THE Wire

February 2003

The Royal Corps of Signals

VISIT OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL TO HEADQUARTERS 2 (NC) SIGNAL BRIGADE

Despite poor weather, the clouds parted long enough to allow the Royal helicopter to descend on Corsham at 1000 hrs on 18 October 03, when **Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal** was met by the Master of Signals, **MajGen IOJ Sprackling OBE**, and Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas MBE**.

Brig JE Thomas MBE greets HRH on arrival at Corsham

This was the first visit of **The Colonel-in-Chief** to 2 Bde HQ since it moved to Corsham 15 years ago. The occasion was organised as a working visit and a chance for her to see the ever-evolving HQ, and the troops and equipment from the formation. Every unit within the Bde was involved in some way with the visit.

Capt Chris Biddulph briefs Her Royal Highness on the latest preparations for OP FRESCO

To begin with, **Her Royal Highness** was invited to tour a number of stands provided by the units and sub-units of the Bde. Here she was given the opportunity to view demonstrations of the formation's range of equipment and to meet many of the TA and Regular soldiers who operated them. At Lima Tp she was shown a display of fibre splicing, during which she successfully spliced a cable herself.

The second part of the visit was to the Officers' Mess to present a number of medals and take lunch with officers, soldiers and civilians from across the Bde.

Four members of the Bde were fortunate enough to receive medals from **The Colonel-in-Chief** during the visit. **WO2 (YofS) Clint Barker** and **SSgt Tony Ward**, both received their LS & GC awards in the presence of proud families. **YofS Barker's** 5-year-old daughter, **Emily**, presented **Her Royal Highness** with a posy of flowers to mark the occasion. **SSgt Kevin Wosika** received his long overdue Sierra Leone medal, and **Cpl John Ryan**, who missed out on the official medal ceremony when he returned from Bosnia after a six month tour with 97 (V) BRITFOR Sqn, received his NATO medal.

WO2 (YofS) Clint Barker receives his LS & GC from HRH.

The Colonel-in-Chief, Bde Comd and Master of Signals look to the skies for the Freefall Parachute Display Team

Finally, before departing, HRH was given the opportunity to see for the first time, the recently re-formed Royal Signals Parachute Display Team, as they swooped in to the cheers of a sizeable crowd gathered by the landing site

The visit was a resounding success. **Her Royal Highness** departed Basil Hill Site having seen a broad cross-section of personnel and equipment from the Bde. In all, she had met over 120 people from across the formation, some of whom had travelled the length and breadth of UK to be in Corsham.

The Royal Signals Magazine

The Wire

February 2003 Vol. 57 No: 1

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Editor Maj (Retd) B L Redshaw

Deputy Editor Mrs M-A Field

Member of the Association of Service Journals

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FRONT COVER

3 Div Sig Regt recently hosted a visit from the Andover MENCAP Society Tracks Club. Some 16 excited youngsters together with carers turned up for a day of fun activities. Our picture shows Carly Webber obivously enjoying herself whilst Sig O'Reilly (L) and Cpl Falinski (R) share her excitement.

BACK COVER

THE CYRIL BASSETT VC MEMORIAL TROPHY is awarded annually to the most outstanding Corporal in the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals. As a signals corporal, Cyril Bassett won his VC at Gallipoli in 1915. The Trophy commemorates this event. Last year's recipient, now-Sgt Karl Claasen, 2 Sqn RNZSigs, is shown with the Trophy. See 2 NZ Sig Sqn's report on page 87.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT COPY FOR THE APRIL ISSUE MUST REACH THE WIRE OFFICE BY 15 FEBRUARY

Corrigendum - Sgt P Corden

In the December edition we published her date of death as 10/08/09. It should have been 10/08/02. We apologise to her family for any distress the error may have caused.

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.

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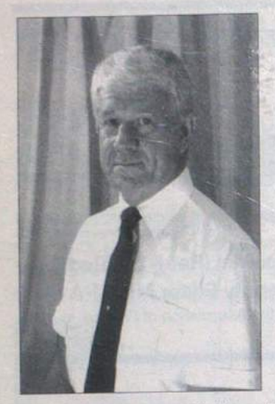


EDITORIAL

In this, the first edition of 2003, may I wish all readers and contributors all the best for the New Year. For the serving Corps, we have some interesting times ahead of us. I know that you will meet all the challenges ahead of you. My wish is that you will all come through safely.

I take pleasure in welcoming our new Deputy Editor, **Mrs Maria Field**. Coming from a very different MOD area (CASH), this new position has been a steep learning curve for **Maria**, but she has settled in well and is already well on top of the job. With the changes we are currently implementing, she has proved to be just the right person for the job.

Some of these changes will be apparent in this issue, notably a different type font, more 'white space' on each page and a variation in the shapes and sizes of pictures we use. What I am trying to achieve is to make the magazine easier and more attractive to read. In due course you will see changes in page layout, and possibly in the structure of the magazine. Yet another thing I want to do is to work on the principle of 'a picture on every page'. We have already achieved this in the colour section, which is now a useful stimulus for units to produce better quality colour pictures (both technically and aesthetically). But we still need more good photos for the rest of the magazine, particularly photos that really say things.

With respect to content, I am in the process of encouraging contributors to focus more on articles of wider readership interest and to produce quality rather than quantity. Sure, each unit or branch wishes to let us know their comings & goings and their domestics, but these could be included towards the end of your contributions, after you have told us what you have achieved. To help writers, a new set of *Guidelines for Contributors* is currently being issued. **

Coming back to changes, I need to emphasise that I want to go beyond just changes to the magazine itself. I recognise that *The WIRE* is a team effort, and that its most important assets are its contributors. So I am also changing the way we at *The WIRE* Office work with you. I want the Office to be a more amenable place for you to call or visit. And you will see that the *Guidelines* have been written to be helpful and encouraging, rather than directive and restrictive. In them, I have outlined the aims of *The WIRE* and explained how we go about assembling it, so that you can understand the reasons for what we ask of you.

I am also continuing my visits to units and to RSA branches, because I believe that face-to-face contact contributes so much to good working relationships. It allows me to see first hand what you do, so that I can better understand what you write and help you present it in the best possible way. Visits also allow me the opportunity to offer help and encouragement to those who do the writing and, importantly, those who take the photos. And it is always possible that I may be able to spot a good story that you may be standing too close to to recognise. So if you haven't had a visit yet, please call me to arrange one.

With all that said, we do have some excellent stories in this issue. I have highlighted just a few of them below.

Bernard Redshaw

** Please call this office if you haven't yet received your copy.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE.....

A Corporal Describes his First Freefall Parachute Jump

Cpl Lane describes vividly his first freefall parachute jump and then catches the free fall bug. See 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sqn (200) report on page 62.

Another New Comms Unit is Formed

The 275 strong Cyprus Communications Unit (CCU) was formed on 2 Sep 02. Made up of a mixture of Army (approximately 110 R SIGNALS), RAF and Civilians, it is now one of the most complex and diverse comms units across the Services. See CCU report on page 81.

Exercises in Poland

1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt recently held Ex's ULAN GROUSE and ULAN KESTREL in Poland, where they trained on 'an extraordinary assault course, normally used by Polish and Russian Special Forces.' During one exercise, their enemy were the PANTS (Poles against Nato troops) See 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt report on page 24.

An Assault on Austria's Highest Mountain

GLOCKNER DIAMOND saw members of 201 Sig Sqn make a successful ascent of Grosse Glockner, 3798m, Austria's highest peak. Careful planning and decision-making, combined with thorough training, made the operation a success and a useful learning experience. See 201 Sig Sqn's report on page 25.

A Sig Sqn Participates in the Lord Mayor's Show

68 Inns of Court & City Yeomanry Sig Sqn took part in the Lord Mayor's Show in London on 9 November 02. Despite OP FRESCO commitments they manned three Landrovers, and 'dressed to kill' they proceeded on the route from the City to Waterloo Bridge and back again. See 68 (I of C & CY) Sqn's report on page 53.

Memories of Op Burberry, 1977

Cpl 'Staf' **Storey** of 238 (L) Sig Sqn remembers OP BURBERRY, the Armed Forces involvement during the 1977 firemen's strike. Even then, crews were anxious about the vices of the Green Goddess. The GG that the then **Sig Storey** was manning skidded on black ice, overturned and was reduced to matchwood. He was injured, but the rest of the crew survived without a scratch. See 238 (L) Sig Sqn's report on page70.

Canadian Signals About to Reach 100

The Communications and Electronics Branch of the Canadian Armed Forces, an amalgam of the former Royal Canadian Corps of Signals, the RCAF Telecommunications Branch, the RCN Communications Branch and elements of the RCEME, will celebrate their centenary in October 2003. To give us some background on this sister Corps, our resident Canadian, **Maj Jeff Howes**, OC 1 Sqn, 11 Sig Regt, has given us a brief history of its development. See 'A Short History of Canadian Communications' on page 6.

Secretary RSI
Post Vacant 1 June 2003

Bill Kennedy is planning to retire on or before 31 May 2003. The post is nominally 3 days per week paid proportionately at roughly RO1 rates as an employee of the Corps. The post entails running the RSI events, editing *The Journal*, close liaison with industry and professional bodies, and acting as Secretary to the RSI and as Secretary/Treasurer of AFCEA Academic Trust. Interested parties should contact the **Regimental Secretary, Col Andrew Carter** (01258 482081) in the first instance.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM

by Colonel (Retd) Cliff Walters

JUNIOR LEADERS REGIMENT, ROYAL SIGNALS – NEW DISPLAY

By Colonel (Retd) CJ WALTERS, Museum Director

The Museum aims to change its displays from time to time in order to retain public interest in what we are portraying. One of our additions in the last year is a display about the Corps' Training Organisation. This important aspect of Corps life, including the training of juniors, is often neglected, hardly even getting a mention in the *Vital Link*. 6 (Boys) Training Regiment was one part of the organisation which moved from Beverley, Near Hull, to Denbury, Near Newton Abbott in September 1955. It was renamed The Junior Leaders Regiment, Royal Signals in 1957 and continued in Rawlinson Barracks until the final parade was held, with 246 Junior Leaders on parade, on 10 August 1967.

The Museum display has recently been enhanced by the addition of the Junior Leaders Regiment Princess Mary Pipe Banner. This Banner was embroidered in gold and coloured threads by Hobsons of London. It depicts the Heraldic Arms of Princess Mary on one side and 'Jimmy' supported by a scroll bearing the appropriate words 'Leadership in the Cause of Peace' on the reverse. The Banner was presented to the Junior Leaders Regt by the Princess Royal, as Colonel-in-Chief of the Corps, on 19 July 1961. It was received by **Pipe Major Junior Corporal Etherton** at St James's Palace in the presence of the Representative Colonel Commandant, **Major General L de M Thullier CB OBE** and the Commanding Officer of the Regiment, **Lieutenant Colonel LHM Gregory MBE**. There were also twelve Junior Leaders at the ceremony.

Dave Walker putting the finishing touches to the hanging of the Banner

The display of this Banner, in the Museum's Training Organisation exhibition, puts the Junior Leaders Regiment firmly in the public eye. If anyone has any interesting, informative or amusing anecdotes about their time in training, and specifically at Denbury, they would be gratefully received by the Museum Director for future reference by the Museum.

The 'Denbury Boys' have an excellent web site where you can find more details. It is at www.g4kki.freeserve.co.uk> The webmaster, **Bill Stevenson**, is evidently a radio ham!

THE MASTER OF SIGNALS AWARD TO LT COL (Retd) PAT SOWARD

On 15 November the Museum volunteers met at the Crown Hotel, Blandford Forum for their annual dinner. On this occasion **Maj Gen Last**, Chairman of the Museum Trustees, presented **Pat Soward** with The Master's Award for his services to the Museum over the past 10 years. This is a rare award for exceptional contribution or service to the Corps. **Col Cliff Walters** read the Citation, which related **Pat's** stalwart efforts. Commencing with his great enthusiasm in the early days of fund raising for the new Museum Project, it extended into assisting in the design stage of the project, where he put his wealth of Corps knowledge to considerable use.

The Museum now relies heavily on its happy band of volunteers, particularly for weekend manning. The duties of over 40 members are co-ordinated by **Pat** in his usual efficient manner. He arranges courses, on-the-job training, information leaflets and our annual dinner. Inter alia, the Citation stated, '**Lt Col Soward** has made an immense contribution to the creation and subsequent operation of the Museum. For his complete, selfless and sustained dedication and outstanding contribution he receives the Master of Signals Award.'

We are all very grateful for **Pat's** efforts over the past ten years for which he richly deserves the Master's Award.

Lieutenant Colonel Pat Soward receiving the Master's Award from Major General Last.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ADVENTUROUS TRAINING MEDAL

Adventurous training is now widely recognised in the Army as being an excellent way to enable individuals to develop further their own personal skills and attributes. As we are all aware, our Corps encourages and supports this type of activity and we have seen and experienced how it brings out the best in people. Occasionally, we hear of a really outstanding achievement by an individual in a particular event or expedition, something that inspires others and makes us all proud to belong to the Corps. We do our best to give credit to these achievements in *The WIRE*, and we ensure that they get reported outside the Corps.

For a long time there has been a feeling that we should recognise them further. So now the Royal Signals Institution has established the Royal Signals Adventurous Training Medal for outstanding endeavours and achievements. The details of the award are set out below:

GENERAL

The Medal is to be awarded to recognise an outstanding achievement or service by a member of the serving Corps (regular and TA) participating in exploration, expeditions or adventurous endeavour.

RULES

The Medal shall be awarded to an individual and not to a group or to an individual in the name of a group. The Medal is intended as a rare honour and will only be awarded when a sufficiently meritorious case arises.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

Nominations for the Medal are to be initiated through the Corps chain of command to COS HQ SOinC(A). Submissions should comprise a fully documented history of the achievement and personal involvement. Following screening, COS HQ SOinC(A) will recommend the award of the Medal to the Awards Sub Committee of the Royal Signals Institution, who will in turn pass on its recommendation to the Corps Awards Selection Committee.

PRESENTATION

When the Corps Awards Selection Committee has agreed the award, the Chairman (who is the Master of Signals) will forward a personal letter via SOinC(A) to the recipient and the Medal will be presented on a suitably prestigious occasion.

RECORDS

The names of those awarded the Medal will be recorded on a board displayed in Princess Mary Hall, Blandford Camp.

EARLY USE OF RADIO

The article below was sent to me recently by a retired New Zealand signaller who found it in a page of *The Waikato Times* that had been used to line a drawer of an old piece of furniture. There was no date to the article, but from other writings on the same page, it would appear to have been published in April 1912. It demonstrates well that age-old Signals approach of using initiative and imagination to find solutions for comms problems – an approach that all good signallers of today still have.

The Waikato Times have kindly allowed us to publish the article.

Bernard Redshaw - Editor

MILITARY MANOEUVRES UPDATE

The value of 'wireless' in modern military operations will be given its first practical demonstration in Australasia at the camp of the 4th Regiment Waikato Mounted Rifles in May. ***Col Allen Bell*** *and* ***Capt Purdon*** *have just returned from Rotorua where they have made arrangements for an uptodate installation of the wireless system in connection with the forthcoming camp. During the week's encampment the members of the Signalling Corps will receive daily instructions m the use and manipulation of the instruments.*

The regimental staff are much indebted to ***Dr Wohlmann****, officer in charge of the Sanatorium, who has kindly assisted the movement by placing at their disposal the X Ray apparatus, which will be temporarily converted into the transmitting station consisting of an 18inch Rhumkoff induction coil, as used by the Marconi high power stations, the direct current for which is obtained from the electric fighting main at 50volts. The induced current on being transmitted from the coil to the aerial wires produces 150,000 volts, being ample to enable the Regiment to communicate over a radius of 200 miles during the day and probably up to 500miles at night, when the ether conditions are more favorable.*

A somewhat unique make and break system is available in the form of an Isenthal Mechanical Interrupter, by which the old-fashioned eye system on the coils is abolished.

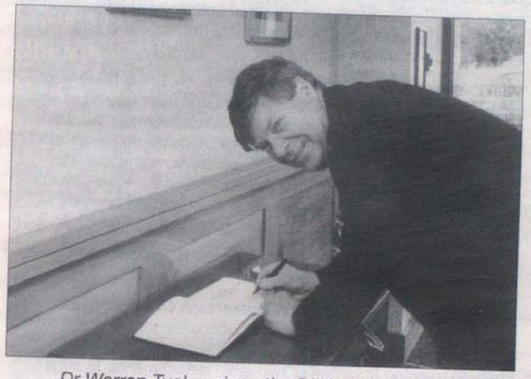
The aerial wires will be connected with the coil by a vertical wire feeder running up to the top of the tower on the new bath house, a distance of over 150 feet making it an ideal position on which to fix the apparatus. The aerial which will be used for both transmitting and receiving will be on the four fold system having a spread of over 2000 feet of copper wire. The coil being fitted with a system of shunts means that messages can be transmitted from within a few yards to as much as 500miles. An opportunity will thus be given to the members of the Signalling Corps, to receive thorough instructions in sending and receiving. The receiving apparatus will consist of a Magnetic Detector, which is being made in Frankton.

In addition to the above, ***Col Bell*** *is endeavoring to arrange for a transportable field wireless set to enable the troops to communicate with the central station, or with each other during the manoeuvres. This will consist of a 2 fi hp oil engine of lightweight, 50volt dynamo, 12" induction coil and a 50 foot mast (consisting of ten sections of 5ft each to allow for easy transport). The whole, excluding the mast, weighs approximately 150lb and the same will be transported by a packhorse with a specially constructed saddle. It is possible that the mast maybe entirely dispensed with and the aerial wire suspended from a kite or hot air balloon. The whole apparatus can, under ordinary conditions be unloaded and communications set up within about fifteen minutes.*

The adoption of the foregoing scientific methods of communication will go far to make tile manoeuvres interesting to all concerned. The 4th Regiment is to be congratulated upon being the first unit in Australasia to adopt the new system. The work will be done under the supervision of ***Capt Purdon****, who has had a large and varied experience in 'wireless'.*

NEW ZEALAND COLONEL COMMANDANT VISITS BLANDFORD

Dr Warren Tucker, the Colonel Commandant of the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals, visited Blandford Camp on 19 November. He was met at RHQ by the Regimental Colonel, **Col Neil Donaldson OBE**, and Regimental Secretary, **Col (Retd) AF Carter MBE**. After signing the Visitors' Book, he was given an in-depth briefing on the Corps by **Lt Col Iain Standon,** from HQ SOinC(A) and **Col Donaldson**. 'I have learned a lot about the parent Corps and how you do things and I am filled with admiration' **Dr Tucker** remarked afterwards, 'It his has given me much to think about and many ideas that I can take back to New Zealand. I'm sure that we (RNZSigs) will be back to see you again soon.'



Dr Warren Tucker signs the RHQ Visitors' Book

At a luncheon in the Corps Room of the Garrison Officers' Mess, **Col Donaldson** presented **Dr Tucker** with a Corps 75th Anniversary Dalton statuette of a Royal Signals Officer in the full dress uniform of 1930. The visit concluded with an extended tour of the Royal Signals Museum conducted by its Director, **Col (Retd) Cliff Walters**.

Col Neil Donaldson OBE presents Dr Tucker with a Dalton statuette of a Royal Signals officer in 1930's full dress uniform.

HARD GOING FOR INSTRUCTORS

by Bernard Redshaw - Editor

Below is a paragraph taken from a training pamphlet, 'Army Telegraph & Telephony Instruments' dated 1916, that came across my desk recently. I can just about visualise a Cpl instructor preparing a lesson from this material, but I have great difficulty in imagining what it must have been be like for the recipients. There should have been a campaign medal for this. It seems that it wasn't just the fighting that was tough during WW1.

'A Simple Telegraph Circuit'

Before describing the connections of telegraph sets, the 'up ' and 'down ' as applied to circuits must be explained. In any circuit one terminal station (the more important usually) is made the 'up ' station, and the remaining offices are 'down ' stations with respect to it. The line to the next station is therefore the 'down ' line. At the next station, however, the line coming from the 'up ' terminal station is called the 'up ' line, and that going on to the next office farther from the 'up ' terminal station is the 'down ' line, and so on at other stations, the line from the direction of the 'up ' station being always the 'up ' line and that leading farther away from it the 'down ' line.

At any intermediate station all offices between it and the 'up ' terminal office are 'up ' stations with respect to it and those in the other direction are 'down '. At the 'up ' terminal office the 'up ' line is put to earth and at the 'down ' terminal office the 'down ' line.

As explained below, the current when any station is sending should flow from 'up ' to 'down ' along the line.

MISSING THE JOE COTTERELL CUP

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS CUP?

'Joe' Cotterell was renowned for his achievements in running. His career in Royal Signals started in 1919 he and stayed with the Corps until his discharge in 1939. He then re-enlisted in the APTC and served until his release in 1946. He was known as the British Army's most outstanding runner. His achievements (including representing England in the Olympic Games in Paris in 1924) are too numerous to record here.

The cup was originally presented by the Officers of the 7th (Princess Royal) Dragoon Guards as the Cross Country Challenge Cup in Cairo in 1910. After **Joe** had won the event three times in succession, the cup was retained by Royal Signals. It was later re-designated the 'Cotterell Cup'

From our records, previous holders of this Cup have been 1 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt in 1990 and more recently 2 Div Sig Regt. But there our records end.

If you have any knowledge of its whereabouts please inform the Corps Property Officer, **Maj (Retd) Pat Lafferty** at RHQ Royal Signals.

A HUNDRED YEARS OF CANADIAN MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS

by Maj Jeff Howes, Royal Canadian Signals

As Canada prepares to celebrate its centennial of military communications in 2003, I have been asked to provide a brief history of military communications and its impact both on a national and global scale. The article below is an extracted from an abridged version of *Canadian Military Communications Over the Past 100 Years* by **Col (Retd) PH Sutton CD**, Senior Researcher, Military Communications and Electronics Museum.

The Communications and Electronics Branch, which is responsible for all communications and electronics matters in the Canadian Forces, has several founding members; namely, the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals, the Royal Canadian Air Force Telecommunications Branch, the Royal Canadian Navy Communications Research Branch, and some elements of the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Following the South African War, (1899-1902), the importance of signalling in the Canadian Army was recognised by the appointment of **Capt Bruce Carruthers**, as Assistant Adjutant-General for Signaling. He conceived the idea of a separate Corps to develop signaling in the Canadian Army. On 24 October 1903, General Order 167 authorised the formation of the Canadian Signalling Corps (A Militia unit). The original Corps shared communications responsibilities with the Royal Canadian Corps of Engineers until 1919.

The First World War saw the development of spark wireless, buried telephone cable and message rockets, in addition to motorcyclist dispatch riders, messenger dogs, carrier pigeons, and the old reliable lamp and flags.

In 1923, the opening of radio stations at the Yukon mining communities of Mayo Landing and Dawson City, heralded the beginning of the Northwest Territories and Yukon Radio system. It provided reliable radio communications for mining companies, aircraft, trading posts, and prospectors. Regular weather reports from these systems formed the basis for national forecasts from the Dominion Observatory until 1957, when the system's 28 stations were gradually turned over to the Federal Department of Transport. When airmail post was introduced to the Canadian public in 1927, Signallers were given the responsibility for the nationwide system of radio beacons required to guide the mail planes. In the early days of 1932, Signallers assisted the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the hunt for the Mad Trapper of Rat River. This 53-day saga gained the immediate attention of Canadian citizens when, for the first time in northern Canada, people were fixed to their radios listening to live reporting of the manhunt as it occurred.

The Second World War saw a tremendous increase in the size and scope of operations for communicators from the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals and the Air Force telecommunications and radar operators. Hundreds of trained signalmen served in base signal units and many more served in North Africa, Hong Kong, Australia, and Burma. Later, they were present in Korea with a brigade signal squadron and personnel serving in infantry and artillery regiments. The RCAF Signals Branch's peacetime establishment, which by 1939 had grown to six officers and 75 men, grew to over 20,000 personnel operating communications equipment, radar and navigational aid equipment overseas and in Canada.

At the beginning of the Cold War, when the North American Air Defence (NORAD) became a permanent feature of our defence policy, RCAF communicators operated and maintained several layers of radar sites to track, and identify aircraft within and entering Canadian airspace.

With the exception of World War 1, before the 1940s there were never more than a few thousand officers and men serving at sea. The history of naval communications goes back many hundreds of years, and although today's methods of signalling are generally recent in origin, the hoisting of flags, semaphore and flashing lights are still used. Over the last century naval communications have gone from wireless telegraphy to wireless telephony to world-wide voice and satellite communications.

In the Canadian north, a component of the RCN operated the Supplementary Radio System with some 800 sailors.

The advent of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations had a tremendous impact on all communications personnel. In virtually all of those operations, communicators were represented in strength, ranging from one or two radio detachments, to a full signal regiment. Today, they continue to provide military communications to all CF deployed personnel currently involved in UN or coalition operations.

Army, Navy and Air Force communicators have been involved in most major domestic operations and emergencies, providing communications during the Montreal Olympic Games, the OKA standoff, the ice-storm, and many other domestic operations.

With the passage of the Canadian Forces Reorganization Act in 1968, military communicators from the Army, Navy and Air Force were brought together to form the Communications and Electronics Branch of the Canadian Armed Forces. The individual service training schools closed and professional military communications training was concentrated at the Canadian Forces School of Communications and Electronics at Kingston, Ontario, where it continues today.

The men and women of the military communications community, assisted by civilian defence team members carry out duties across Canada and around the world in support of the United Nations, NATO, humanitarian missions and joint operations. In cooperation with our defence science and technology organisation, military communicators operate and maintain some of the most sophisticated and complex equipment found today.

Military communicators pride themselves in living their motto: being swift, accurate and watchful in meeting the needs of today's modern Canadian Forces.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
DECEMBER 2002

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col N. A. W. Pope	D DEF RP
Maj M.C. Roberts	EC CCII - HORG
Capt P. R. Griffiths	2 Signal Regiment
Capt A. S. Johnson	Headquarters 1 Signal Brigade
Capt G. J. Oliver	JSSU (Ayios Nikolaos)
Capt P. Pearce	3 (UK) Div HQ & Signal Regiment
Capt A. D. Shakespeare	Royal Military Academy Sandhurst
Capt K. P. Simmonds	5 Regiment Army Air Corps
Capt R. A. Wilson	22 Special Air Service
Capt M. Worden	GOC Theatre Troops HQ
Capt R. J. Wymer	DEI Enterprise Man Branch Henlow
2 Lt I. A. Bangurah	21 Sig Regt
2Lt K. T. Bates	16 Sig Regt
2Lt J. Chatman	19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
2Lt L. S. Giddings	7 Sig Regt
2Lt L. Griffiths	16 Sig Regt
2Lt C. Hamp	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
2Lt M. S. Hele	14 Sig Regt (EW)
2Lt J. D. Landreth	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
2Lt J. C. Long	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
2Lt S. J. MacPherson	2 Sig Regt
2Lt M. J. McNelis	7 Sig Regt
2Lt G. M. Oosterveen	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
2Lt M. J. Speed	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
2Lt N. Streetly	30 Sig Regt
2Lt J. V. B. Thomson	2 Sig Regt
2Lt E. K. Watson	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt

JANUARY 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col E.A. Davis	NATO (G)
Lt Col S.G. Hutchinson MBE	SO1 Offr Wg
Lt Col R. G. Nicholson	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col P. Richards	Royal School of Signals
Lt Col D.W. Somerville MBE	33 Sig Regt (V)
Maj A.J. Bowering	Infra & Networks HQ SOinC (A)
Maj M. N. Johnston	Infrastructure HQ SOinC (A)
Maj G. R. Mason	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Maj N. S. Stevens	MOD A Block
Maj J. Turner	BMATT (Freetown) Sierra Leone
Maj G. W. Wilson	209 Sig Sqn
Capt A. J. Barry	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt C. E. Caie	R Sigs/Int Div
Capt A. J. Gray	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt L. Golley	TDT HQ SOinC (A)
Capt A. J. Large	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt J. N. Mayne	Army Technical & Foundation Coll
Capt R. G. Nixon	CIS 241 Sig Sqn
Capt D. R. Orr	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (262)
Capt E. S. Warhurst	Army Presentation Team CGS
Lt S. G. Davis	Army Technical & Foundation Coll
Lt P. D. Jones	15 Sig Regt

WOS AND SNCOS
DECEMBER 2002

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
A/WO2 YofS J.R. Broughton	Bowman Trials
SSgt D.M.E. Heath	60 Sig Sqn (V)
SSgt I.K. Jones	21 Sig Regt
SSgt C. Pullen	37 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt T Shiels	34(N) Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt G.L. Christie	DII Convergence - Unicom
A/SSgt P.J. Graham	The Royal School of Signals
Sgt D.R. Collins	264 Sig Sqn
Sgt S.M. Davis	RSIT
Sgt B.A. Ewart	DCSA DEI Information Assurance
Sgt L.B. Frew	ATR Lichfield
Sgt S.C. Pilmer	21 Sig Regt
Sgt A.J. Powell	264 Sig Sqn
Sgt I. Rutland	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt I Wilson	21 Sig Regt

JANUARY 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
SSgt YofS K.M.Book	252 Sig Sqn
SSgt L.D. Balmforth	16 Sig Regt
SSgt C. Batley	16 Sig Regt
SSgt D. Brodie	35 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt D. Cartledge	2 Sig Regt
SSgt D. Clash	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt J.R. Coupland	30 Sig Regt
SSgt J. Crowton	The Royal School of Signals
SSgt W. Hayes	215 Sig Sqn
SSgt R.D. Hutton	215 Sig Sqn
SSgt G.R.Kitchen	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt A.S. Laver	15 Sig Regt
SSgt T.M. Pellett	215 Sig Sqn
SSgt D.J. Smith	259 Sig Sqn
SSgt G.A. Sorley	32 Sig Regt
SSgt M.D. Wilford	2 Sig Regt
A/SSgt D.L. Mackenzie	35 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt D.N. Ashley	225 Sig Sqn
Sgt S.H. Ayres	321 EOD Sqn RLC
Sgt M.C. Beckett	21 Sig Regt
Sgt N. Blenkinsop	15 Sig Regt
Sgt J.J. Davey	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Sgt H. Dunlop	31 (City of London) Sig Regt (V)
Sgt S.J. Ferrer	228 Sig Sqn
Sgt V.M. Hawtree	The Royal School of Signals
Sgt M.P. Hay	The Royal School of Signals
Sgt C. Hunt	The Royal School of Signals
Sgt A.L. Malin	The Royal School of Signals
Sgt S.L. Martwich	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Sgt J.D. McArthur	JSSU Ayios Nikolaos
Sgt J.P. McLaughlin	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Sgt M.R. McMullan	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt P.M.R. Merchant	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt C.N. Nelson	252 Sig Sqn
Sgt I.L. Overal	HQ ARRC
Sgt M.E. Pay	21 Sig Regt
Sgt G. Revell	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Sgt W.A. Staff	21 Sig Regt
Sgt G.J. Topps	36 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt A.T.D. Waddington	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn

RETIREMENTS

DECEMBER 2002

Lt Col J. R. S. Amberton	07 Dec 2002
Lt Col D. J. Luckett	29 Dec 2002
Lt Col D. J. Lumb	16 Dec 2002
Maj M. D. Bailes	25 Dec 2002

JANUARY 2003

Maj P. J. Bowles	08 Jan 2002
2Lt F Sultan	16 Jan 2003

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

HEADQUARTERS SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

COMMAND SUPPORT TRIALS & DEVELOPMENT UNIT

TRIALS TROOP

S03(W) Trials	**Capt JE Toze**
YofS Trials Tp	**W02 (YofS) RAJ Barnes**

Currently, RSigs trials are conducted by Command Support Trials & Development Unit (CSTDU) which falls under the auspices of HQ SOinC(A) and Command Support Development Centre (CSDC). CSTDU is commanded by an infantry SOI with three separate subunits. The largest subunit is the all-arms BOWMAN Trials Team (1+74), which is currently forming up within CSTDU and is 'lifed' for two years to the BOWMAN project. The other two subunits are S Tp (1+15), which provides specialist trials support to DEC(SP) and Trials Tp (1+15), which provides support to both R Sigs trials and wider service trials. Both S Tp and Trials Tp are manned solely by RSigs personnel of mixed trades. Trials Tp has been involved with a number of equipment trials, and many more are planned for the future which have specific relevance to the mainstream RSigs community. *The WIRE* provides the ideal means to update the Corps on some of the new equipment that is due to enter service in the future.

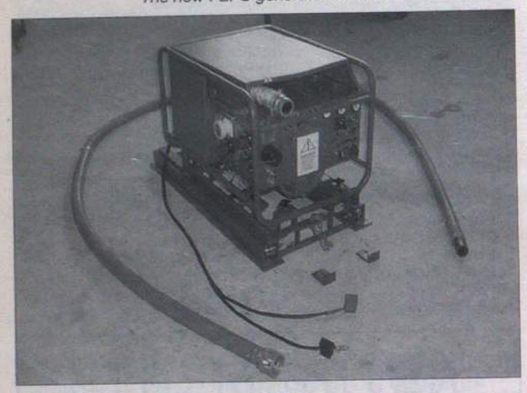
POWER SUPPLY SYSTEMS FOR THE FIELD ARMY

In the last 12 months the Tp has been actively involved in the trialling of the new Field Electrical Power Supply (FEPS) family of generators, which are designed to replace the 8/12kW, 16/24kW and 40kW sets currently in service. The planned ISD is 2003.

The Tp has also completed a competitive evaluation trial for a replacement to the in service 3.5kVA, 6kVA and 4.5Kw generator sets. The selected generator, rated at 4.5Kw will undergo further user trials in June 03, and once accepted, will be fitted to all RR, Central and TII installations, less armoured variants.

The latest power supply project that the Tp will be involved in will be the new Lightweight Field Generator (LFG). It is planned that

The new FEPS generator on trial



The selected 4.SKw generator

this will replace all nonspecialist in service generators rated below 3kVA, including the widely used 1500w, not just within RSigs, but Army-wide. The LFG will be as small as possible and capable of supplying both 110V and 230V AC 5OHz and 28V DC, running on either Dieso or AVTUR. The Tp will conduct both the competitive evaluation trial and user trial for the LFG in Apr and September 03 respectively.

FUTURE ARMOURED PLATFORMS

The Future Command and Liaison Vehicle (FCLV) is currently progressing through a series of trials being run by our RAC counterparts in the Armoured Trials and Development Unit (ATDU) at Bovington. Trials Tp has provided RSigs user input to one of the competitive trials, following which the five contenders have now been down-selected to three. On current plans, a variant of this platform will replace all armoured RRB and LO vehicles within the Corps. The current planned ISD is 2006.

One contender for the FCLV project

More recently we have been invited to provide RSigs input to the trial of the reengined and regeared FV430 prototypes produced by Alvis, due to take place in April 03 at ATDU. The Tp will also be heavily involved in the series of extensive BOWMAN trials beginning in March 03 alongside the BOWMAN Trials Team, more of which in future editions of *The WIRE*.

NEWS OF TRAINING

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AP Hudson MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) DM Forrester**

THE SPORTSMAN'S DINNER - AUTUMN 2002

11 Sig Regt hosts a Sportsman's Dinner twice a year (in the spring and autumn) to celebrate two different sporting seasons. This could be considered excessive but when you consider the throughput of soldiers, many deserving individuals and teams could leave Blandford without getting their due recognition. Essentially, the dinner provides an appropriate end to a season and an occasion when representatives from the various sporting disciplines can gather in a social setting to celebrate and recognise those individuals who are prepared to make the extra effort for their teams. This effort can be in many forms; not necessarily sporting excellence but also the courage to compete, the commitment to train, the determination to succeed, or indeed in the supporting role as an OIC sport, a coach or an event organiser.

The Sportsman's Dinner has become a premier event in the Regtl social calendar, and this season was no exception. Where possible the Regt seeks to invite soldiers and sportsmen and women of the highest standard as our guest speakers. This season we were given a very interesting insight into a young athlete who has just completed her most successful season to date (now ranked fourth in the world), the British Javelin record holder, **Pte Kelly Morgan** from 3 CS Regt RLC. An inspiration to many young soldiers and a great ambassador of sport, she and highlighted the opportunities that exist in today's Army.

18 sets of Regtl colours were awarded, along with the following awards for outstanding contributions to sport across the Regt and the RSS:

Sportswoman of the Season	**Sig Bloor**
Sportsman of the Season	**Sig Young**
Award of merit	**WO1 Coffin**

The CO, Lt Col A P Hudson MBE, presents an award of merit to WO1 Coffin for his contribution to Regimental and Corps sport

EXERCISE QUATHLAMBA DRAGON - *by Sig Jinks*

Personally, I couldn't think of anything more adventurous than conquering some of the highest peaks in South Africa and I'm sure that my colleagues felt very much the same. On 5 October, 14 members of 11 Sig Regt, including myself, boarded the plane for the 10-hour flight to Johannesburg, completely oblivious to the physical and mental challenges awaiting us, high in the Drakensburg mountain range.

Arriving in Johannesburg, we caught our transfer to Durban and drove to the South African Defence Force camp, whose hospitality we were to enjoy for the next three days. It was here that we started the first phase of our exercise, the 48-hour acclimatisation period. This consisted of a two-day guided battlefield tour, where we visited what must have been every battlefield in the southern hemisphere, reliving each and every battle that took place, with the help of our guide **Ken**. The weather during our period of adjustment was similar to what we had just left in England. It wasn't until we began the second phase, our ascent of Giant's Castle, that we experienced the full force of the South African sun beating down on us. We left our comforts behind and we began our ascent laden with enough equipment and supplies to last us two days.

We tackled the extremely arduous Giant's Pass, an almost vertical slope, which took us nearly four hours, in temperatures up to 35° C. The ascent was challenging, both physically and mentally, the high altitude starved us of oxygen and the heat drained us of the energy we much needed. Reaching the summit gave us all a great sense of personal achievement, but there was more yet to come. We contoured around the slopes, and after much complaining, reached an even higher peak. This one, however, was only just large enough to hold 15 people. With 2000ft drops on either side, it wasn't for the faint-hearted! The descent wasn't half as daunting as the ascent, with the whole party splitting into two groups in order to make the journey as quickly as possible. Luckily, I chose the group led by **Capt Black APTC**, widely recognised by our group as a master map-reader and trekker extraodinaire (!). Upon reaching base camp, we packed up all our equipment in readiness for a little stroll back to the minibuses. The 'little stroll' took three hours, the last hour of which was in the dark.

We returned that night to a very welcoming campsite, and very welcome meal. Here we began to prepare for our next ascent, involving a series of daily walks, culminating in a final climb for the peak. This was enjoyed by all, particularly those who indulged in the lesser-known sport of swimming in the freezing rock pools! After this, we headed to the shops to purchase the supplies for our final and most challenging task to date, the Tugela waterfall ascent. This was a three-day expedition, with more than its fair share of challenges. After leaving our personal possessions in what was quite possibly the 'dodgiest' car park outside of Liverpool, we started to climb to the top. The first day consisted of the ascent, which took in the dreaded chain-ladders - a series of ladders embedded directly into the rock face, which we had to climb with our packs on. After this task, we set up our base camp at the top of the Tugela Falls.

The second day consisted of a long trip along the Escarpment, taking in some stunning views and doing a spot of sunbathing along the way. The final day of trekking began with us being roused from our beds at an ungodly hour to watch the sun rise over the mountains. While none of us appreciated this at the time, it was, we all agreed, a breath-taking experience. Upon descending from the falls, and finding that all our kit was where we left it, we set off to a local hotel, for some very well earned cold Cokes and ice creams.

This ended the trekking phase. We had all earned a tremendous sense of achievement and personal pride. We were now officially on R&R, which we felt, was much needed. We stayed with 84 Sig Regt in Durban, where we were made to feel very welcome, before finally flying back to the lovely climate of Great Britain.

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JGJ Howes Royal Canadian Signals**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) NJ Roberts**

CHARITY FUNCTION 7 NOVEMBER 2002

Early in October 1 Sqn decided to hold a charity function in aid of the Blandford Opportunity Group. This Group, a registered charity that was opened in January 1992 is for children aged between 0 – 5 who live in the North Dorset area. These children have been referred to the Group by the health service profession. They all have special needs and to help them with their difficulties, 1 (Ouston) Sqn has become involved in raising money for toys and facilities for the staff and children. On 07 November 2002, Rhino Tp organised a charity function for all Phase 2 soldiers at Blandford Camp. The evening was extremely successful and enjoyed by all, who, as well as a disco were entertained with 3 'sets' (2 planned, 1unplanned) from 11 Sig Regt's own resident rock band 'Last Orders'. With the sale of tickets, the money tree and donations from individuals, the evening managed to raise over £800 for this local charity. The Opportunity Group extends its thank you to all those involved in raising such a significant amount of money for a small charity. It is hoped that the link between 1 (Ouston) Sqn and the Blandford Opportunity Group will continue over the coming years to enable new members of the Sqn to contribute to this worthwhile cause in the local community.

WO1 Bob Clubb demonstrates how to wear a beret to the Blandford Opportunity Group

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj RS Gibson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) S Haynes**

IRON TROOP

EXERCISE CATTERICK ENDEAVOUR – by *Sig Mitchell*

During EX CATTERICK ENDEAVOUR, all the intakes were mixed into teams so that we were not working with people we knew well. I had not really met anyone with whom I was not in basic training, so this gave me the chance to meet new friends and work with a different group of people. Before we deployed to Dartmoor training area, we had a few revision lessons on how to pack a Bergen, basic map reading lessons and hygiene in the field. Theory is always easier than reality, as we were to find out throughout the weekend.

We arrived at Oakhampton Camp late on the Friday evening and it was freezing. We knew that our kit was going to be carried around with us but some joker had put bricks into my Bergen. In the morning, after an uncomfortable night on a concrete floor, we had breakfast and a brew and instantly found ourselves out on Dartmoor. The aim of the ex was to move around the training area from one point to the next carrying out command tasks at each point. This was a timed exercise, and reaching some of the checkpoints was difficult. On each stand one member was chosen to command the sec and complete the task. I had the opportunity to command my sec and I found it very rewarding, learning a lot about the sec and about myself. Between stands we were given the map and told to get to the next point. This was nerve-wracking, but fortunately I got my sec there. It was a long weekend. We navigated during the day and then again at night and the following day we did a gruelling assault course.

Our sec bonded together almost instantly and we worked well as a team. We attacked all tasks with 100% effort and we were pleased with the results that we achieved. All in all we all enjoyed the weekend.

BEAUFIGHTER TROOP

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD SCHEME - *by Sig Blackburn*

I started my Duke of Edinburgh Award with the cadets when I was thirteen. Twenty of us passed the Bronze but only two of us continued on to the Silver Award. My Bronze took just over a year and I did most of my work for the Award on Durham Dales during expeditions. To continue to do my Silver Award was difficult, as there was only two of us and we had problems finding people to help us. Then to make matters worse we were then hit by the foot and mouth epidemic. We decided that we needed to join up with another Cadet force and so we did our expeditions during the winter in Scotland. Despite the set-backs, I passed my Silver in just over and year and a half. On leaving the cadet force I joined the Royal Corps of Signals and chose to continue with the Duke of Edinburgh and attempt my Gold Award.

There are five sections which I need to complete before the Gold is awarded. These are Skill, Service, Physical, Residential, and two Expeditions. For the Skill I am currently working in The Forum Cinema in Blandford Camp as a projectionist. I work there three nights a week and my tasks include ordering films, putting the film together, test screening them and then showing the film. I also make sure the ice cream machine is fully stocked at all times. The manager has trained me and I can now screen a full film with a change over in the middle.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme has played an important part in my life for nearly 5 years. Not only have I learned new skills, but I have also learned a lot about myself. With the on-going support from my Tp and the Corps, I hope to qualify for my Gold Award in the very near future.

4 (MILITARY TRAINING) SQUADRON

THE ROYAL SIGNALS LEADERSHIP COURSE 120
by LCpl Codack (7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn)

On 22 September 23 students from all corners of the Corps gathered at 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn to begin arguably one of the hardest courses the Sqn runs. Many wouldn't make it, but those who did would come out the other end stronger, faster, harder and allegedly wiser. Being kept in the dark and given limited information left most of us expecting the worst - which was quite handy because that's what we got!

Without going into too much detail about the course, we were both physically and mentally tested. As the course progressed, some real characters emerged. Development became the key word. Essays, presentations and inspections kept everyone up until the early hours, but the difficult times were balanced by the social training that we received in Sheffield, Mansfield and London. Overall undoubtedly a demanding course that saw us conducting activities ranging from initiative exercises, to high-wire confidence courses, to racing across the Brecon Beacons.

ROYAL SIGNALS RECRUIT COURSE (TA) 02/005, 2-16 November 02

In November 02 RSigs TA Recruit Course 02/006 took place in Blandford, with all training being conducted around Blandford and Salisbury Plain. Out of 32 students who arrived, 26 passed out on Friday 14 November. All who passed out are to be congratulated and welcomed into the Corps. The Top Student of the course went to **Sig** 'Paddy' **Gibson**, 40 Sig Regt, who as an individual performed exceptionally throughout this 2-week intensive demanding course. Top Shot went to **Sig Wayman**, 43 Sig Sqn. Top Academic went to **Sig Denney**, 63 Sig Sqn. Top Physical performance went to **Sig Espirit**, 31 Sig Regt. Top Field Soldier went to **Sig Griffiths**. Best Endeavour went to **Sig Morledge**, 38 Sig Regt.

A very special thanks from all the team goes out to **Lt Col WDL Brown**, CO 36 Sig Regt who was the Reviewing Officer.

BLANDFORD SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Patrickson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) IH Pennel**

FOCUS ON TM TROOP

TM Tp has just undergone a transitional period with personalities coming and going on a weekly basis. There are however two things that have not changed: the workload and the customary greeting of *'Welcome to TM Troop. What's wrong with you?'* from one of the stalwarts, **Mr Ted Pounds**. It is a warm welcome to **SSgt Ek Pun**, **Sgt Steve Munro**, **Cpl Jim Elkin**, **Cpl Paul Bungay**, **Mr Paul Wise** and lastly but not least **Mr Bruce Grindley**. And a fond farewell to **LCpl Lee Griffiths**, **Cpl Mike Garry**, **Cpl Jim Elkin**, **LCpl Mark Witty** and **Mr Steve Holman**. All the best in the future.

Within a busy training environment TM Troop have (as is becoming the norm) had an extremely busy period, having to cope with the ever-changing environment here at RSS. In addition to the customary workshop tasks we have had a Busy PA period providing Public Address systems for the following events: White Helmet Display Team (on numerous occasions), Remembrance Sunday, Dorset Police open Day, RSA weekend, are to name just but a few. The Tp is becoming a highly efficient 'Dolby, Stereo, Digital Surround Sound Provision Unit' (DSDSSPU).

In-between work we have found the time to enter into a new venture to keep life in perspective, 'Civvies vs Military' sporting arena. This is a fortnightly event and takes the form of any sport that won't give **Rick Tilley** a heart attack. First blood went, surprisingly, to the Civvies with a convincing win at softball, **Mr Colin Cavanagh** redefining the meaning of a non-contact sport. A draw in the five-a-side football led to a resounding win for the Military in the basketball, with **Mr Bruce Grindley** disproving the theory, that if you hit the back board hard enough the ball will go through the net (err, no it wont **Bruce**, it'll just bounce back harder). The last of the sporting events saw us in the indoor SAT, with the obvious Military advantage proving decisive, even after allowing the Civvies an extra player. Step up **Mr James Fish** and thank God for the Military. Currently the Military lead 7:4 but no doubt the Civvies will come back at us with a renewed fighting spirit in the next event.

With Christmas just around the corner the Tp is gearing up for a busy start to the New Year, which sees a new round of

inspections, and the start to the PA season. No doubt, with the characters present, new challenges will be faced and we will emerge through the next year unscathed and victorious.

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

GROUP HEADQUARTERS

Gp Comd **Maj Guy Benson**
SSM **W02 Rob Melotte**

The Gp continues to work hard and play harder. A number of changes in personalities have occurred since our last contribution. **Capt James Dennis RM**, the new OC Comd Sect from 40 Cdo and **SSgt (YofS) MartinWoodgate** straight from YofS 55 Course, filling the newly formed post of Projects (BOWMAN) and the OC's right-hand man when a brew is required. Unfortunately we have lost some men as well. Farewell to the outgoing 2IC and OC Comd Sect, **Capt Alex Williamson RM**, our green and lean fighting machine off on his JCSC.

OPERATOR SECTION OUTSTANDING STUDENT

It is with deep pride and affection that the Gp reports an Outstanding Student Award. These Awards are particularly rare and well sought after. The recipient, **Cpl Scott**, enlisted in RSigs as a Data Telegraphist. To fulfil his potential, he decided to change his trade to Radio Systems Op. This change would also help him in his quest to become a YofS. It was obvious from the start of the course that he was a mature NCO who was not only willing to learn, but was also willing to help others who struggled during the course. The other course personnel without doubt, gained from his experience and leadership, resulting in the course attaining well above-average marks on their trade tests. This is credited to **Cpl Scott** for his hard work and enthusiasm. For his high results and input into RSBR 007, **Cpl Scott** was unanimously voted outstanding student by the instructors in Radio Systems Gp. The Gp would also like to congratulate him on his impending promotion to Sgt. See you on the YofS course!

The OC, Maj Guy Benson issues the Outstanding Student Award to Cpl Scott

On 23 October, whilst on exercise at Piddlehinton Camp, RSG were visited by Comd RSS, **Col Ewbank**. The aim of the visit was for the Comd to meet the lads from Radex Tp, who were carrying out various comd and sldr trg exs. The Comd was conveyed by **Maj Guy Benson**, OC RSG to Piddlehinton Camp, where **W02 (YofS) Paul White** and **SSgt John Batts** met him. The latter had brought china cups from home and had spent the previous evening kindly making a Corps-coloured cake for the Comd.

Sgt Sid Snape and **Cpl Oliver** briefed the Comd on the exercises, and there followed whistle-stop tour of the dets to meet some of the key personalities of Radex Tp. **Sig Sarah McGuinness** talked her way around the aim of the exercise to get on to more pressing matters of renting houses. The Comd then moved away from Comd Sec and on to Sldr Training and **Sgt Chas Fox** and his infamous moustache. At this point, as a part of his upgrading course, **Cpl** 'Scouse' **Lloyd** explained to the Comd his interpretation of how to deploy a Rebro. He must have made the right impression because the following month he was promoted to Sgt.

RADEX TROOP EX WET DRAGON

The ex started as it continued throughout the week, with a beer in our hands and the wind in our hair. The crew of salty sea dogs was made up from **Cpls Tim Smith, Scott Robinson, Dave Haskell**, and **LCpls Cooper, Lee Wheeton**. Our skipper was **Sgt** 'Windy' **Gale**. From Gosport we sailed across the Solent to Yarmouth, where we spent the rest of the day 'cleaning the boat'.

To catch the tide, we started the next day early and set off for Weymouth, where we each took our turn at the helm. There were a few hairy moments, especially when beverages were nearly spilt! After spending three great days at Weymouth 'cleaning the boat and practising man overboard drills' we set sail once more.

This time we landed at Lynmouth, and then finally back to Gosport to end a fantastic week. Our skipper, **Windy** has to be congratulated for putting up with the kebab and beer stained deck of his pride and joy *Petasus*. Thanks **Windy** for a great week.

EQUIPMENT SECTION

IC **Mr Peter Braithwaite**
2IC **SSgt** 'Smudge' **Smith**

We are now pleased to inform that Eqpt Sec is healthy and safe after the recent 5 Div H&S Inspection. A big thank you to **Sgt** 'Flash' **Gordon**, the Sec H&S Rep, for all his hard work. **Sgt Scott Thomas** has now put his name down for a pool/snooker skills course after his recent performance, but we put it down to using a drumstick instead of a cue. Our intrepid SSgt, **SSgt** 'Smudge' **Smith**, will shortly be departing for a winter cricket tour to South Africa (lucky chap) with the Corps Cricket Team. He has promised to send a postcard or two, and a full report of the tour will follow later. Apart from that its business as usual.

POWER SECTION

OC **Sgt Stidwell**

The time has come to say a fond farewell to **SSgt Ray Williams**, his wife, **Gillian** and daughter, **Lauren** on completion of 22 years service. Not quite yet to Civvy Street but across the road to the old School building NVQ cell. All the best to you and your family. See you soon. A very warm welcome to **SSgt Phil Graham**, who be will taking over the reins of the Sec, arriving 02 December 02. Standby **Phil**, there's a lot of new things on the agenda for Pwr Sec.

We would like to congratulate the following personnel on their recent selection for promotion: **Sgts Gray** and **Lloyd**, **Cpl McMahon**, **LCpls Dodd**, **Johnston**, **Drummond**, and **Wilson**, **Sigs Kennedy**, **McLennon** and **Barrow**. If you want job satisfaction and promotion, get a posting to Radio Systems Gp.

CISM COURSE

Back Row: Capt N J O'Kelly, Maj P Flavell, Capt C Ward, Maj G R Leyland, Maj K Bell, Maj D J Duggan, Maj J A Kennedy, Capt N Sutherland RM, Maj S J Turnbull, Maj M J Hanby
Front Row: Mr K Dugdale, Mr J Beggs, Mr R Halliwell, Col J Ewbank, Lt Col J Dryburgh, Mr N Rich, Mr R Lavies, Mr J Close

After a year of hard work at RSS, the successful students of the third CISM Course were awarded their MSc Degrees at the Bournemouth University Graduation Ceremony at the Bournemouth International Centre on 7 November 2002. The aim of the course is to educate selected RSigs officers and other technical arms in the application of technology and management for the delivery of CIS capability to fit them for technical staff appointments. Of the eleven students who started the course on 2 September 2001, ten were awarded an MSc. Top student was **Maj Mark Hanby**, who achieved a Distinction and was awarded the AFCEA and Science Prizes. **Capt Neil Sutherland RM**, who also achieved a Distinction, was awarded the Wemyss Prize for the most improved student. The course members are now filling technical staff appointments throughout the Army and MOD, and the students on CISM 4 are hard at work trying to emulate their success.

TROOP COMMANDERS' COURSE 54 - *by 2Lts Clare Cassidy and Aileen Grant*

In true young officers' fashion TC 54 brought a breath of fresh air following the stale atmosphere of TC 53 (not mentioning any names – **2Lt Tom Kelly**). We started the course in the bar (purely for admin purposes of course), enabling us to help **2Lt Kemba Protain** acclimatise and relax after her long flight from Trinidad.

And so it was that our first week at the School was spent on a H&S course with the 'Safety Tubbies' (their words not ours). Points to note: be careful, paper can cut! However, that is no way as bad for your health as the PO's visit, as one or two of them would have testified the next morning. The success of the visit however, was down to the TC 54 'Beam Team'. Not only did we destroy the PO's but have since been challenged by the more mature members of the Mess, who feel they can show us how it is done. We say: 'bring it on!'

James Bond continued to be a source of entertainment. Not only did the course enjoy a night out to watch the film but also the male contingent amused most of the cinema by dressing up in their DJs!

Finally, as you always finish a lesson with a look forward to...Congratulations to **2Lt Irene Cowling**, who married **Lt Troy Gordon RLC** on Saturday 7 December. We wish you both all the best for the future.

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC	**Maj Don Macaulay**
SSM	**W02 Neil Roome**

KUKRI TROOP

OC	**Capt (Tfc) Mark Harris**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Dewhurst**

It has been an eventful couple of months for Kukri Tp as yet another Tp Comds' course is pushed out into the big wide world, loaded full of useful information. Predictably, as one course ends the next is underway and the Ptarmigan garages are awash with hoards of potential FofSs, anxious (on the most part) to absorb the wisdom of the Comd Trg Team.

Meanwhile in the garages, in between bouts of rearranging the furniture and throwing away anything he can't recognise, **Cpl Richie Savage** has completed another climbing course. RSIT came and went, bringing a commendation (in his absence on his skillies) to **Cpl Al Donaldson**. The Tp wishes the best of luck to **Mrs Sarah Dyer** who has recently left to have a little bundle of joy, and welcomes **Mr Stuart Hawey** as the new body in the ceil.

TC53 @ ASG
by 2Lts I G Thompson and C E J Davies

Monday 16 September saw the 25 strong TC53 gather at ASG for the last major element of our Troopies' Course. Apparently we received an opening 3 weeks of theory (curiously this went unrecorded and unremembered) on the bar chits or the DAK Kelly photograph album. The final 3 weeks started with simulations in the OSPREY suites, progressively built up to deployment exercises and culminated in the 5 day Ex FINAL FLIGHT. Despite pleas of 'I'm not going to a ******* Ptarmigan unit,' **FofS Steve Davis, YofS Phil Tonks** and new boy **YofS Eddie Cochran**, resolutely DS'ed our meanderings across Dorset. Using the Sysex Tp assets and their helpful/patient operators (plus the guest appearance of 216), we undertook a medley of command and operator appointments. All humans, installations and the local countryside made it to ENDEX relatively unscathed. While the exam results are unknown at the time of going to press, many of us have to admit to actually enjoying the experience.

FofS 73 @ ASG AWAYDAYS

FofS 73 had a well-earned break from the confines of F19, with an excursion to the local woods to help with environmental issues. Because of transport restrictions, Day 1 was spent in camp on the local 25m range. **W02 (FofS) Steve Davis** directed our clearance task against a mountain of brambles - to aid local plant growth. **Sgt Steve Colbeck** immediately set off to purchase some petrol to help start the fire. He came back with a full jerry can and is still waiting for his eyebrows to grow back! Some members of the group got really into it. There was a report of **SSgt Max Challis** seen running around in his underpants carrying a spear.

The next day the course headed to local woods near Dorchester, where the task was bigger and the fires got larger. Happily the threatened downpour more or less held off and morale was revived at lunchtime with a surprise consignment of beer. AWOL from the morning, **SSgt Daz Ware** suddenly appeared from the mists of the forest carrying 3 trout, which were promptly cooked on our towering inferno and quickly scoffed.

By the end of the two days everyone was thoroughly exhausted, but had had an enjoyable time. All had recharged batteries ready to get on with the rest of the course. Special thanks to **Sgt Gaz Watkins** for his help on the two days.

BATTLEAXE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt (Tfc) Mark Harris**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mick Openshaw**

Notes by SSgt Openshaw

These last few months have been eventful, with inspections galore. We managed to survive the Health and Safety inspections, and then moved on to Screening and RSIT. The latter was a success and everyone involved deserved a big pat on the back. The Tp now looks forward to a quiet couple of weeks till Christmas and then the fun and festivities start. Whilst all this has been going on, our sporting gladiators have managed to get away and do their bit for the Corps:

Blandford Half Marathon **Capt Harris, Sgt Butler, Sgt Max Wright** and **Sgt Stu Park** were all heard to mutter those famous last words " never again" as they crossed the finish line.

Corps Badminton/Squash **Sgt Steve Pengelly, SSgt Amrit**.

Corps Swimming **SSgt Openshaw, Sgt Stu Park**.

Congratulations from the Tp to **Cpl Kate Anderson** on the birth of her baby. Welcome to **SSgt (YofS) Eddie Cochran, Sgt Lynda Sutherland, Cpl Geordie Appleby** and **LCpl Laura Murphy**. No farewells.

BUILD THE MILLENIUM EYE
by Sgt Jo Walton

It was a cold, dark Monday morning, when **Maj Don Macaulay, Sgt Jo Walton** and **Cpl Geordie Appleby** (Battleaxe Tp), along with **Sigs Purnabbahadur Rai, Jay Gurung, Pandu Tamang, Ashish Subba, Khindaraj Rai** (Beaufighter Tp) boarded a minibus and headed for the Institute of Civil Engineers in Westminster. This KAPE activity was to help about one hundred schoolchildren use rolls of plastic to make an engineered sub-structure, which we would then form into a mould of the Millenium Eye.

We eventually arrived at the venue at 0930 hrs after a long trawl through the London morning traffic. Following a formal brief by the organiser, I gave the team a brief on our task. The team then split up to help the various teams. By lunch time sufficient sub structures had been completed for us to start the joining up. It was not so easy at first but it finally finished with what could be described as a circle of rolled up tubes of plastic. The trickiest part was to cut thirty-two equal pieces of string and bolt them onto our circle and to add right amount of tension to each. By 1400hrs the wheel was complete on its axis and even spun around.

We all stood back and looked with pride at our work. A little ripple of applause came and very quickly went. After the inevitable photo calls, we walked across the river for our forty-five minute ride on the real Wheel. While we would not be back in camp for another four hours, the view across the London skyline was the high point of an enjoyable day.

SYSEX TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Mahendra Limbu**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Neil Pollit**

Since the last set of *Wire* notes, Sysex Tp has contended with a continuous stream of courses, and the 'challenge' of RSIT with only two days preparation!

SSgt Andy Smith has left (last seen stacking shelves in Tesco) and been replaced by **SSgt Neil Pollit**, who is so small that for four days nobody realised he had arrived until he found a soapbox to give a speech from. I/C R R, **Sgt Jimmy Frew** has been posted to Lichfield and replaced by **Sgt Loz Sharp** and **Biff** the dog. Four members of Sysex Tp came off the Cpl's board (who says RSS is bad for your career!). They were **LCpls Jamie Masters, Calem Jones, Jane Robinson** and **Jay Summers**. **Jay** was particularly pleased as he has waited 21 years for this moment. Well done!

60th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS
ÉCOLÉ SUPERIEURE D'APPLICATION DES TRANSMISSIONS (ESAT), RENNES, 26 SEPTEMBER 2002

On 26 September 2002 a small representative party from RSS Blandford consisting of **Lt Col Jim Dryburgh**, the Chief Instructor, and a flag party commanded by **Sgt Hunt**, supported by **Cpl Worsfold** and **LCpl Kennaugh** travelled to the French Signals School (ESAT) at Rennes. They were to represent SOinC(A) and Comd RSS at ESAT's 60th Birthday celebrations.

The celebrations commenced on the morning of the 26th with a Catholic mass, followed by a formal parade which included representatives from the US and German Signals communities. There was then a videosatellite conference, which included French signallers deployed around the world. A short reception followed with official gifts being presented to delegates representing the UK, US and German communities and to the many officials representing other French arms, services and government departments.

The National representatives and Heads of Arms and Services salute the French National Colour

Lt Col Dryburgh makes a presentation on behalf of the R Signals to the French SOinC

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

BRITFOR SIGNAL TROOP OPERATION PALATINE

BRITFOR SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Captain Vanessa Galloway**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Kenny Macpherson**

The Tp from 7 Sig Regt, Bruggen, arrived on the 30 October to warm sunshine - not what we expected at all. We also arrived to a strict two can rule – 16 Sig Regt found this particularly funny – can't think why! The first couple of days were spent shadowing the outgoing Tp who, to give them credit, had done a cracking job at preparing for the handover/takeover period. Anyone would have thought that they had spent their entire 6-month tour preparing for this moment! By the end of the week, 7 Sig Regt had taken the helm and were apparently unfazed by their new job.

So far so good! On the Saturday evening, there was a rather low key send-off party for 16 Sig Regt in the Tp bar which fizzled out around 2100hrs due to the distinct lack of alcohol! I have to take this opportunity to point out that **LCpl Sam Richards** seems to find two drinks all too much for her and so the rationing is having no effect on her! Routine has been established now and morale remains pretty high, considering the circumstances. We are now gearing ourselves up for the Christmas period and bracing ourselves for the snow.

COMMCEN SECTION *by Cpl Matt Page*

With 7 Sig Regt ruling the COMMCEN again and 16 Sig Regt leaving for sunnier climates, the realisation of a cold six months

was soon upon us. After receiving a well-organised and planned hand-over from **Cpl Andy Adams** and **LCpl Buffy Bufton**, the Sec soon settled into the routine of the Gym, ECHOS, the Tp Bar and work. (Nice to see you have got your priorities right!) Can we just point out at this stage that the calendar reminders on the computer that were set for Christmas Day and New Year's Eve by a departing member of 16 Sig Regt, were not well received by a couple of members of the COMMCEN. **Cpl Matt Page** has been busy dealing with the day-to-day running of the COMMCEN with a few late night and early morning call-outs thrown in for good measure. Along with looking after the welfare (not warfare) of the Sec, he has also been busy explaining a rather embarrassing moment with a mannequin. Least said. A Shift, which comprises **LCpl Matt Knowles** and **Sig Bronwen Collins**, had a very eventful start to the tour and have since learned the error of their ways. **Sig Collins** has also been giving **Alan Titchmarsh** a run for his money and has even been offered a job by the BBC for the next series of Ground Force. **LCpl Sarah Hardy** and **Sig Rick Clayton** make up B Shift and have drawn the short straw for working over Christmas. **LCpl Hardy** has also made a very good start to her tour, with the gym becoming her second home. **Sig Clayton** has taken up kick-boxing as well as trying to teach himself hypnosis. With **LCpl Kerry O'Connor** at the helm, C Shift has been battling on with the daily routine at BLMF. **LCpl O'Connor's** night shift concurrent activity of creative art has proven to be very entertaining for **Sig Howard Riches**. Congratulations to **Sig Riches** on his recent selection for promotion. He has also kept the fact alive that all 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn personnel are related to each other.

ISIS SECTION

The ISIS team deployed at around half strength, with a couple of the team having to return to the UK to do their ISIS course (**Sgt Thompson** and **Cpl Baynes**). It all looks like a cunning plan on their part to get some time away from the Mental Factory. The ISM team was looking forward to getting to work but with not a vast amount of experience in the team, we knew it would be a difficult start. The first few days were the handover/takeover period, where the members of 16 Sig Regt did their best to pass on all of their acquired knowledge from the previous 6 months. As the computers we administer are scattered over a wide area, **Sigs Si Byrne** and **John Gotch** soon became a quick response team with the help of a couple of mountain bikes signed out from BRITHOUSE. Up in Sipovo, the Det consists of **Cpl Phil Baynes** and **LCpl Andrew Pickup**. Overall, we have had few problems. With people like **Sgt Daz Brady** and **Sig Nat Brown**, we really can't see any problems? We'll let you know how things are going in the next exciting instalment of 'ISM Team II - The Return of the Geeks.'

ODA

We met up with a very happy **SSgt Dean McKenzie** and **Cpl Ed Roberts** to begin the hand over/take over, only things didn't start off as planned because of a bomb threat on camp that slightly hampered things. The OC, **Capt Vanessa Galloway** turned a shade of white when she saw the amount of stuff she had to sign for. Her blood pressure has definitely gone up since! Since taking over, **Sgt Nat Turney** and I have made great friends with the postal staff due to their sound advice - or not as the case may be! The next thing on the agenda was to meet up with our account holders, and that proved quite funny as communications between us and the Dutch proved somewhat easier than that of The Royal Scots because of the language barrier!

Sgt Nat Turney's plans of seeing Sarajevo with the OC were dramatically changed when the 'trustworthy' RAF told them they had only 5 minutes on the ground in Sarajevo before they were to fly back. For me this is a big learning curve as it is the first time that I have been employed in this position. So I am on permanent receive! Now we are just counting down the days until the snow starts to fall and then to look forward to a white Christmas in the Metal Factory.

TSCP BANJA LUKA A FEW SHORT WORDS

Now we've been here for 1 month now,
Doing the job 16 Sigs showed us how,
3 shifts of 7 Sigs' finest men,
Doing their stuff now and then,
They take in faults from far and wide,
To get them cleared they do with pride,
Who are these wonders I hear you ask,
Who work so hard despite the task?
Yes these fine men will do their deeds,
From top to bottom the honour roll reads:
SSgt 'Willie' **Scoots**
Sgt 'Bet Lynch' **Francis**
Cpl 'Handy Andy' **Ashurst**
Cpl 'G.S.' **Golding-Smith**
Cpl 'Kidneys' **Garner**
Cpl 'Jase' **Sheehan**
LCpl 'Deadeye' **Reddy**
LCpl 'Johnno' **Johnson**
Sig 'Northern Man' **Thornley**
Hard working are they and ask no praise,
Some say we are just counting the days,
This is not true I have to say,
We're worth every penny of our pay,
We'll end our piece until next time,
And we'll meet again in awful rhyme

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (NORTHERN IRELAND)

OC **Capt Bobby Strawbridge**
YofS **WO1 Bob Horan**
FofS **WO2 Rick Gorman**

Notes by Cpl Franky Franklin

If these are not the inaugural Wire notes for the Joint Communications Unit (Northern Ireland) then they must be the only ones in recent memory. The Workshops are split into different sections, each with a unique role. There are various Royal Signals trades employed within the Workshops, ranging from System Engineers to Information System Operators, and Radio Systems Operators to Installation Technicians. In addition, there is a handful of REME technicians and Infantry Advisors.

Over half of JCU (NI) have attended the two week Royal Signals Short Riggers Course, held at RAF Digby. This course instructs working competently and safely at height, and is not for the faint hearted. Personnel passing this course are deployed on rigging tasks, working long hours on arduous but rewarding tasks. Although the working day can be long and demanding, JCU (NI) Workshops abide by the principle of 'Work Hard, Play Hard'.

There has been a significant change in personnel in recent months. There are too many to list all, but most recently, we welcome newly promoted MT Sgt, **Sgt Gav Rickard,** and his wife (and boss), **Nikki**, who join us from 30 Sig Regt. **Cpl Sarah Finney**, whose fear of heights was truly conquered on her 'Suitable To Climb' course, comes to us from 280 Sig Sqn. Her appearing like a koala bear halfway up the mast had locals thinking that a new species had arrived in Lisburn. Also, quick hellos go to **SSgt Ski Nowosielski**, **Sgt Mick Cameron**, **Cpls Richie Libby** and **Mick Burton**. Fond farewells go to **SSgt Jon Parr**, who departs for AFCENT shortly and **Cpl Nick Piff** who leaves for his T1 course at 11 Sig Regt.

ADVENTURE TRAINING

Earlier this year, the Workshops deployed to Newquay for two weeks well-deserved adventure training. This excellent package, organised by **SSgt Dave Moore,** had activities like Surfing, Coasteering and Quad-biking designed to test and bond the team. Unfortunately, the Newquay cliffs did not quite match the thrill of climbing a 360 foot mast!

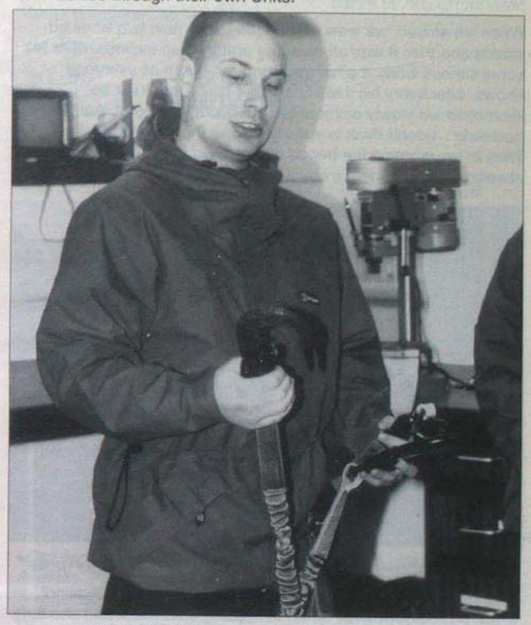
MASTER OF SIGNALS VISITIS JCU (NI) WORKSHOPS

Cpl Lindsay Stewart and the Master admire the interior finish standard of a Ford Focus.

On Thursday 21 November, the **Master of Signals,** visited the JCU (NI) Technical Workshops. His visit was short, but he was well briefed on our activities and met most personnel.

Having been briefed on the Workshop's main disciplines, he was then further briefed by **Cpl Lindsay Stewart** on the available in-car entertainment systems and by **Cpl Scott Tomblin** on the use of a purple strop (as opposed to a green one). **The Master** was then introduced to the remaining members of the Workshops over tea, coffee and any cakes that had been left uneaten by **Cpl Mick Burton.**

Any Royal Signals personnel interested in serving with the Joint Communications Unit (Northern Ireland) Workshops should initially seek advice through their own Units.



Cpl Scott Tomblin pretending to be Captain Hook.

XV

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col N P Metcalfe MBE**
RSM **WO1 J McNaught**

With the marching season now complete, the Regt has been able to take time out for the more fun things in life, such as sport, adventure training, a bit more sport and the RSM's 2 week Pre-Operational Refresher Training (PORT). And if that was not enough, the Regt has seen a huge change round in personnel.

Of particular importance, we welcome our new CO, **Lt Col N P Metcalfe** who has recently escaped from PJHQ, had a blistering hand-over and has had a very busy first few months in the chair. Our final change at RHQ level is the RCMO's post. **Capt Al Jenkins,** has unfortunately (for us) been sent to MCM Div as OC Operator Trade Section, taking over from **Capt Shane Knight** at the end of October. All the best to Shane on retirement and good luck to **Al** for the new job. **Capt Vince McNaught** our new RCMO gains his LE Commission (congratulations) and is posted in from sunny Latina to miserable NI in November. We hope that the change from suntan lotion to Gore-Tex is a smooth one!

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj D T H Wilson**
SSM **WO2 G Steel**

HQ Sqn has been 'ticking over' in the last few months. We have just come off the back of a maximum leave and adventure training period with personnel in the squadron taking a much-deserved break.

Well it had to come - the end of an era. August saw the departure of **Sgt** 'Smudge' **Smith** from the QM's Department after 22 years service. A function to say goodbye was arranged and **Sgt Smith** was given his presentation(s). We hope you enjoy your time in civvy street and hope you are safe in the knowledge that your work will continue through **Sig** 'Son of Smudge' **Burdon.**

Also in the QM Dept we welcome the arrival of **SSgt** 'Dusty' **Miller** from 7 Sig Regt. We hope that you and your wife **Mona** enjoy Lisburn. The QM Dept would also like to welcome **LCpl Fitzpatrick** from 216 Sig Sqn and **LCpl Worral** from 30 Sig Regt.

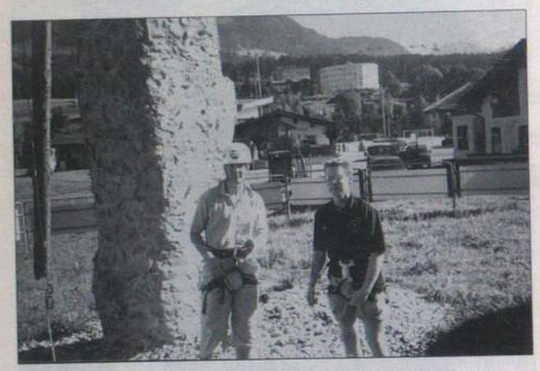
EXERCISE TYROLEAN FINN
HQ SQN ADVENTURE TRAINING AUSTRIA

OIC EX	**Capt Dickson**
INSTRUCTORS:	**Cpl Ford**
	LCpl Shakelton
	LCpl Smiejkowski

By Sig Hobbs

Week 2 of the Adventure Training, and it's the turn of the rowdy bunch led by **Sgt Wayne Robson.** The week started with some drama - **Sig Shaun McAulay** decided to do his own thing at the airport, much to the dismay of his fellow hikers who were sat wondering were he was. As it turned out he was just having a brew on his own in a cafe.

When we arrived, we were introduced to our new two wheeled steeds and then it was off up some pretty steep inclines. After some serious work, the hill was conquered, but as everyone knows, after every hill there is another hill. After 40 or so kilometres we slowly dismounted our bikes to cries of 'Aargh my backside'. I don't think anyone sat down in the bar that night. Then in the morning the troops participated in things such as abseiling, the confidence course and hillwalking.



LCpl Shakelton (R) and Cpl Ford (L) doing the' Instructor' pose

The next day saw us take part in what is known as 'canyoning', which basically involves diving in freezing cold water and shouting very loudly from the bottom of a, yes you've guessed it, a canyon.

The fifth day saw us skiing. After a cable car ride to the top it was down to **Capt Dickson** and **LCpl Broderick** to be the stars of the day.

Time was also spent chilling out at the local pool and at the local go-kart track. The last day was spent white water rafting and canyoning. Hats off to **Capt Dickson** for organising a fantastic two weeks adventure training. A great time was had by all.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC SQN	**Maj S J McConnell**
SSM	**WO2 P Tasker**

This month has heralded a change of command in the Sqn, so we bid a fond farewell to **Maj Nick Walker** who is posted to D Info (A) and a warm welcome to **Mar Stuart McConnell** who has arrived from DCSA.

INDIA TROOP

Tp Comd:	**WO2 McHugh**
Tp SSgt:	**SSgt Wilson**

This has been another active period for India Troop, who have been involved in both the McKelvie Cup shooting and football competitions and found time to participate in adventure training in Scotland.

Twelve members of the Tp enjoyed five days in Scotland on exercise Nevis Finn (later renamed to India Tp Selection). The highlights included walking the aptly named route "THE RING OF STEEL". On reaching the top of his first mountain (980m) **Cpl** 'Toff' **Lucas** discovered a new fear of heights! After eight hours of walking and rock climbing up a number of peaks, most people were ready for a hot shower. Our next adventure involved mountain biking, and armed with two MLT's and the hope of spending some time visiting Aviemore, moral was high! Unfortunately a few miles were added to the ride as time was spent crossing rivers, traversing the rockiest paths in Scotland and generally getting completely lost! Everyone seemed to enjoy the challenge of finding the way home except **SSgt** 'Tug' **Wilson** who decided he'd had enough and somersaulted off his bike. On Thursday the group hiked up Ben Nevis and again some of us were geographically challenged, managing to stray off the tourist path for an extra hour! Despite this, the walk was well worth the effort and the views were fantastic.

On a final note we'd like to welcome back **SSgt Ian Clark** to the Tp on promotion along with **Sgt Jane Simmons, Sgt** 'Daz' **Holman** and **Cpl Glyn Ansell**. We also like to wish **Sig Phil Brocken** and his wife well at his new posting to 2 Sigs and **Cpl Aidy Falinski** who has left for 3 Div in Bulford.

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt R A Hamilton**
Tp YofS	**WO2 (YofS) Yates**
Tp FofS	**WO2 (FofS) Clarke**

by Cpl Murray

It has been all change once again this month as we see the arrival of five new members to the Tp. Welcome to **Cpl Dave Moore** from 3 Div, **Cpl Ian Wallace** from 280 Sig Sqn, **Cpl** 'Daz' **Clough, Cpl** 'Mac' **McMahon** and **LCpl** 'Wilko' **Wilkinson** from a unique / interesting Georgian town. We must also say goodbye and good luck to **Sgt** 'Loggy' **Wright** who is off on his Foreman of Signals course. Finally farewell to **Sgt Tony King** and **Cpl Ross Brown**, who are both off to seek fame and fortune in the civilian world.

This month continues to be very busy both in and out of work. The equipment rollout programme continues and everyone has been working hard in preparation for the forthcoming cross training at Magilligan. At the same time the Tp has been striving to keep the trophy cabinet topped up.

Congratulations to the Tp shooting team, who returned undefeated for the third year in a row with the McKelvie Cup Shooting Trophy. Special mentions go to **LCpl Burns** who also brought home the Clay Pigeon trophy, **LCpl** 'Stu' **Jones** for having the reddest face in the world ever during the march and shoot and also to me for being the best looking team member. The Tp shooting team was then incorporated into the Sqn team, who went on to win the Regimental Shooting Competition. Unfortunately the Tp did not have the same luck in the McKelvie Cup Football Competition, taking only third place. Blame for this goes to **Sgt** 'Safe Hands' **King,** who unfortunately got sent off in the first few minutes of the first match (cracking save though).

Finally, we must spare a thought for **Cpl** 'Jerkins' **Jenkins** who we haven't seen for quite a while. Rumour has it he has been skydiving in Norway and is now skydiving in Spain. If anyone comes across him, could they please ask him to phone home, as we are worried!

PARACHUTING COURSE
by Cpl Darren Clough

An early start on the Thursday morning didn't stop ten soldiers departing Thiepval barracks heading for the Services Parachuting Centre, Northern Ireland (SPCNI), Ballykelly, to take part in a basic parachuting course.

After arriving at SPCNI, it was straight into the classroom phase with lessons taught on subjects such as canopy control, malfunction drills and water landings. These were then practised in 'The Shed'. Basically, there were six harnesses hanging from the ceiling and this provided us with the ability to practise everything we had just been taught. We took it in turns jumping out of the mock-up aeroplane and had fun learning to count. We were due to make the first jump on the Thursday afternoon but due to inclement weather (damn that cloud cover!), this wasn't possible. It was postponed until first thing Friday morning.

First to jump was **Sig Jackie Penman**. Her face as she jumped from the Cessna 206 was a picture. Next up went **Cpl Kevin Alford**, the 233 Sig Sqn clerk. Then came the turn of **LCpl Keith Wilkinson,** who encountered 'twists' on his first jump. He handled the situation well and was just happy to land in one piece. Next was I, **Cpl** 'Daz' **Clough**. I can't remember those first few seconds but if you have never parachuted before I would thoroughly recommend it.

Second lift saw **LCpl Tony Jones** and **Sig Keil Fraser** jump from 3500 ft to the drop zone, which is centred round Ballykelly runway control tower. All parties agreed it was a fantastic feeling and when the opportunity arose for a second jump there was only one non-taker. Second time around was even worse, because you know what to expect as you jump into a slipstream of 120 mph.

Then it was the turn of the professionals. **Capt Rob Hamilton** and **Cpl Nick Jenkins** (who organised the trip) did their showing off with a good free-fall display. Both parachutists made good landings and were eager to get up and do it again.

In all, it was a very good two days off work. All parties involved in throwing themselves out of an aeroplane had a really good time and would like to thank the staff at SPCNI for their tuition and advice. A special mention to **Andy Goodall** who took all the lessons and was there as jump master for all of the New Boys (and Girl).

NCC TROOP

Tp Comd/ OPSO	**Capt Booker**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Johnson**

A relatively quiet couple of months have been had by all in the industrious Network Control Centre. Most of us were lucky enough to get a well-earned couple of weeks leave over the summer period, which has boosted everyone's morale. Unfortunately, we have to say goodbye to some old faces. Those lucky enough to be granted parole this month are **LCpl Dave Phillips** who has gained an Inter troop posting to TM Tp. We also say goodbye to **Cpl Matt Coverley** and his wife who have crossed back over the Irish sea to 21 Sig Regt and finally to **Cpl Fox** who departs to 1 UK Div in Herford along with his new bride. The NCC wishes them all well for the future. This month the Tp welcomes **LCpl Bob Toner** and family who have escaped the Armour at 1 UK Div, **Cpl Eddie Banks** and his wife who join us from 14 Sig Regt and **LCpl Keil Fraser**, who has joined us straight from the factory.

The Tp would like to congratulate **Cpl Dave Carter** on being successful on the YofS course (God help the future Operators). Congratulations also to the NCC Shooting Team (**Cpl Lowery, Cpl Smith, Cpl Coverley** and **LCpl Parker**) who managed a feat that has never been achieved in the history of the NCC (3 years!), winning a trophy. The first of many to come, so beware Romeo Tp.

NCC Troop winning the McKelvie Cup Shooting Competition

CO'S SHOOTING COMPETITION
by LCpl Burns

This year's CO's Cup shooting competition took place at Ballykinler Ranges on 26 Sep 02 with each squadron entering a team of their best 8 shots. With **SSgt Parkes** orchestrating the day's events to his usual impeccable standards (can I get off Duty keys for a week Staff?), the competition was guaranteed to run smoothly.

The teams chose their starting order by picking numbers from a hat. The first event was a two mile March and Shoot, and to the dismay of the team, **Sgt Jones** decided that 233 would start first. Other events included 10 rounds on the shotgun range, 75m sniper target shoot and culminated with a falling plate shoot, where the teams battled against each other in a knockout to determine the overall winner.

Unsurprisingly, the overall winners were 233 Sig Sqn, much to the dismay of OC 225 Sig Sqn, who thought his Sqn had it in the bag. Congratulations 233 Sig Sqn!

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt V Hemmings**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Goodwin**

Notes by Sig Stevens

This month TM troop has lost some of its best and strangest characters in the form of **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Watkins, Cpl Micky Partridge** and bride to be **Cpl Jamie Disley**. Suffice to say that we will all be sad, relieved, but sad, to see them go and the majority of local publicans are preparing for hard times ahead. We would like to wish them all the best in their new jobs and hope there is nobody of sensitive disposition at their lucky new units.

On the bright side however, the Tp would like to welcome **Sgt Grimes**, who will be working in Networks Section, (God help her!) We wish her all the best of luck (she will need it!) in her time with us.

Meanwhile, on the more energetic side of life, TM Tp crushed all opposition in the McKelvie Cup Football and we would all like to congratulate the team consisting of **SSgt (FofS) Clish, SSgt Goodwin, Sgt Spruce, Cpl Lawer, LCpl Duffy, LCpl Jenkins, LCpl Bell** and **LCpl Hatton**. Unfortunately the McKelvie Cup March and Shoot team were unable to snatch victory, but for a valiant effort the Tp would like to thank **Cpl Disley, LCpl Holley, LCpl Jenkins** and **LCpl Hatton**. **Cpl Adamson** and **LCpl Jenkins** also participated in the Sqn March and Shoot competition, which they won spectacularly so they tell me.

Next month we look forward to demolishing the opposition in the McKelvie Cup Rugby Sevens.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj G Inglis**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) B Hogg**

Just as the 2IC and SSM found their feet in their new appointments, the new OC, **Maj Graham Inglis**, arrived in the Sqn. We would like to welcome **Maj Inglis**, his wife **Melanie** and son **Hamish**. We hope you have (another!) good 2 years in the Province. Goodbye and many thanks go to the outgoing OC, **Maj Mark Smith** and his wife, **Jo**, who go back to normality on the mainland.

SUPPORT TP

2IC Sqn / Tp Comd	**Capt M S W MacDonald**
RQMS / Tp 2IC	**WO2 (RQMS) S Griffiths**

by Cpl S A Brown

The summer months have been a time for many arrivals and departures in the Tp and a time to catch up on some courses.

The MT Department have seen the arrival of **LCpl Iain Billings** for his second tour within the Province and the departure of the department head, **Cpl Si Clayton**, to warmer climates. Although, hopefully, he will be back as he has just gone on leave to Australia for 3 weeks (lucky so and so). **LCpl Stu McCrone** has completed his Defence Staff Car Driving Course, which will enable him to scare the pants off even more people he drives to and from the airport. Lastly, **LCpl Chris Blundell** has earned the name 'Shermanator' (as he has a scary likeness to the character from 'American Pie').

The RQMS Dept have also seen an arrival recently. **WO2 (RQMS) Steve Griffiths** has arrived fresh from Germany and already gone on leave to Canada. **Sig James** has had enough time away for the whole troop, fitting in his TA Rad Op Course between bouts of leave. He has also spent a couple of weeks in prison. But luckily enough it was only as part of his resettlement package to become a Prison Officer. Congratulations must go to **Cpl** 'Pickles' **Hayward** whose team in the Charity CFT Challenge at Ballykinler achieved a respectable 10th.

The Sqn Orderly Room has seen the most staff changes of late. The swift departure of the ORS, **Sgt Scott Davies**, after attending his SFA course at Worthy Down. A fond farewell to **Cpl Korrie Coverley**, who leaves to have a baby and accompany her husband to his new posting at 21 Sig Regt (AS), Colerne. This leaves the admin office very undermanned, but the imminent posting in of a new Sgt and Cpl promises to allow the AGC personnel in the Sqn actually to take some leave this year. (**Cpl Coverley** has since given birth to a healthy 7lb 3oz baby boy named **Kai**. We wish her all the very best.)

GOLF TROOP

Tech Adjt / Tp Comd	**Capt R J Craig**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D Wilson**

Notes by Sgt Dave Street

A very busy time for the Tp, with the marching season in full swing. Flash to bang times were kept to a minimum and people were kept on their toes. A big hello to the following people: **WO2 Paul Holmes**, who is the new gaffer in ITSG. **SSgt Pete Asplen** and **Cpl Ian Waterworth**, who join ITSG in their unenviable task of making the Sqn LAN run even slower (I mean faster!). **Sgt Paul Newell** joined the throng from 7 Sig Regt. Welcome: here's the duty tech pager. **Cpl Lee Punyer** joined the ranks of the permanently depressed when he married **Ruth** in St Lucia. Some people will go to any lengths to get off duties. **WO2** 'Gaz' **Bennett** left the troop on completion of his 22-year colour service. Good luck to him in his future career as a tester for the Imperial Tobacco Company. For a forty-year old you don't look a day over 60! **Cpl Joel Senior** left the Sqn. Goodbye to him and good luck for the future at 3 (UK) Div.

The Sqn put in a sterling performance in the inter-Sqn football, beating 233 and HQ Squadrons in convincing style.

SSgt Dave Kilgallon and **Sgt Dave Street** organised a Quiz Night for the Sqn and selected visitors. A feast of sausage and chips was provided, and due to the blatant over-ordering of food, everyone managed at least two portions! **SSgt Andy Ball, SSgt Ash Ashworth** and **WO2 Miles Nettleship** ran out eventual winners. The losers, by a staggering gap, were 'Rodneys Revenge' consisting of OC Golf Tp, **Capt Craig**, and OC Echo Tp **Capt Morris**. Which part constituted the revenge, no-one is quite sure.

SSgt Dave Kilgallon swung into action during his normal working day, bankrupting the SECO budget by ordering 10 CD drives rather than 01. A mistake that even **Ken Dodd** wouldn't have made. Nice one **Dave**!

SCI-FI NIGHT
by Cpl Hildreth

July saw the Sqn say a sad goodbye to **SSgt Tony Dodds** and his wife **Sgt Liz Dodds** as well as the Sqn OC, **Major Smith.** To mark the occasion, a farewell bash was organised with the theme of 'Science Fiction and Super Heroes,' with the Squadron bar suitably decked out in silver foil, flashing lights and a force field on the back door to repel anyone not in fancy dress. Almost an entire Sqn's worth of masked and light-sabre armed characters were beamed or shuttled in. There were at least three Darth Vaders, several Lara Crofts and numerous others. The most unusual was **LCpl Murray**, who decided to come as Mister Muscle, the household cleaning products character. Even the boring speeches had a suitable theme for the occasion with **WO2 Nettleship's** being especially entertaining.

The outgoing OC, **Major Smith**, took the opportunity to present a rather nice gift of a port dispenser. This was subsequently put to great use and resulted in may 'Super Heroes' not feeling quite so 'Super' come the morning. We would like to wish all those leaving all the best in their future postings.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC	**Major D A Craft**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) P Marshall**

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Major S Harvey R IRISH**
WOIC:	**WO2 (RQMS) D M Buckingham**

We welcome the new Tp Comd, **Maj Steve Harvey** R IRISH who takes over from **Maj Jim O'Shea**, who having completed a mere 40 years for the Queen, moves on to pastures new. We all look forward to your farewell in January.

The RQMS Dept has had a busy time recently having its LSI, which went well. We now cannot wait for the next one! October also saw two of the team come off the Cpl Promotion Board, **Karen Tarry** and **Karl Deakin**. Congratulations from all of the Sqn.

Sig Kirsty Galbraith returned to her old school in Blackpool for a week as a "Satisfied Soldier" and **Cpl Lee Patterson** represented the Sqn at the Corps Orienteering Competition in Blandford.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt S R Bennett**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt P P Corcoran**

OPERATIONS SECTION *by Cpl Grimes*

Congratulations and farewell go to **LCpl Selina Moffat**, who was top student on the recent Dog Handling Course and leaves us for the Province Dog Section (another example of how persistence can ensure your escape). The Sect would like to extend a warm welcome to **Sig Jay Gillard** and **Sig Sophie Gibson**, who both join us as part of the exchange program we have with 21 Sig Regt (AS).

The Sqn has always been into its sport, and this has not diminished since the last edition of *The WIRE*. Recently the unit has entered teams in the Corps orienteering championships, Province Cross Country championships, The Mercury Cup, local football and rugby leagues and cups and last but not least the Squadron Gladiator third Friday club. Well done to everyone who did well and well done to those who did not do so well.

TM SECTION - *by Cpl Tedby*

The workshop says farewell to **Cpl Vicky Roissetter** and welcomes **LCpls Lawless, Gumery** and **Williams** fresh from the factory. We wish them a good tour. We also await the arrival of **Cpl Rawlyck** from JSG (NI) and hope that the blackout across his eyes is no hindrance to his performance. The biggest job we have to contend with is the extra tasks to support the military fire fighters during OP FRESCO, putting more pressure on our sites.

The Sqn has been relatively quiet on the military and adventurous training fronts, only entering the Mercury Cup Military Skills and March and Shoot competitions. We also entered a team in the Cambrian Patrol, but due to so many of the Sqn personalities being injured and having no replacements, we were forced to withdraw. A lack of willing volunteers or even able bodied pressed men was also evidenced before the Military Skills

competition as some of the team had to be scratched together at the last minute. Our FofS was told the afternoon before the team travelled to the event that he was the team captain.

Events coming up next couple of months include: the Sqn Snowboard team departing for Zell-Am-See in Austria to compete at the Corps Wintersport Camp; EX FREEZING FINN, the Sqn skiing trip in February; EX IBERIAN FINN in March, the first trip to Spain for Rock-Climbing and walking the Sqn has ever attempted; and to our delight, Lanyard Trophy trg begins soon - more miles on tired feet.

RIGGING SECTION - by *Sig Slowey*

Well deserved congratulations go to **Sigs Andy Morrison** and **Del Slowey**, who were both selected for promotion to LCpl. Both will soon be wearing their first stripe upon posting. It has once again been quite a busy period in the Rigging section, with projects coming in for both the new sites at Musgrave Park Security Base and the new PVCP building Thiepval Bks. There has also been a lot of work involving night rigs in various areas in and around West and North Belfast.

The Sect will soon be welcoming back **LCpl Bob Wells** from his Class 1 course. Also, on courses at Blandford are **LCpl Craig Bate** on his fibre optics course and **LCpl Terry McGrouther** who is on his Class 1. **LCpl Ozzy Osbourne** is on his rigging course at RAF Digby. Finally a well done to **Sgt Arnie Renforth** on the completion of his RQM course at Ballymena.

VISIT OF THE MASTER OF SIGNALS - *by Cpl Tierney*

On Wednesday 20 November 02, the Sqn had the honour of hosting the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen IOJ Sprackling OBE**. After a brief introduction into the role of the Sqn by the OC, **Maj Dave Craft** he began his walk around with a visit to the Ops team where briefs were given by the 2IC **Capt Dickson, FofS WO2 Cook and the YofS WO2 Wood.** After this the Master then had an informal chat with the whole Sqn. Many thanks to all those who made the day a success.

EXERCISE TRI-DAY FINN - *by Cpl McNally*

After a very busy summer, EX TRI-DAY FINN was a chance for Sqn personnel to relax and enjoy some of the activities available to them at the North Coast Adventurous and Recreational Centre.

On Day 1 we left Thiepval Bks at 08.00 hrs, arriving at the centre two hours later. After signing for our stores (surfboards, golf clubs, mountain bikes, etc.) we collected our packed meals and set off for the Whiterock Beach area of Portrush for a spot of surfing. With **LCpl Gary MacKenzie** constantly fishing out **Cpl Andy McNally** it should have been called lifesaving classes. In the evening we enjoyed a night out in Portrush.

Day 2 was to be mountain biking and golf. After breakfast we got on our bikes and headed of towards Port Stewart where we had a meal and did a bit of sightseeing. At 1230 hrs we cycled back to the centre to collect our golf clubs. Golf proved that **Cpl Dave Grimes'** heart-lung co-ordination is a lot better than his hand-eye co-ordination, with shouts of 'I just can't hit the thing' being heard all round the course. That evening we had a Chinese and got a few beers in.

It was raining on Day 3, so we dropped our original plan of going go-karting and went surfing/waveboarding. Everyone had really enjoyed it on Day 1, and we thought as we were going to get wet we might as well do it in style. The day's surf mong turned out to be **LCpl Oz Osbourne**. At 1400 hrs we signed the stores back and headed back to Lisburn where we had a debrief in the Horseshoe Club. All in all an enjoyable three days was had by all.

ORIENTEERING - *by LCpl Williams*

I was fortunate enough to be part of the team representing 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn at the Royal Signals Orienteering competition held on Wednesday, 6 November 02. The team consisted of the **RSM, Cpl Welton, Cpl Patterson, LCpl Prince, LCpl Gumery** and **LCpl Williams**.

The competition comprised two events spread over the course of two days. The first part was the individual best effort, which consisted of 22 check points with varying points awarded for each: 10 points for near-by check points, 20 points for the slightly further away ones and 30 points for the furthest away ones. This was a timed event, with each contestant being limited to one hour from start to finish. Anyone who exceeded this time limit would be severely penalised, as the RSM made very clear to the whole team at the start. We had to have at least 4 minutes between each team member's start time. **LCpl Williams** was third to go and managed to get five check points and get back within 50 minutes. The RSM did particularly well, returning within the time with seven check points. However, **LCpl Gumery** seemed to become geographically challenged and although he managed to locate three check points, he was 11fi minutes late returning. We were about to send out the search parties. This obviously led to him being severely penalised and left him with around – 150 points, finishing 95th out of 95 contestants, which we all had a laugh about.

In the team event the following day, there were 27 checkpoints, five of which the whole team had to get, and the others to be split up between the three team members. The two teams were **LCpl Williams, LCpl Prince and LCpl Gumery,** and the **RSM, Cpl Welton and Cpl Patterson.** We all made our plans, split the check points up and went our separate ways. I got lost about 4 times, finding myself wandering through dense undergrowth and relying on luck to stumble on towards the check points. However, we didn't do too badly and finished with a respectable time. Overall I really enjoyed the experience and would advise anyone who has not been orienteering to give it a go. The others, felt the same.

MERCURY CUP MARCH AND SHOOT - *by Cpl Welton*

On the morning of 17 October 02 the team travelled down to Ballykinler to represent the Sqn in the Mercury Cup March and Shoot Competition. On arrival we found out that we were first on and had to get ready ASAP. We lost minimal points during the kit inspection, but would have lost none if **Cpl Mick Jennings**, had not decided to ignore the admin order and wear his own selection of clothing.

Cpl Donna Manns led the team at a good pace for the march, getting us round the 8-mile course in just over 1 hr 20 mins. But with the time penalty we had suffered earlier (thanks to **Cpl Jennings**), our final time was 1 hr 23 mins. Our shoot was not the worst of the day but neither was it the best, with half the team not being able to see their targets at three hundred due to the sun's glare. At the end of the day the team was placed in fifth position. Thanks to other team members **Lt Steve Bennett, Sgt Richie Brown, Cpl Stu Welton, Cpl Dave Grimes, LCpl Matty Grounds** and **LCpl James Prince**.

MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION – *by Cpl Welton*

On the 21 November 02 the Mercury Military Skills Competition took place at Magiligan Training Area. Unlike the March and Shoot, our team (which had been organised by **Sgt Jase Hawksworth**) was to be last to start. The first stand was a 3km forced march, which **WO2 FofS Cook** enjoyed with legs going ten to the dozen the entire way round. Hats off to him though – he was told only the previous day that he was in the team. The remaining stands were mainly shoots with personal weapons, HK 53's and a clay pigeon range. There was also a terrorist weapons recognition stand, a military general knowledge stand and a first aid stand, all of which the team did reasonably well in. Once again our final position was fifth. Thanks to the rest of the team **Cpl Dave Driver, Cpl Stu Welton, Cpl Lindsey Payton, LCpls Matt Grounds, Ben Williams, Rob Lawless** and **Sig Rachel Yates** who formed the admin team.

RECRUITING WEEK - *by LCpl Liz Fox*

During the week of the 9 – 15 November **Sig (now LCpl) Fox and Sig (soon to be LCpl) Slowey** had the pleasure of joining the RSigs Mobile Presentation Team, for a trip around Northern Ireland. Throughout the week over a thousand kids and potential applicants (or at least it seemed that many) enjoyed both the activities and briefs on offer. There were at least a couple of definite applicants, so a job well done to the recruiting team. We were co-located with the RE recruiting team, who poached 998 of our potential recruits! Compo rations were a bit different from

normal as we had seven day's worth of burger and chips and as much candy floss as we could carry.

The ideal person to work for the recruiting team is a robot, capable of delivering numerous briefs, day after day, week after week. For us it was just an attachment and as such as we enjoyed it, but the end was also very welcome. Although the RSMPT enjoyed their time in NI, I am positive that they will be glad to be reading this from the mainland. Thanks go to the whole team for the hospitality they showed us, it was a great experience.

40th (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col R J Kelly TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) G C N Keane**

The Regt has bid a fond farewell to the Adjutant, **Capt Nick Morris,** who along with **Beverley**, **Henry** and **Charlie**, has left for the joys of Wilton. In his place, a belated welcome is extended to the new Adjutant, **Capt Gareth Kemp**. It was goodbye also to **WO1(FofS) Russ Batley**, off to York and welcome to **WO1 (FofS) Andy Dawson**, on his arrival from 20 Armd Bde.

Congratulations are extended to our RAOWO **WO2 Kevin Kirkham-Brown AGC(SPS)(V)** on the award of the Meritorious Service Medal.

The Regt was visited by the **Master of Signals** during his recent visit to N Ireland and the opportunity was taken for him to present **SSgt John Webber** with his LS&GCM.

The past few months have been a busy period for the Regt. Along with the ongoing centenary celebrations for the 100th Anniversary of the North Irish Horse, Annual Camp, in the shape of EX ARRCADE FALCON, has taken up the majority of our time. No sooner was that over than the Christmas season is upon us. Traditionally, as those who have served with the Ulster Sig Regt know, this is a time of quiet reflection for all in the Regt, rather than the bacchanalian revelry that occurs elsewhere.....

BRITISH ARMED FORCES MOTORING ASSOCATION (BAFMA) TEAM

The Regimental Team has had its usual share of success in this driving competition staged by BAFMA, with the result that many now believe that the associated trophies are on permanent loan to the Regt. Congratulations to all concerned, especially **WO2 Billy Lyle** and **Sgt Keith Colhoun**, in wresting the trophy from the CO and the RAO(V).

Ex ROADMASTER - 31 Oct to 4 Nov 02 – Championship Event

Maj Ian Kyle TD AGC(SPS)(V) **Lt Col Robert Kelly TD**	(Driver) (Navigator)	4th Overall 2nd Expert 1st Safari Team
Sgt Keith Colhoun **WO2 Billy Lyle**	(Driver) (Navigator)	5th Overall 1st Expert 1st TA 1st R SIGNALS 1st N Ireland
Sgt Dave Evans **WO2 Dennis Watts**	(Driver) (Navigator)	81st Overall
Sgt Steve Agass **Cpl Kane**	(Driver) (Navigator)	24th Overall
LCpl Kirkpatrick **Cpl Coulter**	(Driver) (Navigator)	51st Overall

Ex WHITE ROSE - 30 Nov to 2 Dec 02

Maj Ian Kyle TD AGC(SPS)(V) **WO2 Dennis Watts**	(Driver) (Navigator)	4th Overall 1st Unit Team
Sgt Colhoun **WO2 Billy Lyle**	(Driver) (Navigator)	7th Overall 1st Unit Team
SSgt Craig Stables REME **LCpl Kirkpatrick**	(Driver) (Navigator)	21st Overall

CORPS ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2002 - *by LCpl Potts*

Once again the intrepid trio continued to represent the regt in this years Orienteering Championships. The CO, **Lt Col Kelly**, still no change there then. **WO1(RSM) Keane** and **SSgt Taylor**, in addition a new team member, **LCp Potts**.

Day One was the individual day held just outside Tidworth Garrison. The event organisers even booked the weather (it threw it down for much of the day) but it was a well-organised event running smoothly from start to finish. The aim of the day was to get as many checkpoints as possible within the hour. The **RSM** continued to produce a good result and finish 5th overall in the individuals. **SSgt Taylor** improved on his result last year by finishing 15th overall. The CO however had a bad day, much to the delight of **SSgt Taylor**, who was last seen with a big smile on his face saying 'I'm only as good as my last race. Ho,Ho,Ho.'

Day Two was the team event, and banter with the 35 Sig Regt Team was going well as they badly wanted the title back. After an agonising 49 minutes the CO completed the team task. However 35 Sig Regt(V) had done the deed and come in at 47 minutes. We were beaten by the better team! Well so it seemed. Because of a tight time-frame, we had to leave the event to catch our flight home before the prize giving. Deflated, we left knowing our adversaries had beaten us. On our arrival at Heathrow the RSM received a phone call informing him that we had indeed won the event because the 35 Sig Regt(V) team had not completed the course. Once again we returned to the Province with our heads held high.

85 (ULSTER & ANTRIM ARTILLERY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj T Dick**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) T Johnston**

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

For the second year running, since the Sqn moved to Bangor, Co Down, we paraded at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday. Despite a security alert causing an interruption to the proceedings, we were able to go ahead with the service as planned. Once again we were commended by the Royal British Legion for the quarterguard we provided. This was organised by the Regimental Drum Major (and 85 Sqn SQMS), **SSgt (SQMS) Gary Shaw**, who did an excellent job. Next year, the SSM has volunteered his services to produce the parade format.

VRSM PRESENTATION

Also on Remembrance Sunday, the Honorary Colonel, **Col I G Henderson OBE TD**, presented **Sgt Andy Jones** and **Sgt Michael Ferguson** with the VRSM and Clasp for fifteen years qualifying service in the TA. **Sgt April Dalzell** was presented with the VRSM for ten years qualifying service. The OC extends his congratulations to all.

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to **Lts Martin Mayo** and **Nicole Lamb** on achieving their second pips after a very good performance at annual camp, EX ARRCADE FALCON 2002.

RECRUITING

A determined emphasis has been placed on recruiting and recruit training in the Sqn. Under the direction of **Sgt Neil Telford** and his team, recent recruits have been performing exceptionally well. **OCdt Brian Still** joined us in July, achieved Champion Recruit on his course in September and passed his TCB in October. **Sigs Kieran Devlin** and **Brian Smyth** achieved best in field-craft and best shot respectively on their recruits' course. **OCdt Still** will be starting training for his commissioning course in January, while those who have passed their recruits' course will be commencing trade training. A new intake of recruits will also be starting preparations for their recruits' course in January.

EXPEDITION SHAMROCK FINN - EAST AFRICA 2002

by Capt Ian Craig

Maj L C Mitchell R IRISH(V) (Leader)
Capt Ian Craig
SSgt Geoff McClean
Sgt Mick Simcock
Cpl J Ruddy R IRISH(V)
Cpl P Neill R IRISH(V)
Cpl A Law R IRISH (V)
Cpl Dave McQuillan
LCpl Gillian Winters
LCpl Kevin Potts
LCpl D Foster R IRISH(V)
Rgr C Armour R IRISH(V)

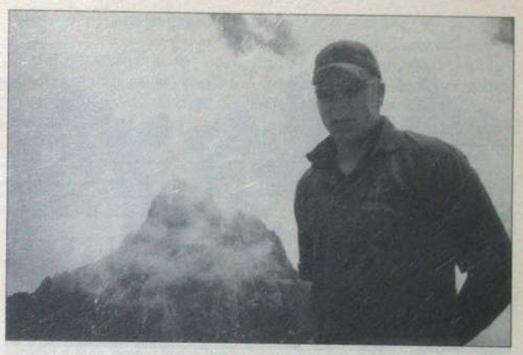
Expedition SHAMROCK FINN was a 107(Ulster) Bde adventurous training expedition to Kenya and Tanzania. The main objective was to reach the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro at 5895m, the highest point on the African continent. Although open to all Bde units, the expedition team was composed of six members from the 40 (Ulster) Sig Regt (V) and five members from The Royal Irish Rangers, N Ireland's TA infantry battalion. The twelfth member was **Maj (now Lt Col) Leslie Mitchell** of 107(Ulster) Bde, a veteran on his fourth ascent.

The expedition team met in Belfast International Airport at 05.30 hrs on Friday 4 July 2002. **Maj Mitchell** arrived forty-five minutes later just before check in for our flight to London closed, quelling rumours that he was not off to Florida for four weeks. Twenty-four hours later we arrived in Nairobi, via London and Abu Dhabi, and proceeded to BATLSK to prepare for the month long expedition.

The first two days were spent in BATLSK preparing kit and covering lessons on mountain first aid. On the Monday we began the first phase of the expedition, a trek to the summit region of Mount Kenya. We arrived at the Mount Kenya National Park gate in the early afternoon after a bone jarring 200km journey in the back of a Bedford TCV, wondering if our skeletons would still be able to support the weight of our bergens. In the end we cheated. **Rgr Armour** volunteered to go ahead with the bergens in the Bedford to the first campsite while the rest of us walked from the park gate. The campsite was located at the Met station on the Naro Moru route, a few kilometres from our initial drop off point along a dirt road which passed through some dense woodland. As we walked through the humid heat of the afternoon we wondered about the difficulties facing the service personnel who fought the Mau Mau in the fifties over this terrain. The Met station was at an altitude of approximately 10,000 ft and already some of the team were starting to feel the first signs of AMS (altitude sickness) as we settled down for the night with mild headaches.

During the second day on the mountain we planned to reach McKinder's Camp, named after the first European to climb to the highest peak on Mount Kenya. We set off at about 0800 hours up the dirt road again but it was not too long before this became a path and then disappeared altogether. From that point onwards, snow poles marked the route and the forest gradually gave way to heather, grass and bog. Indeed this section of the route (known as the Vertical Bog) can sap the strength in your legs very quickly, but as luck would have it, the ground was quite dry and we made good progress. In the afternoon we headed up along a ridge to the south of the Naro Moru River valley where the vegetation again changed into giant heather and other strange species which are found nowhere else in the world. We also got our first sight of the imposing summit peaks, Bation and Nelion. These are technical climbs that we did not have the expertise to attempt. Instead we planned to go to the highest point accessible to trekkers, Point Lenana. We reached McKinder's Camp by 1700 hrs and quickly pitched the tents and got our evening meal prepared. Although we were not yet above the snow line it was very cold and we all bedded down for the night at 1900 hours, just at last light.

Our planned activity for the third day was to reach point Lenana at just under 16,000 ft. From our campsite we could not see it, but



LCpl Potts with Bation Peak in the background

we could see our initial route past the Lewis Glacier up a steep scree slope, and with most feeling nauseous and suffering headaches, we knew it was not going to be a stroll. By 13.00 hrs we were sitting at the top of this peak and **SSgt Geoff McClean** and **LCpl Potts** stripped to a pair of shorts for a photograph! Descending the scree slope was not quite as difficult as the ascent but nevertheless it was a tired bunch of people who returned to McKinder's camp. The next two days are spent descending the mountain to the Mount Kenya Youth Hostel before returning to BATLSK, phase one successfully completed.

Phase 2 consisted of a vehicle safari in the Masai Mara National Park. Two British Forces Safari Club Landrovers were hired for this purpose. We departed from BATLSK early on the Sunday morning, stopping for a while to admire the view over the Rift Valley and in the town of Narok, where some children outplayed us in a game of football. We eventually reached the "River Side" Campsite by the Talek Gate, which was to be our base for the next four nights. On the Monday morning, after a breakfast of boiled eggs and bread, we entered the game reserve in search of wildlife and it was not long before we spotted the first zebra and Thompson's gazelle. Very soon afterwards we were rewarded with the sight of a lion and lioness relaxing after a meal. Shortly afterwards we sighted a female cheetah with her three cubs. During the rest of the day we ticked off a host of animals on our sheets.

On the second day in the Masai Mara we were lucky enough to see a rhino. Apparently none are supposed to exist in the park. The OC, in an effort to become wildlife photographer of the year, got a little too close to this beast and eventually the inevitable happened. The rhino made a charge for his Landrover and the rest of us in the second could not understand why they did not seem to make any effort to escape. Thankfully they drove off in the nick of time. It later transpired that the driver, **Cpl Neill** had, at that moment, been engrossed with taking a photograph; hence the tardiness in fleeing from the charging bulk of rhinoceros. Other notable sights on our second day's safari included thousands of wildebeest and zebra on the beginnings of their migration. We did not manage to see any crossing of the Mara River which is one the great spectacles of the natural world, but the number of animals was immense and a most impressive sight. The only animal on our sheet that we did not manage to cross off was a leopard, but as it's mainly nocturnal we were not surprised.

On our last day in the Mara we decided to visit a Masai village to get a feel for how these people live their daily lives. After a bit of price negotiation with some of the senior figures of a particular village we were allowed to come in and have a look around. The village was arranged in a circle and had an outer fence of acacia thorns. In the centre was another fence with an area for livestock, with huts arranged in the ring between the two. These were made from sticks and cow dung and inside had separate cooking, eating and sleeping areas, all of which were extremely dark. As usual we were pestered to buy all the by now familiar trinkets, with one girl particularly keen to sell me an ostrich egg.

After a particularly interesting and enjoyable time in the Masai Mara the main objective of our expedition began on Saturday 20 July with a bus and Matatu journey from Nairobi to the town of

In a Masai Village –Sgt Simcock bridging the cultural gap

Moshi in northern Tanzania. After an overnight stay in the town we were woken at 0500 hrs by a muezzin calling Muslims to prayer. When this eventually finished, a rooster started and when that shut up the church bells started to ring. So it was an early start to the first day of our trek to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro. It costs about US$500 per head to climb the mountain and despite arriving at the Park Gate early in the morning it was lunchtime before we finally completed all the formalities. Then, with our porters (and bucket loads of other trekkers) we began the first leg of the journey. The extremely muddy trail, at this point, cut through tropical rainforest and of course it was raining. This, combined with the commercialisation, was not the vision of Kilimanjaro that many of us held. The slow going kept the hordes of trekkers together and we all reached the first campsite at more or less the same time, and in the ensuing scramble for the best sites we lost out as most of our porters had not arrived.

After a broken night's sleep due to the noise from what resembled a refugee camp, we were among the first to rise at 06.30 hrs. The sun had not yet appeared over the peak, but it was clear and though there was a frost on the ground it was not too cold. At this point we were above most of the clouds and had a good view of Mount Meru, which looked very big and ominous because we knew we had to go to a higher altitude. We set off at around 08.30 hrs leaving our porters to catch up. As we left the campsite behind, the vegetation changed to alpine flowers and giant heather. The track, in contrast to the previous day, became dry and dusty and every now and again was punctuated with volcanic outcrops, which had to be climbed around. Also, in contrast to the previous day, the sun was shining brightly and, in the distance, we had a magnificent view of the Kibo summit. At approximately 12.30 hrs we reached the second campsite at an altitude of 3,860m. This was a bit disconcerting because it looked like we had a lot to do the following day. However the trick is to go slowly to reduce the effects of AMS. As we were among the first group to arrive, we grabbed the best sites and settled down to guard our piece of territory until the porters arrived. At sunset we witnessed a beautiful red hue on the side of the summit crater and the clouds rolling up the mountainside below us - a fantastic sight.

The next day (day three on the mountain) we arose at 06.30 hrs, made breakfast and were ready to move by 08.00 hrs. In spite of being the second group to depart, we moved at a very slow pace and were soon overtaken by the porters and some of the other groups. It was another lovely sunny day and even with the slow pace it was not long before we had worked up a sweat. The vegetation was now grass, daisies, rock flowers and lichen, and as we ascended further, there were solidified lava buttresses to negotiate. This slowed everyone down a little and there was soon a huge winding caravan of people. As we went further up, the vegetation became sparser and soon we were on a moonscape - just lava rocks and solidified flows. In the afternoon, the sun disappeared behind clouds and it became a lot colder. We could see some glaciers perched precariously on the side of Kibo and we knew we would have to climb up past these later that night. The thought reduced everyone to silence and the pace slowed. Signs of altitude sickness were starting to appear. The sore heads were returning. Eventually we crossed the crest of a ridge, and there ahead of us was the campsite. Tents and kit were all there so we got quickly to cooking and sorting out our kit for in preparation for the summit attempt.

The final push to the top began at midnight. After some soup we all set off up a steep scree slope, past ice and snow, towards bluffs at the top of this route. Once again we began at a very slow pace but it was not long before we started to feel breathless. The cold started to get through our layers of clothes and the water, which we would need for the descent, froze. Soon the lights at the third campsite were specks in the distance and the lights of Moshi and some other towns could be seen in the distant blackness of the land below. As the hours passed by the view beneath us became insignificant as our focus switched to what lay above. Each time we surmounted a ridge another came into view and it seemed like the climb would never end. As the night gave way to the day, everyone's face had a very serious expression as our mental and physical endurance was put to the test. Finally, seven and a half hours after leaving the campsite, we broke out onto the summit plateau. The relief on everyone's face was plain to see, but we had not yet reached our objective, Uhuru Peak. This last ascent had everyone struggling. It was the most arduous part of the whole climb, finding the reserve to complete that last bit and get the obligatory photograph at the top – which we did. Everyone made it up to and back down from Africa's highest point. It was a great achievement for the whole team and the highlight of an excellent expedition.

In celebration, we rounded of the expedition with a couple of nights in a hotel at Diani Beach on the Indian Ocean south of Mombassa. We spent an afternoon in the city, visiting Fort Jesus and learning about the history of the region before returning to Nairobi by train and flying back to the UK. The expedition lasted 31 days. Our aims were achieved and we enjoyed it. In the process the team raised some sponsorship money for Sargent Cancer Care for Children. This charity aims to help children who are terminally ill to make their last days as comfortable as possible. At a reunion dinner two months later, we presented them with a cheque for £1600: A truly commendable achievement.

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC	**Maj DC Gaul**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) K J Simmons**

OPS/PLANS

Ops Offr	**Capt MA Southern**
Bde FofS	**WO2 (FofS) SD Metcalfe**

As the year draws to a close there are a few 'hellos' and 'goodbyes'. **WO2 (YofS) Bill Barnes** is leaving on promotion to work with the T&D Team in Blandford. Thank you for the 4 years of hard work you have dedicated to the unit. We wish you all the best! Welcome to **WO2 (YofS)** 'Muz' **Murray** taking over as Bde Sig Sqn Yeoman, and his wife **Sharon**. We wish you both a happy and successful tour in NI. Finally, welcome to **SSgt John Kielty** and his wife **Liz**. The team wish you both the best for a successful and enjoyable tour with the Sqn.

MT SECTION

MTWO	**WO2 Tony Stronach**
MT Sgt	**Sgt Shelly Williams**

HIGHLAND DRIVE 2 – 28 OCTOBER - 8 NOVEMBER 02
by LCpl Bishop

The MTWO led members of the MT and various other members of the Sqn depts on EX HIGHLAND DRIVE 2. This was the second of two exercises that are held at least twice yearly to promote driver training and skills with green fleet vehicles. The party left Londonderry and headed for Gandale farm in Catterick.

The exercise involved many areas, the first being white knuckles cross-country driving with **LCpl** 'Mo' **Morrison** (RLC). **LCpl Morrison**, who was teaching, seemed to spend most of the time with his eyes shut. I don't know if this was something to do with the calibre of students or if he was just really scared! He wouldn't say which. Then came the motorcycle training with **Cpl** 'Nick' **Malocco** (RLC) who, after constantly telling us that he is the No 1 bike instructor, had a little something to prove. He does have a vast amount of experience and with this thought he was determined to demonstrate his skills to the class. Unfortunately, during a daring manoeuvre, the bike got the better of him and he fell off, hurting his ankle. The students didn't let him forget it in a hurry.

We also had a convoy drive. **LCpl Lee Custance** managed to take his packet on a sight seeing tour of Ripon, a jaunt that lasted some three and a half hours. Eventually an old lady by the name of **Doris Luke** came to their rescue and directed them back to Catterick. I thought that we were supposed to help little old ladies, not the other way around.

Pte Jay Dewar and **Sig Steve Ward** went on a pathfinding mission in a Drops to find a fish and chip shop, but in their haste for the chips, they managed to get themselves bogged in. After about six hours, the duty recovery of **Kevin Webster** and **Tyrone Banks** arrived to render assistance. I don't think that fish and chips had the same appeal after that! Overall, it was a very good exercise which most people enjoyed, if only for the break of being away from Londonderry.

For those that were left behind, **Cpl Andy Doyle** was left with the difficult task of running an MT with depleted manpower. He was still required to complete the vast number of day to day details as well as drive a couple of them himself, not to mention attending meetings and conferences. Everyone who stayed behind worked extremely hard and deserve a well-earned pat on the back. They were doing the routine stuff so that the rest of us could get away to have some fun.

FOOTBALL TEAM

Run by **W02 Stronach** assisted by myself, **LCpl Bishop**, the Sqn have enjoyed a great deal of success this season, winning our opening 3 matches by beating Depot R Irish 7-2, beating 3 IBSS 2-1 and finally beating 5 RMP 5-0. Well done to all members of the team for some great results.

EXERCISE APHRODITES FINN
by Cpl Eric Low

This was a diving expedition to South Africa, with an aim of getting six novice divers from the Bde qualified to sports diver level. At 0800 hrs on 11 September 02 the six novice divers and the OIC of the exped set off for Belfast city airport in high spirits, eager to arrive at their destination. On arrival at London Heathrow, the group was checked in and enjoyed a few refreshments whilst we awaited the arrival of the remainder of the group. We arrived in Johannesburg early on the Thursday, then on to Durban, arriving at around 10.30 hrs. By the time we reached our accommodation at Ellingham estates we were all very tired, and looked forward to a relaxed evening.

At 07.00 hrs the next morning, the group assembled for pool training to refresh our skills. Once this was complete, we headed for the open water and our first encounter with the unknown. The sea was very choppy on the ride out, and a little sea-sickness was somewhat inevitable. The first two dives covered basic skills, then progressed to more complicated ones to make sure that the novice divers were ready to move on to the next level. On the ride back to shore there were a number of dolphins about and our skipper brought us in for a closer look. However, this only made the sea-sickness worse for **LCpl Warner** and **Cpl Eric Low**, who were both particularly weak and rather un-military.

Day two of diving started at 05.45 hrs. Not even the sea life was up at that time! The main feature of the day was to see a spot known as Raggie's Cave, a spot where the ragged toothed shark is known to rest and mate. With that in prospect, all of the team was back on top form. Even **LCpl Nelson** was prepared to take on the monsters from the deep. On the way we saw a number of species of tropical fish and a few large sea turtles. Once we found the cave, we saw two large sharks resting inside and the whole group seemed like they were in a trance just staring at these huge animals.

Later in the trip, we set out at a more humane time (08.45 hrs) to dive on a new part of the reef. Known as the inner edge, we were told that we would descend deeper and we would see more varied wildlife. We were not disappointed. The current on the dive was very strong, making it impossible for the group to stay together, so each smaller group under the guidance of an instructor put up a marker and went on their own separate adventures. Once we returned to the surface we all had our own little stories about large eels and huge rays, but one of the groups looked a little pale. Under the guidance of **CSgt Mark Dykes**, **Cpl Eric Low** and **LCpl Chris Anderton** headed off over a ridge and were looking at the rock features, but failed to notice that a very large shark was headed for them. When it was within a few feet it turned and swam away showing the group it's very distinct markings. It was a Tiger shark!

We also completed dive on a wreck. *The Produce*, a cargo vessel had struck the reef in 1974 whilst heading south from Durban. We had planned to descend onto the bow section and then drift across the wreck to the stern. However the anchor line missed the target and we had to fight the current to make it even to the stern. Once on the wreck we saw a number of large brindle bass and lionfish. After refuelling on steak and chips, the group decided to try a night dive. As we sat on the boat waiting for dark we could see dolphins swimming all around and this made the wait bearable. After darkness fell we were off, armed with torches and ready to spot all new types of fish, Unfortunately, because of the size of the group, we totally illuminated the sea and not much was seen, but it was a very surreal experience.

The final dive of the trip was to be our deepest one and, although there were a lot of new and interesting things to see, certain individuals were more concerned with the maximum depth that they could record. The award went to **Capt Southern**, who managed to record a depth of 40 metres by plunging her dive computer deep into the sand. Later that evening, once we had all packed, we headed off to Durban for a night out at Jo Kools, the cities best known club. The trip was a total success and a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Rip Wilson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Steve Mayell**

Comms Tp continues to be a hive of activity with EPORT training, normal taskings and the firemen's strike. Despite this, the Tp has still been able to provide most of the gladiators for the recent Mercury Cup Competition in which we came third overall. We say goodbye to **LCpl Morgan**, who has moved on to 11 EOD Regiment, **Cpl Irwin**, who has gone to 30 Sig Regt and **Cpl Holloway**, who has moved on to 1 (UK) ADSR. We wish them all the best in their future appointments.

Comms Tp welcomes **LCpls Margrie**, **Pauley**, **Morgan, Adolphe** and **Sig Oldridge** who have come to us straight from the shop; **Cpl Johnston** and **LCpl Lindley** from 1 Mech, and **LCpl Forrester** from 19 Mech. May they all enjoy their stay!

RQMS DEPARTMENT

QM	**Capt Gordon RE**
RQMS	**WO2 Dave Inman**

The Dept says a sad farewell to **Sgt Brian Robson** and his family, who have gone off to 3 UK Div in Bulford. On a happy note, hello to **Sgt Ian Taylor**, who has just arrived from 16 Sig Regt, hopefully bringing lots of stores experience and knowledge with him.

The Dept has had a busy few months. Since the end of summer, we have been involved in providing manpower on a number of ex's, such as EX HIGHLAND DRIVE and EX ZEUS FINN. We have also been heavily involved in the organisation and supply of stores from around the Province for THE MERCURY CUP MILITARY

SKILLS COMPETITION, which was held at Magilligan TC. However we have still had time to relax and get away for some useful golfing afternoons, enabling the RQMS to improve his hacking skills.

LCpl Custance was also sent away to improve his driving skills on EX HIGHLAND DRIVE, where he refreshed his memory on how to drive a car normally and nearly killed himself on a motorbike. He also looked after all the stores for the RQMS and managed not to loose anything (well that is what the RQMS believes). **LCpl Smith** RLC also deployed on EX ZUES FINN, acting as the EX SQMS. Whilst there, it was noted that he managed to avoid all the physical stuff to watch DVD's or play on the play station. Meanwhile **Cpl Munslow** volunteered his services as a Kayak Instructor and organised an excellent weekend's kayaking in Portrush, where he managed to scare six willing volunteers half to death. However, he has assured the Sqn OC that they will all be back for more. Congratulations go to **LCpl Devlin RLC** who came top on his Class 1 and successfully passing an NBC Assistant Instructor Course.

Finally, the Dept would like to say congratulations to **Cpl O'Reilly** RLC and his wife **Nannette** on the birth of their new baby girl, **Caitlin**.

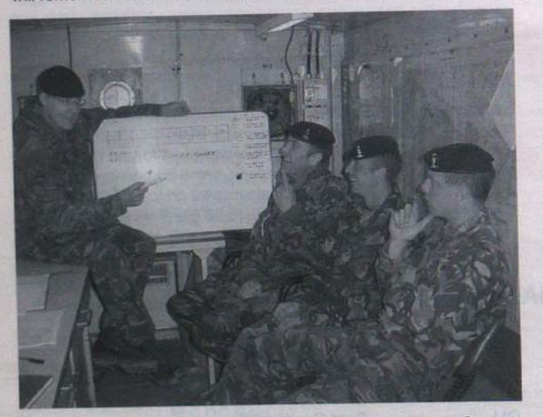
NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1st (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col A P Bristow**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Baird**

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON
OC **Maj A Churchill**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) S Cook**

The Sqn calendar has been full of demanding and hectic activity over the last couple of months, the main focus being our deployment to DPTA in Poland. This deployment consisted of two exercises run concurrently. EX ULAN GROUSE was an excellent and original military skills training package which involved 3 days of innovative ITD(A) training together with some other enlivening stands, followed by a 2 day patrolling package which was designed to challenge the skills learnt over the previous 3 days. EX ULAN KESTREL, a 7 Bde logistics exercise with 1 ADSR acting as EXCON, was a more familiar comms effort for the Regt. The Sqn were able to participate in both of the exercises, but all will remember Poland for EX ULAN GROUSE.

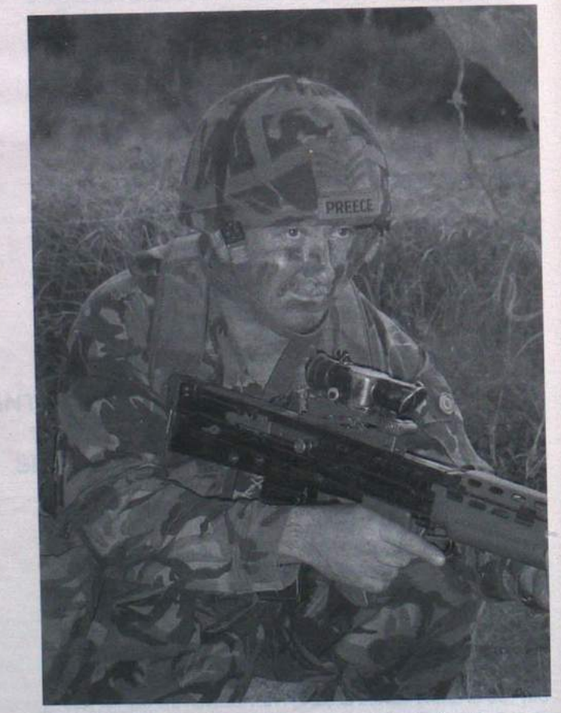


The OSC crew counting the days till they too would be on Grouse.

Each day began early, with arrival at the first stand of the morning immediately after breakfast. The stands included a speed march followed by an extraordinary assault course, normally used by Polish and Russian Special Forces. The section attacks gave everyone a chance to remember what being in the Army is all about, and the NBC stand let us try out NAIAD equipment, which many of the younger soldiers hadn't seen before. In the evening we even got taught how to make omelettes and pancakes by the chefs and were then let loose in a field kitchen to attempt it ourselves.

After 3 days of living under bashas, the patrol competition started, with all the sections full of enthusiasm and determination. Unfortunately for some sections, navigating to the first stand ended up in some geographical embarrassments, causing them to tab much further than they needed too. But at least they could relax in the comfort of knowing that at the end of the day they could return to their nice warm maggots. Of course the DS had other plans, and when they finally finished for the first day they were told they didn't have their bergens and that they would have to put their survival training into practice. For about 20 soldiers this meant squeezing as many people as they could into a small hole in the ground to keep warm!

The second day of the patrol competition saw a slight



SSgt Pete Preece demonstrating Anti Ambush Drills.

improvement in map reading skills, and more taxing stands to complete. These included a number of first-rate command tasks, anti-ambush drills, and battlefield first aid, all of which had to be conducted whilst avoiding the enemy forces, aptly named PANTS (Poles Against Nato Troops)!

Particular attention must be paid to a few individuals: **Cpl Gaz Lane** for helping run the assault course, and encouraging many soldiers (and new 2Lt's) to fall into the swamp on the balance course (well done, **LCpl Mark Thomson, Sig Nicola Kirkby, Sig Matthew Catto, Sig Helen Drysdale, Cpl Robert Pilsbury, Sig Stuart Marshall** and many others!). **SSgt Preece** who has just joined the Sqn from 2 Sig Regt Trg Wng had to chance to teach anti-ambush drills in between various photo shoots. Extra praise to **SSgt Tinnion** for running the survival stands. He is still trying to create fire from permanganate crystals and sugar, even after some excellent skits of his stand ('Is it safe yet? ').

2Lt Matthew Mallett had the chance to see some first class acting skills whilst entertaining us all in his Law of Armed Conflict lesson. **WO2 (SSM) Cook** provided a good noise and light demonstration before a short night navigation exercise. The fact that it was only about 2Km long didn't stop some teams from taking all night to complete the course!

On the final night of the package, everyone gathered round the improvised stage of a Bedford, and took part in a few skits whilst enjoying a couple of beers. Everyone involved agreed that it was a big success and that we should do more military training in the future (were these really the words of signallers away from the comforts of their Landrovers and kettles?)

This month has also seen the recent formation of Kestrel Tp, which will hold the new MAPPS vehicles (if they ever arrive from the UK!). There will be a lot of maintenance and training to do for Kestrel Tp over the next few months, and we expect to be kept busy once everything is up and running.

Apart from those already mentioned, we should also welcome our new OC**, Maj Andy Churchill**, who impressed the Sqn seniors by making his first OC's prayers last for four and a half hours. Farewell to **SSg**t (FofS) **Matless**, who is moving back to RSS. At least his leaving gave us a chance to try out the newly decorated Sqn bar!

EX GLOCKNER DIAMOND

24 July 02. A full month on exercise is not ideal preparation for a trip to climb the Grosse Glockner, at 3798m Austria's highest mountain. However at 0500hrs, eleven hours after ENDEX, we hit the road for the long journey south. After a brief stop in Garmisch for some essential Mammut 'posing' gear we arrived in Frielieten at 1600hrs. We were behind time and had a four-hour trek with 1100m of accent to the Swartzenberghutte (2269m) ahead of us. The incentive was that we needed to do it in three hours or miss dinner. Despite **LCpl Steve Lloyd** getting a nasty shock from a cattle fence, we arrived in three hours.

25 July 02. Up at 0600hrs for a breakfast of hard bread and black tea and then an hour's trek to the Hochgrube Glacier to learn some essential skills. The weather was foul - snow falling and a bitterly cold wind was not part of the plan. With smiles few and far between, use of crampons and ice axe needed to be taught and learned quickly. **LCpl Phil Whitney** had left his common sense in the car, managing to break a crampon before getting to the ice and **LCpl Wignall** revealed that he had not brought any warm gloves. **SSgt Davies** was not amused. 'Go and sit on that rock **Wiggy** with your hands in pockets and think about what you have done'. By midday the basics had been learned and with the weather getting worse we retreated to the safety of the hut. As we descended an enormous roar of falling rock was heard not to far behind us. Phew!

26 July 02. With the weather was still bad, our planned tour to the Oberwalderhutte was not an option. Advice was taken from **Martha**, the hut guardian and the decision was made to descend and try a different route from the Pasterze Glacier. We returned to the van and after buying **Wiggy** some gloves and seeing **Sig Jim Morrison** drop his lunch on his lap, we drove to the Glockner Haus (2132m). The drive was a spectacular one over the Hoch Alpine Strasse.

27 July 02. With more hard bread and tea to fuel our day and the weather still wet and windy, we set out for the Mittlers Pasterzen Glacier for some more training. Crevasse rescue techniques cracked, we set of for the Oberwalderhutte (2973m) to practise all that had been taught so far. The weather eventually cleared, offering us our first views of the Grosse Glockner and a feeling that we might actually make the summit.

28 July 02. The Oberwalderhutte is a fantastic hut set high above the Mittlers Pasterzen Glacier. After a comfortable night in our own room, we set of for the Grosse Glockner, which was now basking in early morning sunshine. The team had consolidated the necessary skills, but **LCpl Steve Lloyd** slipped on an exposed path and fell heavily, injuring his chest. A direct ascent was now not possible. Fatigue was setting in and **Steve's** injury called for yet another change of plan. It was therefore decided to go round the mountain, giving us an easier ascent from the Salmhutte (2638m).

A very long trek ensued and by the time we reached the hut **Steve** was clearly suffering from his earlier tumble. An early start was required in the morning, so to every body's delight, breakfast was booked for 0430hrs.

29 Jul 02. Geared up and psyched up we set off in the dark. The route took us over a small glacier and up the Hohenwartschart, a rock gully that tested our climbing skills and boulder dodging ability. **Sig Chris Morrison** caught vertigo like a cold and inched his way to the top. Crampons on again and with the summit in view and the sun shinning, we made our way to the Erzerhog Johann Hut (3454m). Fatigue had well and truly taken its toll and an injured **LCpl Steve Lloyd** made the brave decision to call it a day. That also meant the end of the line for **LCpl Wiggy Wignall** and **LCpl Jim Cowan**. With rucksacks lightened **SSgt Gaz Davies, LCpl Phil Whitney** and **Sig Jim Morrison** set of for the summit at about midday.

First view of the Grosse Glockner. L to R: LCpl Steve Lloyd, LCpl Jim Cowan, LCpl Phil Whitney, Sig Chris Morrison, SSgt Gaz Davies

The summit ridge was reached after an hour on steep snow. The ridge is a straightforward climb and scramble, but very exposed. It was also very busy. Local guides with clients applied their

continental driving habits to mountaineering, spoiling the exciting last sections to the top. By the time we reached the summit of Austria's highest peak, we could see nothing but the inside of a wet and cold cloud. With thunder echoing all around and hail starting to fall, it was time to make a hasty retreat. We took the guides on at their own game, and at about 1600hrs, we arrived back at the hut in zero visibility. Congratulations and a beer waited - and so did an early night.

The Grosse Glockner is a fine mountain with several good and relatively easy routes to the summit. However it should not be underestimated. Training in all alpine skills is essential.

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A G Lucas**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) C Lloyd**

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt S J Gladwin**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Geordie Cullen**

Support Troop has finally got some news that we would like to share with the Corps.

Firstly we would like to say goodbye to **Cpl Beckett**, who goes to JSSU Digby. With no PT for 2 Years, it's a dream come true. We would also like to wish **Sgt Austin Rodway** a delightful 4 months penguin-watching down in the Falklands and we welcome back **Sgt Struthers** from his tour in BATUS.

We would like to welcome **Cpl Paul Oldfield** and **LCpl John Walsh** to the Troop, and to **LCpls Chapman & Bashir**, who are due to be joining us in the near future. From the Gene Section we say goodbye to **Cpl Colin Teale**, who is posted to 30 Sig Regt on promotion. Coming into the gene bay are **LCpl Chris Crowder, LCpl Toby O'Connor** and **Sig Craig Barton**.

Congratulations go out to **Sgt Geordie Cullen, Cpl Paul Oldfield** and **Sig Phoenix** on their recent new additions to the Corps.

As a Troop, we have been preparing for Op Fresco and turning kit around ready for the RSIT Inspections. But first we have to get up to speed and ready for the day when the Panzerthon will commence. We have one final welcome to make and that's to our new Technical leader **WO2 (FofS) Bob Pace** welcome to the Squadron FofS.

COMD TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt L J Brereton Martin**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt P J Robinson**

Command Troop are getting slightly worried that people seem pretty desperate to get out of here. **Cpl Chris Palin** has been selected team to spend 6 months with the British Antarctic Survey. **Sigs Jim Thorley** and **Greg Baker** have gone on an expedition to Chile, while **Sig Reg Holdsworth** has gone on a diving expedition to Spain.

Ex ULAN GROUSE (our Battlecamp/ITD package) was a huge success and turned the troop into an elite fighting unit. **Sig Hans Seager** was so psyched, he had to be physically restrained from destroying the enemy figure 12 target on the section battle drills stand. The exercise had the added bonus of teaching **Lt Brereton Martin** basic map reading so that she now knows what a contour line is.

We welcome **Cpl Wood, LCpl Hardy, Sig Ian Gadsdon, Sig Briffett** and **Sig Scarfi** to the troop. Congratulations go to **Cpl Vickers** on being selected for promotion and to **LCpl Law** and his wife **Lisa** on the birth of their baby girl. On the down side, we have lost **Sigs Stanyer** and **Kat Price.** They will be very sorely missed.

REBRO TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt C Kamara**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Mackensie**

Rebro Tp have seen the departures of **LCpl** 'Scottie ' **Moran** to 14 Signal Regt, **Sig Brian Chambers** to 101 Log Bde. We wish them all the best. Good luck to **Sigs Ballard, Edwards** and **Robertson** in their assault on P Coy. Welcome back to **2Lt Kamara** and **Sig Price**, and also to **Sig Colling** from the Falklands. New additions are **Sigs Colin Gavin** and **Dan Dixon**. We hope they enjoy their time with the Tp.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Clare Cassidy**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Sammy Lee**

We say farewell to **Cpl Shaun Hutson, Cpl Ogg, LCpl Nathan Brown and Sig CK Kellet** to new postings. We wish good luck to **LCpl Waters** who is off to BATUS and **Sig Wright** who is off to the Falkland Islands. We welcome in **LCpl Kimberley, Sig McLoughlin** and **Sig Just** and. Glad to have you here.

The summer has been spent exercising in Sennelager and Poland but now it is definitely time to turn those vehicles around! Surely that quiet period we were promised is just around the corner!

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj B Alderson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) A Buckle**

COMD TP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Ali Biggs**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt John Swanston**

With the summer firmly out of the way and our minds settled on the winter party season, there was still a lot of work to be found before the summer hats could well and truly come off. The main focus for the Tp came in the form of EX PREMIER BLITZ, or as it has become known, the 'Panzathon.' The general idea of the exercise was to consolidate all of the vehicles to find out exactly what was missing, taskworthy, or just completely broken. From this, the vehicles that were no longer used could be taken off our hands and would no longer be our problem to fix. This of course led to its own series of dramas, and after a lot of work on everyone's part, we were down to a very good fleet which we can now use in a more productive way.

With all that hard work out of the way, it was safe for the new Tp Comd to turn up from his stint at RSS Blandford. His first job was to show the RSIT team around the vehicles whilst starting on the preparation of the next exercise, which would involve an arduous journey a mile up the road to one of the other barracks in Herford. With all the efforts the Tp had put in up to the 'Panzathon' and guided under the able watch of **SSgt Swanston** and **Cpl Hunter**, the RSIT reports turned out to be a very good read, with lots of praise to follow from the CO. With everyone now feeling slightly better, all that stands between Comd Tp and Christmas is EX RHINO STAFF. Let's hope it goes as well as the last three months have gone!

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Lesley McCaffertey**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Bill Duggan**

VISIT BY THE RSIT TEAM

Once again it is the time of the year when the lads from Corsham descend upon our vehicles to make us aware of all the little jobs we need to do to make us task-worthy. Two weeks prior to their arrival the Tp was a hive of activity with pages of det folders flying, drills working their magic and det comds flapping. A lot of work was needed on some of our vehicles, kindly highlighted by our own Sqn Techs after STI's. The Relay Sect was by far the busiest, and with a lot of extra work being put in by the crews of the SAS's and Relays, a special mention to **Cpl Billy Morrison** and **Sig** 'Wiggy' **Preece** for the miracles they performed on the wheeled relay. The techs were busy too, especially **Cpl** 'Smudge' **Smith** and **LCpl Sam Harper**. **Sam** must have used several pens writing all the jobs into the book, but as ever she remained calm and helpful!

On the morning of the 25 November the RSIT team arrived and were greeted by the happy, smiley faces of Tp. Not messing around, they went straight for the jugular by inspecting the Relays. They then looked at the wheeled fleet and the ASV's. The crews were still running round blowing on the wet paint and clearing other last minute jobs.

To our relief and after a lot of hard work, the inspection went well.

The RSIT team, supplied with brews seemed happy enough. Off they went to the next tp. Top tip for **Sig Burns**: do not empty 20 litres of diesel on top of your SAS/MC 5 minutes before RSIT are about to inspect!

INTER-TROOP BOWLING COMPETITION

With RSIT out the way, the Sqn celebrated with an Inter-Tp Ten Pin Bowling competition. Each Tp; Comms, Comd, and Sup/SHQ provided 4 teams of five players. The prize was to go to the tp with the highest combined score. On arrival at the bowling alley, it was nice to see a guest appearance by Santa himself – or was it **Sig Burns**? Comd Tp had 'created' some imaginative T-shirts, and when we saw them, we knew we were in trouble. They knew all the bowling terms, such as 'split pin', 'king pin', 'spare' and 'strike'. A special mention must go to the two beautiful ladies who turned up in the shape of **Sig** 'Stu-etta' **Payne** and **Sig** 'Beatrice' **Bateman**. Dressed as schoolgirls, they caused quite a stir. **Sig Payne** was a little too convincing. He had to beat off unwanted advances from most of the competitors,

The day was organised by **SSgt Bill Duggan**. He gave everyone the low-down on what was about to happen and as soon as the teams were decided, battle was joined. Each team played 2 games – no warm up, which was probably why **Sig Don Cugudda** scored an impressive 36. Having said that, the best score of the day was 167, scored, strangely, by the organiser. So how did it end? Congratulations to Comd Tp, who came out as winners, with Comms Tp a close second and Sup/SHQ Tp third.

EXERCISE PREMIER LESSONS – BATTLEFIELD TOUR TO ARNHEM

16 October 2002 saw the Officers and Warrant Officers of the 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt departing Herford for a two-day battlefield tour to study Operation MARKET GARDEN. There were two distinct and different aims. The first was to study the full operation, focussing on both the Market (Ground forces) and the Garden (Airborne and glider borne landings) aspects of the Operation; and the second was to provide an opportunity for the Regt hierarchy to bond in a more relaxed out-of-work environment.

Prior to the departure for Holland, the Regt Ops Offr, **Maj Chris Crowther**, presented an extensive background brief and insight into the events leading up to and during the Operation. Armed with significantly more facts and figures than we thought possible, it was time for an excellent curry supper and the chance to warm our livers up with a few sociable beverages, and some lively discussion.

The memorial stone laid at the home side of the LoD

The day arrived to get on the bus, which, strangely enough for any Army unit, was done only once, even with four Sergeant Majors to mess the men around. We settled in for the obvious precursor to the tour, a screening of the ubiquitous classic *A Bridge Too Far*, which allowed us to get properly into the mood, and provided a further foundation to relate the subsequent discussions of the next two days to.

Day One concentrated on the deployment to Arnhem by 30 Corps, tracing the route along what quickly became known as 'Hells Highway' starting at the Line of Departure, Joe's Bridge.

Even now it is clear to see the problems that the advancing columns of armour along such a prescriptive route, with both narrow and traversing successive choke points over rivers, had to overcome. The key lessons brought out from this, namely: force protection, successful bridging, relevant intelligence and, most importantly, maintaining lines of communication are all still relevant to this day. The day was capped off by an excellent dinner at the hotel, followed by the massed ranks deploying to the hotel bar to discuss further the day's events. It is unfortunate however that this became less and less possible as the night went on.... Strong stuff that Dutch lager!

The morning of Day Two was primarily focussed on the recovery of the night before, interspersed by frequent stops along the way for both fresh air and to take in the various landing and drop zones surrounding the town. Discussion on Airborne Doctrine, individual and group actions and their effects of the operation as a whole were key. It remains a mystery as too why people still want to put themselves through the prospect of falling slowly from the sky under a significant weight of enemy fire. Still, that's the Paras for you.

Landing Zone Yankee – Hells Highway on the right of picture

From the landing zones, it was on to the Airborne Forces Museum, situated in the Hartenstein Hotel on the outskirts of the town. Amazingly relatively untouched throughout the action, it allowed us to see the HQ of **Gen Urquart** pretty much as he would have used all those years ago. This also allowed us to delve further into the difficulties and restrictions placed on both sides of the battle, with both cumbersome equipment, and intense opposition. The cafeteria made a small fortune on coffee sales.

From the Museum it was on to the final stands of the day, visiting Lonsdale Church, named for **Maj Lonsdale**, as the site of his forces final stand. Just down the road lies a memorial to the gargantuan efforts of a supremely brave soldier, Baskyfield where we were able to see quite what is required to become the recipient of the Victoria Cross. With the bullet holes still visible in the church, and the enormity of the undertakings of Baskyfield, the full severity of the battle was rammed home. The question on everybody's lips was whether or not we could have made the same sacrifices today.

To finish on a comparative high, it was on to the last stand of the day, the Bridge that was the one too far, now called the John Frost Bridge, after the then CO of 2 Para. Now surrounded by modern buildings and a thriving and revitalised town, it was none the less sobering to imagine the carnage and destruction that these people went through.

To seal the tour it was left only to remember the sacrifices made not just by those soldiers at Arnhem, but on all of the battlefields of World War 2. **Padre Joe Moesel** conducted a field service at the Commonwealth Cemetery, with a wreath laid by the CO, **Lt Col AP Bristow**. Never have the words "For your tomorrow they gave their today" rung more true.

The John Frost Bridge

EX DIAMOND AXE – by *LCpl D Boyle*

EX DIAMOND AXE was a combined RRB Tp and Spt Tp multi-activity ex conducted in Bavaria from 21-31 October 02. We left Herford on the 21 October, destined for ten days of hill walking, rock climbing and canoeing around the Sonthofen area.

The kayak crew consisted of **Cpl Phil Sills**, **Sigs Ian Gadsdon**, 'Shakey' **Stevens**, **Barry Colling**, and **Leanne Tweedie**. **SSM Chris Lloyd** led this group of swimmer-canoeists across the Alpensee and surrounding rivers carrying out daily re-enactments of the 'Cockleshell Heroes'.

Sgt Mickey Prince (LAD) and **Sgt Ted Wellstood** (IS Tp) led the future Hillarys and Bonningtons. Making up the rock-climbing

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Stuart K MacRostie MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) AJ Frost**

CAMBRIAN PATROL 2002 - *by LCpl Bradley*

The Cambrian Patrol is a tough, arduous exercise, which takes place at the beginning of November around the Brecon Beacons training area. It is designed to test a number of military skills including BFAT, mine clearance and NBC. Each team is deployed as a section of eight. This year there were around eighty teams participating. They came from different regiments and corps, not just from the British Army but also from abroad.

2 Sig Regt began their training and selection process in October. As with all units, time was short due to numerous deployments, so the team spent a week in Otterburn. This was where all the SOP's were decided upon and the final team selected.
After much consideration the team finally selected was **Lt Nicklin** as IC, **Cpl** 'Curly' **Watts** as 2IC, **LCpl Westerman**, **Sig Barun**, **Sig Anan**, **LCpl Bradley**, **Sig Bishnu** and **Sig Khagendra**.

Immediately prior to the competition a visit to Shrivenham was arranged for the team to do recognition training on armoured vehicles, artillery pieces, mines and weapon systems. Shrivenham has a great range of facilities at its disposal and this proved invaluable. As a UK based unit we hosted an American team across from Germany. Both teams were intrigued with each other's different approach to doing things. The American team looked set for a ten-day war rather than a 48-hr patrol.

The first day of the competition began with the team booking in by 06.00hrs. **Lt Nicklin** was taken away to receive his orders while the remainder of the team had a thorough kit check. The NBC stand followed and then the leader returned to give his orders. By this time it was light and the rain had started to fall. The section moved from the admin area to the DOP by TCV. It was then a short tab to the first objective, an enemy check point

(L-R) LCpl Boyle, 2Lt Kamara, Sigs Simpson and Saunders taking a well earned break, hip flask and all

group were **LCpls Chapman**, **Girvan** and **Bashir**, **Sigs Jim Thorley**, **Buchanan** and **Eddie Edwards**. **LCpl Girvan** decided to change to this group after discovering what **2Lt Cliff Kamara** had in mind for his group of hill walkers. It was a good choice. With an initial warm-up bimble up the steepest damned hill I have ever seen (Grunten), the next five days looked more like a beat up for SAS selection than fat scaly adventure training. Giving **Lt Kamara** a run for his money up at the front were **Sigs Simpson**, **Saunders**, **Edwards** and myself.

SSgt Robinson (Comd Tp) accompanied by **Cpl Dukes**, **Sigs Chadwick**, **Price** and **Buchanan** went at a more sedate pace, preferring to spend their hard-earned cash on cable cars than tabbing up monstrous great hills. After days spent walking up the hills we took full advantage of the hills to put the adventure back into adventure training, by braving the snow-less ski runs on mountain bikes.

which needed to be observed. With limited visibility, this proved difficult. The next fourteen hours consisted of patrolling through the night across very wet ground, meeting agents and rowing across a reservoir before finally arriving at a safe harbour area. Wet ground proved to be the horror of all, and by this time every man was wet to his waist. But the break gave the opportunity for personal admin, a quick hot brew and scoff, while cracking on with the patrol report. Within an hour it was time to continue with the mission.

Suddenly a shot rang out. At first we thought that someone had had a negligent discharge, but we quickly discovered a soldier with a 'gunshot wound.' The medical skills of the Queen's Gurkha Signals were deployed with a vengeance, and we were not sure who was the more relieved as we left.

Our next tasking was a series of recces, made all the more amusing when the boss became completely submerged in a bog. Even he saw the funny side of after a minute of having a face as black as thunder. The second night tested the fortitude of all. With kit weighing around 60 – 70lbs, it was the make or break time for the patrol. Coming across a farmhouse filled with enemy we dived in to clear it. However, it was unclear how devastating our attack had been as the enemy gave up rather too easily. After moving to a nearby farm, we were taken in for a debrief. This is where we experienced the full deviousness of the competition. We were taken into a room filled with kero heaters and given a hot brew. Very rapidly **Sig Khagendra** fell victim to sleep, and everyone was starting to flag.

Information given now was very sketchy. As each fire team loaded onto the transport there was a feeling of suspicion, and quite rightly so. The vehicles came under fire in a planned ambush. Both fire teams de-bussed and launched an attack, neutralising the threat. On moving into a building in the FIBUA village the last agent revealed the grid reference of the PUP, but it was a further 4km away!

On seeing the white minibus and **Sgt Ford** at the top of the hill everyone seemed to regain some energy. Maybe it was the 24 cans of Carling he had brought along! Finishing the patrol was a real achievement. Getting a Bronze Award for the Regt was a real bonus. It would be nice to see more Royal Signals units in the line-up next year.

The Cambrian Patrol team. Back: LCpls Westerman, Bradley, Sgt Ford (Team Manager) 2Lt Nicklin, Cpl Watts. Front: Sigs Khangendra, Barlin, Bishnu, Annan.

FREEDOM OF YORK PARADE

On Saturday 19 October 2002, 2 Sig Regt exercised the Freedom of Entry to the City of York in a joint Army parade with the RDG and 1PWO, The East and West Riding Regiment (V). This was the first occasion since the Regt was given the Freedom in January 2001. We had 60 troops on parade, under command of **Lt Hannah Frost** and **Lt Ratnabahadur Pun**. **SSgt Icke** and **SSgt Wigmore**, who have recently arrived from training regts, had drilled to all within an inch of their lives during the previous week. In true guardsman fashion, the Garrison Sergeant Major ensured that we all froze to death in a rehearsal in York at 0715 on the Saturday morning. But he was only thinking of our welfare, as all things being relative, it made us feel all the warmer when we paraded later that morning!

The parade went exceptionally well and attracted huge crowds at the Museum and along the route through the City. After the parade we enjoyed the privileges associated with the Freedom of the City whilst the RDG deployed to the wrong side of the Pennines in preparation for OP FRESCO and 1PWO had a few hours in town before returning to NI.

EX KEY QUALITY

Living in York definitely has its advantages. For the sweet-toothed amongst us, one of those advantages, is our proximity to the Nestlés Chocolate factory (previously Rowntrees). Now for some, particularly those with more wobble than will-power and others who, unhappily, may be dentally-challenged, the constant and pervasive aroma of chocolate in the air which is often borne on the wind to the barracks, might be too tantalising to be considered anything other than torture. Of particular advantage to the Regt, however, is the relationship which we now have with the Nestlés management and their principal sponsorship of our main annual charity event, Race the Sun. This is manifested not only in a sizable financial donation but also in large quantities of chocolate for prizes, et al.

To cement this relationship the Regt laid on a two-day management study period for the Nestlés' movers and shakers, from managers and research scientists to the union stewards.

Although primarily intended to provide an opportunity for Nestlés' to conduct their own 'think-tank' session, we took the opportunity to provide them with briefings on Royal Signals, the Regt, equipment and weapons. Dominatrix **WO2 QMSI Russell** and her gym team, **Sig Becky Greenhalgh** and **Sig Glen Stock** imposed the ritual torture and humiliation known as 'The Command Tasks' upon them. But they failed miserably to stifle the merriment and enjoyment of the Nestlés teams. They apparently felt that had had a fantastic time. Overall the Study period went well and was apparently memorable for the Nestlés participants, ensuring their continued benefaction to the Race the Sun event.

Ex KEY QUALITY

Race the Sun 2003 takes place on 15 May 03. Details should now be with units. Any units or clubs wishing to enter a team to attempt to wrestle the prize away from 2 Sig Regt should contact RQMS White on York Mil 94777 2261 or Civ 01904 662261 for details.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC **Maj S Clarke**
SSM **WO2 N Cooper**

GENERATOR BAY

Tp SSgt **SSgt Crawford**

The RGB ED's have had a busy time recently, repairing generators on EX LOG VIPER, giving lessons to the Area Systems Op courses and preparing for the forthcoming ECI. Christmas is nearly here again and so next up is the 'silly season' with the usual functions and Tp Christmas parties going on throughout the Regt. I don't remember having had a summer this year, but now the time has come to say a sad farewell to **Sig Martin Fallon**, leaving the Army for Civvy Street. He is settling in Peterlee, Co Durham, and will be greatly missed by the Regt Gene Bay. **Sig** 'Bish' **Bishnu** is shortly to finish his time with 2 Sig Regt RGB, going home to Nepal on long leave. In the New Year he goes to 30 Sig Regt in Bramcote, where I'm sure he will do very well. **Sig** 'Mav' **Britton** is posted on promotion to 1 Mech Bde in January 2003. Many Congratulations to **LCpl** 'Cleggy' **Cleghorn** on passing his selection for 264 Sig Sqn. Oh and by the way could the blokes posted into the RGB hurry up and get here please!

TM TROOP

OC **WO1 (FofS) Batley**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Davidson**

Squeezing in our commitments of 2nd Line Inspections, Operational support, various exercises and oversees tours, we have still found time to involve ourselves in a variety of inter sqn sports. Orienteering was by far the Tp's most successful effort. The team of **WO1 (FofS) Russ Batley, Sgt Davidson and Cpls Un, Brown and Local helped HQ Sqn to gain** 1st place on the C Course and win the inter-sqn orienteering competition outright. Well done to all.

We have had many comings and goings over the past few months. Belated farewells and best wishes go to **WO1 FofS Pete Hodson**, **Cpl Gil Gittins**, **Cpl Davies**, **Cpl Simon Brewington**, **Cpl Eddie Waring, Cpl Hayward**, **Cpl Dave Shilton**, **Cpl Dodds**, **Cpl Russell**, and **Cpl Andy Johnson**. Also leaving us on well-deserved promotions are the now **WO2** 'Daz' **Evans**, **SSgt Harris** and **Cpl Clare Edwards.** Last but not least, leaving the service and entering the world as a driving instructor is **Cpl Lance Hanson**. For the arrivals, warm welcomes go to **WO1 (FofS) Russ**

Batley, **Cpl Vanessa Brown**, **Cpl Sutcliffe**, **Cpl Elaine Ralf** (already deployed to Afghanistan), **Cpl Steve Williamson**, **Cpl Caroline Goode** and **Cpl Michelle Local**. Congratulations are also in order for our new parents, **Cpl Un**, **Cpl Roberts** and **Cpl Goode.** Sadly we have had to say a tearful goodbye to our youngest technician, **LCpl Lee Woods**, who had a fatal and tragic road traffic accident on 30 August 2002. We will all miss him.

ISM DEPARTMENT

ISM	**WO1 T Hague**
ISM	**WO2 ST Brown**

The past few months have been busy here at ISM Dept both in and out of barracks. EX LOG VIPER has kept **Sgt Bell**, **Cpl Andy Taylor** and **Cpl Kev Duggan** busy. The rest of us in the RCZ (Rear Computer Zone) had to contend with the enlargement of the Regtl LAN and the day-to-day maintenance of the high spec IT eqpt on loan to the troops. HQ Sqn has now been added to the LAN and the addition of more servers and more cable being laid has kept the Installation Techs busy. **Cpl** 'Barney' **Barnett** and his installation team have been up ladders down drains and in more lofts than they care to remember.

We say hello (again) to **WO2 Steve Brown**, and congratulations to **Sgt Kev Duggan** on his promotion.

CORMORANT INTRODUCTION TEAM

OIC	**WO2 N Cooper**
Dept SSgt	**SSgt T Shiels**

The CORMORANT Introduction Team have had a very busy year, training the operators and managers for the Field Trials in July and generally smoothing the path for this system to be introduced. The team is, was and has been **WO2 Neil Cooper**, **WO2 Steve Brown, SSgt Chris Cheeseman**, **SSgt Rob Eden, SSgt Shiels, Sgt Jim Davidson** and myself **Sgt Steve Dade.**

At this stage of the development, all the CORMORANT equipment has been returned to COGENT for upgrade and modification, and the Team has been sent to the four winds. **WO2 Cooper** is now SSM HQ Sqn (soon to be SSM 214 Sig Sqn), **WO2 Brown** is going on his IS Supervisor course in Jan 03 but is currently in Herford on exercise. **SSgt Cheeseman** has returned to 30 Sig Regt, **SSgt Shiels** is posted to 745 Sig Tp, 34 (N) Sig Regt (V). His replacement, **SSgt Rob Fieldhouse** is busily trying to learn all he can about data-comms before the Training Rig returns in Jan 03. **SSgt Eden** is currently on OP FRESCO duties in Preston. **Sgt Davidson** has been seconded to TM Tp as the Tp SSgt, and I am still here as admin support/course design/hotel booking agent/subject matter expert and anything else that is deemed necessary.

The other half of CIT is the Trade Conversion Team of **Cpl Andy Rutter** and **Cpl Lee Rickard.** They are currently teaching the last conversion course, DTG to SYSOP, after which they are to be posted. **Cpl Rutter** is off to RSS to carry on the excellent work he has produced and **Cpl Rickard** (currently on his RSJCC) is yet to find out where or if he is going. I would like to take this chance to thank them for the excellent training they have provided the Corps.

REGIMENTAL MT

MTO	**Capt D CRAIG**
MT SNCO	**SSgt H BAKER**

As usual it has been a busy couple of months for Regt MT with the preparation for the ECI having been the main effort. The ECI is at the start of that not so busy time of the year of Sqn functions, Tp do's, and Mess transport requirements etc, so we ain't really that busy, particularly with Op commitments as well.

The Regt MT continues to work hard on OP FRESCO. It has been quite hectic trying to get all of the hire cars sorted out to ensure that the teams get to their various control points around the country. Very well done to the details NCO. We can not let this phase pass without saying a big thank you to 2 SSU and Tpt and Mov's at Catterick in meeting with the high demands and requests for hire cars that this period has brought.

We welcome back **Sgt Beswick** and **LCpl Dave Musson**. We also welcome **Sig Fleming** from 16 Air Assault Bde. Unfortunately we say farewell to **Cpl Dickinson**, who has successfully passed his selection course for the White Helmets, and **Cpl Ram** is posted to 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn. We wish both of them and their families all the best for the future and good luck in their new employment. Our congratulations go to **LCpls Pierrepont** and **Harrison** on their recent promotion to Cpl.

REGIMENT RECRUITING TEAM

Team Leader	**Lt Mel Crawford**
Team 2IC	**Sgt Eve Eden**

We say goodbye to **Cpl Helen Caplin**, who has left our busy and hectic life to return to the comforts of tea and biscuits of Mike Tp. She will be terribly missed by **Cpl Ablott**, and we look forward to meeting her replacement in the New Year. In typical Army fashion we have received our kit in reverse order. We have a fantastic display trailer, but nothing to tow it with. So maybe if we all behave well and ask nicely, Santa will bring us our new 4 X 4 vehicle. We have a quiet few weeks up to Christmas leave now and we hope to start introducing ourselves to schools and holding days out for visitors in the New Year. Having had a successful 5 months, we look forward to more fun recruiting events next year.

QM DEPARTMENT

QM (Gen)	**Maj Dalton**
QM (Tech)	**Capt McKenna**
RQMS (Gen)	**WO2 Stillie**
RQMS (Tech)	**WO2 White**

In August the Dept deployed to Catterick Trg Area for EX KEY FLIGHT, a week long ex in preparation for EX LOG VIPER. The first for all the new members, including the RQMS (T), it proved to be a good welcome to the Regt and a good look forward as to what to expect in the future.

As we come to the end of another busy year we say farewells to, **WO2 RQMS (T) Dave Simpson**, retired after 23 years with the Corps. We hope his new venture as a PostMaster is a success. Congratulations go to **Cpl Oldfield** who, on promotion to Sergeant, is off to count the penguins in the Falklands and to **LCpl Claire Edwards** who is leaving on promotion to N Ireland. We would welcome six new faces, **WO2** (RQMS) **Dave White** and **Sigs Danny Haley**, **Rob Reid, Andy Lee, Kelly Grey** and **Jesse Kolikata**. Congratulations to **Sig Kelly Grey** who has just given birth to a baby boy, **Dylan**, and to **Sigs Reid** and **Haley**, who have just returned from Leconfield after passing their C and C+E driving tests.

AGC(SPS) DETACHMENT

RAO	**Capt Potterton**
RAOWO	**WO2(SQMS) Hubbert**

EX KEY FLIGHT (from a clerical perspective)

The AGC (SPS) Det consisting of **Capt Pete Lockitt**, **Sgt Moy**, **Sgt Shaw**, **Cpl Lokendra**, and **Pte Whyman** deployed with our vehicle ready on EX KEY FLIGHT 2. Our role was to be the Field Records office based at Echelon. **WO2 (SQMS) Hubbert** our RAOWO also deployed with us, but he was to act as the SO2 SPS HICON/LOCON at EXCON or HQ 11 Sig Bde. His function was to inject serials from the G1 side of life, which we would respond to. Once we had arrived at the woodline site at Marne Barracks, Catterick we cammed up, prepared the field records vehicle and then looked after the comfort side of life. The exercise started well for **Capt Lockitt**, who appeared with a lovely china plate, which he then promptly dropped. He then had to be like the rest of us mere mortals and eat from a cardboard plate.

Cpl Lokendra, one of our 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn clerks, was detailed to take out a clearance patrol to seek out any pockets of enemy activity. Both the orders process and the actual patrol proved to be a big challenge for **Cpl Lokendra**, but he found it of great use and great fun to lead his patrol against the enemy. **Pte Whyman** was promoted to the dizzy heights of LCpl (for exercise purposes only) by OC Echelon, **Maj Clarke**. During the afternoon we were 'stood to' as a result of enemy sightings reported by **Cpl Lokendra's** clearance patrol. As we were stood to, **'LCpl'**

Whyman had a notional negligent discharge, and was promptly warned for orders. The discipline paperwork was put together, and he appeared at 23.00hrs in front of OC Echelon. The scene was set for Summary Dealing orders to take place in the field. OC Echelon sat at his table with his head torch on so when he stared at **LCpl Whyman** the light shone into his face. The evidence was given, the pleas were made but **Whyman** was guilty. **'LCpl' Whyman** became **Pte Whyman** again and was forced to part with his tape. As well as this fun and games there was other work to be done. There were Pers Reps to collect and collate and send onto HICON, POW's to deal with and casualty reports to submit. Things were hotting up in the field records office. Our final main task was to carry out a MCCP (Manning Control Checkpoint) prior to vehicle packets passing through the wash down point and moving back to Imphal Barracks, York. We were required to check how many personnel had actually deployed on the ex, and to randomly check ID Discs and other documentation. It was then back to York, turn round the vehicles, clean weapons, and return to our families. An excellent exercise had been had by all. **Pte/LCpl Whyman** had a taste of the high life, **Capt Lockitt** was parted from his best china, **Cpl Lokendra** was now a confirmed infantryman, and the Regt had seen the AGC(SPS) doing our professional job in a field environment. Everyone worked hard and benefited from the experience. It goes to prove that good planning and preparation will enhance learning and make ex's an enjoyable experience.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Rab Young**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Abson**

REMEMBERANCE PARADE

Thirty-four personnel from 219 Sig Sqn were selected to represent the Regt at the York Remembrance Parade. The Parade Comd was **Maj Rab Young** (recently posted in from 11 Bde), with **2Lt Andy Nicklin** leading the Army contingent and **WO2 (SSM) Daz Abson** 'encouraging the' troops as they marched along. The parade was attended by several First World War veterans and large number of veterans from the Second World War and other conflicts. During the parade, the Mayor of York said a few words in memory of those who had lost their lives during the conflicts, and **Brig ARD Shaw**, Comd, York Garrison, laid a wreath on behalf of the Army. The parade then marched through the city with the veterans, and joined the remainder of the Regt in York Minster for the Remembrance Service. During the service there were readings by **WO1 (RSM) A Frost** and CO, **LtCol S K MacRostie MBE**. After the service in the Minster a small service was held at the Kohima Memorial, where the CO laid a wreath.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Caesar**
SSM	**WO2 Tara Bahadur Pun**

DASHAIN FESTIVAL 2002 - *by Cpl Indra Kumar Gurung*

Nepal (the homeland of Gurkhas in the British Army) is a small country with multi cultural society. Nepalese people observe one festival or another practically throughout the year. Among them, the main one is Dashain, which combines all those cultural diversities into a single harmony. This festival is celebrated by all the Gurkhas in the British Army.

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 Bde of Gurkhas, only 4 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 over the wicked demons who harassed mankind in ancient times. A legend amongst the Gurkhas is that the Goddess Durga slew demon Mahishasur, who in the form of a water buffalo, had terrorised mankind on earth. Therefore Dashain is the celebration of victory and also a time when families come together to exchange gifts and blessings. The four most important days of Dashain are:

Phulpati (7th Day) –12 Oct 02. On this day, people go in procession to the countryside to collect Phulpati (plants, leaves and branches). On arrival at a selected spot, a shrine is erected, a sacred fire lit and prayers offered. A goat is sacrificed and the Phulpati is blessed.

Kalaratri (8th Day)-13 Oct 02. This is the day of joyous celebration to entertain guests with a special Nepalese variety show. Kalaratri, which translates literally to black night, is symbolised by switching off the lights at the stroke of midnight and by a sacrificial ceremony at the Temple.

Mar (9th Day)-14 Oct 02. This day is also known as Balidan, and the ceremony symbolises the slaying of the demon Mahishasur by the Goddess Durga. The long-standing tradition of sacrificing a male buffalo by each unit has ceased now, and only one buffalo for the whole Bde is sacrificed in Nepal.

Tika (10th Day)-15 Oct 02. On this day, the Gurkhas assemble at the Temple where the priest and the Senior Gurkha Officer present each man with small tufts of barley and place caste marks, called Tika on their foreheads as a blessing.

Because of the Sqn's involvement in a variety of exercises/events, the main celebrations that should have taken place during the true Dashain period were delayed until the 26th Oct 02. The party began with traditional drinks and tit-bits followed by the Dashain Bada Khana (special party meal) and plenty of entertaining Nepalese cultural shows. During the festival, the Sqn 2IC, **Capt (QGO) Rajendraman Gurung** used this special opportunity to welcome, on the behalf of the Sqn, the new CO, **LtCol SK MacRostie MBE** and his family. Although, not the correct time in the lunar calendar, the celebration was a complete success and no offence was meant to the Goddess, we hope! Jai 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn!!!

Nepalese dance

14 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj ST Gillespie**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) MA Ginty**

EX KEY FAWKES II - *by Lt Hannah Frost*

EX KEY FAWKES II was a charity day held at the Regt for members of the British Polio Fellowship Trust. This event has been held in different formats several times in previous years, so a good working relationship had already developed between the Regt and the Fellowship. It has been made especially easy by the warmth and enthusiasm of **Mrs Jan Taylor**, the Fellowship event organiser. Although polio is now practically non-existent in the younger population (due to vaccinations), there is still a significant number of the older generation who suffer from this disease. The aim of this day was to provide an enjoyable day out for these people and for the soldiers to gain an appreciation of working with disabled people.

The day started with potted sports in the gym. Despite their disabilities, many of the guests were still very active and were certainly not adverse to a little bit of cheating! The soldiers assisting the teams soon caught on to this and were just as bad - to the amusement of all the spectators. Once they had thoroughly exhausted us they then challenged us to several relays, with us in wheelchairs as well! Needless to say they definitely had the advantage over us and won hands down.

Everyone then moved to Kohima Restaurant for a buffet meal, a quiz and prize giving. The chef seemed to think he was feeding the five thousand and the food was both plentiful and excellent. We were then challenged again, this time to a quiz on World War II. However, this time we were prepared and had a secret weapon in the form of the Regt 2IC, whose specialist subject just happens to be World War II. This allowed us to regain our dignity after the resounding loss earlier. **Lt Crawford**, **LCpl Sandeman** and **Sig Jobber** were also part of the team to make up the numbers. The CO, **LtCol MacRostie**, then hosted the prize giving, with prizes going to the best cheats as well as the winners of the potted sports. The best-decorated wheelchair went to a member of the Fellowship for a very realistic tank, with moving gun turret!

From the Restaurant everyone moved to the back fields were there was a bonfire and firework display. This was superb, although the biggest round of applause went to **SSgt Icke** when one of the fireworks went off a bit quicker than anticipated and he had to do a 100m sprint. He could have (should have) won a gold medal! To keep everyone warm, mulled wine and mince pies were available, kindly donated by the Sgt's Mess. It was a highly successful day enjoyed by both the Fellowship members and the soldiers and ensures the continuation of the links between the Regiment and the Fellowship.

3 (UNITED KINGDOM) HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col P Davies**
RSM **WO1 Kelly**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

It is not often that RHQ gets the spotlight turned upon it but occasionally, rather like flipping over a stone, its interesting to see what scuttles away underneath. We bid a fond farewell to the former RAOWO, **WO1 Mackman**, who is off to AFPAA at Worthy Down. The RAO in particular will miss his deft skill at resetting dislocated finger joints on their difficult trips back from the Sportsman's Bar. A warm welcome to his successor, **WO1 Cockburn**, who is already manfully grappling with tottering piles of CRs. We also say farewell to **Sgt Watts** and welcome **Sgt Ash** as the new Staff Assistant, Personnel Support.

Elsewhere in RHQ **Capt Paul Rose** and **Capt Lloyd Golley** sit licking their wounds after yet another golfing defeat at the hands of the QM(A), **Maj Widdows** and the MTO, **Capt Paul Harvey**. **Capt Nev Smikle**, resplendent in DPM lycra and new DMS trainers, and **WO2 (YofS) Lloyd** giggle quietly in the corner and despatch **Sig Hall** to drag another 40 gallon urn of tea down to the office. The RAO has experienced rather more sporting success and congratulations go to **Sgt Allen** and her netball team, which recently triumphed in the 5 Division Championships and the Inter-Corps competition for the AGC. These successes have undoubtedly been helped by the selfless manner in which **Maj Gary Morrow**, OC HQ Sqn, and **WO2 (SSM) Low** have insisted on personally supporting the netball team in its fixtures.

MENCAP DAY

The Regt recently hosted a visit from the Andover MENCAP Society Tracks Club. Some 16 excited youngsters together with carers turned up for a day of fun activities, courtesy of the Army. 202 Sig Sqn headed up the hosting effort led by **Lt Becky Jacques.** Although many depts across the Regt were involved in looking after our guests, a mention must go to **QMSI Sheila Strickland** and her team of PTIs, who devised a fiendish indoor assault course and field gun race. Special thanks also to **Cpl Welsh**, who successfully kept his charges intact bouncing across SPTA in an AFV 432, and to **Sgt Smith** and his team, who ran the Small Arms Trainer for hour after hour after hour. Our visitors went home extremely tired and happy, and it is probably accurate to say that the hosts enjoyed it just as much as they did!

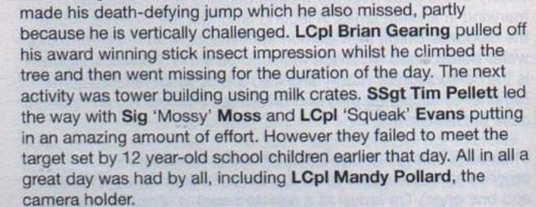
HQ SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Morrow PWRR**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Low**

HQ SQN, REGIMENTAL GENERATOR BAY'S ADVENTURE TRAINING WEEK 21 OCTOBER – 25 OCTOBER 2002

by Cpl Bonney

Early on a cold wet October morning the Regtl Gene Bay (RGB) began a long drive to the Lake District. **SSgt Neil Sorley** and **Cpl Reg Varney** felt that getting in a crammed minibus with all their professional mountain bike equipment was far too much for them and decided to drive up by their own means. From the minibus all the lads went straight into a nice chilly gorge run, where **Sig Lee Perry** felt the chill and had to make a rendezvous with a patch of grass. The second day began with rock scrambling, and everyone was enjoying themselves until we came upon a climb to be known as 'Varney's Rock'. **Cpl Reg Varney** got very stuck and the only thing to do in that situation is to take it out on the rock face by kicking it. The week continued with rock-climbing and another rather larger gorge run. When the final night arrived we all decided to go and check out the big old town called Penrith.



Lt Becky Jacques demands to see where the bullets live

REGIMENTAL MT

MTO **Capt P Harvey RLC**
MTWO **WO2 Anthea Burdus**

Just as the Regtl MT thought that it was going to be another working sports afternoon, the MTWO **WO2 Anthea Burdus** organised a confidence and morale boosting exercise at the LDSA, Bramley wood, the Hampshire tree assault course.

After the initial safety brief from the Provo **Sgt** 'Mac' **McDonnell**, the first victim rigged up and prepared to climb. Enter **LCpl** 'Squeak' **Evans**. 'Squeak' climbed the telegraph pole in about 15 mins and then took a further 15 mins to get the courage up to jump for the high wire which he missed. Next up was **Cpl** 'Chatts' **Chattaway** RLC who scaled the pole in a nano-second and then made his death-defying jump which he also missed, partly because he is vertically challenged. **LCpl Brian Gearing** pulled off his award winning stick insect impression whilst he climbed the tree and then went missing for the duration of the day. The next activity was tower building using milk crates. **SSgt Tim Pellett** led the way with **Sig** 'Mossy' **Moss** and **LCpl** 'Squeak' **Evans** putting in an amazing amount of effort. However they failed to meet the target set by 12 year-old school children earlier that day. All in all a great day was had by all, including **LCpl Mandy Pollard**, the camera holder.

MY BOBSLEIGH EXPERIENCE *by Sgt Shilter*

I was first drawn to the idea of bobsleighing when I got talking to one of the coaches at the Army Athletics at Aldershot in May 2002. I attended a training day at Aldershot in August, completing a number of physical tests. I was then given the opportunity to attend an ice camp in Lillehammer in Norway during the week 12-19 October 2002.

The ice camp is geared towards novices, although it is an ideal time for members of the GB team to get in some serious training on the ice. The Olympic track at Lillehammer is 1360m in length, with 16 bends in total By the end of the week this was negotiated in under a minute at speeds of 80 kph plus.

Each day was taken up with loading/unloading of the bobsleighs, walking the course with one of the coaches (to get expert tuition on how to get round each bend and get to the finish in one piece). And finally the ultimate rush, getting into a two-man bobsleigh and setting off on an amazing journey.

At the start of the week, you are paired off with someone of roughly your own size and weight and given a bobsleigh to use for the week. Once on the ice you have 4 'runs' each day, 2 as a driver and 2 as a brakeman. Up until the Wednesday or Thursday depending on your ability and how well the coaches think you are doing, you start from the ladies/junior start point which is at bend 4. After this (if you are thought to be competent enough) you can then progress to the top of the run and have a go at all 16 bends. This is obviously a lot faster than from bend 4.

After this week I now have the opportunity to compete in the Novice Bobsleigh Championships which take place in Igls, Innsbruck, Austria in December. Hopefully if all goes well the Army Championships in La Plagne, France in January beckon. Although bobsleigh is not for the faint hearted, if you crave speed combined with the ultimate rush, then this may be the sport for you.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj RJ Freeman**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Buckley**

At last it's back! The Sqn eqpt used in Afghanistan, including the DRASH, has finally made its way back to Bulford. It was just in time, as DSG had to be built for the Staff College Demo. It was the first time that many of the Sqn had seen the complete DSG and also the first time that **Sgt** 'Jase' **Quilter**, had overseen the building of the DRASH. The build occurred on Avon Camp and went without a hitch. Following the huge change of manpower in the Sqn during 2002, it was a great opportunity to deploy in slow time and in daylight. This may not be the case next time.

One man not sorry to say farewell to the DRASH was the Sqn FofS **SSgt Dave Tribbeck.** He has moved to the calmer environment of AFSENT North**.** His replacement, **Sgt John Simons**, did not have far to travel, having moved from 222 Sig Sqn. The Sqn has also said farewell to **LCpl Lindsay Smith** (who is off to join the police force) and our clerk, **Cpl Zelda Kidd**.

It's not all work in 206 Sqn. **Sig Lisa Hughes** managed to escape to the warmer climate of Barbados with the Army ladies' hockey team. It seems to have been an enjoyable trip, even if their water sport skills are now better than their hockey. Rugby has also been on the agenda. 206 Sqn is not famous for its sporting prowess, but it managed to field a team in the inter-sqn Rugby 10's Competition. Under the captaincy of **Sig Rakocevic**, the team did much better than expected, with only 2 players needing hospital treatment. The Sqn ladies' football team had a little more success winning the Inter-Sqn Ladies Competition. It was the first time that the competition had been held, and **Cpl George Keogh** and **Sig Louise Walker** showed the Sqn men a thing or to about football.

Away from the sports field, **WO2 (SSM) Buckley** almost single-handedly organized the Garrison bonfire. The night was a roaring success with over 2000 people attending the event on Carter Bks. The Bonfire was built and a competition amongst the local schools was held to produce a guy. The standard was very high with the winning prize going to Bulford Primary School. All guys entered had a place on the bonfire. The lighting of the fire was followed by a firework display, carried out under the control of the Sqn MT SNCO **Sgt Ian Smith**. SPIRE FM, the Salisbury radio station provided the backing music.

Congratulations go to **Sgt** 'Jase' **Quilter**, who was awarded his LS&GC medal by the SOinC, and to **WO2 (SSM) Buckley** on his recent wedding.

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Major Andy White**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Matt Wakeling**

The Sqn has now all returned from various different countries. All those who deployed on EX IRON ANVIL have come back after providing communication support to 19 Mech Bde, who seemed to look after our soldiers as if they were their own. The Sqn has also just returned from a very successful battle camp organised by **Maj Morrow PWRR.** This proved to be far more exciting and demanding than the usual type of battle camp. With **Maj Morrow's** experience and enthusiasm it was enjoyed by all who attended.

The OC would like to thank all the soldiers of 202 Sig Sqn for their hard work and dedication over the past 12 months and wishes both them and their families the best of luck for 2003.

Finally a sad farewell to **SSgt (YofS) Ted Heath**, who has bailed out early to make way for the younger more thriving **SSgt (YofS)** 'Shifty' **Rutland**.

INKERMAN TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Freemantle**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Lawn**

We start with congratulations to **Sigs Blake, Ellis, Ronald** and **Scott** for successfully coming off the board. Also to **Mr** 'PK' **Kerridge**, better late than never!

The Tp took an educational trip to the Imperial War Museum, London. The museum was excellent and, as ever, it was good to be out of the garages. Proving our worth, a section from the Tp showed the Sqn how to perform on Battle Camp by gaining Best Section. Well done lads. The Tp is now looking forward to block leave, and maybe a quieter year in 2003?

OVERLOON TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Debbie Coslett**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Kev Cooney**

Overloon Tp has had a busy few months with RSIT preparation and inspection, OP FRESCO and Battle Camp. Well done to **LCpl Dodgson** and **Sigs Noakes** and **Hesketh**, who all received a commendation for the RSIT report on their Det. Those who deployed on Battle Camp performed exceptionally well and displayed real enthusiasm for shooting civilians on the fire discipline range!

We say goodbye to **Sig Martin**, who has moved on to civilian life, **Sig Tucker**, who has moved on to JCUNI and **Cpl Anderson**, who has unfortunately had to leave us. We wish them all the best of luck and look forward to hearing from them in the future. We welcome our new arrivals from Blandford, **Sigs Dunn** and **Shone.**

BUSSACO TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Rich Bennett**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Neil Watt**

As usual another busy time for Bussaco Tp. Luckily we have plenty of new arrivals to help us out. Firstly **Cpl Phil Bainbridge**, straight from his Class 1 in Blandford along with **Cpl Dave Wood.** We are also blessed with new newly trained technicians in **LCpl** 'H' **Waters** and **LCpl Jim Ross.** We congratulate **Cpl Jaime Falinskie** on both her marriage and the prospect of starting a family in the near future – 5 months to go.

Battle camp went very well, led by **Lt Bennett**, **Cpl Si Tait** and **Cpl Kev Smith**, who came second in the sec competition with **Cpl Dave Storey's** sec taking the honours. It is now all back to normal at work, counting the days down till Christmas leave, except **Sig Hill**, who will more than likely be on duty over the festive season – unlucky!

14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col NJ Borrill**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) AP Staniford**

HQ SQUADRON
OC **Maj P J McElwee**
SSM **WO2 D Newton**

TM TROOP
Tp Comd **WO1 (FofS) Garrett**

Technicians from the factory have recently overrun TM Tp. Where were they when we needed them for exercises? By Christmas, at a steady rate of one every two weeks, we'll have at least fifty.

As well as newcomers, we have had some departures in the last few months, including **Cpl Matty Grant** on his Class 1 and **LCpl Ady Nicholls** venturing into the big wide world. Also on their way in the coming months, **LCpl Lawton** will go and work for Burger King in Marple and **Cpl Andy Kinnaird** will try his luck at pastures new. Big congratulations to **Sgt** 'Dusty' **Millar** and **Anna** on the birth of their baby daughter on 23 November at Withybush Hospital. They now leave for a different lifestyle in civvy street.

As the Tp prepares for Christmas leave, and some lucky people for Christmas guard, we wind down from such things as an ITD battle camp and an adventure training week at Penhale camp in Newquay, Cornwall. Life goes on in Brawdy.

The last few months have seen a few outings with **Cpl Derry Evans** organising a couple of laps around the local go-kart track and the memorable Tenby trip that severely dented Tp funds.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

OC **Maj N G C Yardley**
SSM **WO2 J Ainsworth**

640 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd **Flt Lt B Dunn RAF**

EX LONG LOOK (AUSTRALIA) MAY-SEPTEMBER 2002 - *by Cpl T P Scanlan*

On 06 May 2002 a total of 163 members of the Navy, Army and Air Force arrived at RAF Brize Norton for briefings and an overnight stay before departing for 4 months on Ex LONG LOOK 2002 to Australia and New Zealand. The journey was to take us 3 days with 2 overnight stops, one at the Marriott Hotel Doha, Qatar, the other at the Traders Hotel, Singapore, all courtesy of the RAF.

The contingent finally arrived in Sydney late at night on 09 May and were welcomed by the Aussies, who handed us our first beer of the exercise (it certainly wasn't the last). With jet lag, our body clocks were telling us that it was 3 in the afternoon, so few of us were going to go to bed. Instead taxis were booked and a night out in Sydney began.

The next morning I was flown from Sydney to Brisbane, where I would meet my Australian exchange partner **Cpl Nick Rodham**. From Brisbane we travelled by car to Toowoomba, Australia's largest inland settlement where I would be working at 7 Sig Regt (EW).

I was assigned to X-Ray Tp and fitted in well. The Tp had just taken on its new EW asset, Formation Light Electronic Warfare System (FLEWS) and were preparing to take it 'out bush' (on exercise) for the first time. The experience I brought from 14 Sig Regt (EW) along with that of **WO2 (Supvr) Tony Watters** (UK Exchange Officer) helped the Tp prepare well for the exercise and ensured that individuals knew what was required of them. After putting the EW system through a number of trials locally it was finally time to deploy to Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA) for 2 weeks.

After an interesting 14-hour drive we finally pulled into Rockhampton, where we would stay the night before driving onto the training area the next morning. The exercise ran well, with a few minor points raised, some questions asked and certain problems relating to the comms. Overall I would rate it as a success as lessons were learned, and finally the new EW asset was put through its paces for the first time.

Shortly after I had returned from the exercise, my wife **Sarah** and 2-year-old daughter **Stephanie** came out to Australia for a 4-week visit. Then it was off to the Sunshine Coast and Gold Cost for a fantastic time, visiting the home of the Crocodile Hunter (**Steve Irwin's** place), Australia Zoo, where crocs rule, and Sea World to see the dolphins and polar bears, which my daughter loved. We also spent time admiring the beautiful scenery that Australia has to offer and relaxing on the beach and in the water.

A few weeks later I managed to get on a 4-day trip to the Regt's comms det in Bamaga, Cape York, Northern Queensland, along with **WO2 (Supvr) Tony Watters** and **Sgt Quaife**. From there we went to the northernmost point on the Australian continent, the very tip of Cape York itself. We did some early morning fishing and caught 3 trevally for breakfast. We also visited Thursday Island (or 'TI' as the locals call it) for the day (at the Regiment's expense) to have a look around and sample the local beers.

Cpl Scanlon as far north as you can get in Oz

A week after returning from Bamaga, I was off on 5-day trip to Melbourne, courtesy of the Projects and Development Team (P & D). This was to have a look at future developments in EW in the Australian Defence Force and for us to offer any ideas or points that would help. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, the trip had to be cut short and the trip to Melbourne was lost. However, a week later I was given a few extra days by the Regiment to travel down to Sydney, where I was able to see and enjoy the city, and to see the Sydney Opera House and other landmarks before our departure on 23 September.

Unfortunately all good things must come to an end. It was time to say goodbye to 7 Sig Regt (EW), to 72 Sqn (EW), to **WO2 (Supvr) Tony Watters** and family, to **Lt Matt Pettig** and to X-Ray Tp. Keep up the good work and thank you all very much. All of you played a big part in making me feel welcome.

In summary, Ex LONG LOOK was a tremendous success. It has opened my eyes to what else is going on outside the British Army and proved that the relations between the defence forces of Australia and Britain are as always (and importantly) very strong. In a number of ways it showed me how proud it felt to be a British soldier and serve my country, and also how well respected we are throughout the world. To end it all nicely, we flew home with Qantas Airways via Singapore rather than with the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). Now that's a bonus.

ROYAL NAVY ATTACHMENT
by LCpl Chant

On 19 August 2002 I embarked on HMS Cumberland, a type 22, batch 3 Broadsword Class frigate. I met the ship whilst it was alongside in Mombassa, Kenya. A week later we sailed on a patrol of the HOA (Horn of Africa), staying 15 miles off the coast of Somalia for about 3 weeks. I went straight into shift working. My role was to work with the other members of the CESM (Communications and Electronic Support Measures) office known in the Navy as CTs, the R SIGS equivalent of a Tele Op Spec.

After 5 weeks at sea, we came into port in Sallalah, Oman for an overnight refuelling stop, before proceeding through the Straits of Hormuz into the NAG (Northern Arabian Gulf), to act as the flagship in support of Op ENDURING FREEDOM (the US's operation fighting the war against terrorism). No sooner had we arrived in the Gulf, the ship's company were brought to action stations and remained until we left the area. This made for some very long hours in defence watches.

On 12 October we arrived in Bahrain, for re-supply and refuel. Whilst alongside, we were visited by **HRH Prince Andrew**, who was very impressed with the ship's state and the crew's morale.

When we sailed from Bahrain, we proceeded directly to Iraqi territorial waters, where we stayed 10 miles off the coast for the next 2 weeks conducting MIOPS (Maritime Interdiction Operations). This entailed the stop-and-search of all merchant vessels bound for and leaving Iraq, to enforce the UN trade embargo. Countless numbers of ships had to be turned around and sent back to Iraq for carrying illegal cargo.

The terrorist attacks on US Marines in Kuwait, our next intended stop, made the Captain anxious about bringing Cumberland into port. These dangers were eventually outweighed by other reasons for HMS Cumberland to visit Kuwait. I was happy about this, as I was due to fly home from Kuwait.

With storms in the UK forcing my return flight to be cancelled, and leaving me stuck in Kuwait Airport for 20 hours, I eventually arrived back on 22 October, tired, but very glad to be back in the temperate climate of the UK.

In all it was a thoroughly enjoyable experience, and it was useful to hone the skills I have learnt in my trade that had not been touched on since I left training.

ROYAL NAVY ATTACHMENT
by LCpl Robertson

On Monday 5 August 2002 I embarked at Devonport on HMS Chatham, another type 22 batch 3 Broadsword class frigate. This was not bad going as I only volunteered on the previous Wednesday and received orders on the Thursday, the last working day of the week for us at Haverfordwest. We sailed that day and it was made clear to me that I would have only a short adjustment period. My first watch started at 1300 hours, straight into defence watches, i.e. 6 hours on and 6 hours off. My role on board was to integrate with the ship's SIGINT staff, known in the Navy as CTs (communications technicians).

Our first stop en route was at Catania in Sicily, where I had the opportunity to visit Mt Etna (before it erupted) and do some sightseeing. Here we relieved HMS Sheffield on her final voyage before decommissioning. Our first patrol was exhausting, but I got the chance to really settle in and get familiar with long forgotten systems that I had last seen in training at DSSS, and to learn a few more to boot. Our next stop was Aksas Naval Base in southern Turkey, near the tourist centre of Marmaris.

Following our second patrol (which again proved successful) we returned to Aksas to hand over duties to HNLMS De Witte in a ceremony attended by the Dutch Secretary of State for Defence and ships from USA, Spain, Germany, France, Turkey and Greece.

In all it was a thoroughly different experience but very useful as so many of the skills I used and improved are core to operations in the modern DISI world.

EX URBAN SEARCH*by Cpl Brumfield*

Our first ever Sqn deployment on FIBUA Training started on 9 September 02 with our arrival at Westdown Camp to the usual accompaniment of horizontal rain and gale force winds. After settling in, we began two days of sect/tp battle runs with demos by the DS on room entry clearance procedures at Copehill Down. Fortunately the weather held up for the confidence course days of rain had left the drains and tunnels rather damp! An interesting lesson on booby traps and house defence was given by RE instructors. These brought out a few home truths of urban warfare fighting. We also did the Molotov Cocktail range, which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. All lessons were then put into practice with the 2 platoons advancing to the holding area for the final dawn attack. This commenced with a brisk 5-mile tab with approximately 80lbs of personal equipment. Dawn broke accompanied by GPMG fire which initiated the company attack. The assault lasted for 2 hours, which seemed more like 2 days! After the smoke had cleared, all 6 sections agreed that the exercise was a complete success, and we all returned to Brawdy thoroughly exhausted. A big thank you to **SSgt Morgan** and his band DS and to the RE team for all their hard work which made the exercise an enjoyable experience for all.

EX WHALE WANDER 2002 - *by LCpl O'Mahony-Doran*

The Sqn took to the hills on 2 October for the annual Individual Navex Competition, a 25 km tab with bergens across the Brecon Beacons. The weather wasn't brilliant at the start. Morale was high, but the hills were higher, and by checkpoint 2, fears were setting in that we wouldn't make it back for last orders. The fog got heavy later in the day, as did the cursing. However, with some expert navigational skills (Ahem!), most people made it to the finish. Everyone put in a good effort, but at the end of the day there could only be one winner, **LCpl O'Mahony-Doran**, who was followed by **LCpl Secker** and **Sig Treweeks**. Everyone enjoyed the whole experience (honest!), and would like to thank **SSgt Morgan** for organising the whole thing, and all the DS at the checkpoints (when they were there, of course) No names, **SSgt Norris**!

ADVENTURE TRAINING - *by Cpl Hobson, Romeo Troop*

Adventure training is all about searching your inner self for character and courage. As the old saying goes 'To a brave and faithful man nothing is difficult'. This year our adventure training package was a trip to Halton Training Camp in Lancaster, where we were to embark on a busy schedule of caving, mountain-biking and hill-walking. Who would have thought that our adventure training would have started before we even crossed the Welsh border into England? Our first surprise activity was to recover baggage from the hard shoulder of the motorway after one of the side panniers popped open of its own accord, or at least that is the story we got from **Sig Sarah Dunwell**.

Cpl Gregory descending to fetch water for the group

The first element of the training covered was the caving. The majority of people seemed to approach this with a little trepidation, but after some expert advice from the instructors everybody seemed raring to go. It wasn't until we were well into the caves that we realised that there would be no turning back! This certainly crossed the adventurers' minds when we came to the deep-water crossing. It was either navigate with expert agility or get wet! A few of the party managed to experience the 'underground swimming pool' in all its glory. The highlight of the caving evolution had to be the dreaded 'Cheese Press'. I leave this your imagination.

Next on the agenda was the mountain-biking phase. This seemed to be the event that most people were looking forward to, as it

was an excuse to hurl yourself around the hillside at a rapid rate of knots! After climbing what seemed like Everest, we eventually arrived at the top with our cycles. Then, with much gusto the bikers said a few prayers, made peace with God, pointed themselves downhill and went for it. All the participants managed to make it to the bottom without damage, but one injury is worth mentioning. **Sgt Steve Bottomley** was attacked indiscriminately on the shin by a sharp piece of flint! After showing off his war wound he was whisked off to the local hospital for stitches and a bandage for his pride.

The week in Lancaster turned out to be a fantastic trip for all, especially the young soldiers, as in some cases it was their first taste of adventure training with a working unit. Halton Training Camp is an excellent facility, and has many more activities available in close proximity. By the end of the trip we all proved that when you are brave, nothing is difficult.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

OC	**Maj J Sutton**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) K Scott**

HEADQUARTERS TROOP

The Tp has had a couple of busy months with the recent ECI, RSIT and CO's Management Inspections. Well done to everybody – now we can look forward to the Sqn Pacex. Thanks go to **Sig Flook** and **Sig Smith** for refurbishing the Sqn Conference Room and map store. The SQMS, **SSgt Andy Craig** is running out of KFOR T-shirts and is looking for somebody to cover for 6 months while he nips out to buy some replacements. The 2IC, **Capt Knightly Brown** has been sent on a course so that she can look after the Sqn accounts. Are you sure that **LCpl Agnew** is the new funds manager in the meantime? Congratulations to **LCpls Baz Green** and **Glen Russell** on their promotion to corporal.

EX FOXES DRAGON IV, 07-11 OCTOBER 02

On Day 1, the adventurous training week didn't get off to the best possible start. A certain individual, **Sgt Gibson**, couldn't quite hear his alarm going off, and a certain foreign exchange warrant officer from Australia, (not mentioning any names) **Craig Corcoran**, didn't think it was necessary to give his neighbour a call. But we eventually departed Brawdy Camp at 0600 hrs for the Guards' Adventurous Training Wing at Fremington Camp in Devon. After collecting **SSgt Dean Butler** and **LCpl Green** en route, everyone settled down for the four and a half-hour journey. On arrival, we were introduced to our instructors and given the relevant briefs. We were then quickly whisked off to the climbing tower to begin the first of many activities, starting with an introduction to abseiling. With a small amount of friendly encouragement, **Sig Carter** managed to descend safely. Next was the death slide. A wire had been suspended from the tower to an A-frame in the distance and **Cpl Ian Shaw** attacked this venture with vigour. The day ended with a marvellous meal prepared by our chef, **Pte Collins** and a trip into Barnstaple to experience the delights this town could offer.

After a hearty breakfast on Day 2, the party was split into two teams, each of eight people. Group 1 would begin with rock climbing while Group 2 would start with surfing and kayaking. After a two-hour journey to the coast to master the jagged cliffs of Baggy Point, Group 1 was disappointed to discover that inclement weather was to prevent them from climbing. A little disappointed, the group returned to the camp to attack the climbing tower. They soon began to enjoy themselves, trying different routes and racing to the top of the tower. A gladiator competition had been organised by the instructors to find the best of the best. **Sig Carter**, although nervous at first suddenly turned into an extra from 'Cliff-hanger'. After an exciting finale, top marks were given to **Sig Carter** and **Sig Roberts** who both appeared to run up the wall with the agility of a chimpanzee in the mating season.

Meanwhile Group 2 enjoyed surfing and kayaking, with excellent weather conditions for beginners. **Sig Roach** and **Cpl Shaw** seemed particularly adept at riding the waves, but the same could not be said for **LCpl Blockley**, who spent most of his time rolling in the sand after many attempts at surfing left him rolling around in the sea.

On Day 3 the party was again split into two groups with Group 1 doing a caving expedition and Group 2 attempting to overcome the elements at Baggy Point. After attiring themselves in extremely fetching waterproof outfits, Group 1 delved into the deepest, darkest caves the area could offer. Everyone tried to remain as dry as possible, but this was all a waste of time, as the instructors made everyone jump into a pool as part of the activity. The weather held for Group 2 as they hopped from rock to rock along the coastline. Everyone managed to stay quite dry, apart from **Capt Knightly Brown** who unfortunately got exceedingly wet after missing a rock jump. Ah well... The group then returned to the tower back at camp to continue climbing practice. A hotly contested gladiator competition was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone, with **Cpl Shaw** narrowly beating **WO Corcoran** by a kangaroo's tail.

On the final day of activities both groups joined together and decided to hit the surf. The weather was again ideal for surfing and kayaking, and everyone attempted both activities with varying degrees of success. The day finished too soon and it was time to return to the camp. The week had been a great success, with everyone enjoying most, if not all of the activities on offer. A big thanks to **Sgt Gibson** for a well-organised, fun-packed week's activities and thanks also to Fremington Camp and the instructors of the Guards Adventurous Training Wing.

VICTOR TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Lish**
Tp WO	**WO2 Butland**

The Tp has been very busy with maintenance and checking the Sqn's ODETTE and radio equipment, not to mention our vehicles. Following the inspection by the RSIT team, the hard work that had been put in by the Troop was rewarded by an impressive set of vehicle reports. A special thank-you goes to **Sgt Evans** who had to endure a period of heightened blood pressure in order to ensure all gave maximum effort. The theme of inspections continued with a CO's Management Inspection. Again the Tp had worked hard and received a good report. 25 November saw the anniversary of the Regt, which was celebrated with a dinner at the Offrs' Mess, with all Sgts' Mess members in attendance. The evening was enjoyed by all and has set the pace for the Christmas social calendar.

We welcome **Cpl Matthews, LCpl Buxton** and **LCpl Morrison** to the Tp.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (AYIOS NIKOLAOS)

CO	**Lt Col RA Sharp MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) M Neighbour**

2 SQUADRON

OC	**Lt Cdr DL Jones RN**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) NR Jennings**

THE DHEKELIA DASH

The Dhekelia Dash is a charity relay race run over 15 miles with 15 participants, each running a mile. Traditionally the race was run from Ayios Nikolaos to Dhekelia but this was changed, to a one mile circuit within Dhekelia Garrison. This year saw the 36th Dhekelia Dash and TMS had decided to enter a team, with the new **WO1 (FofS) Al Holyoak** at the helm, eager and keen to make a good impression. The morning of the race was typical for Cyprus with the temperature soaring into the high twenties.

We decided to approach the race tactically, running one of our stronger runners first to give us a good starting position. 2 Sqn's SSM, **WO2 Neil Jennings**, was volunteered for this leg, and completed it in a good time, placing the team in fifth place at that stage. The second part of our plan was to have the weaker runners run early, leaving the stronger runners the task of picking up the pace and regaining places. The second, third and fourth legs were run by **Sgt Ian McCarrick**, **LCpl John Kinnoch** and **WO2 Ade Peel** respectively. The responsibility of running the fifth leg fell to **Cpl Neil Shoebridge**, who ran an excellent time for a big lad, of 6.15 minutes. The sixth, seventh and eighth legs were ran with jointery in mind, with **CPO Nobby Hall**, **Cpl Matt Dawson** and **SAC Steve Harris**. Now was the time for the pace to be picked up and the ninth leg was completed by **SSgt Roger Thompson**. Next up was the tenth leg and our secret weapon, **SSgt Des Murney**, who ran an incredible time of 4.40 minutes (and is still yet to be drugs-tested). The eleventh leg was run by worse-for-wear **LCpl McGuire**. The twelfth leg fell to our great and illustrious leader, **WO1 Al Holyoak**. Thirteenth and fourteenth legs were run by **SAC Chris Ritchie** and **LCpl Ritchie Saether**. Finally, the last leg (the glory leg) was run by **Cpl Stu Yates**. The team finished with an impressive time of 1 hour 27 minutes and 29 seconds, which placed us (much to the amazement of the whole team) fourth in our category and sixth overall. All in all the day turned out to be thoroughly enjoyable for all those who had completed.

3 SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MGP Bohanan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) R Thorne**

3 SQUADRON COMMUNITY PROJECT - ST GEORGE'S CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

The project was conceived back in December 2001 with a plan of action and preparatory work being completed in January/February 2002. **Major Mick Bohanan**, OC 3 Sqn headed the project and appointed **SSgt Brian Sheard** as his 2IC. A committee was formed from personnel in 3 Sqn to assist **SSgt Sheard**.

Top of the list of priorities to enable this project to commence was funding. **SSgt (now W02) Neil Jennings** came up with the idea of a sponsored run round the Island of Cyprus to help raise money. To his amazement, volunteers appeared and completed the task, raising £2500. Many thanks to all who ran.

The project was now rolling and the next requirement was materials and resources. After long negotiations with local contractors in Cyprus, these began to appear, thanks to the quiet voice of **Mr Michael Gregoriou**, who negotiated a vast amount of help and donations from outside agencies.

Now that resources had become available, the project could kick into action. **SSgt Brian Sheard** gathered the volunteers for the first week in this six-month project. **Cpl Trev Shippey RAF**, headed the volunteer work force and the work began on 13 May 2002. The first week was designed to make a big impact on the garden and surrounding areas and included painting walls, changing the old chain fencing and laying the foundations for the new gazebo. But what everybody enjoyed most was the preparation of the garden and the laying of 60 tons of aggregate. This latter task was very hard and demanding work, especially in the heat we experienced. But we had a good group of workers who kept spirits high when the work got hard. **Major Mick Bohanan** and **SSgt Brian Sheard** visited the site frequentiy and witnessed the vast improvements happening day by day.

More volunteers gathered together for week 2, which started on 17 June 2002. They had the hard task of laying even more aggregate, a further 30 tons to be exact. The site foreman for this week was **Sgt Tony Woolford RAF** and the week's proceedings also included preparing and scraping the outside of the School building for its first coat of paint. The Gazebo was erected and the woodwork received treatment against the weather. The new sandpit was also erected and filled ready for the handicapped children to play in. Finally, 62 Sqn RE from Dhekelia dismantled a large 30-foot metal water tower that was unstable and dangerous.

Week 3 saw the preparation and re-decoration of all the internal rooms under the watchful eye of **Cpl Trev Shippey**. The area to the rear of the building was prepared for the delivery of more stone aggregate. **LCpl Pavi Warner** assisted **Sgt Kenny Butler** in the painstaking removal of weeds and debris to ensure the ground was fully prepared. **Sgt Kev Davies RE** whizzed round with the duty chainsaw and cleared trees to enable the painters to gain access to the surrounding walls.

Weeks 4 and 5 saw the internal re-decoration completed and the kitchen re-vamped. Electrical work was carried out to ensure that safety was at its highest standard for the handicapped children. Carpets were fitted and other comforts added to make this School the envy of others and to make a better life for the children and staff.

The project and all the hard work accomplished by **Major Mick Bohanan, SSgt Brian Sheard** and their team from 3 Sqn has received well-deserved publicity. RAF PTI **Cpl Andrea Shaw** and **WO2 (SSM) Rick Thorne**, with the assistance and coverage from a Cypriot newspaper have helped put the Sqn in the limelight. All the hard work has been very much appreciated by Principal at the school, **Eleni Kalogeri,** all the staff and especially the children.

The Garrison Commander, **Col GB Grossmith MBE** and CO JSSU(AN), **Lt Col RA Sharp** also pass on congratulations to **Major Mick Bohanan** and his team from 3 Sqn for the tremendous task they completed in 6 months.

XVI 16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO:	**LtCol CJ Thackray**
RSM:	**WO1 (RSM) Fisher**

At the time of writing it is December and the Regt is deservedly channeling its energies into the preparation of the festive mayhem that precedes the Christmas break. When the hanging and readjustment of decorations replaces that of similar struggles with wet and uncooperative cam nets, it is time for somber reflection over the last couple of very hectic months. September through to November saw the culmination of the year's operational efforts with two major exercises. EX ARRCADE FALCON was spread over a three-week period in October, and was a joint exercise predominately between 11 and 1 Sig Bdes. In addition to 16 and 7 Sig Regts, elements of 5 TA sig regts joined us for the fray. As convoy after convoy lined up, the apron at the former Bruggen Airfield (now Javelin Barracks) was reminiscent of the major air outlift to Macedonia back in 1999. The whole affair was a miracle of organisation and planning and was well worth the sleepless nights endured by the QM during the preceding weeks. It turned out to be a very successful exercise, the only casualty being the SO3 G2/G3 from 1 Sig Bde, **Maj Marcus Chambers**, and his birthday doughnuts. These were liberated by members of the Regt's Ops Team who had infiltrated 1 Sig Bde Ops cell. So much for security. The theft only came to light with the transmission of a photo from the perpetrators to their victim. This was to be the opening salvo of the "cake wars" campaign that would rage throughout the ex.

With the patch paint hardly dry on the relays, it was out again in November for three weeks on EX ARRCADE FUSION, HQ ARRC's annual war fighting exercise. This took place in Sennelager (probably the worst lager in the world). The HQ element of the Regt took the opportunity to develop its new role as the NEC (Network Engineering Control) which, after ironing out a few wrinkles, proved a great success.

On the sports front, the Regt soccer team has made good

progress, reaching the quarter final stage the BA(G) Cup. Led by **SSgt Ali Watkins**, the team reached the semi finals of the Corps 7-a-side tournament in September, unfortunately losing out to 21 Sig Regt, who went on to become runners up. Inspired by this success, the team has enjoyed victories in the first two rounds of the Army Cup. The first round pitted us against a strong QRH side, and goals from **Cpl Miller** ensured a good 3-1 win. The result shot us into the second round against the RDG, (our conquerors in the previous season). The match was played in good spirit throughout and the RDG proved how strong a team they are by strolling into a 2-0 lead after 20 minutes. However, our heads never dropped and we kept on playing. Our efforts were rewarded as we narrowed the deficit and went in at half time 2-1 down. An inspired half time team talk set the lads well on their way, but RDG scored again 20 seconds after the restart. 3-1 down, the nail in the coffin? NO! Again we kept on playing the football we are striving to achieve and after **LCpl Young** scored an absolute peach of a goal, the comeback had started. The RDG folded under the ever-increasing tide of pressure and we eventually won 6-3. A close game! A special note must go to all of the team for never giving up and always maintaining belief in their own abilities. Well, that's what **Sgt Dave Skingley** believes as we are now through into the BA(G) quarter finals. A great team spirit is being built and the lads will carry on in that vein for the rest of the season. 'Watch out, 16 are back!'

Staying with sport, an Inter-unit Novice Grade 3 Boxing Competition for the BMW Park Lane Inter Unit Boxing Trophy was fought for at Javelin Barracks on the evening of Thursday, 28 November 02. The competition was contested between the two main RSigs units in Javelin Barracks, us (16) and our sister regt, 7 Sig Regt. The night was a great success on all fronts, not least the display of courage, controlled aggression and sportsmanship shown by all the boxers who took part. The boxers showed good technical skills and a high standard of fitness through the whole evening and coaches from both teams should be thanked for the time and effort put in to ensure the teams were at their peak. These were, **Sgt Robinson** from 7 Sig Regt and **Sgt Rob Kirk** and **Cpl Robbo Robson** from 16 Sig Regt. A huge 'pat on the back' must also go to **WO2 (QMSI) Trev Bowman** and his team for arranging a great evening's entertainment and for turning the 'Hangar' into something resembling a professional boxing arena and surrounds. The results from the evening were as follows:

Featherweight
Winner **Sig Rizza** (7) Runner-Up **Sig Miller** (16)
Light Welter
Winner **Sig Horsley** (7) Runner-Up **Sig Kelly** (16)
Light Middle
Winner **LCpl Johnson** (7) Runner-Up **Sig Hindson** (16)
Middleweight
Winner **Sig Kingan** (16) Runner-Up **Sig Godwin** (7)
Middleweight
Winner **Sig Winters** (16) Runner-Up **LCpl Mcewan** (7)
Cruiserweight
Winner **Sig Brown** (7) Runner-Up **Cpl Brameld** (16)
Light-heavy
Winner **Cpl Robinson** (7) Runner-Up **LCpl Willis** (16)
Light-heavy
Winner **Sig Hall** (7) Runner-Up **Sig Young** (16)
Welterweight
Winner **Sig Thorburn** (7) Runner-Up **Sig Forsyth** (16)

Best Boxer **Sig Rizza** (7)
Best Endevour **LCpl Willis** (16)

The Overall Winners of the Inter-Unit Novice BMW Park Lane Boxing Trophy were 7 Sig Regt. We all look forward to the re-match when 16 Sig Regt will try to take back this prestigious trophy. See you all there.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

O C **Maj Guy Richards**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Leigh Crossing**

The SHQ has been busy thinking up wild ideas on how best to test the skills sets of the Sqn depts, as the OC awards an array of differing and challenging tasks to unsuspecting tp comds. The SSM's face has been transfixed by a grin or is it a grimace since he learned of his impending posting. Is he off to 1 Mech Bde or 11 Sig Regt as the RQMS or is it 11 Sig Regt as SSM HQ Sqn?. Whoever it is, best get your running shoes dusted off! On the bad news front, the OC has not received his posting yet, but there is the saying "better the devil you know".

MT TROOP

MTWO **WO2 Gary Greaves**
OPs Sgt **Sgt Jimmy Pritchard**

We say a sad farewell to **LCpl Jobson** on promotion to Cpl. If that was not enough good news, he also received a posting to Cyprus! We also say farewell to **LCpl Guy Hawkes** on his move to the Falklands. We welcome **Sgts Neil Fraser** and **Jimmy Pritchard.** Congratulations to **Sig Lee Lester**, who has been promoted to LCpl - AGAIN! He has been up and down so often, he is known at the records office as Tower Bridge. Hopefully he'll manage to hang on to it a little longer this time. **Sgt Neil Fraser** is to be congratulated on his performance as Mr Vice for the NWE Dinner Night (200 guests, and no one laughed). Never mind the RSM might let him have another go! By the time of going to press the MTWO will have moved to pastures new as the SSM of the Sqn. Good luck **Mr Greaves** and remember where you came from!

TM TROOP

Regt FofS **WO1 Colin Hamilton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bath**

It has been a hectic and demanding month, starting with arguably the most important ex of the year, ARRCADE FUSION, in which all taking part were highly praised by the staff. The exercise on the whole was a great learning experience for all, and went well for all concerned, especially TM Tp. With all exercises out of the way until the New Year, TM Tp can now start looking forward to a well-earned Christmas break. We received a number of early presents, not from Santa but from PROM, in the form of new workshop benches. All very state of the art, which means we can now get rid of the 6 foot tables that have served us so well since we arrived in April.

We extend a warm welcome to **Cpl David Holmes** and **LCpls Farrington** and **Fowler.** On a sadder note, the move of techs back to the Sqns sees a number of the boys and girls going out to 230 Sig Sqn and 255 Sig Sqn. Good luck to you all. Last but not least congratulations go to newly promoted **Sgt Roger Teasdale, Cpls Nick Bray, Rachel Ellison, Mike Heydon** and **Nick Sheehan**.

Four members of the Regt, **WO1 John Ramsdale, Sgt Tindale** and **Cpls Cadogan** and **Smith** embarked on one of the 3 things every man should try, a marathon. In this case, it was the Berlin Marathon. With 41,000 runners trying to register at the same time, registration was a nightmare, but once that was out of the way the team decided to enjoy the delights of the Italian cuisine available in Berlin. Race day itself saw ideal conditions for a marathon - overcast, dry and not too cold. The support around the route was excellent and the route itself would take some beating anywhere in the world. **WO1 John Ramsdale** completed the course in a time of 3hrs 45 and **Cpls Paul Cadogan** and **Smith** together in a time of 3 hrs 35 - all excellent times for a first marathon. But **Sgt Tindale** completed the race in a time 2 hrs 37. Just to put that in perspective, it is like running 17 and a half sub 9-min BPFA's without a rest.

The Jever 10k, although not being as high profile as the Berlin Marathon, enabled members of the Regt to compete and socialize with members of other countries' Armed Forces. Although it represented the whole station, the team all came from 16 Sig Regt. The race itself was held in windy wet and cold conditions, and although we had a much-weakened team we still managed to come 7th out of 57 teams.

On a sad note we must say goodbye to **SSgt Lloyd Bath** who has swapped his soldering iron for a pace stick as he covers the long-term absence of the SSM.

QUARTERMASTERS DEPARTMENT

QM(T) **Capt Paul Horton BEM**
RQMS(T) **WOII Al Ironside**

We extend a warm welcome to **Sig Lee Patterson** from 249 (AMF) Sig Sqn, **Sigs Phil Sansom, Maryalyn Dryburgh** and **Kate Barry** all of whom come straight from training. Also back from op tours are **LCpl Nicky Harrison** and **Sig Bungle Micheal** from BRITFOR and KFOR respectively. Farewells include **Sgt Ian Taylor**, off to 8 Bde, and **Sgt John Hoskins** off to 20 Bde.

At the end of October, A2 Ech ventured out on EX ARRCADE FUSION 02 to Sennelager. After a period of low intensity training with the NEC in attendance, we started a period of day and night moves which was intended to give the newer members of the Dept some valuable experience. Highlights of the exercise were the QMSIs idea of battle PT and games (with a twist), and finding out that **Sig Clare Kilhooley** got the reefer, with all the rations on, stuck on a Brigadier's lawn. With the end of the exercising period we now get down to the serious part of the year, how we should enjoy ourselves over the next couple of weeks prior to Xmas.

REGIMENTAL OPERATIONS

'Once more into the breach dear friends' we cry as Regt Ops dives feet first into the exercise season AKA ARRCADE FALCON/WARRIOR and ARRCADE FUSION. The exercises saw the ops team employed in a very different role as the NEC (Network. Engineering and Control), a highly mobile command complex which dealt with the responsibility of maintaining the real-time communications. It was an exciting time as we developed both the new HQ complex and tailored our operating procedures to meet our new responsibilities. The long hours were well spent and the exercises proved very fruitful. A few mentions go out to **WO1 (RSM) Fisher** for always being last out of bed in the morning; Traffic Officer **Capt Kiely** for his EGGstremly enEGGmatic performance on this EGGercise; **WO1 (YofS) Dennis** for his diplomatic relations with the Americans and last but not least **Sig Buyers** for geographically misplacing an entire camnet plus hessian. Both exercises went extremely well, giving us an excellent overview of how this new idea would work on real time war fighting operations. A fond farewell to **Capt Larry Grierson** and **WO2 Hannah**. Goodbye and Good luck to **Sgt Cowie**, who is off to Blandford on the next Yeoman's course and to **Sig Douglas**, who leaves us on promotion to 1 Mech. Hello and welcome to **Maj Thornber**, who joins us as the new Ops Offr, **Capt Milne**, who steps into the TOTs chair, **Capt Gordon Wills** as the new Tech Adjt, **Sgt Yvonne Jones**, the new PVRO and to myself **Sig Jamie Buyers**, who takes over (in my opinion) the busiest job in ops as the Regt Ops Clerk. Oh, and congratulations to myself on getting picked up on the LCpl board.

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Dominic Sharkey**
SHQ **WO2 Mclaren**

As the Sqn continues to evolve, we find ourselves losing some members of SHQ. **SSgt Neil Swithenbank** leaves the Army with our best wishes for himself and his family for the future. His replacement comes in the diminutive form of **SSgt Dom Graham**. **Sgt Scott Day** moves over to 7 Sig Regt. The Sqn also loses one of its funniest members (in his own opinion at least!) with **SSgt Brodie's** imminent posting to 35 (V) Sig Regt. As he will be in post by the time this issue is released, it seems appropriate to pass on a few secrets he holds dear. Although he hides and denies it, he is actually a Sys Op, and his real name is **Gordon**! And we all wondered why he preferred to be called Spats.

TRUNK NODE 015

Tp Comd **Lt Ed Swift**
Tp SSgt **SSgt John McNeill**

The last couple of months have been productive for TN 015. Personnel from the Tp have been mostly involved with EX ARRCADE FALCON and more recently, EX ARRCADE FUSION. During ARRCADE FALCON the Tp was involved in supporting our sister Tp 016, in providing the PTARMIGAN communication network in support of ARRC and 1 Sig Bde. A special note has to go to **Sig Ford** in his night navigational skills, more specifically in being the only member of the Tp who was able to park the Switch on its side. This was just after **LCpl Andrew Stockdale** had managed to hit a tree! Remedial driver training is to follow shortly. Overall the exercise went well and all personnel benefited from it.

With a very short turn around week the Tp was then deploying on to the main ex of the year, ARRCADE FUSION. This was the culmination of training and exercises in 16 Signal Regiment for the Tp. Both TNs were deployed to provide the main effort of PTARMIGAN network coverage and SCRA(Central) support. As the exercise became more static after the first week of being bounced around Sennelager Ranges, half of 015 were released from the exercise and many of us returned to camp. This didn't last long as most of us were called back out in various jobs, augmenting the HQ or showing the other node how to do it properly.

This period has not been without its good news. Congratulations go to **LCpls Glen MacDonald, Buffy Bufton** and **Simon Griffiths** on their promotion to Cpl, and to **Sigs Sharron Norcross, Tracy Ardron, Carl Vickers, John Ford** and **Jemma Patman** on their promotion to LCpl. Well done!

We also welcome the newcomers to the troop, **Sgt Chris Simmonds, Sigs Chris Hall** and **Ashley Kirkbride**, and say our good-byes to **Cpl Andy Adam, LCpls Ricky Baron, Paddy Irwin, Scott Cameron** and **Billy Merrick.** The Tp also loses **SSgt John McNeill**, who moves 30 metres up the corridor to be take over as SQMS. The Tp looks forward to meeting our new Tp Staffy in the form of ...another **SSgt McNiell**. Rumour has it that this was done so that the RSM wouldn't get confused.

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Ashley Hayden**
SSM **WO2 Den Yates**

It has been yet another busy time for some of the elements in SHQ. At the beginning of the month the Sqn, along with the rest of the Regt, deployed on EX ARRCADE FUSION in Sennelager. From the time we left Javelin Barracks to the time we returned, we must have had a whole year's rainfall over the three-week period. It was quite eventful on the journey up to Sennelager as the MT had given all the co-drivers very detailed route cards, but for some reason the ED's wanted to go a different way - twice! We eventually started erecting the CP with Acting SQMS **Sgt John Mckillop** adopting his normal position of chief radio operator. In the meantime Acting SSM **Sgt Barney Revell** was his normal diplomatic self trying to put our Allied friends in the picture regarding how the Sqn does things, but not getting very far. On 10 November the exercise was halted for a very moving service to commemorate Remembrance Day. An estimated 500 personnel from a variety of nations attended.

Congratulations go to our Sqn Clerk, **LCpl Mark Unsworth** on his promotion to Cpl. Well done, and all the best with your new posting to 14 Geo Sqn RE at Ayrshire Barracks. Welcome to the new clerk, straight from the factory, **Pte Francois**, and to our new Civ Clerk, **Mr Adrian Yates**. A fond farewell to Sqn 2IC, **Capt Barker**, who leaves us to take up the post of Ops Offr 4 Armd Bde in Osnabruck, and to (SSM) **Sgt Barney Revell**, who leaves to move up country, to Herford, 1 (UK) ADSR, to take up a position in the Regt MT.

H TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Emily Greenwood**
Tp SSgt **SSgt MacPhee**

This month, part of the Tp was away on EX ARRCADE FUSION with the role of installation and maintenance of a battlefield fibre optic LAN to support CIS Tp. The Tp, led by **Lt Greenwood**, **SSgt MacPhee** and **Cpl Cooper** ensured that all within Mega City 1 (Sennelager) ran smoothly. Meanwhile back in the real world, Static Sect, led by **SSgt Watkins** ensured that a clean environment awaited the rest of the Tp`s return. **Cpl Farrow, LCpl Sanderson** and **Sig Tranter** strived to complete the Hangar

1 re-wire. Meanwhile **Cpl Aplin** asked questions and **Sig Mike Spotswood** drank coffee. The Tp says farewell to **LCpls Downey, Lake** and **Gault**, and wish them all the best in their new postings. We welcome **Sgt Doink** and **Sig Brown**.

MAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Jane Squires**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Rob Kirk**

We say hello to our new Tp Sgt, **Sgt Neil Davis** and our two new Sigs fresh from the factory, **Sigs Hill and Smith**. Good-byes go to **Sigs Webber, Wood, Steele** and **Donaghy**.

With both promotion boards sitting in the last couple of months, we congratulate **Sigs Woody Wood, Andy Winters, Neil Donaghy, Jamie Buyers** and **Michelle Spotswood** who all came off the LCpls board, **LCpls Steve Carroll, Chris Knights and Connie Turner** who were promoted to Cpls.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Graham Dorrington**
Tp SSg	**SSgt Des Holroyd**

We welcome our new OC, who has arrived back from his six month exile, the tp comds course at HMP Blandford. Also new into the fray is **2Lt Chris Humphrey**, currently on his gap year commission. Don't worry sir, we won't make life too difficult! Also new in is **SSgt Kitch Kitchner**, who will be running the tech wksps. We also welcome **LCpl Terry Cartmell**, fresh from the rigors of the station fitness centre. **Sig Bobby Bryant**, stand by! Good-byes go to **Cpl Trigger Marshall**, who is off to 30 Sig Regt, and **Cpl Chuck Brennan**, who is off to fulfill a career in Civvy Street. We also wish **Sig Steve Kelly** the best of luck representing 16 Sig Regt against 7 Sig Regt in the Station boxing tournament (afternote: lost) Last but not least, well done to **LCpls Jim Greenham** and **Bish Bishop** on their promotion to Cpl.

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col IPF Vingoe**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) M Nuttall**

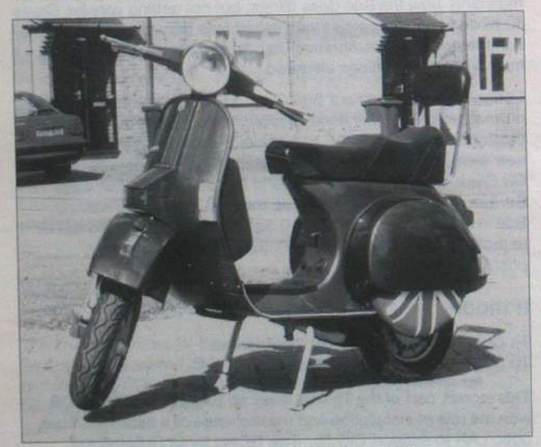
FAREWELL TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER

Lt Col Nick Pope departed the Regt on 11 Nov 02. After 21 months in command, he left the Regt to take up the post of Deputy Director in D Def RP. The temptation to tow him out of the Regt in a 501 or such like was resisted. Instead a former State Rolls Royce, used by the Queen in 1974, was borrowed for him to leave in customary style. The Regt is extremely grateful to **Col Nick** for his work and support whilst in command and wish him, **Jo**, and the rest of the clan all the best for the future

OFFICERS MESS FAREWELL

On Thursday 7 November the officers of the Regt said their farewell to **Lt Col Nick Pope**. The 'exhaustive' event started with an 18 hole round of golf at the Ansty course followed by a lunch in the Mess and presentation of a current Mess caricature painting. The achievements of the CO during his tour have been well documented in this publication, and were topped only by managing to fine all 41 attendees a bottle of champagne, himself included.

MT – THE WICKSTEAD PARK SCOOTER FAIR



Modtastic - MT's New Pride and Joy

On Sunday 29 September 2002 the scooter duo from Regt MT, **Cpl Ian Campbell** and **Cpl Sean Watson** departed Bramcote on **Cpl Watson's** Vespa with smoke flying, wheels spinning and parkas flapping in the wind. The event was the Wickstead Park Scooter Fair near Kettering. We arrived at 10.30 hrs to see about 150 scooters already parked up. **Cpl Campbell** thought all his birthdays had come at once, and seeing what was on offer, he rang his wife to ask about the possibility of re-mortgaging the house. The conversation finished along the lines of, 'I'm so excited, I've left a spot where I'm stood' and with that he toddled of to the toilet. Needless to say the rest of the day was spent dashing from stall to stall with one very excited person. That said, he did have a keen eye for a bargain, tapping down some of the hardened stall-holders to rock-bottom prices. Having dodged **Cpl Campbell's** trails of excitement, we left for the drive back to Bramcote. The return journey saw much of the same from the wannabe mod. He is now a confirmed fanatic and scooter owner who can't wait for next rally season to begin. Scooterist's rule! (That's scooterist's **Ian** not MOD's).

501 NECTARINE - KOSOVO

For some time, a 501 detachment from 30 Sig Regt has been providing the back-up SATCOM and Light TAC role for the MNB in Kosovo. Most recent in this roulement were 5 lucky lads from A Tp, 256 Sig Sqn. A quick crew summary is below:-

Det Comd was **Cpl Matt Whitfield**. The remainder of the crew and the reputations they forged are as follows: **Sig Edwards** was the Det clown and kept us all amused with his random stories. Unfortunately he developed an advanced case of compulsive lying disorder and was quickly volunteered for everything going just to give the Det a break. He enjoyed various trips around Kosovo, including a visit to the KPC and the Crystal Caves.

Sigs Edwards and McHugh meet 'Dr Mick' in Kosovo

Sig Chris McHugh fancied himself as a Michelangelo and decorated every inch (including the ceiling) of his corrimec with pictures from magazines left over by the previous crew. **Cpl Malcolm Hirst** was pleased with the finished product and spent hours gazing at his handiwork. A visit to Slim Lines by **Faye** from 'Steps' was welcomed by all and gave **Sig Owain Jones** a chance to stop eyeing up the LEC's (sick man) and remember what British women were all about!

The highlight of the tour was the phone call from Sqn Ops informing us of our early departure from Kosovo, so after a quick goodbye to our new friends from 1 Mech Bde Sig Sqn, we left much sooner than planned.

The Nectarine Crew recruit Faye from 'Steps'. L-R, Cpl Whitfield, Sig Edwards, Faye, Sig Jones, Cpl Hirst and Sig Jones

31 (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**LtCol Paul Wenlock TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Paterson**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC	**Capt Knowles**
SSM	**SSgt Browning**

HQ Sqn has had a busy time of late. Two radio dets were deployed to 2(NC) Sig Bde to operate as Spec task, during our Annual Camp EX HORSESHOE 3 and drove in excess of 1000Kms, in the execution of their role. Given the minimum manning required, both dets played a valuable role during this ex. **Sgt Sarah Hales** managed to contribute to a major movement ex in Liverpool, due to a flat tyre. **SSgt Graham Browning** and **Cpl Elvis Presley** kept the Regt re-supplied under direction of the QM Dept.

Congratulations to the Sqn team in the tug of war competition. They beat the rest of the Regt without losing a single pull, during the potted sports day of Annual Camp. HQ Sqn also had a chance to show off at The Lord Mayor's Show in London. Along with other members of the Regt, they provided the Guard of Honour for the Lord Mayor. Remembrance Sunday also featured highly in the Sqn's calendar with the parade and march past through Putney High Street.

The Sqn has bid farewell to **Maj Guy Bewsher**, who has gone to 2(NC) Sig Bde, Corsham, and to **WO2 (SSM) Dean Clarke**, who retired in October.

THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

by WO2 (AQMS) Andre Scrivener

This year both 31 (City of London) Sig Regt (V) and London UOTC were tasked with providing the Guard of Honour, for the Lord Mayor's Show. The event took place on Saturday 9 November 2002. The Regts LAD provided 4 of the soldiers, including myself as the photographer. After the inspection of the Guard of Honour, by the Lord Mayor outside Mansion House we marched past St Paul's Cathedral and onto Aldwych. The return march was from the Embankment passing Mansion House and finishing at the Guildhall. The weather remained dry and sunny for the whole day and was extremely well attended by the general public.

83 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Alec Ferguson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Matt Cahill**

EX BAYONET WARRIOR

The Sqn moved to SPTA to polish up some of the basic soldiering skills that tend to get over looked in the packed calendar of a TA Signals Sqn. Special mention must go to the Sqn's trip-flare stars, **Lt Andy Knight** and **Cpl Jay Eastwood-Bell. Cpl Eastwood-Bell's** first attempt at setting a trip-flare had gone pretty well until the moment she decided to clean up the packaging and, in doing so, walked across the trip wire on the way to dispose of the rubbish. The platoon was well established and, after some beat-up rehearsals, sent out the fighting patrols mid-day on Saturday. Luckily enough the enemy (in the form of **Maj Alex Ferguson**, **Capt David** Farrimond, **WO2 Matt Cahill** and **SSgt Tony Wringe**) were in the right place at the right time to get properly shot! The rover, and more surprisingly the OC and PSI, survived the SSM's cross-country assault on the ambush position. Some cunning route planning ensured that the patrol came from a totally unexpected direction - although there may well be a real officer-with-a-map story behind this, if you believe the rumours…eh sir? A Standing patrol, lead by **Sig Paul Bullivant**, succeeded in locating intelligence which pinpointed the hideout of the rebel group. The obligatory first light/late morning attack was the culmination of the ex. The platoon put into practice all the skills rehearsed over the weekend.

56 DIV OCA DINNER

The Guest of Honour at the Annual Dinner, held on 8 November 2002, was the SOinC (A), Brig **David McDowall MBE ADC**. The event was well supported by members 83 Sig Sqn, who are able trace their roots back to 56 Div. The soldiers thoroughly enjoyed the evening and mixing with former soldiers. **Sgt Stuart Farqhuarson-Roberts's** most generous note to the top table, an offer of a case of champagne, was unfortunately rejected. **Maj Alex Ferguson**, who retires this year, has now found something else to occupy his spare weekends. Some persuasion has resulted in a joint Regt/OCA Motor Cycle Club, with **Maj Ferguson** as the first president. 56 Div's despatch riders formed one of the earliest motorcycle display teams in the British Army and many members are still active bikers, so hopefully there should be an interesting spread of classic and modern machines.

REMEMBRANCE PARADE SHEPHERDS BUSH

A strong turnout from both 83 Sig Sqn and 10 Coy, 4 Para, with whom we share the TAC, ensured a large military contingent for this local parade. The parade was lead to the War Memorial on Shepherds Bush Green by **SSgt Ian King**, The Regt Piper. Following the service at the memorial, the Sqn marched down the Shepherds Bush Road to be reviewed by the Mayor of Hammersmith and Fulham. The Sqn also sent **Capt David Farrimond, Cpl Jay Eastwood-Bell** and **LCpl Matt Hunt** to St Paul's Cathedral, where they did a sterling job in representing us.

Congratulations go to **Sgt Stuart Farqharson-Roberts** on return from FTRS and promotion to Sgt; to **Cpl Cheryl Duncan** on promotion to Cpl; to **Sigs Gary Esprit** and **Emma Hall** on completion of their recruits' courses. Farewells go to Maj **Alex Ferguson** on retirement after 22 yrs' TA service

94 (BERKSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Major Hugh Robertson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Peter Watson**

The Squadron's role is to provide a flexible CNR capability. Formerly an independent sqn, it has now joined 31 Sig Regt (V), part of 2 (NC) Sig Bde. The Sqn is located with a SHQ and three tps at Windsor, and a further troop at Reading. Well recruited from the Thames Silicon Valley with personnel who possess a strong technical background, the Sqn continues to attract a large number of recruits with a broad range of IT and technical skills.

BATTLEFIELD TOUR – GALLIPOLI

In May, 35 soldiers from all ranks of the Sqn took part in a fascinating battlefield tour, organised by Windsor Tp Comd, **Captain Vince Connolly**. In marvellous weather, Sqn members visited the Helles, ANZAC and Suvla landing beaches and traced the progress of the allied troops as they fought their way inland. Of the 350 Berkshire Yeoman who came ashore, 160 are buried at Green Hill Cemetery. The tour finished there with a short service and the laying of a wreath. It had been a very interesting and educational four days, although sadly most of the lessons learned were about how not to do things.

GOLDEN JUBILEE DAY PARADE

On Monday the 3 June, the Sqn took part in a large and happy Jubilee parade through the streets of Windsor. **Her Majesty the Queen**, was accompanied by **His Royal Highness, The Duke of Edinburgh**, who reviewed almost every imaginable organisation from the area. The Sqn's contingent had spent some time under the watchful eye of **WO2 (SSM) Peter Watson** and **WO2 Dave Davies** practising for the event. On the day, the OC, **Major Hugh Robertson** led some 45 all ranks in No 1 Dress, bayonets fixed, as is their right since the Sqn has been granted the Freedom of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Two very smart Sqn Landrovers, packed with warlike types in No 8 dress followed this marching contingent. Afterwards there was a well-attended barbecue for all those who had taken part in the parade.

ANNUAL CAMP

This year's Annual Camp was the last activity the Sqn held, as an independent unit. Together with 60 Signal Squadron (V), we provided CNR for EX ARRCADE FALCON. It was decided that this role could best be fulfilled, by combining both Sqns to form a composite CNR Sqn. The aim of the exercise was to practise 11 Sig Bde's new concept of manoeuvring the communications capability according to the demands of the battle. To do this, the Sqns' CNR assets, were used to provide immediate and flexible C2 outside the trunk assets provided by the Bde's other Regts. The ex was judged to have been highly successful from the CNR point of view, with CNR providing C2 for the whole of ARRC at one stage.

REMEMBRANCE PARADE - WINDSOR

Because Combermere Barracks was already occupied by Green Goddess fire appliances in support of OP FRESCO, practice took place within the grounds of Windsor TAC. It rained copiously for the rehearsal, but cleared up for the actual parade. **WO2 Dave Davies** and **SSgt Matthew Allen**, with **SSgt Wayne Ratcliffe** and **Sgt Andy Cassidy** acting as the Guidon escorts, commanded the Guidon party, which carried the Berkshire Yeomanry Guidon. The Sqn formed up under the expert handling of **W02 Pete Watson** and was handed over to **Major Hugh Robertson**. The Sqn then marched to the Regimental War Memorial, in Barry Avenue and paid tribute to their fallen comrades. Approximately 150 members of the Regimental Association, families and friends attended.

32 (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Cammy Payn**
SSM **WO2 Norma Sproul**

EX STATIC DESCENT - 27 JULY – 4 AUGUST 2002

by Lt Iain Davidson

EX STATIC DESCENT saw six members of the Regt venture to the Dutch Waffen Island of Texel to take part in the Dutch Military Parachutist Course. Four members of the group had parachuted before, either on the basic freefall course at Netheravon, military jumps or a combination of the two. This left **Cpl John Black** and **Sig Andrew Hough** as the jump virgins of the group, but they were both eager to have a go and a little bit apprehensive with fear of the unknown!

After a slight deliberate detour, we arrived in Holland. The group visited the British War Cemetery at Oosterbeek, Arnhem Bridge and the Airborne Museum in the Hartenstein Hotel. We then made our way north to the top of Holland where we caught the ferry to the island of Texel.

We settled in at our campsite and, after completing all the admin required for the course, we commenced the course with a few days of ground training. In glorious weather we sweated and learned how to jump out of, off and onto things properly, how to pack our parachutes and most importantly how to deploy our reserve. We also met the other members of our class, which consisted of a Danish Naval Officer, Danish Special Forces Reserve, Three Luxembourg Soldiers and a member of the Dutch NRPS. Our instructor for this phase was a Dutch civilian, and **Capt Stevie McBride**, the keen eyed Met Officer that he is, instantly befriended him by asking whether he had obtained his wooden leg parachuting! Around this stage the Regt 2IC, **Maj Roddy Sutherland** started worrying about **Sig Hough**, and the more cynical members of the group started a book betting on which jump **Hough** would die. **Cpl Black** played the traditional Glaswegian abroad role, by doing the training with as much flesh on show as possible, but he soon regretted it once the blistering and third degree burns kicked in.

Sunday night saw the ground training finished and as long as the weather held first jump would be on Monday morning. This was seen as a good reason to go out and everyone donned their kilts and headed downtown. This was an interesting experience as the club we chose to attend was holding a foam party, which is different in a kilt! **Sig Andrew Hough** attempted to chat up every woman in the club, and the rest of us spent the evening in ever increasing confusion over the size of the beer glasses (small) and the age of some of the Dutch clubbers. They allow different age groups access to nightclubs, controlling their alcoholic consumption using different coloured armbands).

Monday dawned, we arrived at the airfield, waited for the weather to clear and then donned our gear. Being the first jump for several courses, we were jammed into a 20-man lift and took off with no problems. Our first jump was to be filmed, which was to cause great hilarity as different people reacted in different ways to the camera in the plane. As the cameraman panned across the plane, **Maj Sutherland**, **Cpl Black** and **Cpl Gibbs** each gave the camera a toothy grin and a big thumbs-up. **Capt McBride** refused to look into the camera, but eventually gave a thumbs-up. **Sig Hough** actively hid his face so that he wouldn't have to give the thumbs-up and **Lt Davidson** had to be woken up.

Everyone's first jump went smoothly (although some had to be thrown out more than left to jump) and the group soon settled into a routine of two jumps a day (which is all that can be done if you are packing your own chutes). Some members of the group soon discovered that a softer landing was to be had if you landed in the hayfield next to the dropzone. **Sig Hough** discovered that he was light enough to stay up in the air for a long time, but when he

reached the ground this turned into a disadvantage, as he got dragged by his chute. **Maj Sutherland** brightened up everyone's week by wearing a leather flying jacket, jeans and a bush hat whenever he wasn't parachuting. He also demonstrated an unerring ability to land on the wrong side of the runway from the dropzone (the fact it was a shorter walk back to the packing shed had absolutely nothing to do with it!) From the number of young Dutch men that tried to chat him up, **Lt Davidson** discovered that he had become a gay icon.

All too soon our first five jumps were completed and we were qualified, although some of us carried on to eight jumps. But we all agreed that the highlight of the trip was the jump we all did out of the Antonov *(pictured)*, which used to be an intelligence platform for the KGB.

Better out than in – Regt personnel decide that bailing out is the safer option

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj Donald Gordon**
SSM **WO2 Karen Swan**

52 Sqn have had a busy couple of months since returning from Annual Camp. This time of year is normally very busy for the Sqn but with several annually recurring events in addition to OP FRESCO, the TAC has been busier than ever.

One of the highlights of the past few months was the drill night visit of the Armed Forces Minister, **Mr Adam Ingram MP**, who is also Member for East Kilbride. During the course of the evening, the Minister was shown examples of the equipment used by the Bde, and had the opportunity to meet the members of the Sqn in both a formal sense and at an informal buffet at the end of the evening. The CO also used the opportunity to present newly promoted **LCpls David Dunbar** and **Gary McGilvray** with their slides.

The Minister of State downs in one with his eye fixed Maj Donald Gordon's desperately held Glengarrie

The following weekend was EX LAST MINUTE an Infantry weekend on the Gairlochhead Training Area, organised by **Lt Iain Davidson**. With storm warnings on the Friday night, only the battle-hardened dared turn out for this rather wet & windy weekend. After some excellent build-up training of section attacks, platoon attacks and CTR skills, the soldiers mounted their dawn assault on the skills house. Rather than the conventional flanking manouvre, our hardened platoon decided 'up the middle with bags of smoke' would be a better option. As many of the enemy stood in disbelief, the platoon successfully achieved their objective by using the surprise element to great effect (for 'surprise' read 'flabbergasted at the audacity of the tactics'). Many medals would have been won here if it had been for real!
Not letting the rain deter us, we managed to fit in a CFT, which everyone, although wet and tired, completed. Highlights of the weekend included **Sig Olivia Zambonini's** impromptu commando tactics during an assault, **Sig Mick Larkin's** unerring ability to walk over bashas in the dark and the dubious pyromaniac leanings of **Lt Ewan Weir**.

The following weekend was Remembrance Sunday and unusually, a beautiful day. Whilst the Officers tried to deal with hangovers from the preceding night's Divisional Dinner, the Sqn assembled at the local British Legion. As usual, the Sqn had a large turnout for the Parade, marching to the Cenotaph in East Kilbride, then on to a church service. For many the service was more poignant after a recent battlefield tour in France. As usual, **Sgt Main** provided his renowned curry for the function back at the British Legion and many a glass was raised to the memory of the fallen.

Sig Lisa McCluckie was presented with the British legion Best Young Soldier Award for her excellent progression during the year's training (even thought she had broken her arm during the awards period). All of the Sqn went home that night glad to have paid their respects in the traditional way, although some may have regretted it the next day. Some of the SNCOs were glad that the mysterious Glengarrie thief of last year's Parade seems to have retired.

An internal investigation has been launched after 52 Sqn suspected match fixing in this year's TA Cup. After winning the TA Scottish Cup in 2001, this year 52 met last year's finalists in the first round. Taking it in their stride, the Sqn fought a courageous game, but were defeated by some dubious refereeing. The Cup organiser (who was coincidentally part of the opposing team) had arranged the draw and supplied a referee whose affiliations to the opposing team were slightly dubious! (allegedly). If that's not match fixing, then what is? We are not deterred and will be back next year as rightful winners of the TA Scottish Cup - on our own merit. Honest, we're not bitter that two of our players were sent off!

The Sqn has had some minor sporting victories in recent months, when they won 4 out of 5 of the events during a recent Regt Sports Day. The most rewarding was the retention of the Tug of War Trophy and the addition of the Assault Course Champions Title to the already jammed-full trophy cabinet in Kitchener House. Congratulations must go to the OC, **Maj Donald Gordon** as Tug of War anchor man (he still insists its all down to technique), and **Cpl Joanne Mundie** for her winning effort during the Assault Course competition.

Recognition must go the Sqn's Regular and NRPS personnel for the amount of effort and extra work put into making our guests comfortable for the duration of Op FRESCO. The Sqn is glad to welcome back **Cpl Vidya Nursimiloo** and **LCpl Ray MacDonald**, who have spent the last few months in an Ops Room at BATUS – yet still volunteered for OP FRESCO as soon as their post-tour leave ended.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC **Maj Cammy Payn**
SSM **WOII Norma Sproul**

Fresh from its efforts on Annual Camp, the Sqn leapt straight into the winter training programme with an intensive period of weapon training. This occurred on 3 consecutive drill nights and was a welcome opportunity for the soldiers to get their hands on the rifle after a lengthy absence of weapon training. The Sqn was

indebted to **Sgt Jackie Sliman**, who provided the teaching. 12 October saw an opportunity for some Sqn publicity in Glasgow. Through a civilian contact of the OC, the Sqn loaned the cooks trailer to a healthy eating event in Drumchapel. The recruiting team, led by **Sgt Hali** 'piggy-backed' along and used the event to raise the Sqn's profile in the area. Whilst the obligatory rain and wind kept most of the public away, it was, at least, a useful 'run-out' for the Sqn recruiting team. The highlight of the day, was **Sig Lawson** presenting some recruiting literature to a couple of very bemused (and soon to be striking) firemen.

The Sqn has also played host to both the Comd and DepComd of 2 Sig Bde. On both occasions, the Master Chef, **WOII John Wren** and **Pte Tinney** ensured a good finish to the visit by providing an excellent curry supper in the Officers' Mess. It was also good to see so many of the Sqn officers on the Mess at the one time. The HQ Mess has been somewhat of a ghost town recently, and following both visits, it was agreed that a curry supper on drill nights would be a regular monthly event.

There was a dramatic start to the RTW at Barry Buddon Camp near Dundee. Two Sqn Bedfords were involved in an RTA caused by a local drunk driver in a civilian vehicle. The civilian car just missed the leading truck and then collided with the second causing it to swerve into a ditch. Thankfully, there were no serious injuries, although **Cpl Wilson** did spend an uncomfortable night in Ninewells Hospital with broken ribs. The police quickly apprehended the offending driver. On a more positive note, the SQMS, **SSgt Gary McCracken** was able to use the RTW as an opportunity to issue the Regt its newly acquired Mark IV NBC suits and gloves. The evident glee of the soldiers was only matched and exceeded by that of the Regt NBC Trg Offr, **Capt Phil Donegan**, who was positively apoplectic with joy.

The Sqn took its usual place on George Square for the Remembrance Parade. Once again, **WOII (SSM) Norma Sproul** ensured that the Sqn (mostly!) kept in step for the journey to and from George Square. That the Sqn survived the march down to the Square was in itself a small miracle. The local constabulary, who normally hold up the traffic at road junctions, were strangely AWOL at the last junction before the Square. It was only with great timing that the Sqn ensured that the junction was crossed 'on a red light'. There are plans next year to create the post of 'Sqn Lollipop Man/Woman' for the march down to George Square.

33 (LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col E A Davis**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S Day**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

Another busy few months for RHQ with the deployment of the Regt to Germany on EX ARRCADE FALCON with 11 Sig Bde in support of 1 Sig Bde, preparing equipments for the ongoing cycle of inspections, the second training weekend for 98 (BRITFOR) Sig Sqn at Leek and a battlefield tour to Normandy (with a series of lectures prepared by the permanent staff on various subjects given prior to departure.) Oh, and a new Adjutant arrived in post for the CO to break in, so a warm welcome to **Capt Karl Jeeves** posted in from 30 Sig Regt taking over from **Capt Richard Koss**, who returns to 42 Sig Sqn after his FTRS post as Adjutant. The CO would like to wish all Officers, SNCO's and OR's a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. It will be the CO's last one with the Regt prior to his handover to **Lt Col Somerville MBE** and then a sojourn to warmer climes.

On behalf of the Regt I would like to thank the CO for all that he has done for the Regt and wish him every success in the NATO High Readiness Force in Germany, followed by immediate deployment to Afghanistan for six months.

55 (HEADQUARTERS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj W Wyper**
SSM **W02 (SSM) M Robertson**

The Sqn deployed on Exercise ARRCADE FALCON in support of the Regt on 5 October. After an eventful couple of days spent at Leaconfield, Hull Docks and then on board the Zeebrugge or Rotterdam ferries, we all eventually arrived at Javelin Barracks, Elmpt, to meet up with the QM and the advance party. After being lined up in the correct packets, the Sqn was fed, watered and rested prior to being deployed into our exercise locations.

Echelon (PLUS) set up in its first location in Leuth and quickly got into the swing of exercise procedures.

At ENDEX the Sqn returned to Javelin Barracks to prepare to journey back to the North West, but not before a well deserved bout of R and R. A night out in the glamorous city of Monchengladbach and a day shopping in Roemond or Dusseldorf. The journey back was not as complicated as the outward journey, with all the Regt on the same boat from Zeebrugge.

We would like to thank Elmpt Station for their hospitality during the exercise and for finding a case of Legionnaire's Disease to stop the Officers drinking in the Officers Mess. After arriving back in Liverpool, the Sqn quickly turned round, and is now looking forward to the end of the year festivities, provided we can get the JRC back. At present it is the sleeping accommodation for the troops manning Huyton Temporary Fire Station.

Before the final parade back in Huyton the Sqn OC presented **Sig Smith AB** with the Best Soldier Award, a well-deserved award for a young soldier who has improved and impressed over the past year.

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj D Titheridge**
SSM **W02 (SSM) I Coburn**

CONGRATULATIONS TO WO2 (FofS) ANDY OWEN MBE

WO2 Andy Owen at the Palace after being presented with his MBE by the Queen

On 12 November 02, the Sqn's FofS, **WO2 (FofS) Andy Owen**, went to the Palace to be presented with the MBE by **Her Majesty The Queen**. The award was in recognition of his sterling efforts during the foot and mouth crisis in and around the Lancaster area and for his work with socially deprived youngsters in Manchester. **Andy** is an inspirational character and the Sqn counts itself fortunate in having him as its Foreman. Currently he is heavily involved in the planning for 98 (BRITFOR) Sig Sqn, which is being formed under the direction of 33 (Lancashire and Cheshire) Sig Regt to deploy to Bosnia in May 2003. Needless to say, all members of the Sqn and the Regt were delighted to hear that he was to be honoured by the award of the MBE and, through the medium of *The WIRE*, join in congratulating him on his fine achievement.

EX ARCADE FALCON 2002

EX ARRCADE FALCON was 11 Sig Bde's annual FTX. It was conducted over the period 0418 October 02 and was the annual camp for the TA units taking part. As part of 33 Sig Regt (V), 42 Sqn deployed to the Nordrhein Westphalia region of Germany via concentration areas at Leconsfield and Javelin barracks in Bruggen. The exercise itself proved enjoyable for the most part, with the weather only deteriorating to dampen proceedings in the final week. From the Sqn's point of view, invaluable experience was gained, especially by **Lt Sophie Curtis**, who was thrust into the limelight and given her first taste of power in command of Trunk Node Tp in the absence of **Lt Danny Fenwick**, who was on a course.

Notable events were:

Lt Sophie Curtis leading a packet into the picturesque small town of Wiedenbruck near Gutersloh and ending up in the pedestrian area much to the consternation of the local population. It took much effort to extricate the convoy from the narrow confines of this area. A local man had to guide the packet through torturous side streets before it eventually regained the highway with a very pinkfaced Tp Comd once more in charge.

The Sqn being instructed to erect a 70 ft mast in a German barracks in Leuth in the middle of the night. The whole sorry event proved to be a disaster when, after a couple of futile attempts, **Sig Martin Porter** nearly hanged himself whilst climbing the mast too enthusiastically. When the mast was eventually erected and triumphantly reported to OSC, sod's law dictated that it wasn't really required after all.

Sgt Westall deploying with Access Tp and camming up so successfully that they were neither heard of nor could be found for the first 3 days of the Ex.

Lt Sophie Curtis and Sgt Ruthven are ecstatic after she has successfully navigated Trunk Node Troop to the brick factory in Augustdorf.

On a more serious note, the Ex proved to be a steep learning curve for a lot of people and, as ever, many valuable lessons were learned and relevant skills improved.

CHANGE AT THE TOP

There has been a complete change of the Sqn hierarchy since return from Annual Camp, with **Maj Dave Titheridge** taking over

Maj Dave Titheridge and W02 (SSM) 'Rooster' Coburn looking forward to their time in command

command from **Maj Mica Cummings** and **W02** 'Rooster' **Coburn** succeeding **W02 Maurice Aarons** as the SSM. **Maj Titheridge** is a 42 Sqn old boy, having spent his TA career at Norman Road until he was promoted to Maj and sent off to Command 80 Sqn in Runcorn. **Dave**, a Detective Sergeant in the real world, has been pleased to note on his return that we now have 5 members of the Greater Manchester Police and one member of the Liverpool Police amongst our numbers. He may shortly be able to form his own precinct!

SQN ECI (EQUIPMENT CARE INSPECTION)

On return to Manchester, the Sqn was met almost immediately by the 42 Bde ECI inspection team. Having once again drawn the short straw to be the first Sqn in the Regt to be inspected, it was all hands to the pumps in an effort at least to wash all the German mud off the vehicles before the team arrived. As ever, minor miracles were performed and the Sqn achieved a pass, much to the amazement of all and sundry. **Cpl Dave Neat**, our long suffering MT PSI, was highly relieved as CR time for him was looming, and he was last seen heading off to the Sqn office muttering, ' I must get away on a course. Any course will do'.

SQN CMT - 0103 NOVEMBER 02

Strensal Training area near York was the venue for the Sqn's CMT qualification weekend. A fine and unusually dry weekend provided the ideal conditions for being gassed and run ragged around the training area. An excellent turnout proved that the lure of all that taxfree bounty money was still a powerful incentive to the average TA soldier, even in this age of comparative affluence!

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY PARADE

As part of the Remembrance Sunday Parade, the Sqn took part in the march to the Cenotaph in the centre of Manchester. Fortunately the lashing rain eased as the parade formed up and the sun eventually appeared to make for an unexpectedly pleasant day. Led by the OC, the Sqn did well to keep the step

42 Sqn, On Parade, in Manchester on Remembrance Sunday

with the drumbeats from the bands of the Royal Engineers and the Greater Manchester Police echoing confusingly from the tall city centre buildings. It was a good parade, with the Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Manchester, **Councillor John Smith**, taking the salute at the march past. As is customary, the Sqn returned to the TA Centre for the usual curry lunch with families and guests.

80 (CHESHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj S Mason**
SSM	**W02 (SSM) Eddowes**

EX NORMANDY QUEST - 26-29 NOVEMBER 2002

Following the success of the tour to the battlefields of the First World War, organised by **Capt Gerry Whelan**, PSAO of 42 Sqn, the Regt conducted a tour of the battlefields of Normandy between 26 29 November 2002. There were 29 participants in all, including the CO, **Lt Col Elton Davis**.

Prior to departure, a presentation evening was held at RHQ, Liverpool. Each sqn was tasked to present a different aspect of Operation Overlord. It was obvious that a lot of hard work and research had gone into the project and the presentations were enthusiastically presented. **Cpl Dave Neal** gave an excellent account of himself as the representative for 42 Sqn. We were fortunate to have the tour guide, **Dr Graham Watson** in attendance, to correct some of the more imaginative observations! We were also graced with the company of **Mr Bill Cowan** and his wife **Elsie**. **Bill** is a veteran of the Normandy Beach Landings. His vivid memories of the horrendous sights he witnessed lent a real sense of perspective and realism to the evening. The evening set the scene for the trip to come.

After a calm overnight ferry crossing from Portsmouth to Le Havre, we set off for Utah Beach, the site of one of the American assaults. Arriving just after dawn we were met by clear blue skies and a welcoming chill which blew away the cobwebs and sharpened the mind. We were treated to a first class account of the American operations from **Dr Watson**.

The rest of the first day was spent visiting Omaha Beach and other sites in the American sector. A very short stop for breakfast was made in Bayeux where **Capt Richard Koss** took the opportunity to sprint around the tapestry! Meanwhile, not content with coffee and croissants, some of the group managed to find Le McDonalds. **Sgt Tony Booth** (the current army super heavyweight boxing champion) would not divulge how many Macky Dee breakfasts he had consumed, but then, who would argue with him!

On Wednesday night we were accommodated in a comfortable hotel in the centre of Caen. The city was heavily bombed during the war but has since been restored to its former glory. It is a beautiful place and most of the group took the opportunity to visit some of the sites. Others, namely **Lt Col Davis** and **SSgt Paul Richards,** who are both renowned for their athletic prowess, decided to get around a bit quicker in their running kit (which is probably how they how they managed to be first in the bar!).

The officers entertained **Dr Watson** in a splendid little restaurant not far from the hotel. There were one or two green faces as captain **Tom Ponton** tucked into his starter of snails. The adjutant, **Capt Karl Jeeves**, impressed everyone with his command of the French language and ensured that everyone was served exactly what they had ordered. The fact that the menu was in both English and French did not put him off his stride one bit!

Thursday was spent looking at the British sector, paying particular emphasis to Arromanches with its splendid museum and remnants of the famous Mulberry Harbours. We also visited the Bayeux War Cemetery to pay homage to **Pte Kenneth Roy Ainsworth**, who was killed in action whilst serving with the 5 Bn, The East Lancashire Regt. He died on 8 August 1944, aged 19. He was selected because his regt was part of 59 Staffordshire Div, of which 59 Sig Sqn is a lineal descendant. **Lt Col Davis** laid a wreath and we conducted a short service of remembrance in honour of **Pte Ainsworth**.

The tour culminated with a visit to the Pegasus Bridge, the scene of a hard fought battle between the defenders and members of the British Airborne Forces. This totally delighted our airborne warrior, **Sgt Brian Gillbanks**, who could hardly keep his maroon beret in his pocket! He was slightly miffed when it was pointed out to him that the bridge had actually been taken by glider troops of the light Infantry. Fortunately the second battle of the 'Bridge over Caen Canal', did not take place and good humour prevailed.

The tour, organized by **Capt Chris Hopkins**, PSAO 80 Sqn, was a worthwhile educational venture, from which everyone benefited. **Chris** looks forward to handing over to **Capt Geoff Downey**, PSAO 59 Sqn, who will be responsible for the next one. PEARL HARBOUR might be interesting?

34 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col I T Hall TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) M J P Anderson**

We would all like to say a fond farewell to **Lt Col Ian Westerman** who leaves us for greater things in G6 Land Command. In the immortal words of **Maj Graham Jennings**, 'He was all right' - praise indeed from the TA! He is succeeded by **Lt Col Ian Hall**, who brings with him the experience of having a 'real' job.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Chris Jones TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Neal Dixon**

Earlier this year 20 Officers and SNCO's from the Regt went on Ex DRUMMER'S BEAT, the annual battlefield tour. Following on from the success of Arnhem (99), Ypres (00) and the Somme (01), it was decided to go back further in time and journey to Waterloo in Belgium.

Led by **Lt Col Ian Westerman,** the group travelled by ferry from Hull to Zeebrugge. At Waterloo we met our guide **Mr Ian Fletcher** and drove straight down to the crossroads of Quatre Bras, the scene of a stand-off between the British and French. This time the stand-off was with the Belgians, as the garage owner upon whose site we stood took exception and blockaded the minibuses with some rather expensive cars from his showroom. Thanks to **2Lt Vicki Wedgewood-Jones**, who managed to coax the local gendarme into persuading the owner to let us leave, the stalemate was resolved and we were set free with the entente remaining cordiale! We finally walked the route taken by the British in their retreat to Waterloo and then drove back to the hotel for rest and recovery.

Sunday saw an early start for the walking tour. We started south of the battlefield with our first stop Hougoumont Chateau, the scene of some very heavy fighting during the battle. By this time the famous wet Belgian winds were blowing and some people began to realise their foul weather gear left a lot to be desired with CO (Des), **Maj Ian Hall**, consigning his boots to the bin. The Visitors' Centre Shop did a brisk trade in baseball caps. The MO, **Capt Zia Khan**, bought one and an umbrella as well.

The group then travelled along the ridge held by the British throughout the battle and south to La Belle Alliance, before following the route taken by the Imperial Guard in its last desperate attempt to win. Evening entertainment involved a magnificent dinner in the hotel with Mess silver thanks to the prior preparation of **Maj Mark Finch.** We then adjourned for a quiz on the Napoleonic Wars organised by **Lt Col Ian Westerman**. The rules are too labyrinthine to recount here, but there were two teams, one led by the tour organiser **Maj Chris Jones** who went on to win.

The final day was an opportunity to visit the Wellington Museum and Chapel in Waterloo itself. The weather had finally cleared and we were able to view the battlefield from The Lion Mound and see the area we had walked. Considering that nearly 50,000 men were either killed or wounded within 10 hours in such a small place, it made us aware of what war can involve and why it is so important to learn from the mistakes and successes of the past.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Mark Finch**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Dave Carr**

It is that time of year again and the young and not so young of 49 Sig Sqn scrape the mildew off their boots and take part in the TA Cup. Only eight teams have entered the Yorkshire competition this year, and so only two wins and we will be in the final – yes, confidence has already started to overtake ability. This situation was not helped by our 6-1, yes, 6-1 victory over HQ Sqn, 38 Sig Regt on a puddle-riddled pitch at that footballing outpost called Worksop. So now that we are in the semi-final, delirium has

The Sqn team, warts 'n' all

definitely set in. The Sqn has unearthed a major footballing talent in the shape of **Sig** 'Doc' **McKerr**, a worthy man of the match. There was also a cameo display by **LCpl Ford**, who came on to score the final and classy sixth goal. Two goals apiece from **LCpl Rich Torley** and **LCpl James Lutkin** meant that the team had a comfortable lead, 4-1, before **Capt Keith Williams** nut-megged the keeper, deliberately, apparently. **SSgt Mark Alexander** continues to turn back the clock and contributed greatly to the combined age of the back four – 160 years.

EX ARRCADE FALCON 2002

The Regt deployed to Germany for annual camp in October and practised their undoubted skills on the Ptarmigan network. Here are a few memorable moments:

The Sqn EDs, **Sig Jo Ambler** and **Sig Mage Jaboro** leading the way by winning the best Siggy awards. **Sig Sally Buck** deciding to use the PV as a brake for her vehicle, unfortunately she was driving a Switch. **SSgt Gordon Hardaker**, our loveable NRPS, being refused entry to the Node Home because he wouldn't wear cam cream. Unfortunately he was doing the sticky run and it was touch and go whether the Sqn were going to receive their little treats. **Sgt Kev Mayfield** attempting to lead the crypto packet to Cologne. **WO2 (SSM) Dave Carr** acting as Commander Comms, YofS and Master of Signals.

Sig Sally Buck and her 'successes'.

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Capt Jez Bailey**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Les Middleton**

THE OC HAS GONE, LONG LIVE THE OC...

It is with much sad regret that we have to announce the departure of **Maj Jennings**, from 50 Sig Sqn as he moves to RHQ to become Regt 2IC. The Sqn takes great pride that **Maj Graham Jennings** is taking over its prestigious OC's role, and that once again another member of 50 Sqn makes the step-up to Regt HQ. Somehow we still suspect that we might be seeing **Maj Jennings** from time to time at Darlington? As one of his final acts, he had the honour of presenting two well-deserved promotions. With perfect timing, to catch two different nights in the bar, the OC promoted **Cpl's Iain Patterson** and **Matthew Graham**. Very well done to you both.

Maj Graham Jennings hands over the Squadron to Capt Jez Bailey on Remembrance Day

OP ROCKCLIFFE DIG

Darlington Lions Club approached the OC Sqn for assistance with a project at Rockcliffe Court residential home. This project was to dig out and clear a pond in the grounds. Back-breaking work, but 50 Sig Sqn was up for the challenge. Suitably attired in old clothes and wellie boots, the Sqn got stuck-in, assisted by an attached Army Cadet, to be known as **Charlie** - for her own

protection! Getting stuck in was best described as knee-deep mud, but after many hours of hard labour, the first phase of the project was complete. Retiring from the action we have promised to return and complete the project, much to the appreciation of the residents and staff of Rockcliffe Court, who have the grand opening already planned, with Darlington's Mayor as guest of honour.

OC's DINING OUT (BALDERSDALE CAPERS)

As OP FRESCO soldiers and the Regt SAAM teams would be occupying the Darlington TAC, the dining out from the Officers Mess of **Maj Graham Jennings** was held in the only available space, **Capt Steve Wayman's** home in Baldersdale. In the grand and palatial surroundings of Chateau Wayman, 22 guests were entertained in some style, in both food and commentary (if you wish to book **Capt Jez Bailey** as an after dinner speaker, or children's entertainer please get in touch). Special thanks must be given to **Mrs Hilary Wayman** for allowing the invasion of her home. In the immortal words of **Maj Graham Jennings,** 'We could not have picked a better location, nor a finer group of people to celebrate my dining out.'

REGIMENTAL CHRISTMAS WEEKEND (SQUADRON) EX YULETIDE SPIRIT

Due to fire-fighters strike, the Regt Christmas weekend was cancelled, but undaunted, 50 Sig Sqn soldiered on. Never wishing to let anything spoil the fun, an alternative programme quickly came together. As a round robin, the Sqn undertook rock climbing at an indoor wall (many thanks to the TOT for showing us the ropes), a round of shooting in our own range, followed by an inter-tp sports competition, organised by **Cpl** 'Iggy' **Patterson**. During the climbing, **Sig Faith Bailey** scaled new heights that even she did not believe she could do. **LCpl Tony Standing** won the shooting competition, organised by **SSgt John Howe**. On Sunday morning the now traditional orienteering event, organised by **Capt Jez Bailey**, allowed us the fresh air we all craved.

RIGHT OF REPLY

Capt Steve Wayman has asked for a retraction of the heinous and scandalous accusations made against him in the last edition of *The WIRE*. He has somewhat redeemed himself at a recent Sqn event. However this had him continually knocking at **Maj Graham Jenning's** caravan door during the early hours of the morning! Enough said.

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Richard Lenton**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ian Ward**

MEMORIES OF EX ARRCADE FALCON

Despite a lack of beer or beds on the ferry over, the Regt still managed to deploy to Germany on EX ARRCADE FALCON. During the ex, the newest member of **2Lt Helen Baxter's** tp was mysteriously taken hostage. The ransom note demanded 2 crates of beer. Unfortunately, 'expert' advice from **Sig Wilson** was flawed and the hostage's body parts were subsequently returned, calling into question the actual experience of **Sig Wilson** and his 'I could tell you but I'd have to kill you' type job. **Sgt John Edwards**, intent on finding the missing hostage, decided to clear out the admin GS on numerous occasions but succeeded only in burying **LCpl Paul Liddle** in the avalanche of ~~duty frees~~ equipment taken onboard. At the thought of R&R, **LCpl Liddle** rapidly recovered, whilst **Sgt Dave Ross** decided to play 'hide and seek' with **LCpl Julie Wilkinson** and **Sig Alison Bibby**. Relying entirely upon his own version of convoy drills and secure comms (telepathy), he decided covertly to pull into a location without so much as a glance in his rear view mirror! The girls appeared 12 hours later after a mystery tour of North Germany.

Sleep deprivation was experienced by most this year. **Sig Helen Keen** found numerous guard duties keeping her occupied, although it has been suggested that she still managed to accumulate an extensive 17hr sleep in one 24hr period. This put her in line for the golden blanket award. However, after numerous discreet tip-offs, it was decided that the champion, when it came to stacking zeds, was **Capt Simon Smith**, who managed to tot up an enviable 12 hour's worth of sleep *every* night!

For most, the R&R phase was a welcome break. **Sig Rothesay** found a new vocation as a very reliable people carrier. **LCpl Peter Metcalfe** took a particular interest in wrapping items of lacy underwear around himself, courtesy of MG's classiest nightclub 'The Gravel Pit'. **Sig Moore** also took a liking to the underwear on display, choosing instead a more subdued grey thong, and modelling it with the waistband over his shoulders.

90 Sqn proved victorious in the recent inter-Sqn golf championship. The unfancied team of **SSgts Gaz Williams**, **Cas Cassidy**, **Daz Durnall** and **Sgt Groundsell**, thrashed the opposition and left the losers wondering why they had bothered to spend every afternoon practising for the last month.

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col C R Owen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) J T Cauldwell**

HO! HO! WOE!

A Day to Remember – Old Comrades meet New

Those ardent readers and hopeful subscribers to *The Wire* will have noticed that we were regrettably absent from the December edition. This was caused by our submission arriving late on the editor's desk due to our annual camp and the unfortunate discovery that you cannot send any guaranteed delivery packages through the forces mail system! Happily, snippits from our annual camp and other articles which are still topical are included in this issue and I hope you find them enjoyable reading. To prevent an overflow, these, our winter notes, have been reduced, but I have included some of the more prominent events since annual camp.

On Remembrance Sunday the Regt and its Sqns were responsible for organising and controlling special parades in Birmingham, Coventry and Rugby, which have already been widely reported upon in local papers.

STEP INTO CHRISTMAS

The Council House Dinner is a special occasion where, once a year, the Regt Officers entertain some very special guests. This year (superbly organised by **Capt Dave Tarrant**) the event took place on Saturday, 30 November in the extraordinary surrounds of the City of Birmingham Council House. Special guests included the Right Worshipful Lord Mayor of Birmingham, **Councillor**

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THE VICTORIA CROSS AND GEORGE CROSS MEMORIAL APPEAL

The Victoria Cross and George Cross Association has launched an appeal to raise £250,000 to provide a fitting memorial to those awarded the Victoria Cross or the George Cross. Although there are many memorials to individual and groups of recipients around the world, no all-encompassing memorial exists.

Westminster Abbey is the logical place in which to commemorate recipients of these awards – the Victoria Cross for outstanding bravery in the face of the enemy and the George Cross for outstanding gallantry when not on the field of battle.

The memorial, pictured below, will be inset in a prominent position at the West end of the nave of the Abbey. Engraved in stone, it will be inlaid with large versions of the bronze and silver crosses with enamelled maroon and blue ribbons.

The unveiling, in which holders of the two awards and their descendants will participate, will take place at a special service in the Abbey in May 2003.

There are many whose lives have been touched in some way by the holders of the VC or GC or who have found inspiration in their example. This Appeal gives everyone a chance to contribute to this cause. The Royal Signals Association has already donated £500 and other Corps members have made individual contributions.

Anyone who would like to donate is asked to send their contribution to The Victoria Cross and George Cross Memorial Appeal, Horse Guards, Whitehall, London SW1 2AX, or make a credit card donation by phoning 020 7930 3506.

The Victoria Cross and George Cross Association was founded in1956 by holders of the two awards. Her Majesty The Queen became Patron in 1957 and Sir Winston Churchill was its first President. The principal aim of the Association is to ensure that no holder of either award, or their widow is without help or fellowship should hardship or adversity arise.

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO **Lt Col I Hooper**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Rook**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC **Maj S Morgan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) A A Chapman**

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – CASTLE COMBE CHURCH

By Cpl Leslie

The 2002 Remembrance Day Parades were held on Sunday 10 November. Following the success of last year, the 3 sqns of the Regiment went to their unofficially adopted village churches. 220 Sqn made their way to Yatton Keynal near Chippenham, 244 Sqn went to the local church in Colerne village and HQ Sqn went to Castle Combe, some 4 miles NE of Colerne as the crow flies.

The day started with a hearty breakfast in the cookhouse before the troops were sized off in their No2 dress. Thankfully we did not have to march to church. Our generous MTO being provided transport. On arrival at Castle Combe, HQ Sqn was greeted by the village hall warden who provided a welcome cup of tea before we formed up for the parade.

The parade Sergeant Major, **WO2 (SSM)** 'Adie' **Chapman** marched the Sqn from the village hall to the remembrance monument where the villagers and Sqn's families were waiting, along with the usual smattering of Japanese and American tourist. 'What luck – a quaint English village and a squadron of British Soldiers in their best uniforms to photograph'.

The vicar then conducted the ceremony, reading the names of people from the village who had fallen in past wars and conflicts. The Sqn OC, **Maj Steve Morgan**, then laid a wreath. After the traditional two minutes silence was observed we marched to the church for the service of remembrance.

As the service finished the villagers made us feel extremely welcome, with coffee and biscuits in the church and a couple of pints in the lovely country pub before transport home. Our thanks go to **Rev Rachael Lewis** and the villagers for their very welcome hospitality.

MT SECTION

MTO **Capt A Balsdon**
MTWO **WO2 (MTWO) Rigby**

The best in the Regt MT Sec is that **WO2 (MTWO) Jolly** is now the RSM in Latina. **WO2 Jolly** spent 5 weeks in MT, there was a flurry of activity with some cosmetic improvements and then he was off. Many congratulations on your promotion and good luck in Italy.

Welcome to **WO2 (MTWO) Rigby**. We hope you stay longer! Congratulations also go to **Sgt Midgley** on his promotion to SSgt in Jan 03

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj S R Mannings**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) K J O'Neil**

It has been a busy period for 220 Sqn, with most of us deploying on Ex Eagles Lift. This was closely followed by special to role training and various military training exercises in preparation for us assuming High Readiness again in January.

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt K Hannaford**
Tp SSgt **SSgt A Dutton**

The Tp would like to welcome **Sig Sunderland** from 11 Sig Regt, **Sig Buck** from 15 Sig Regt and **Cpl Smith** from 30 Sig Regt. Sadly we must say goodbye to **Sig Withers** who is posted to 1 (UK) Div Sig Ret, **Sig Gillard** posted to 39 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn and **Sig O'Brien** to civilian life. The Tp wishes them all good luck!

Stop! Don't leave without me!

Congratulations also go to **LCpl Bailey** on the birth of his daughter **Charlotte** and to **Sig Gillard** on his engagement. The Tp recently enjoyed a day of paint-balling organised by **Cpl McMurray**. A closely fought competition ensured that there was plenty of inter-troop rivalry. The Red team under the leadership of **Sgt Langridge** won two of the five games, but they were narrowly out-fought by the victorious Blues led by **Lt Hannaford**!

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt P Wright**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Pope**

The arrival of **Sgt Morris** and **Sgt Lees**, has enabled SSgt **Pope** finally to take up his role as Tp SSgt. We also now have our Tp Comd back – **2Lt Pete Wright**. However we have recently lost

eight of our MAPPS vehicles, which have gone back to British Aerospace for further modification.

SSgt Pope has been busy recruiting unsuspecting members of the Tp to the sport of orienteering. **Sig Gemma Collins**, **Sig Jimmy Cullen**, **Sig Kelly Berry**, **Sig Nat Curtis** and **Sgt Billy Morris** all participated in one particular recent event. After stomping around Westdown National Park in a rather haphazard and frantic fashion, the Delta Tp six were surprised to find themselves selected to represent the Regt at the Corps championships.

The Tp had an explosive and eventful day out on 22 Oct at Copehill down FIBUA village. **Cpl Hopkins** played a key part in its organisation, and the day included making petrol bombs and going over a confidence course. We started by launching Molotov Cocktails from the top window of a building, the aim being to hit a 432 vehicle parked beneath the house. Just as the surrounding area was catching fire, **Cpl Hopkins** moved us on to the confidence course. This turned out to be a fantastic experience with the bad weather making many of the obstacles especially daunting. The tunnels were also beginning to fill with water, which was 'nice'. The wooden spoon had to go to **Cpl Rob Varley**, who took hours to find his way out of the maze. He obviously had difficulty locating the cheese!

Other Tp events included **Sig Jimmy Cullen's** extended holiday in Aberdeen! Many of the Tp have also recently gained their Rigger Marshalling and Landing Point Commander's qualifications.

The Tp says farewell to **LCpl Ellerton** and **Sig Woodcock**, who are about to embark on a new life in civvy street. Congratulations go to **LCpl Donnelly** on promotion to Cpl and to **Cpl Rob Varley** on his engagement to **Cpl Kerry Johnson.**

SSgt Pope's ration lift on Ex Eagles Lift 2

GOLF TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt C Jardine**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt P Beattie**

On 29 September members of Golf Tp deployed to Falmouth on Exercise Windy Scorpion 2002. It was to be an arduous adventurous training exercise consisting mainly of sailing. The Tp arrived on Friday evening allowing enough time to familiarise ourselves with RNAS Culdrose. We then donned our adventurous training suits to conduct a quick recce of the Falmouth area. A special thanks to the good doctor who attempted to fix **Sig Campbell's** face, but we think it will probably take more than resetting his broken nose to improve those looks!

The next morning we were split into two groups. Group 1 enjoyed a day sailing and a power boat excursion. Many were nervous about leaving the comfort and safety of dry land, but once out on the water, everyone seemed to find their sea legs. Meanwhile Group 2 enjoyed a cultural visit to Penzance. This was followed by another evening of Tp bonding in Falmouth. We also managed to fit in some body-boarding and bird watching in Newquay. A good time was had by all and, Visa and MasterCard's permitting, we hope to enjoy future similar exercises in the near future.

A big welcome to **LCpl Sheppard**, from 20 Armd Bde, **Sig Scarff**, from 11 Sig Regt, **Sig Smith**, from 1 UKDSR and **Sig Price** from 3 Inf Bde NI. Unfortunately **Cpl Margle**, who joined us from 7 Armd Bde, was unable to join us on our weekend of fun and sailing.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj S O France**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) C A Budding**

Now that the disruption caused by **Peter Gabriel's** stage build is over, life in 244 Sqn is almost back to normal. The single soldiers recently volunteered for a quick spring clean of the block and returned on top form – 244 are now the Inter Sqn basketball champions. The last few weeks have been very busy with EX WELSH DRAGON, EX STOLEN THUNDER and Ex EAGLE'S LIFT. For once, most of the Sqn were able to deploy, and for the first time Alpha Tp were deployed in their new non-AMF (L) role. The Sqn now looks forward to some military and adventure training on EX DRAGON'S SHOT in Brawdy.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt C Hill**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Cain**

EX CO-OPERATIVE ADVENTURE EXCHANGE 02- UKRAINE

On a cold Sunday morning, 29 September, six members of A Tp started their journey on what was to be the final AMF (L) exercise, in the Ukraine. Eventually we arrived in the Yavoriv training area. After the initial formalities, we were fortunate enough to enjoy a cultural tour of L'viv. This was followed by our very own cultural tour in the evening!

When the exercise began, the MAOTs were busy providing comms for para drops, gun moves, para drops and even more para drops. On one occasion a Ukrainian para became rather too attached to one of our vehicles when he stacked into the side of it! The exercise ended with an R&R package in L'viv which was a great success. The end of the final AMF (L) exercise was celebrated by a rather early Xmas bash, held by 249 (AMF (L)) Sig Sqn, and to which all BRITFOR personnel were invited. However, the six-day journey back to the UK was not so good, with the movers proving there worth once again?? Alpha Tp now looks forward to exercising in some slightly less exotic locations e.g. Salisbury Plain.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt L A Fish**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt A Gill**

EX STOLEN THUNDER - 12-20 SEP 02

Bravo Tp's most recent antics involved a deployment to STANTA in support of the RAF Tactical Supply Wing. Glorious weather throughout ensured that the RAF were soon operating in their standard dress in the field: T-shirts and Ray-Bans. That aside, the Exercise gave us the opportunity to operate in real-time conditions, as the RAF had set up Main, Tactical, and Forward refuelling areas from which the helicopters were able to re-fuel. In addition, since this was an RAF Battlecamp, we went out on recce and clearance patrols on a regular basis. For this, the Tp were able to put their manpack skills to best use (including the Tp OC!). This was particularly popular for those who enjoyed being dropped in by Puma at night and then being attacked by a bunch of hairy Rock Apes en route to the PUP. (**Sig Bogart** and **Sig Horne**) A number of different helicopters supported the exercise, including Pumas, Chinooks, Merlins, and Sea Kings, thus providing plenty of opportunities for a quick 'cabby'. All in all this was a great exercise, with no dramas or injuries, save those caused by the Troop gymnastic competition... Finally, the Tp welcomes **Sgt Dave Margle** and **Cpl Matt Coverley**

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Z K White**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Donnelly**

Hotel Tp members have found themselves flung to various training areas over the past few months, some more exotic than others. A recent deployment involving a large part of the Tp was to Sennybridge Training Area, supporting a 3 (UK) Div FAC

exercise. The main effort for the Tp at the moment is EX DRAGONS SHOT - a Military and Adventure Training package run by the Tp for the Sqn at Brawdy in November. Pre-training will include how to treat mild hypothermia after 5 hours paddling along the coastline.

The Tp welcomes back **Sigs Jesson**, **Worthington** and **Ault** from an arduous tour of Canada - even though the latter two might wish to remember that it is traditional to bring back your weapons from such jaunts! **Cpl Brookwell** spent an enjoyable couple of weeks in the Ukraine supporting the final AMF (L) exercise. **Sig Parker** has just returned from a long stay at Leconfield, learning how to drive the big green vehicles. A massive farewell to **LCpl Dave Ezard**, who leaves us to take up a posting at 14 Sig Regt with her new husband. Her contribution to the forming of the Tp was immense, we are hugely grateful for all the help she gave us and we wish her all the best in the future. By the time this is out, **Sig Fielding** will be our latest Tp member thrown to the mercy of Civ Div - lets hope he can find an employer who can put his very 'special' time management skills to use!

EX WELSH DRAGON II
by Sig Rees

A group of 16 Hotel Tp personnel deployed from Colerne on 16 Sept to take part in EX WELSH DRAGON II. The exercise was in the Brecon Beacons and lasted 12 days. We were to support the RAF and TACPs with Ground to Ground (VHF) and Ground to Air (UHF) communications. It was to be a steep learning curve for us all, with many new procedures to learn, such as providing back-briefs for the jets, and the dreaded 9-line brief. The aim of the exercise was to qualify FACs. This involved getting as many aircraft to targets throughout the day and night as possible, so the Command CP staff were clocking up 17-hour days. New equipment (IDM) being used by the TACPs in conjunction with the Jaguars was found to be very successful. Using burst transmissions over UHF, the Jaguar crews were provided with the information they required through their visual display within their helmets, rather than the old system where they had to write everything down.

Having been with the Regt for only two weeks, I was not only a bit apprehensive at spending 2 weeks in the hilly, wet and cold Welsh mountains, but also at the prospect of working on the HQ det for the first time. I had not only to polish up on my own VP, but also to get used to the RAF's VP (many of their terms would not have gone down well with our Yeoman!) As it happens, the weather held out and the RAF officers at HQ were very patient, pointing us in the right direction. In fact the RAF were very accommodating as, not only did they put us up in hotels, we were also given a stack of cash to pay for our food! This was a fantastic experience and I am now really looking forward to my next exercise!

THE TANK PARTY VIEW
by LCpl Ranson

Six able-bodied soldiers deployed to the Brecon Beacons for EX WELSH DRAGON II, our mission - to blow up tanks. We were to inflate scale-sized models of tanks and armoured vehicles to be used as targets by RAF jets, which included Harriers, Tornados and Jaguars. Once we had settled into our hotels, and after waiting for **Sig Butcher** to arrive, we set off to recce the HQ Site. This of course resulted in the first vehicle getting bogged in! **LCpl Ranson** and **Sig Butcher** were sent to the rescue and, in true MT fashion, managed to get their own vehicles stuck as well. Nice one lads! We eventually got all of the vehicles out, and the exercise commenced. We are now all experts at recognising tanks, that is, the inflatable kind, that don't really look like tanks at all - more like military bouncy castles! We spent the fortnight inflating targets for the jets to laser and then deflating them once a kill had been decided.

A good time was had by all, including **Sig Butcher**, who really seems to like bogging his vehicle in. On the last day he did it so well, that the REME had to be called out. Not content with this he then decided to reverse his Bedford into a 40-ft arctic lorry, watched by **LCpl Steve Hadley.** Still, he doesn't get much practice at this driving lark, it being his trade.... Nevertheless, we will all be volunteering for the exercise again next year, especially the one based in Canada!

SWIMMING AND WATERPOLO SEASON - 2002
by Capt P Griffiths

The 2002 Swimming and Water polo season proved to be as difficult a year as 2001 for getting a Regimental team together for training and competitions. The first competition of the year was the 5 Div Inter-Units held in May 02 at the new leisure and swimming pool complex, Tidworth. The Regt won both the men's and ladies' swimming. The water polo competition followed 2 weeks later and, after an excellent final between 11 Sig Regt and a somewhat depleted 21 Sig Regt team, 11 Regt eventually won by 1 goal.

The next competition was the UK South Semi-finals, held at the new sports complex Aldershot. Once again, the Regt swimming teams acquitted themselves well, with the men running out winners in a hard-fought battle with RMAS, and the ladies taking second place. In the water polo, the Regt won a well-contested and exciting competition. In the Army water polo finals, held at Arborfield, the final saw the Regt pitted against 2 PWRR, who had already lost to us in the UK South semi-finals. It was a good omen for the Regt, but in a hard-fought and excellent game, running to extra time, we eventually won by 2 goals. The swimming finals saw both our ladies' and men's teams winning. As far as I am aware, this is the first time any unit has won all 3 disciplines.

A number of the Regt were selected to represent Army and then Combined Services in all three disciplines. But the season has not yet finished, and all team members are now in training for this year's Inter Corps competition to be held at Aldershot in November. The Corps are currently Champions in all 3 disciplines and are eagerly looking forward to defending their titles. Looking to the future, the Corps is in the process of organising a swimming and water polo tour to the West Coast of the USA, so if you think you are Corps standard and have been out of the loop for a while, phone **Capt Pete Griffiths** on Colerne military 94385 5111 to give him your details.

CROSS COUNTRY

With the regimental runners having stacked on a few pounds over the summer leave period, it was time to start training again. So, in preparation for the forthcoming cross-country season, the Regt sent nine runners up to the hilly town of Keswick for the Corps pre-season training camp. A gruelling week of training took place under the supervision of **Capt Turnbull** whom we all agreed, even after last year, was still mad for it!

The season kicked off with the Blandford Multi-Terrain Half Marathon, which incorporated the Royal Signals Half Marathon Championships. Early on the morning of Saturday 5 October, **Capt Lindsay Courage**, **SSgt Dan Burdus**, **Sgt Debbie Hutchinson** and **Sig Nat Curtis** met up with a spring in their step. Alas this was not to last long, as we did not appreciate just exactly how hilly and multi-terrain the course would be. However, true to her name, **Capt Courage** got a credible 2nd place, followed by **Sig Curtis** in 3rd and **Sgt Hutchinson** finishing 12th. Between the three of us, we managed to win the female category of the Royal Signals Championships. The league races brought out some dark horses in the Regt, namely **Sig Steph Bogart**. However, since then, she has gone to the other side and has converted to orienteering. A common theme in all the league races so far has been **Sig Chepwony** leading from start to finish. In fact he is usually showered and changed before the rest of the runners come in.

The next key race was the Army Relays at Tweseldown racecourse. It was a very wet and miserable day, but this did not stop us having a good day. We managed to field two teams each in both the male and female categories. After a hard day's running on a wet and muddy racecourse, the men's teams finished 2nd and 10th, and the women's teams gained a credible 4th and 12th. **Sig Chepwony** – more training required! In between these events the cross-country team have been training hard under the watchful guidance of **SSgt Dan Burdus**. However, when he is not there we do all take the easy option and just go for a steady run. Sorry Dan!

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT BEXLEYHEATH

CO **Lt Col S C R Malik TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S P J White**

EX PHOENIX LEADER (CADRE COURSE)
By Cfn Compton, 60 Sig Sqn (V) LAD REME

It was with some trepidation that, on a miserable Friday night, 7 of us from 60 Sig Sqn left to go down to Folkestone for EX PHOENIX LEADER. It was being run by 71 (Y) Sig Regt, the Regt we've so recently joined, and for most of us, this would be our first introduction to our new CO, RSM and PSI's. Although this is a sig regt, the JNCOs Cadre was open to all trades at sig level, which explains why I was going. I'm a craftsman in 60 Sqn LAD.

The course started the following morning at 0615, with 20 students on parade for PT. What a great way to start the day (!). After having nearly died, it was off to shower and change for breakfast.

The working day began after breakfast with an address from the CO, **Lt Col Simon Malik TD**, who introduced us to the principles of Leadership. Following his address, there were lessons from the teaching staff on various aspects of the leadership of a sig det in the field, from generating a route card to receiving and giving formal orders. After a series of practical and classroom-based lessons, we headed for the training area for a map exercise, where each soldier took their turn as det comd. We had been informed that during the entire course, the Directing Staff (DS) would be closely watching our individual performances. After a quick trip back to camp for tea and formal orders, we were back out for our overnight exercise. This consisted of making our way to the training area to set up a det in the field (despite thick glutinous mud sticking to everything), surviving an attack, moving to another site, re-establishing the det, and then hopefully settling into a night-time routine. No sweat. It was all really good fun. I can't think of anyone who didn't get the infantry buzz when the enemy attacked.

Soldiers on Command Task

Soldiers on Battle Run

So, up the next morning, pack up the det, and back to camp for breakfast - in less than half an hour! That woke us up. The rest of Sunday was spent on command tasks. With practical application, thinking and trust all playing a part in one or more of the tasks, these really gave us a chance to show we could work things out and engineer a good solution to a problem. Personally, I really enjoyed these. We then got a chance to go for a lovely Sunday stroll in the woods - a stretcher race. Fantastic(!) We nearly died again. Thanks for that, RSM.

All in all, it was a very instructive course. With plenty of hard work, a great deal of active encouragement from the DS (if you know what I mean....) and, (especially with the command tasks) there was a good feeling of satisfaction when you were told you'd passed the task as a team. One of the hardest things was making an effective, co-operative, well-led team out of 5 people who'd never met before - in just 24 hours.

As a craftsman, it was an enlightening experience for me to see how a sig det worked, and it gave me a basic understanding of how to run an FRT det on a sqn or regt exercise when the chance comes up.

As a new sqn to the Regt, 60 Sqn put in a good showing, with **Sig Staunton** being in the Best Section, and myself winning Best Student for the course. I would like to thank my OC, **Maj Woping**, for nominating me for the course, and **WO1 (RSM) White** and his team for running it.

68 (INNS OF COURT & CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON - LINCOLNS INN & WHIPS CROSS

OC **Maj Jonathan Manley**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Lawrence Evans**

THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW
By 2Lt James Evans and Sgt Richard Turnham

The Lord Mayor's Show took place on Saturday 9 November 2002, winding its way through the streets of London from the City to Waterloo Bridge and back again. The annual event takes place to mark the end of the tenure of the current Lord Mayor of London, and the beginning of his successor's year. It is a day steeped in pageantry and tradition, and one in which the Reserve Forces of London take a large and active part.

68 (Inns of Court & City Yeomanry) Sig Sqn, although not on horseback (due to OP FRESCO commitments), as is traditional, were there to take our place in the parade, manning three Landrovers and dressed to kill. As we progressed along the route, two officers walking alongside the vehicles and **Lt Simon McMenemy**, the det commander, standing proud in the lead vehicle, we were met with cheers and roars of support. At one stage the Sqn motto, 'Salus Populi Suprema Lex', could be heard ringing out as we moved past an enthusiastic supporter!

The Lord Mayor's Show is all about waving. The crowd wave with great enthusiasm at all the participants and expect nothing less than the same in return. The IC&CY did not disappoint. **Sgt Alvin Lewis** abandoned his vehicle much to the watching crowd's mirth, to emulate the loping gait of a passing inflatable giant. Meanwhile, **SSgt (Yeoman of Signals) Mark Gittins** and **Sgt Richard Turnham** reflected ruefully on the entirely unexpected and for them unique experience of receiving admiring screams

The Detachment poses for the camera

from packs of spectating Girl Guides and exhortations to 'honk if you're horny!' For those watching at home, there was a treat in store with **Lt Simon McMenemy's** star role during his impromptu interview with the BBC.

Preparing to salute and be interviewed by the BBC

After the Honorary Colonel, **The Earl of Limerick** and the Sqn OC, **Major Jonathan Manley** had taken the det's salute, the day wound to an end. The Sqn returned to Lincoln's Inn to prepare for the next day's Remembrance Parade, well satisfied that during an enjoyable day, the Squadron's profile in the City of London had been raised in true IC&CY style.

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON - CHELMSFORD & HARLOW

OC **Major Craig Tallents**
SSM **W02 (SSM) Jim Swain**

The Sqn has been through another very busy period over the last three months with Remembrance Day, Regimental Training and continuing Recruit Induction Weekends.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

10 November 2002 saw the Sqn parade through the Town Centre of Chelmsford in support of the Royal British Legion for the Remembrance Day parade. The Sqn put on a good show with over fifty all ranks on parade. The salute was taken by the Mayor of Chelmsford and by his side was our Honorary Colonel, **Colonel David Casstles TD TL**

REGIMENTAL TRAINING

The Regt organised an Officer/SNCO's Study weekend and a J/NCO's Cadre course during November 2002. Both events were well attended by the Sqn and there was positive feedback from those attending. **W02 (SSM) Jim Swain** was said to be telling jokes to himself in the early hours of the morning after the Officers/SNCO's function during the Study weekend.

RECRUIT INDUCTION WEEKENDS

The Sqn has nine recruits attending the Regimental Induction weekends in October and November 2002. Recruiting is going well and we already have four recruits for the Induction training that commences in January 2003.

FINALLY...

The OC and all ranks would like to congratulate **W02 Richard Pieper** on his award of VRSM and to **Cpl Christie** on his bar to his VRSM. **SSgt Tony Perry** was awarded the clasp to his EM(T).

The White Helmets

THE WHITE HELMETS

CO **Lt Col Bob Brannigan**
SNCO **SSgt P Baughey**

SHOW SEASON 2002

The White Helmets 2002 show season has finally come to an end, after an extremely busy summer. Without the limitations of last year's foot and mouth outbreak, the calendar has been full to bursting point. We have travelled as far south as Allnick in sunny Cornwall and as far north as Edinburgh in not so sunny Scotland. We also travelled to Germany to take part in the last ever Rhine Army Summer Show!

75th ANNIVERSARY REUNION

The 75th Anniversary of the Royal Signals White Helmets took place in Blandford over the weekend 27-29 September 2002. The weekend took the form of an extended reunion to include every former team member who could be contacted! After months of phone calls, letters, faxes and emails, the weekend finally arrived. Approximately 300 former team members (from as far afield as Australia) arrived for the reunion, a testament to the team spirit that exists long after leaving the White Helmets and the Army!

The Weekend began with a meet and greet of the old and bold in the local Royal British Legion. Old friendships were renewed and new ones were made. At the crack of dawn the following morning it was up to the airfield for all the current members and a few old hands. A frantic morning of re-familiarisation and training commenced, as the former members would be taking part in that afternoon's display.

The display went well, despite the enormous pressure of performing in front of a crowd composed entirely of former members who had done it all before! You could almost feel the critical gazes! After the display there was a chance for all the guests to meet the team and even to have a ride on a Triumph. The old adage of never forgetting how to ride a bike was proven as former members jumped on and reverse rode off around the

Maj (Retd) Keith Russell tries to read his prepared speech from a moving tableau!

arena. The takers for the free rides even included an 81 year old ex team member. The Team Captain offered **Mr Len Gasson**, who was a member in 1936, a ride around on the back of a bike. His reply was 'Dear, White Helmets don't ride pillion' and promptly rode of for a few laps of the arena on a 750cc Ride Bike!

'Sorry, where did you say the pedals were again?'

'It's all coming back to me you know!'

Cpl 'Tonka' **Richardson**, the longest serving member of the team was surprised with a 'This is Your Life' in front of all gathered from the decades. Even Tonka was speechless when in true 'This is Your Life' style, his whole family, Mum, Dad, Brother and others appeared at the end. The day concluded with a party in the Semaphore Arms. The Corps Band were in attendance, putting on another excellent display and the day was rounded off in grand style.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES.

As ever the turnover in the team has been pretty high, but it has been even higher in the last few months.

Firstly, **Lt Col Jack Amberton** leaves us for civilian life after a long career in the Corps. The team wishes all the best to **Lt Col Jack** and **Irene**. Once we had removed **Lt Col Jack's** vice-like grip on the keys, they were handed over to **Lt Col Bob Brannigan**, who joins us from the School of Signals. If that wasn't enough, **Capt Kyra MacAnulty** has also left the team at about the same time! She moves on to complete the Junior Command and Staff Course. **Capt Jon Malcolm** took over the reins after an extensive HOTO period! The team tried to avoid the HQ building for the duration of this period as with two Lt Col's and two team captains, it had become a pretty crowded place!

Lt Col Amberton finally relinquishes command to Lt Col Brannigan

Besides all these changes, best wishes from the team go to **LCpl Chris** 'Trigger' **Jackson** who married **Alison** in October, and leaves the Army at the end of December. More best wishes to **LCpl Jonny Kama** who married **Zoe** and has now moved to RADEX.

Good luck to **LCpl Keith Hodgson** who leaves us on promotion to 2 Sig Regt, **Sig Cari Potter** who is off to MT 11 Sig Regt and **Kevin O'Leary** who has left the Team and the Army.

PROMOTIONS

If you believe the rumour that you can't get promoted in the team then read on! Congratulations to **Sig** 'Geordie' **Lewis** for coming off of the Sig - LCpl Board, and to **LCpl Jim Brown, LCpl Damien Chorlton, LCpl Scotty Eccott** and **LCpl** 'Tonka' **Richardson** for all being promoted to Cpl.

If you require any information about the Royal Signals Motorcycle Display Team, The White Helmets, phone Blandford Military (94371) 2365/2368. The next induction course is in November 03.

WINTER SPORTS

ROYAL SIGNALS WINTERSPORTS TRAINING CAMP AND CHAMPIONSHIPS 2002
'SPORT FOR ALL'

This year's Camp took place once again in the beautiful and challenging resort of Zell-am-See and Kaprun. The snow conditions were ideal for racing on the Kitzsteinhorn Glacier and the training team soon got stuck into race technique coaching. Support for the Championships this year has been overwhelming, with 180 soldiers training and competing during the last two weeks. Regular and TA, alpine and snowboarding, novice and advanced racer all trained alongside each other fulfilling the aim of the Camp – 'sport for all'.

Conditions on the Glacier are often extremely cold and hostile, but morale was well maintained throughout and in true British Army style, we were the last to be snowed off the mountain from bad weather. The novices progressed with admirable speed and showed up several of the more conditioned racers during race week. The advanced racers used the Camp as an opportunity for consolidation training prior to the Divisional Championships. Of particular note in the prize list were the following:

Snowboard:

Most Improved	**Cpl Skeggs**, 1 (UK) ADSR.
Best Effort	**LCpl Robinson**, 11 Sig Regt.
Overall Novice	**Sig Moore**, 101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn.
Overall Ladies	**LCpl Paterson**, 15 Sig Regt.
Individual Champion	**Lt Steven Knight**, 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt.

Sgt Andy Dawson, 11 Sig Regt, Chief Instructor (Alpine)

Alpine:

Overall Ladies	**Lt Brereton-Martin**, 1 (UK) ADSR.
Individual Champion	**Cpl Paul Wraight**, 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn.
Team Combination	1 (UK) ADSR.

Capt Davies

In addition to this, two special awards were given - **SSgt Dom Graham** and **Sgt Andy Dawson** were presented with engraved plates, in recognition of exceptional contribution to their disciplines. **SSgt Dom Graham** started up Corps Snowboarding 4 years ago from nothing and has taken a team to the Army Snowboarding Championships for the last 2 years. Last season the team were extremely close to picking up the silver, and we wish them all the best in this year's competition. He now has over 200 Royal Signals Snowboarders as members of the Club, which is testament to his commitment and belief in the sport. **Sgt Andy Dawson** has instructed on the Camp for the last 5 years, and this year assumed the role of Chief Instructor (Alpine), organising four weeks of progressive training, which culminated in a 5 day race week for 90 racers. **Maj (Retd) Paul Ford**, Secretary AWSA, is warmly thanked for being with us as the Technical Delegate throughout race week – his experience and help were invaluable.

The Royal Signals Corps Training Camp and Championships is open to all Royal Signals personnel, both TA and Regular. Beginners, intermediates and advanced racers are all welcome. The dates for this year will be 15 Nov – 13 Dec 2003. If you are interested in progressing to racing in either Alpine skiing or Snowboarding please contact **Capt Michelle Worden** at HQ Th Tps, Upavon, **Sgt Andy Dawson** at 11 Sig Regt, **Lt Steve Knight** at 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt or **SSgt Dom Graham** at 16 Sig Regt.

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Mahmood Hussain and his consort, **Nagina Kauser**, Comd 143 Bde, **Brig Andrew Meek**, CO Birmingham UOTC, our former Honorary Colonel, **Brig Ian Sim** and our former CO, **Lt Col Stephen Potter**, who made a very special presentation to the Regt during the dinner. The Honorary Colonel, **Colonel Brian Foxon** and the CO, **Lt Col Calvin Owen** welcomed all of our special guests. The meal could only be described as scrumptious and memorable, although heaven knows how a starter combination of Salmon and Black Pudding could taste so good - but it did. Following the meal and the traditional speeches, the CO presented the award of Best Subaltern to a pleasantly surprised **Lt Janet Lawrence** of 89 Sqn. He also extended the best wishes of the Regt to **Capt Carolyn Daly** and **Capt Jack Jennings** on their recent respective marriages. Special thanks are also extended to the Corps Band for their most entertaining musical and audience participation interlude. Talk about a band on the run and having fun - wow!

Coinciding with the Council House Dinner was the Sgts Mess Annual Christmas Draw, which took place at Canley. No detailed report is available for the event, but judging by the recovery phase needed by the Regimental PSI's, it must have been a Christmas Spree – no jokes about all their lights being extinguished please! Finally, the CO decided to play Santa and give the other ranks a treat this year by declaring that a Traditional Christmas Dinner be organised during EX SILVER BULLET. This took place at Nesscliffe during the weekend 7/8 Dec.

The event was smartly and deftly organised by **Sgt Martin Walton** and **SSgt Chris Jones**, who made sure that those who give up their weekend were guaranteed a great time - even with the Farmers disco, which definitely milked the Regt. The fact that the servers outnumbered the diners did not in anyway diminish the success of this excellent dinner. It was enjoyed by all, especially by 48 Sqn – altogether now, it will be lonely this Christmas..... As I pen these notes, preparations are well advanced for other Sqn functions, starting with 89 Sqn on Friday 13 December (spooky with hooky) closely followed by HQ, 58 & 48 Sqns on 14 December, and leading quite nicely a week later to our well deserved Christmas Break. Happy New Year!

ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS

I would not forgive myself if I closed the 2002 notes without a mention of our Orienteering ventures and our individual success and near miss at the Corps Orienteering Championship. The Corps event took place at Perham Down near Tidworth over the period 6/7 November. Here the Regt and in particular, **LCpl Andy Price** of 48 Sqn, achieved notable success when he won the Corps Under 25 Champion Award. He will now represent the Corps at the Inter Corps Championship at Newbury – not bad for a novice. The rest of the team thought they had done equally well and were convinced they had thrashed the opposition to take the TA event. Unfortunately **Andy Price** (surprisingly) missed a checkpoint and the team was disqualified on Day 2, much to their bitter disappointment. Failure soon turned to further success when, on the strength of their individual efforts, **Capt John Middler** and **WO2 Chris Smith** were selected to represent the AGC at the Inter Corps Championships. To all team members, including **Capt Tom Jeffries** and **SSgt Dave Arnot**, well done. On a closing note, those intrepid orienteers from 89 Sqn once again scooped all the awards at the Regt Championships at Nesscliffe on Sunday 8 December.

36 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col WDL Brown TD**
RSM	**W01 (RSM) WJ Morrow**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON - ILFORD

OC	**Maj Pete Minshall**
Acting SSM	**SSgt Graham Carroll**

The Regt deployed to Germany for EX ARRCADE FALCON 2 with 11 Sig Bde. It proved to be a valuable learning experience for all involved. Not only was it the first BAOR exercise for many members of the Sqn, but we all had the opportunity to work with all regts and sqns in the Bde. It was also a chance for many to meet up with friends met during courses and for others to find out what life was like in other regts. We left England with **LCpl Johnnie Walker** and **SSgt Trevor Franklin** and arrived back with **Cpl Walker** and **WO2 Franklin**. Congratulations from everyone.

Back in Ilford with yet another annual camp over, our trusty PSI left us to attend his Sgt's course. Although he missed us all, he did find some comfort from the sheep whilst on exercise in his homeland. Now he is back getting everyone geared up for the Lanyard Trophy!

In the past couple of months we have said goodbye to some well-known faces in the Sqn, some moving to new posts, others leaving the army altogether. **Capt Gordon Shelley** has moved to 35 Sig Regt (V) and taken up the post of QM, while **Capt Feasey** got itchy feet and decided it was time to move on to become RAO of 3 PWRR(V). Both have spent a number of years in HQ Sqn, and we have benefited from their presence. We wish them both farewell and good luck in their new roles. Just after camp, the LAD waved goodbye to **SSgt Brett Richardson**, who made his way on promotion to Catterick, whilst **SSgt Paul Ginbey** was welcomed with open arms to take over. We also welcome **WO2 Chris Barnard**, who has joined us as MTWO, having served with the RA for 22 years. We welcome **WO2 Tony Wells** back to Ilford as RQMS(V) and congratulate **WO1 Eddie Kikas** on his promotion and stepping into the role of SVWO from **Capt Scott**, who has been promoted and appointed QM(V). Finally, congratulations to **SSgt Graham Carroll**, who has assumed the role of SSM for the Sqn.

Finally, thank you to everyone who attended annual camp in Germany and for all the effort that went in before, during and after the exercise. Let's continue the hard work into 2003.

FAREWELL TO SSGT JIM POLLIT (HQ SPSI)

On Wednesday 27 November, members of the permanent staff gathered in the Officers Mess to bid farewell to **SSgt Jim Pollitt**.

Jim leaves the unit and the Army after 7 and 22 years respectively, during which time he has served as the PSI to 44 Sqn and as SPSPI to HQ at Ilford. When the speeches were made there wasn't a dry eye in the house. Much beer was drunk and after a lot of reminiscing, everyone moved on to the trip the light fantastic in Romford. **Jim** moves on to pastures new and a job as a personnel and training manager with Wellingborough County Council. All the permanent staff wish him well for the future.

We wait with baited breath to meet **SSgt Gaz Topps** who will be arriving in January from 7 Sig Regt.

44 (CINQUE PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Major Mark Baker**

After a considerable period of absence, 44 (CP) Sig Sqn has blown the dust off their Biros and are back with a vengeance. Since our last submission to *The WIRE*, the main effort for the Sqn has been the preparation for and the deployment on EX ARRCADE FALCON 2, which provided the ideal opportunity for us to gain our Annual Camp 'tick in the box' for 2002.

As avid readers will remember from previous issues of *The WIRE*, 44 Sig Sqn has for some time not had the most reliable vehicle fleet in the Regt. So the lead-up to Camp this year saw much frantic preparation, and in some cases re-building of our vehicles. A very big 'Thank you' must go to the Sqn's newly-formed Colchester-based MT Det – ABRO. If it had not been for their sterling work, often carried out at very short notice, the Sqn would have not deployed. Thanks lads!

On Saturday 5 October, the Sqn assembled at SHQ to prepare to deploy to Germany. Final preparations included changing wheels on vehicles, issuing vehicle tools, the all-important 'Hi-Vis' vests, and vital personal documentation and signing the pay-sheets (!) Oh, and re-adjusting the main gates with a RR vehicle – **LCpl Himsworth**.

The Sqn provided 1 Euromux EAN, which was formed from 747and 749 Tps, and comprised approximately 25 personnel. In addition we provided OSC 148, which with the Sqn OC, **Major Mark Baker** at the helm, ably assisted by **WO2 (FofS) Mark Ward**, would keep everything running smoothly. That was the plan!

After travelling from Grays via various locations in the UK (including Aberdeen, Newquay and Cardiff - well it felt like it!), the Sqn managed arrived in Germany fairly intact and without too many problems. A special mention must be made by the SPSI of **Sgt** 'Griff' **Griffiths** (PSI HQ Sqn)'s attempts to change a wheel on a Leyland Daf. My lips are sealed……

As far as the Sqn was concerned, the exercise itself went extremely well, and despite some challenging and difficult locations (who did the recces?), EAN 549 gave an extremely good account of themselves, providing the only reliable links for most of the exercise.

With only 2 moves during the exercise, there might have been a danger of boredom creeping in and 'the peasants revolting' had it not been for our secret weapon, **Lt Francis Koroma**. Having been born and raised in Sierra Leone, he ably demonstrated his knowledge of traps and snares during an impromptu demonstration by the SPSI, and succeeded in snaring his quarry (himself), hoisting one leg well above his own head! When questioned as to where he had gleaned his commendable knowledge, he was heard to utter the words 'Guerrilla Warfare.' Not quite the same prey somehow.

Another event worth mentioning was the appearance of a human faeces in the toilet that had been hastily constructed by the 'Euromux Girls' whilst we were in a wooded location. ('It's only for wee-ing, you know!') On finding the offending specimen, **LCpl Kiersty Shaw** went absolutely berserk, ranting on in disgust, only to find that the object had in fact been 'created' by **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Robinson** from a Mars Bar! Oh, how we laughed.

Sadly, ENDEX came all too soon (believe that and you'll believe we're off to Jamaica next year!), and the Sqn re-joined the rest of the Regt at Elmpt to enjoy a period of well deserved 'R&R'. This passed without much incident, although much dancing was danced, drink was drank and food was……fooded (?), and by early morning on 18 October, everyone was ready for the return journey back to Blighty. All in all, EX ARCCADE FALCON 2 had been a major success, and all members of the Sqn should be extremely proud that the hard work they put in prior to the exercise resulted in such a success.

On our return to 'normality', we now face the rigors of the dreaded RSIT, having prepared for the never-ending cycle of inspections in the weeks since Camp. As this article goes to press, we are preparing for our deployment on EX SOUTH COAST CRUSADE, a 'character-building' adventure training exercise, coupled with some festive celebrations on (hopefully not 'off'!) the South Coast. More of that in the next issue.

Finally, a very big 'Hello' to or new AO, **Mrs. Sue Wills**, and to **Capt Adrian Marshall** and **Lt Francis Koroma**, and sadly, 'Goodbye' to **Cpl** 'Del' **Ridgewell**, and **Sig Paula Murrell**, off to join 'The Boys In Blue'. We wish you all the best for the future.

45 (ESSEX) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Mike White**
SSM **WO2 Louise Walker**

The Sqn has been settled back into a routine after our deployment on Annual Camp, and the main focus now is on RSIT early in the New Year. We welcome **Capt McKenzie-Bell** into the Sqn to replace our outgoing 2 IC **Capt Marshall**. I hope he has a successful time in his new post. Well-done goes to **Sgt (SQMS TA) Cook** on his recent promotion.

54 (EAST ANGLIA) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Dennis Prince**
SSM **W02 Martin Wright**

September to November were busy months for the Sqn, with preparing for and deploying on Annual Camp in October, ECIs and Regt'l Board of Officers in November.

On the 26 September the Hon Col, **Col Foakes TD DL**, visited SHQ and 757 Tp based in Cambridge. This was his first visit to the SHQ. **2Lt Darren Ambler**, OC 757 Troop, showed him around the Centre. At the end of the evening, **Col Foakes** presented the following SHQ members with the VRSM: **WO2 (SSM) Martin Wright**, **SSgt (YofS) Kim Robertson**, **Sgt** (now Retd) **Sue Vickery** AGC and **Cpl Geoff Shearing**.

He also presented the C in C Commendation to **Capt (Retd) Alan Newbery**, the former TOT who retired from the TA in March this year. Alan's wife, **Pauline** was there to see him receive this commendation.

Medal recipients pictured with the Hon Col and CO

Capt (Retd) Newbery pictured with his wife Pauline and the Hon Col

Sadly we bid farewell to: **WO2 (SSM) Martin Wright**, who has finally decided to retire from the TA, Sgt **Don Punter** (the Sqn's Recruiting Sgt) and **Sgt Sue Vickery** (Transferring to Wales in her civilian job)

37 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col RG Mather**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Keen**

FAREWELL TO WO1 (RSM) FISHER

After 22 years loyal service to the Corps **WO1 (RSM) Fisher** leaves the Regt to begin a new life in Civvy Street. All ranks of 37 Sig Regt (V) would like to wish **Mo** and his wife **Michelle** all the best for the future and thank him for his outstanding contribution during his tour in Redditch. In his place, we welcome **WO1 (RSM) Keen** who has joined us from 30 Sig Regt.

Handing over - WO1 (RSM) Fisher hands over to WO1 (RSM) Keen

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Riley**
SSM **WO2 P Hall**

EX RICKSHAW RAMBLE

Congratulations to newly commissioned **Capt Graham Bond** were almost short-lived when he was stopped and breathalysed by **SC Garry Swinburn**. However the test results were negative. This was part of the training taking place during EX RICKSHAW RAMBLE, which concentrated on a variety of driving-related stands. You didn't really think he was being tested for drink-driving did you?

SC Garry Swinburn breathalyses Capt Graham Bond

This stand was provided by Warwickshire Police, who demonstrated the variety of equipment that they carry in their patrol car along, including a new speed detection system which was so accurate it could calculate the speed of pedestrians. To prove this, individuals were asked to run towards the camera and immediately their speed was recorded on a display screen. The fastest speed of the day was 19mph.

HQ Sqn deployed on a Military Skills and Leadership weekend, a variety of training which included field-craft, patrolling and a number of command tasks. The aim of the ex was to assess the Junior Ranks of the Sqn in their leadership skills and to provide valuable training as part of their personal development. To assess their command and control skills, individuals were tasked as sect comds and given specific tasks to complete. This came naturally to the more experienced NCO's, but the new members of the Sqn soon realised how challenging it was to take on the role of a sect comd.

To assess teamwork, there was a water obstacle that had to be negotiated using a variety of items. (It's amazing how there are always oil drums around when you need them). Participants produced a number of ideas on how to construct a makeshift raft, some good, some not so good. However the aim was achieved with each sect working together on a plan. The weekend was successful and provided the opportunity to assess certain individuals for promotion potential.

53 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj Giles**
SSM **WO2 Nicky Neill**

In the Welsh bid to take over the Regt, three of the Sqn hierarchy have taken over RHQ positions. **Maj David Munson** assumes the role of Regt 2IC, **Capt Andrew Henderson** is now Ops Offr and **WO2 (YofS) Mel Giles** the Regt Training YofS. **Maj Tony Giles** assumes command of the Sqn, **Capt Mick Turnbull** takes up the post of Sqn 2IC and we are waiting for the return of **SSgt Adrian Sharman** from his trip to the States to let him know he is now the Sqn YofS. **OCdts Dave Barbara** and **David John** now assume a bit of command of 868 and 869 Tps with the brief of 'sign only leave passes' (I wonder how long it will take for them to notice that there are no leave passes in the TA). Congratulations go to the newly promoted **LCpls Carter**, **Davies**, **Prosser** and **Pollard**. Well done. Welcome back to **Hugh Darren** and **Julia** from the wilderness in North Wales and your new appointments as reserve bar persons.

ANNUAL CAMP 2002.

Annual camp 2002 was planned in secrecy and no one really knew what was going on until it was too late. But once orders were given, we were off to a flying start. The Sqn has the esteemed position in that it provides the NMC and Radcon to RHQ. This was set up very well with all the trimmings waiting for the Regt personalities to turn up. But while we were waiting for our illustrious leaders, there was an attack. An eye witness describes what happened: -

Early afternoon, Thursday 12 September 2002, **LCpls Davies** and **Davies** mounting their sheep-hunting patrol were surprised by a blue Transit. It appeared to be acting suspiciously and it looked as though they too were looking for sheep. Disguised as a LDV Convoy van, it was full of skirtless Jocks, one of whom was wearing a salad suit (to catch the sheep unawares). The surprise was thwarted as **LCpl Davies** alerted the sloth-like MT/Admin cell. The QRF were unfazed, gently putting down their tea and biscuits, safe in the knowledge that **LCpl Davies** was physically restraining the vehicle and occupants (without the need of a weapon).

Sgt 'Tommie' **Thomas** was to be heard in the background shouting 'Give me some cable ties! I'm going to enjoy this'. **Sgt** 'Paddy' **Keogh** taking control of the FLAP ON, called all his men to arms (10 minutes after they had surrounded the vehicle) and called up his trump card, one **SSgt Keith Curtis**, attached to us from the good old US of A. After the ceremonial bagging, tagging and laying out of our visitors, there was much clicking of safety catches to put them at ease. This brought a very twisted smile to all persons, who by now were rubbing their hands together. You can only imagine what was going through their minds.

One lucky victim was dragged all around the camp in full view of other regts going out on their own adventure training. At this point **Cpl Mike Colley** was caught acting like a true Tongwynlais boy was rifling through the contents of the vehicle. After retrieving the spare wheel, tool kit and radio cassette he then started to look for Intel which could be used for the ex. Once again the lucky victim

was placed in front of **Capt Andrew Henderson** for interrogation. True to his form, he was of no use at all, getting nowhere except to sell the unwitting individual a Nokia 3330 and a 12-month rental contract. **Cpl Catherine Sains** lent a hand by producing a 320 radio to produce the desired white noise effect to the victim. Our big chief, **Maj Munson** later recommended that we should use **LCpl Davies's** collection of Welsh Valley Hits instead of the radio. This was not approved because of its high suicide risk. After another tour of the camp the victim was frog-marched in true style back to his comrades in captivity. At this point we were instructed to hand them over to a higher authority. **SSgt Curtis** was seen to run and hide as he thought the Padre was coming. But it was really the local CivPol.

Once the merry bunch was eventually sent heading into the wild blue yonder with a smile and wave from the Fighting 53, we could see our beloved SSM returning to the fold. **WO2 SSM Nicky Neill** was promptly informed of the successful escapades of her loyal subjects. Now that Camp has finished, we are entering a period of consolidation, allowing the newly appointed persons to find their feet and getting the Sqn qualified for the end of financial year, coconut flavoured, chocolate bar.

67 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC: **Maj Cooper**
SSM: **WO2 (SSM) Clarke**

On return from annual camp, the Sqn inspected and repaired damaged kit, and then it was back to training. The first ex was the CO's challenge, during which the Sqn went around a number of stands. The first aid stand consisted of a RTA and some equipment had been borrowed from the ambulance service, namely a spine board, head restraints and neck collars. The Sqn all took it in turn in fitting the correct sized collars on each other. **Lt George** tried a number of neck collars on before finding one small enough to fit. On being asked the size of it, the instructor informed us that it was for infants aged between 6 mths -1 yr. Photos were taken and bids are now being taken for the negatives. On Saturday evening the Regt held a go-kart race, which we won handsomely.

Sunday saw EX RICKSHAW, a driving skills competition. There was one stand with the usual reversing skills around cones, another checking that each driver had the correct documents and another driving a Foden drops vehicle around a course to deposit a pallet in a coned area. But the most talked-about stand of the day was the BV 206. The task was to move a container of contaminated waste to a safe area and involved driving the vehicle cross-country without spilling any of the waste. When **Cpl Smith** and her team started, it was a case of hold the container while the driver goes carefully around the course. However, once they hit the first obstacle this plan went all over **Cpl Smith's** smock, trousers and even splashed the driver and safety staff sitting in the front. We did not win this competition!

The Sqn is now recruiting well. We now have approx. 10-15 recruits going through the recruit programme. All we need to do now is stop them joining the Regulars or going on FTRS, then we will be at full strength. Since annual camp we have had some promotions. **WO2 Sewell** is now **Lt Sewell**, **2Lt George** picked up his second pip, (just goes to show what some weight training can do for you.) and finally **SSgt Clarke** was promoted to SSM.

With the New Year coming fast, the Sqn will carry on conducting new and varied training for both the old and bold and all of those just starting out in their TA Career.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj P H Fowler-Smith**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J R Krikorian**

96 SQN CLEAN UP AGAIN

Nesscliffe was the location and provided an excellent facility for this Regt'l weekend. 96 Sig Sqn, keen to continue a successful year, entered the competition with a positive attitude, but more importantly to have fun on this last Regt weekend of the year. Although an MT-led weekend with various stands, the go-kart race was the one that had all of us fired up.

Craftsman Grimbley and **LCpl Adams** had designed our kart, 'The Grimbley Reaper' and this was to be dis-ably driven by **Sig** Archer wearing a steel WW2 helmet in Corps colours and safety goggles to complete the make up. All was set on the start line and, with each sqn eyeing up the competition (they were also looking at the go-karts), the race was on. A combination of 'Robot Wars' and 'Scrap-heap Challenge!', parts there-of lay all around the course as the contraptions fell apart. A large plume of powder from a fire extinguisher (akin to a smoke grenade exploding) provided a 'Dastardly and Motley' scene as drivers, unable to see, collided with each other, the crowd and the trees. 96 Sqn were by now hoarse, shouting in support of our kart. The driver, **Sig Archer** with **LCpls Mullins** and **Kellard** hanging out of their proverbial hoops were pushing our now fatally-wounded kart to keep up with the leaders, 67 Sqn in their 'Kart of Death'. A pit stop was included, and with valiant hearts, 96 Sqn came a creditable second.

The go-kart race was a great conclusion to the 'interest' day, which also included stands covering: anti-ambush drills, (where **Cpl Ryan** and **SSM Krikorian** were the demo team and really enjoyed being the victims!) recovery, RTA procedures, First Aid, other vehicles, documentation, and a demo from our very own **Sgt John Davies** of the Royal Warwickshire Constabulary. Thanks Constable! Sunday brought the MT competition, organised by the MTWO, **WO1 Smiley.** 96 Sqn entered two teams, Team 1 with **LCpl Mullins** (Capt) **Cpl Tuck** and **Sig Archer** and Team 2 with **Cpl John Ryan** (Capt) **LCpl Kellard** and **LCpl Pont**. Each stand tested our abilities and as the competition progressed, so did our desire to win! Team 1 came fourth and Team 2 came second, making us Overall Competition Winners and a giving us a clean sweep of Regt competitions for the year.

THE CITY OF COVENTRY REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

96 Sig Sqn stood out from the crown during The City of Coventry Remembrance Parade, when they were the only unit to dust down their No2 dress and polish their medals for the Parade. Over the past few months **LCpl Rob Mullins** had been practising the ceremonial duties of Standard Bearer and this training bore fruit when he was proudly at the forefront of the Parade as Standard Bearer for the Coventry Branch of the RSA. The service was humbling, allowing us all to reflect on those who had gone before us, and reminding us just how grateful we are to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in conflicts past. The Sqn OC, **Maj Paul Fowler-Smith** laid a wreath on behalf of the Sqn and then led the Sqn for the return march past, where the Lord Mayor took the salute.

EX GRAND WARRIOR

Requiring ITD training, but challenged by OP FRESCO, 96 Sig Sqn deployed into the field - well, Kingsbury Ranges actually. Leaving the TAC on Friday afternoon and navigating around 'Green Goddesses', the advance party headed for the ranges. With rain and failing light, PSI **SSgt Bromley**, **Cpl Ryan**, **Sigs Monty Montague** and **Dave Shaw** struggled to erect Billy Smarts Circus for the arrival of the Sqn.

The weekend offered the full range of ITD training. **Sgt Hayley** led the training package with First Aid first thing on Saturday morning. This was followed by weapon handling - a wise move, which led to the Sqn gaining an 80% APWT pass rate on Sunday! Marksmanship principles were re-enforced and even **Sig Monty** (who hadn't fitted his lenses for his S10 and couldn't see the target), still passed! The NBC training and use of an ad hoc chamber was run by **Cpl John Ryan**. This proved to be an excellent opportunity to carry out modifications to respirators and bring the Squadron members up to date with the threat.

The morning activities had turned our admin area into a stinking quagmire of liquid mud. Time to leave for a break - err, that will be the CFT then. **Cpl Temple** led us around the course and a 100% pass rate was achieved. A positive day so far, the Law of Armed Conflict followed by the obligatory film, which stars our **Capt Schofield** as a pte up to no good. By now the mud was up to our ankles and we finished the day's programme on Equal Opportunities and Alcohol and Drug Abuse. The old saying 'If it's not raining it's not training' definitely applied. Just as we finished the APWT, the downpour ceased and the sun appeared for the first time during the weekend. Despite poor weather conditions, an excellent weekend was achieved, not withstanding the disruptions made by the good cause of OP FRESCO.

39 (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **LtCol PR Towers**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) FE Roberts**

REGIMENTAL RECRUIT TRAINING TEAM

There have been some major changes within these circles during this year. As a result of some internal reorganisation, **WO2 Phil Martin**, left the Regimental Team in May following a short stint of 6 years in charge. One can only imagine how many young faces he will have moulded. In May we wished him well for his efforts, as he moved to an FTRS post elsewhere in the Regt.

At the helm of late has been the **RSM, WO1 Frank Roberts**, who for once gets a mention for something other than train spotting. However he has been fulfilling a desire by the previous CO to take a long look at how we deliver the training package to our future soldiers. A full review has now been completed, resulting in the issue of a substantial Handbook. This has now been issued to all instructors, including **Cpl Si Roberts** and **WO2 Janet Flowers** of 1 (RBY) (SC) Sig Sqn (V) who join us to undertake a joint recruit training programme.

Concurrently with this, a substantial effort at the Bristol side of the Regt has been going into recruiting. In January the Wessex Reserve Forces and Cadet Association made a case for increased recruiting funds for the Regt. We now have the funds (around £9,000). All we need now is the time to spend it wisely. **Lt Rob Woods** gave us around 10 weeks of his time to get things started, and **Lyn**, **Kay** and **Kim** have continued his work (they know who they are).

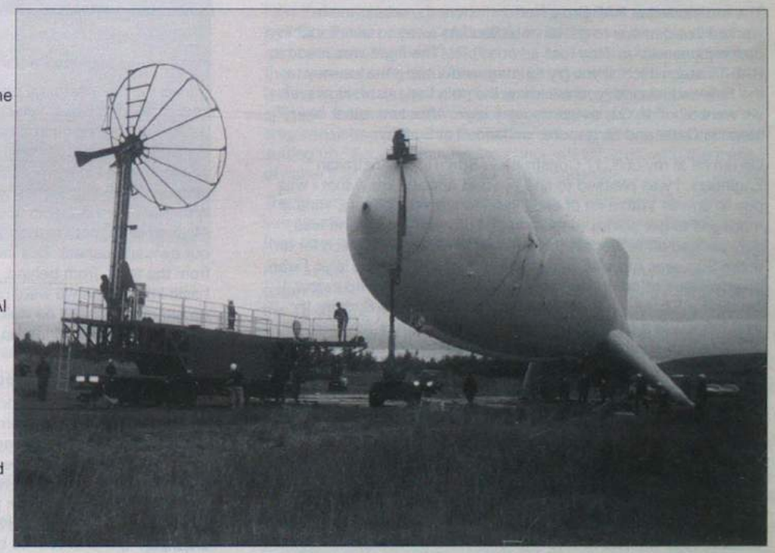
It is a positive move that Recruiting and Recruit Training are now working more closely together, an aspect that was relayed to the new Deputy Bde Comd on his recent visit to Horfield. There will be further improvements towards the end of the fiscal year before **WO1 (RSM) Frank Roberts** hands over his involvement to the newly appointed Senior Volunteer Warrant Officer, **WO1 (SVWO) Ray Phillips.**

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj M L Drake**
SSM **WO2 L Thornton Granville**

2002 proved to be a challenging year for 2 Sig Sqn. The OC's directive for the year was for the Sqn to be able to deploy and integrate its three comms capabilities, one of which is still (oops where's the balloon gone!!) under acceptance trials. The time set for the Sqn to achieve this was the Bde FTX EX HORSESHOE 3.



Capt Bill Naismith stabbing the Aerostat

With the scenario having been set for some months (including those pesky Al Kabosh) the Sqn deployed to their initial harbour area, Otterburn training area in mid-September. Once the Para's had cleared the airfield, we set to work deploying the new SUNFLOWER system (we didn't pick the name). Allowing for the typical Otterburn weather, all went to plan and the aerostat was there in all her glory, much to the bewilderment of the local population. There then followed a round robin of training programmes allowing all members of the Sqn hands-on on all three of the comms systems in service and ample opportunity to show off our aerostat to a variety of VIP visitors. Sorry to the rest of the Bde for stealing the show.

Then came every squaddie's favourite word ENDEX, and the slow pack up of the SUNFLOWER system. It was felt that, as it was **Capt Bill Naismith**, our PSAO's final exercise after nearly 50 years in the corps, he should have the honour of stabbing the deflation port some 50ft above terra firma. After much persuasion and a whisky or two, he was harnessed up and send skyward under the careful piloting of **Cpl Jane Carmicheal** to do the deed. After what seemed like hours, there was the telltale sound of leaking gas and it wasn't the 2IC talking about bats.

After a successful system recovery and equipment turnaround the Sqn deployed to Whitburn training camp for some well earned R & R, which saw the YofS trying out his best Scottish accent to fit in with the in crowd.

Finally, we would like to wish all the best to **Cpl** 'Ginge' **McLean** and **LCpl Mark Batchelor** on their deployment to Kosovo for 12 months on FTRS. We welcome **Capt Glen Davidson**, transferring from Edinburgh and hope he enjoys his time with us.

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj AR Blackwell**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) ACE Burdge**

The Senior Sig Sqn is now well into its Training Year. As well as training within the Bde context it has also clocked up some notable additional achievements. 200 Sig Sqn gained second place in the whole of the Army in the Tickle Fitness Competition. This was a good acknowledgement of the effectiveness of our PT programme, as a well as a nice bonus for the PRI fund! **Cpl Tris Dunbar** was awarded the QCVS for his magnificent performance on OP AGRICOLA in Kosovo earlier in the year. As a local Sgt, he filled the post of IC Sys Con (a SSgt's post) and made a huge impact on the quality of service delivered to all users of the various communications and IS systems deployed across Kosovo.

The Sqn has deployed on Battlecamp 2002 and on numerous exercises in our core role as a Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, as well as conducting other forms of training. These notes describe some of what we have been doing over recent months.

EXERCISE LONG LOOK 2002

by Cpl B Sullivan

'G'day, Cobber. Throw a few shrimps on the barbie, ya flaming galahs' - all sayings that spring to mind whenever you meet a native of Australia. In truth I spent 5 months mixing with our Antipodean cousins and was sadly disappointed that not one of them spoke like **Alf** of 'Home and Away'.

The trip started at RAF Brize Norton, where the admin team worked like demons to get all of us tourists away to our respective destinations with as little fuss as possible. The flight was made in RAF Tri-star, which, if you try to imagine doubling the journey to the Falkland Islands, you will know the pain I speak of. However we were all off to Oz, so spirits were high. After two rather blurry stops in Qatar and Singapore, we landed in Sydney.

On arrival at my unit, 17 Construction Sqn, Royal Australian Engineers, I was pleased to find out that nobody knew that I was due to arrive. With a lot of explaining to different people, I finally managed to get across to them what I did for a living, and was duly packed off to work in the Oz version of an LAD, which for an entire Sqn, was manned by two craftsmen. Two weeks later, I was given a week off to do some travelling, so with girlfriend in tow, I set out for Fiji, which is only a three hour flight from Sydney. If ever there was a place to relax then this is it - white powder beaches and crystal clear waters, the only danger being that of a coconut falling on you whilst you sipped your strawberry daiquiri. On returning to work, I set about trying to stem the flow of dying generators, but my mind often drifted off to dream of the great Australian adventure.

With a week left of the tour, I was given another week off and embarked on a whistle stop tour of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. Here I managed to cram in two days surfing, swimming with dolphins and seeing the mighty **Steve** "crikey" **Irwin** wrestle with crocodiles.

All in all, I was glad to see how the Aussies operated. On the whole, they are no-nonsense soldiers, excellent tradesman and all-round grafters. On the down side, it should have been made more clear to our Australian counterparts that EX LONG LOOK participants were there to actually see a bit of their country and culture, rather than sit in a gene bay for four months!

Battle Camp 2002

by Pte Bolton AGC (SPS)

This year, during our briefing for Battle Camp we were told that there were rebel Foo Fighters who were planning attacks on the British Government. This meant that 200 Sig Sqn had to engage

Cpl Sullivan down under!

these rebels until the Para's arrived.

During the first (learning) phase of the exercise we were taught how to build 'bashas', which, for some was just 'bread and butter' but for others, their first time since Basic Training. On the Monday, the Sqn went through basic infantry tactics, which included fire and movement in pairs, as a fire team, as a section and even as a platoon. Smoke grenades were used to see how we would deal with them - we did, with some style. We were then taught basic ambush drills (both responding to being ambushed and setting up our own ambushes). This included attacking and being attacked from the front, from behind, from the left or the right. With this basic knowledge we were confident that we could handle setting up our own ambush as well as coping with being ambushed. However time would tell, as we were going to get a lot of practice in a couple of days.

In preparation for night work, there was a night manoeuvre course to help us patrol in the dark and overcome likely obstacles. The group made a few minor errors (soon rectified) and although we had tripped many of the traps, we had done quite well for our first time. Other lessons included someone else taking control of the section in the event of the fire team commander being killed. We also had first aid training in preparation for the casevac phase of the final day. By the end of this first phase we were to be ready for anything.

The second phase consisted of patrolling, recce missions and being the QRF team, where some might catch up with a bit of sleep (or not in some cases). We were getting into the infantry routine of 6 hour shifts, getting sleep whenever possible, which for me was impossible. During the shifts the different fire teams encountered many serials, which included being ambushed and engaging the enemy. The training from the previous days came in useful, as we put it all into practice, killing the entire enemy (the Foo Fighters) and ending up victorious.

The 6-hour shifts went on until the Thursday evening, when we stopped and received our final attack orders from **Lt Stoy**. At this point we were already in hard routine, thus enabling the Platoon to

evacuate the area quickly. This hard routine was extremely tough as the platoon were sharing the sentry duties, with everyone trying to get an hour's kip whenever possible. It was made all the harder by the fact that it was freezing cold and there was no shelter to get our heads down.

At 0430 hrs and we moved out into our final attack position, which took approximately an hour and half, and with zero hour being 0730 hrs, it left us with plenty of time to think of our attack. 0730 hrs was announced with flares, lots of movement and the commander giving us orders to attack, which was basically get on top of the enemy position and kill 'em! This was done with confidence and aggression. We hadn't had lot of sleep the night before! This was to be our finest hour, with the hard work from the week eventually paying off.

The attack was complete and all enemy forces were dead - or so we thought. Suddenly mortar fire started to come down on our position. This became so heavy that the order was given to withdraw tactically. As we made our way back to the original starting position, we ran into several ambushes the resisting enemy forces had set up. This meant more firefights to contend with and more enemy to kill.

At this point we started experiencing injuries to our own people. To see how we could cope with casualties, the DS told a select few were that they were injured or dead. They were no trouble to us. Using the skills we had been taught, the platoon got the casualties to the casevac point where they could be airlifted out of the danger zone. We then carried on to the harbour area with no trouble and no further contact with the enemy.

Best Section on Battle Camp

After photographs were taken of each platoon and fire team, we then had a ride back to camp. It was a good feeling, with everyone falling asleep during the journey, this being the first time we had had the chance to get our heads down since the morning before.

The October Beer Festival

by Sig Gabbidon

Come October, it was a perfect chance for the lads and lasses of 200 Sig Sqn to get together and go out – an opportunity to go to the October Beer Festival. **Sig Scottie Kean** was given the task of organising the trip and, at first, it looked as if 95% of the Tp would be going. When it eventuated, we had only 10 from Bravo Tp and 2 from Alpha Tp.

The six-hour drive there was not the highlight of the weekend and neither was the 10-hour trip back. However **Cpl Tris Dunbar** and **SSgt Tom Gibbins** became very popular since they were the only people old enough to do the driving. This allowed the other 10 people to start enjoying the trip, with **Sig Young** being a perfect example to follow. When got there, we sorted out our accommodation (which was in tents) and went straight down to a local pub for a couple of quiet drinks. The pub that we were lucky enough to find was definitely not the normal pub that we were used to, or looking for. When we first entered it, the sight before us was something that you might find in Royston Vasey - Germans in funky lederhosen dancing around like, well, Germans. On looking around we saw lots of people drinking but no bar. On further investigation we found that the bar was in the toilet area. Now we really know what the German lager is made of!!!

Saturday was definitely the best day. We left the tents at 1000 hrs and headed straight for the Festival, losing **Sig Beavis** on the way. When we found him and asked what he'd been up to we found that he had spent the day with a bunch of very happy Dutch blokes. Once at the Festival, we were lucky to get a table and could start enjoying the many steins of beer. Everyone was having a good time, except the Bayern Munich fans wearing their football shirts. This prompted **Sig Gabbidon** and **Cpl Dunbar** to chant 'Man United 2, Bayern 1', a little PR that went down really well. As the day went by, the lads and lasses proceeded to keep up public relations with the many other Europeans present, and with beer becoming the international language, we got more into the spirit of the Festival.

The return trip was spent sleeping. We arrived back at 0030 hrs on Monday to prep our kit for the RSM's inspection we were having at 0800 hrs in the morning. For some reason, none of us was looking forward to it at all.

All in all, everyone enjoyed the weekend and a good time was had by all. Those who went bonded well together and the next Tp outing being planned is for a trip to either Poland or Holland.

Trade Training

by Sig Huxter

As part of the Sqn training programme, every Thursday is now dedicated to trade training. This was introduced to accommodate the number of new signallers that have arrived from Blandford and to refresh the older members of the Sqn.

The first of the trade training days was an HF and Ptarmigan exercise in and around the barracks, instructed by **Cpl Dunbar**, **Cpl Thompson**, and **Cpl Matt Grix**. The Ptarmigan operators held their own training day in the Sqn garages. It was conducted by **LCpl Parker** and **LCpl Brett Merrick** and was on powering up and operating the SAS/MC. To make the lessons more enjoyable, they were not held in a classroom, giving a much more hands-on feeling to the day. In the morning, the radio systems ops were split into three groups with each group being sent to a different area consisting of a radio det with a different antenna to practise setting up. Fault-finding on the armoured vehicles, with the miles of cable that that involves, was also practised.

The area systems ops were shown how to generator start and vehicle start the equipment in the Secondary Access Switch, and then how to operate all the equipment in the installation.

After lunch, three teams had to race one another in putting up antennas that we had practised in the morning. Everyone thought the Tp training day was informative and fun. It helped both the younger and the older signallers get more hands-on in their trades, while the corporals used the training day to improve their instructional techniques.

Free Fall Parachuting

by Cpl Lane

An announcement on Part 1 Orders was for a freefall parachuting course at the local RAPA (Rhine Army Parachuting Association) ... but then it was Friday 13!!!

The course was from 16 –27 September, the idea being for each candidate to reach a 10 second freefall level within the 2 weeks. The only volunteers crazy enough for such an experience in fear management were **Cpl Storey**, **Sig McAskill**, **Sig Ollie Sadler**, **Sig Jamie Parker**, and yours truly, **Cpl Lane**!

The first Monday and Tuesday were spent doing 'ground work', and was led by an excellent team of instructors. Our first jump would be on the Wednesday.

We arrived on that fateful morning, dressed in our bright orange jump suits, and walked onto the plane like something out of 'Con Air' (although 'Point Break' was the look we were going for). 'This is it,' I thought, 'I'm finally going to jump!' It's something I had always wanted to do and the mix of adrenalin and fear was

pumping through my entire body. Judging by all the white faces, I knew that everyone else must have been feeling the same.

You know how it is, when you go on holiday and you look out of the plane window on take off ... I have a good look out and think to myself, 'I'd love to jump out about now'. But when you really are about to jump, all that changes. The door opens, the cold air hits you, and you think 'Too late now - I can't back out!' And then that's it ... it's your turn!

I move into the doorway and allow the training to take over. My instructor yells 'GO!' and I push away from the door. I'm out. I'm falling. The slipstream hits me, and takes my breath away. '1000, 2000, 3000, 4000, check canopy!' I'm yelling out loud, but I can hardly hear myself. I'm looking up and, just like they said it would ... my parachute opens!

I'm now hanging there floating. I can see the world from here, and I look up to see my parachuting mates drop from the plane too. I cannot believe that I just did that! Amazing!

It was time for the landing and I expected to thunder in like a sack of spuds. No! A tiptoe landing just as I had practised! That plane could not have landed quicker for me. I was straight back on the flight line getting checked for my next jump. 100% pure adrenalin! It was the most truly remarkable experience I have ever had, and if you have never tried it I urge you to. Words simply cannot do it justice!

Cpl Storey and **Sig Sadler** reached free fall level, leaving **Sig Jamie Parker** and myself on static line. We'll get there eventually! But **Sig 'Kappa' McAskill** was a textbook jumper and reached a 15 second freefall. Outstanding, considering the bad weather and number of no-jumps we had. Needless to say he was awarded a well-deserved 'best student' award.

We are all junkies for freefall now, so watch this space for the Senior Sig Sqn display team!

TRANSFER FROM THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF FUSILIERS (INFANTRY) TO ROYAL SIGNALS (DRIVER)

by Cpl R. Lister

After serving 15 years in The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers I was fortunate enough to be asked if I wanted to go on an attachment to 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207) for their summer 2001 tour in Kosovo, as they required an MT Sgt. Having been there the previous summer, I knew what Kosovo was like and so I jumped at the chance.

I was given local Sgt and went to Hohne to meet the key personalities of 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207). On arrival I was welcomed in a different manner from that I had been accustomed to in the Infantry, a much more relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

After a very enjoyable tour, I realised I wanted to be a part of the relaxed friendly and family atmosphere that the Royal Signals provided. I went to Blandford still wearing my Fusilier cap badge and marched into **WO1 Club's** office, halted, and stood there to attention to let him know that I had arrived. He looked up and gave me a very strange look, asked me my name and if I wanted a brew. A WO1 making a Cpl a brew, I've never heard of before, but from that moment on I knew I had made the right decision to transfer to Royal Signals.

I left Blandford to join 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (200) where there has been no change from the friendly atmosphere I have seen in other Sig units, However I didn't get a brew from the RSM on arrival!

4th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Maj S Vickery**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Robinson**

It's all change at 204 Sig Sqn, with several new arrivals. We welcome the new OC, **Maj Steve Vickery** (Please be gentle with us!) and we say farewell to **Maj** (now **Lt Col**) **Norton** who leaves on promotion as CO, 7 Sig Regt.

Apparently 7 Sig Regt are not quite ready for him yet, so he has been forced to spend a few months 'fighting the war on terrorism' in Tampa Bay, Florida. That must be a really horrible job!

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Simon Limbre**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Deano Cox**

Notes by Sig Greg Rhodes

Once more it has been a busy period for the members of Oscar Tp after returning from leave and heading straight into a whirlwind of hard graft. Firstly, we encountered the Osnabruck International Football Tournament. Several teams had entered the competition with high hopes of returning with trophies, only to find out that 204 Sig Sqn were no match for them. The Sqn was represented by **SSgt Deano Cox** (Team Captain) **Cpl** 'Slim' **Scott**, myself and **Sigs Tom Malcolm, Ian Dinsdale, Jay Rogers** and **Darren Kirkby**. The Trophy was presented by the Mayor at a ceremony in the Rathaus (town hall). Sqn goalkeeper, **Ian Dinsdale**, also picked up a tournament trophy for being voted Best Goalkeeper and was referred to as 'Oliver Kahn'.

Some of the more fortunate members of the Tp enjoyed some adventurous training – time to get away from the hustle and bustle of the garages and enjoy what we all joined the Army for, to see the world. This took the form of ten day's walking in Spain organised by the Tp Comd, **Lt Simon Limbrey**. Then there was a chance some of us to go on Sqn adventurous training in Bavaria for yet more climbing and walking. It's alright for some!

The Squadron says farewell to Maj (now Lt Col) Norton.

Finally back to the green stuff, the Bde Patrol Competition has just taken place down in Vogelsang, where some of the greener members of the Tp, **Sigs Richard Witham, Tom Malcolm** and **Tony Richard** took part. In this arduous but enjoyable two-day event, the Sqn team faired well against the rest of the Bde in subjects such as NBC, First Aid and Night Navigation skills. Well done lads!

After **Cpl** 'Slim' **Scott** passed his DMI course in July (Well done) he has been working tirelessly to get newer members of the Tp through their track licence. So far he has had a 100% pass rate, including **Sigs Beckie Bosher, James Cooper, Sam Marsh** and **Jay Rogers** who have all managed to scare the local population of Osnabruck and surrounding areas.

Congratulations go to **Cpl Eddy Edwards,** who got married in August and to **Lt Simon Limbrey** on his promotion to Lt. Finally a big hello to Oscar Tp's newest addition, straight from the school of excellence, **Sig Dafydd Thomas**.

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Henderson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Davis**

Notes by Sig Evans

Firstly the Troop would like to welcome **2Lt Holly Richardson**, who will soon become our new OC. A bit of a change from Sandhurst, but good luck to you Ma'am. Another newcomer is **Sgt Mac McGregor**, who has come from Training Wing to our garages. We also welcome **LCpl Craig Jenkins** and **Sig Ben Stroud** and we hope you enjoy your time with us. With OTF being disbanded, and its members dispatched back to their troops, we welcome back **Cpl Charlie Forsyth, LCpl Robertson** and **Sig Wayne Lockton**. **LCpl Ian Milne** comes as one of the new Tp techs, replacing **LCpl Ryan Booth**, who goes to TM Tp.

Many seem to be disappearing off in search of new qualifications or upgrading old ones. Congratulations to **Cpl Andy Parkinson**, who recently passed his DMI'S. He is now putting his newfound knowledge into practice, and running two driving courses back to back. Also well done to **Sgt Mac McGregor**, who recently passed his map reading course. Good luck to **Cpl Bruce Morrison**, who is currently in Bovington on his DMI'S course, and good luck to **LCpl Everett** who is soon to start a special comms course. Commiseration's to **Cpl Sy Upcraft**, who went on a YofS entrance test in the UK, returned back to the garages and then got promoted.

On the adventurous training side, **Lt Bridie Henderson, Sgt Max Maxwell, Sgt Willy Motu**, and **Cpl Charlie Forsyth** were lucky enough to escape to Spain for 10 days on a 'climbing expedition'. They all had a fantastic time (apparently it was extremely arduous in their villa) and came back with pathetic tans!

SUPPORT TROOP

QM **Capt Stoker MBE**
RQMS **WO2 Cooper**

With the departure of **LCpl Peacock** and **Sig Burdon** to colder climates, the handover of Quartermaster from **Capt** (now **Maj**) **Pete McElwee** to **Capt Gary Stoker MBE**, went without a hitch. The battle of good versus evil carries on in the department, with **Sgt Martwich** battling the dark side of **WO2 (RQMS) Cooper** and **Sig Tait** forever changing sides. When the new OC arrived, **Sgt Martwich** actually found some uniform and was seen wearing it. Rumour has it that the clothing store intends to carry out a full 1157 check on him now.

The department now has to prepare itself for the coming onslaught of a Squadron exercise rolling into Bde CAST. All this along with trialing the new WFM system is enough to make **Sgt Taff Bridge** explode. It won't be a pretty sight when he goes so we had better take cover!

EX LONGLOOK

by Cpl Dibbert

My initial thoughts about going on EX LONGLOOK and seeing New Zealand were of excitement. I was looking forward to the challenge that lay ahead of me, working with and getting to know the New Zealand Army.

I was posted to 3 Sig Tp, Burnham Military camp in New Zealand in May 2002. Burnham is in South Island, about thirty kilometres from the very lively city of Christchurch. While I was there the Tp was very busy, with half the manpower away on various UN missions.

Most of the work I did was assisting with 'on the job training' for the new signallers in the Tp. This involved several short exercises to develop soldier's knowledge of long range HF communications and det drills. I also went on quite a few range days firing different types of weapons such as the Steyr IW, the Saur 9mm and the C9 (Minimi) LSW.

There was plenty of time to play sports, although the Kiwis are more into their rugby, rather than football (or soccer, as the Kiwis call it). I was given time off to attend the trials for the NZ Army Football Team, but unfortunately I broke my ankle in the first 20 minutes and was not selected.

By no means was the exercise all work and no play. I was given time off and encouragement to travel around New Zealand. Where possible the unit gave us cars for the weekends and plenty of volunteers to show us the sights. I took full advantage of this and went to see some great sights of the South Island, such as the Franz Josef Glacier. I did a full day tour of Franz Josef and found it quite amazing walking on the glacier. New Zealand has some amazing places to see and the people are very friendly. There are plenty of places to stay (such as back packers' centres and youth hostels) when you do travel, and the New Zealand Army even has leave centres that you can rent at a reasonable price.

I feel that this trip has opened up new ideas for me. Working with the Kiwis gives you an insight as to how other armies work and develop their soldiers, compared with the British Army. Most of their military skills are virtually the same as ours, with small differences, such as the words of command. Kiwis are very similar to us in their approach and outlook to the job.

Overall I thoroughly enjoyed my time in New Zealand, and would like to thank **SSgt Fitz-Patrick** who was supposed to go originally.

Cpl Dibbert attempts to climb out of the world's biggest G+T.

He was unable to, which allowed me to go. Also I would like to say a big thank you to 3 Sig Tp, who hosted me throughout my stay and made me feel very welcome. I would thoroughly recommend EX LONGLOOK to anyone who is thinking of doing it. It really is a once in a lifetime experience.

BERLIN MARATHON 2002

by Cpl James Rock

After months of arduous training, the Marathon Team, comprising **WO1(RSM) Ged Robinson, WO2(YofS) Gaz Tabor, SSgt Mark Fitz-Patrick, SSgt Paul Davis, Sgt Caroline Maxwell, LCpl Ryan Booth** and **Sig Stacey Lyon,** and spectators, **Cpl Chris Heap** and **Cpl Rock,** arrived from Osnabruck railway station into the heart of Berlin. Amazed by its stature and size, we were instantly lost. Eventually, some time and a KFC later, we arrived at the hotel, which to our amazement, was an old converted British Army barracks. After dumping our bags, we went sightseeing, paying a visit to Check Point Charlie, where **SSgt Davis** was left on the train, while the remainder waved him on. **WO1 (RSM) Robinson's** only concern was that Berlin might run out of pasta since he wanted to continue increasing his energy levels for the big day.

The day of the Marathon began with breakfast at 0700 hrs and then straight to the City Centre, where our runners were greeted by another 40,000 lunatics. The Marathon began at 0900 hrs with a steady pace, especially for two of the contenders who were feeling the effects of Berlin's night/day life. Along the way there were many impressive monuments and attractions, but enthusiasm for such sights had diminished by the 15-mile point. The entire route was lined with spectators from all parts of the globe cheering the runners on all the way to the finishing line. All the team completed the run (some slower than they expected) and **Sig Stacey Lyon** was more than pleased with the fastest team time of under 4 hours!

The Berlin Marathon 2002 will be remembered by the group for many reasons. For all of us, it was an eventful weekend.

1 MECHANIZED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC **Maj AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) AJ Shadwick**

215 SQN CADRE COURSE

by LCpl B Reid

As a new member of 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215), my initial thought when I was told that I was on the 2002 JNGO Cadre Course was one of concern and excitement. When I saw the programme, it struck me how much of our spare time would be taken up on lessons.

Our first two lessons were, defence of a comms site and the issuing of fire control orders. Both of these lessons were well presented, and you could tell the instructors had put in time and effort beforehand. While defence of a comms site was new to many of us, the fire control lesson was a much needed refresher and both lessons were well received by the course.

Due to work commitments, I missed the orders and weapon handling lessons. However other members of the course described how they found presenting the lessons themselves quite difficult, but I believe these lessons were enjoyed by all.

Military Law was a lesson that I particularly enjoyed and it taught me a lot of things, which hopefully I will not have to resort to later on in my career! Finally the leadership skills lessons were both very enjoyable. The theory lesson was quite informal and this opened the course up to allow individuals to express their own ideas of what makes a good leader. The practical lesson was both fun and informative and relied on a combination of good leadership and teamwork.

All the lessons led up to two days in the field, the first day being a Sunday. The morning of this day was spent as a refresher of the lessons we had previously been given and practical demonstrations were also given. That afternoon it was then up to us to show what we had learned. I was a section commander and had to prepare and issue orders to my section and to control them during patrols and fire fights. I found this both challenging and enjoyable and I learned a lot about myself. Overall it was a very good day which set us on a 'high' for the following weekend.

The following Saturday was the final day of the course. It was a day of intense pressure, hard work and, in our section, excellent team spirit. The command tasks stretched both our physical and mental capabilities and culminated in our team to winning the raft race at the end of the day.

In conclusion the course, which because of operational commitments many people could take only a limited part in, saw the combined effort of both instructors and students turn the 2002 Cadre Course into a great success. I personally look forward to the 2003 course.

ATTACHMENT TO 1 MECH BDE HQ AND SIG SQN (215)

by 2Lt Cat Yarroll

On 26 August 2002 I reported to 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215), having just commissioned from RMA Sandhurst (RMAS) on CC013. Three days later, following a quick tour of Tidworth Garrison and an issue of kit, I was collected at 04.00hrs go to Brize Norton to board a flight to Kosovo to meet the rest of the Sqn on OP AGRICOLA VIII in Pristina.

Deploying on an operational tour 2fi weeks after leaving RMAS was a fantastic opportunity but also a daunting prospect. As it turned out, I had nothing to worry about and spent an enjoyable and informative time in theatre. The first few weeks were spent getting to know the Bde and Sqn personalities, shadowing the different depts in the Sqn and learning their roles and responsibilities. The Sqn has a very good relationship with the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) Comms Bn and has been involved with their training. Following a crash revision course in HF communications by **Lt Jim King**, I helped train the KPC and tried to increase their confidence in HF comms. PT was high on the agenda: A CFT the third week I was there; a 10km race in Mitrovica (the day after the Bde all ranks party) and a KFOR 'Running Together' 6km road race around Pristina in my last weekend in theatre.

On returning to the UK I spent a couple of weeks shadowing **Lt Adam Clowes**, OC Bengal Tp and OC Rear Party and getting to know the Tp before starting the armd veh driver and comds' course. The course was fun, especially the days driving around the cross-country driving area on Salisbury Plain. There was just the one hairy moment when a knife-edge collapsed on one side as we went over it and the vehicle leant precariously to the left!

The rest of the Sqn returned from Kosovo during the last week of October, the end of OP AGRICOLA VIII was celebrated with a medal parade and party for all of 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215) personnel. The 70's theme for the party brought some interesting costumes out of hibernation, and a fun evening was enjoyed by all!

As the armd course comes to a close, it is time to head off to Blandford for my Tp Comds' Course before returning to Tidworth in April to take over command of Bengal Tp.

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

Sqn Comd **Maj Neil Fraser**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. Weaver**

Once again it has been another busy period for the Sqn, balancing our existing commitments with the drive on training and equipment to get us up to the required readiness state for Christmas. As usual there were yet more arrivals and departures in Colchester. Firstly warm welcomes go to **SSgt (YofS) Barker**, who steps into the YofS 2 job, and **Sgt Henderson** who joins the Training Wing. We also welcome **2Lt Bowman**, on his Gap Year Commission, and **OCdt Fehley** on a pre-RMAS attachment. A fond farewell goes to **SSgt (YofS) Redstone** who goes to SHAPE to enjoy a slightly more relaxed pace of life. Finally congratulations go to **SSgt** 'Tiffy' **Farmer** who has been promoted to WO2, soon become the AAA elsewhere.

C TP – EXERCISE BAVARIAN TIGER - *by Sigs Campbell, Higgins & Lambswood*

Charlie's BAVARIAN TIGER was a level 2 adventurous training exercise, open to all members of Charlie Tp and anybody else in the Sqn. The ex was conducted over two weeks, but first we had to get there. The 20-hour minibus journey was long and painful, travelling down to Dover then through France to Germany. Eventually, when we arrived, we were shocked at where we were staying. It was a lodge run by the Army called Hubertushaus, in a town called Oberstdorf. The intro brief from **Steve**, the lodge manager, seemed to last forever, with lots of rules added to it. The facilities in the lodge included a games room, TV room, a little gym and best of all a tax free bar. We were all allocated rooms and, after settling in, we made our way to the bar where the lads enjoyed a quiet beer.

Over the course of the first three days we were split into groups to get a taster of the activities before deciding what to do for the next week to gain a qualification. The activities open to us were climbing, kayaking and hill-walking. When not on our activities we were allowed to make the five-minute walk into town. There were loads of bars and after the first night out the lads managed to claim a few as their locals for the two weeks, and as always you can not get home without your kebab compass. We didn't just go out drinking though; some of the lads managed to find a health farm. We discovered this when **Sig Heyden, LCpl Allen** and **Cpl Crosby** were spotted leaving the lodge with day-sacks a couple nights running, and after intense questioning they told us where they were going. I don't know if the lads were going down for the German women or the one-hour sessions in the saunas, but the idea soon caught on and all got involved.

Before we started the activities that we had chosen, we had a day of R&R. We went to Kempten to do some shopping and then to a swimming baths to chill out. To our shock and disbelief there was a naked sauna and steam room. News soon spread, and it seemed that half the Sqn personnel were sitting in there chatting naked. The old German blokes in their birthday suits were a bit off-putting though.

The next day we started our main activities, all aiming for a qualification. I participated in the hill walking, which, with the spectacular views, I found brilliant. It was well worth the hard work going up.

KAYAKING

Canoeing in Bavaria was a challenging and enduring task down the fast flowing rivers of Oberstdorf. Not only did we have the rapids, rocks and fallen obstacles to overcome, there was always somebody on hand to give us that friendly push. This, more often than not, ended up with you upside down tapping the bottom of your canoe, waiting helplessly to be rescued.

On our first day of canoeing, we were taught the basic lessons of how to stay upright. No need to say this was a task on its own. Being Airborne, these basic lessons were of no use to us. We needed rapids that were fast and dangerous; so fast and dangerous we got.

On to our first set of rapids. At first sight there seemed to be no problem, but once on the water it was a different story. This wasn't because of the extreme rapids; it was the water being so cold. After doing several summersaults in the two feet of water we eventually attacked the rapids. Bags of fun, several death-defying moments, but we lived to face another day.

The next day nothing seemed impossible, until **Sgt Mark Bakewell**, our canoeing instructor decided it was time to test the Airborne nerve. Not an easy challenge. After finding the most challenging weir to be around, **Mark** showed the way. Straight down with a right turn halfway to avoid the rocks. Now it was our turn, after paddling like lunatics towards the weir, with **Mark** screaming: 'slow down', we proceeded to hit every rock in sight. All managed to make it down to the bottom, though most of the time without the canoe. Some managed to stay in their canoes, but just happened to be upside down. To the shock of all of us, the two worst canoeists made it down by sheer luck. But like the Murphys .....

The best day of all was the day on the 1972 Olympic manmade course, the ice canal. After a two-hour drive and our best German ('Excuse me mate, do you know where the ice canal is?') we eventually got there. Not only did we have the rapids and huge rocks to contend with, there just happened to be other canoeists there as well. They seemed to know how (not that we didn't) to get from top to bottom whilst sitting in the canoe. Easier said than done. Not only did we hit rocks and slalom posts, the other canoeist got their fair share too This soon led to us having the whole course to ourselves, to earn our 3* grades.

Over all an excellent course, would recommend to any one who loves the outdoors, to give it a try. Thanks go to our instructor, **Mark Bakewell**.

CLIMBING

Because of the lack of instructors, only **Sig Jones** and **Sig Lambswood** could undertake the rock climbing challenge led by **Lt Higginson**. Both started well with an introduction on techniques and equipment. Due to poor weather conditions, the first few days on the face were lost, but good views were to be had at the top of the peaks. The skills learned on the days where climbing was possible were put to good use, with a few intensive days at some excellent indoor venues. We both learned a lot and gained valuable experience for our next venture onto the rock faces.

OP FRESCO - *by 2Lt Bowman*

Having been with the Sqn a mere six days, it came as somewhat of a shock to me when the Air Adjt, **Capt Dagless**, told me 'Welcome to the Corps, you're going on OP FRESCO.' After a few trips to Hydrabad Barracks **Lt Gudonis**, 18 members of the Sqn and I were posted in support of 3 Para (covering Essex and Hertfordshire) to wait for 999 calls. As officers, we were tasked as LOs in the Joint Operations Command Centres (JOCCs) in Essex and Hertfordshire respectively.

The JOCC's job was to task Green Goddess (GG) crews and their supporting breathing apparatus rescue teams (BARTs) (manned primarily by the RAF), as the civilian fire services were constitutionally not able to task military units. An emergency call was routed to the fire controllers in the JOCC (members of the normal fire control teams) who then decided which assets need to be deployed. The fire controllers advised the Army LOs and the LOs tasked the GGs. Apart from tasking, referring a few press calls to the MOD press office and sorting out the occasional problem encountered by the Temporary Fire Stations (like the late arrival of a TV and DVD player), the other main JOCC role was to keep 49 Bde informed of absolutely everything that happened.

The mandate of the military in OP FRESCO was to provide emergency fire cover for the duration of the strike. During the first 48-hour strike, our crews attended calls ranging from a burning slide in a park to a light aircraft crash, but most turned out to be false alarms.

The first of the eight-day strikes followed suit, with neither county's crews being seriously stretched. False alarms and burnt toast, more than a few RTAs and the odd house fire were the standard. Striking fire crews lent a hand for the few serious incidents that arose, and apart from some periods being much quieter than expected, there were no dramas to report. With the third strike being cancelled, a light is just visible at the end of the tunnel. Let's hope we reach it before Christmas, or it'll be turkey butties at Goojerat on the 25th.

EXERCISE CRYSTAL SHOT

EX CRYSTAL SHOT was a three-day ex on STANTA for the Sqn to conduct some low level comms and vehicle training, as well as a NBC battle run to fulfil ITDs. It was broken down into three phases, the first of which was NBC.

EX TOXIC EAGLE - *by Cpl McFarlane*

EX TOXIC EAGLE was a designed to test knowledge of battle skills in an NBC environment, with section and platoon attacks, and with plenty of attacks in 4 ROMEO (even better). The exercise started at 23.59hrs on a cold and weary November night. Firstly the lads were issued rations and ammo (only 10,000 rds and God only knows how much pyro to expend in a 24hr period. Many thanks to **RQMS Smith** & **SSgt Walker**). After all this, they had to sit through six hours of NBC ITDs, which included Chemical Recce, Chemical Safety Rule and Decontamination Drills. Bright eyed and bushy tailed, the troops deployed onto the ground at 06.00hrs on a fresh November morning to tackle the might of the Tech Alliance. Gagging for it, the blokes deployed into the Stage Four trenches on STANTA training area. At about 09.30hrs the Tp had their first attack under new boss, **2Lt Kelly** and **Pl Sgt Lloyd**. It was a conventional attack and the Tp managed to hold their lines, but no doubt the Tech Alliance would be back! Sure enough at 10.30hrs the Alliance were back, and this time it was a chemical bombardment. But this time, to make it more fun, they

took casualties, and whiist carrying out the casevac they came under conventional attack and had to move to the ERV. But 2 Sec's commander, in his wisdom, took his sec up to left flank, and the Alliance had to retreat back to a safe location and count their losses.

At this point I would like to say thanks to the RAF lads from the TACPs, who did turn up, although 12 hours late (nice one fellas). New orders were then given to **2Lt Kelly** at the ERV by the IC Ex, **Sgt McAdam**. He was told to patrol his pl out of the ERV and round the area back to the main NBC complex, but on the way there may be some sort of attack (wink, wink, nudge, nudge). Sure enough, as the pl were approaching the PIGS the Alliance's GPMG gunner, **Cpl Hughes** opened fire, along with the rest of the DS, wiping out most of the pl (OOPS!). The tps proceeded to carry out a full pl attack and clear the area (all the time in 4 ROMEO). Again they were taken to an ERV and told to replen, because there was a stronghold of Alliance tps just around the corner. After about half an hour they started their patrol again (still in 4 ROMEO), and as they were approaching the Alliance's position, **SSgt Eldridge** deployed trip flare and SPAL. At this point, the Alliance let rip, allowing the pl to carry out a full-on assault with a sec of support fire. The Alliance were over-run, with the pl convincingly winning the fire-fight.

The pl then re-orged and went back to a safe position, waiting to be called forward to the decontamination area. They were called forward at 17.30hrs, and for one last bit of excitement were sent through the chamber. Once the whole pl had finished in the chamber, they were taken back to the classroom, where they were de-briefed and had to sit an exam (which is always nice) After the exam ENDEX was called, and the lads were still happy. (Yeah, Right!).

I think that next year we will call it BERMUDAN SUN, just to lift the spirits!!

EX REDSTONES REVENGE

After decontaminating, and with great relief, we stripped out of our NBC kit and headed off to the MT driving stand, where, with great enthusiasm, the lads learned how to hot wire Landrovers and do battlefield repairs using chewing gum to repair bullet holes in the engine. As night fell, the secs were split in half and competed in the map reading competition, both on foot and in vehicles. This proved to be an enjoyable event, especially for **Cpl Sharpe** and his navigator, **Sig French**, who took the scenic route around the checkpoints.

The final phase was the comms stand, where the troops where tested on a variety of equipment that in use in the Sqn. Here the operator trades demonstrated their excellent equipment skills before heading back to Colchester.

UPCOMING FOR THE SQUADRON

After a well-deserved Christmas break (here's hoping it stays that way this year!), it is straight back into exs in January. Firstly a Sqn exercise with two weeks of comms training and field firing. Then it is into the first Bde ex of the year, EX EAGLES FLIGHT, taking us into February. The focus then turns to P Coy, with a large Sqn contingent due to go attempt the Unit Preparation Course. Here's hoping they go up to Catterick to maintain the Sqn's strong tradition of good results.

12 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj Paterson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) I Carter**

It's been a busy period for 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228), in fact so busy that we've moved country and changed our name. We our now resident in Kosovo are go under the grand title of Multi-National Brigade (Centre) Headquarters and Signal Squadron (228) or MNB(C) HQ and Sig Sqn (228) as it is more commonly known.

As you can image our key activities in the last few months have all been Kosovo related. Everyone in the Sqn has done OPTAG training and has completed stage 4 field firing. In addition, since much of the CIS equipment used in theatre is based on commercial systems bought specifically for Kosovo, we have had to send a large number of individuals away on specialist courses. These have ranged from Protective Driving courses for the key staff drivers to a four week IT crammer course designed to turn RS Ops into mini IS Ops. A number of lucky individuals attended the Polygon Managers' course, which involved two weeks in a hotel in Paris at the expense of the Army. Who says the Army never gets to go anywhere but Salisbury Plain and the Balkans?

The Sqn arrived in theatre by a number of routes between 14 and 20 Nov. The lucky winners in this year's movements lottery were the driver party who not only had to do the convoy move over night from Thessaloniki in Greece to Pristina, but also had to endure an 8 hour Hercules flight to get to Thessaloniki in the first place. Many thanks must go to 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215) for the smooth handover. We haven't found too many skeletons in the cupboards yet guys, but you could have told us about the Canadian Pistols!

Of course the main event this time of the year is Remembrance Sunday and this year it was even more poignant for being in an operational theatre. Several ceremonies were held, the main one being at the Bde HQ in Pristina. However there were also a number of smaller services around the hilltop sites and in locations where British soldiers have died over the last 8 Op AGRICOLAs.

Signallers Washington, Sturdy, Lewis and Treagust form part of the Honour Guard on Remembrance Sunday

COMMS TROOP
by LCpl Richards

The heart of MNB(C)'s communications is Systems Control (SYSCON), which consists of three major systems, Polygon, a secure radio system, Cleo, the theatre phone system and OATIS, the Operation AGRICOLA Theatre Information System. SYSCON is always buzzing with life and contains a diverse mix of all trades and ranks, brews and biscuits. A key position within SYSCON is the helpdesk. Usually found manning this position is **Cpl Jamie Edgell**, helpdesk operator extraodinaire. It is his duty to log and forward faults that come into SYSCON to the relevant departments within Comms Tp so they can be quickly cleared. The help desk operator also compiles a daily sitrep and briefs the Sqn OC, **Maj Paterson** and Ops Officer, **Capt Adam Corkery** each morning on the status of each system over the last twenty-four hours.

Whilst in Kosovo the COMMCEN serves as the Sqn's vital link back to the UK. Headed by **Sgt Ray Pendrich** and operated by **Sig Gemma Procter**, it receives and transmits messages point to point with HQ Land via its Black Jack secure faxes twenty-four hours a day. This facility allows MNB(C) to be constantly updated with the situation back home and gives the UK the ability to monitor our progress over here.

The Theatre Distribution Agency (TDA) is the UK's Primary Crypto Authority for the whole of Kosovo and supports all the UK national forces within theatre. TDA updates the Crypto on the Comms links and is responsible for the issue and accounting of all COMMSEC material. It also carries out the vetting of personnel within MNB(C). TDA, it seems, is also responsible for the vetting and personal inspection of all foreign PXs in theatre and they are tirelessly devoted to this responsibility.

Sgt Portlock briefing her dedicated team of LCpls Lamb, Brewster and Richards

The Techs are the backbone of Comms Troop, **FofS Rob Clifford** has assembled a formidable team of technical wizards (and some 7 Sig Regt personnel also) to keep HQ MNB(C) communicating and operating at 100%. **Sgt Jules Portlock** deals with fault prioritising and tasking of manpower - and she's been busy. Work has been coming thick and fast and everyone has been working long hours. A major project was the move of a Polygon base station from Waterloo Lines to the HQ of the Czech/Slovak BG, which utilised all the skills of the unit riggers. The project ran smoothly and all the goals were achieved. No mean feat considering the quote of the night, 'The bearing can't be 350 mils, it only goes up to 64 on the compass!'

LCpl Minza climbing a tower during one of the nighttime reconfigurations

The infrastructure maintenance of MNB(C) is the job of the Installation Technicians. Their main task since arriving in Kosovo has been the rectification of the fibre faults within the LANs used by OATIS.

LCpl Brewster living the high life

Overseeing all of this is the Tp Comd, **Lt Jones** and his right hand man **SSgt Alex Alexander-High**. They have had their hands full since taking over, but things are coming together and the Sqn are all settling in. One month down, five to go and the wind is behind us. This is the last time the Sqn will be together as it is now. A big manning shuffle is coming to pre-empt the introduction of BOWMAN, which 228 Sqn are to be the first to trial. A large number of people are to be posted, so everyone wants to make the most of these last few months together and at least the entertainment is cheap.

KPC LIAISON AND TRAINING
by Lt Matt Jones

Part of MNB(C)'s responsibility whilst out in Kosovo is to support the local Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) units around MNB (C). The KPC is mostly made up of ex Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) fighters who have handed in their weapons and are now being trained as a disaster relief force. For MNB(C) HQ and Sig Sqn, this means supporting 50 Comms Bn, KPC. This is a small but eager bunch of men that has been tasked with providing comms as part of a national network in the event of national disaster or such-like.

Our support ranges from training (both in classroom and on exercise) through to equipment provision in the form of tentage, vehicles and masts. They have radio sets bought by UNMIK, but have received little training in their use. Whilst they improvise to the best of their ability, it falls to soldiers within our Radio Sec to train them from the very basics of mast erection through to principles of antennas and propagation. It is a great opportunity both for them to gain the knowledge and for us to revise certain skills that may have faded during these long winter months.

One of the benefits of working with the KPC is getting to support them when they exercise. Recently we provided a detachment to support the KPC on EX EAGLE 5. We got to deploy to the south of Kosovo, high up in the mountains that overlook FYROM. The future intent is to continue supporting the unit at a low level, which can only be of benefit to both sides.

NEVER AGAIN

On Saturday 9 November **WO2** 'Bri' **Gillies**, **Sgt** 'Cosy' **Powell**, **LCpl Rob Hunt**, **LCpl Leanne MacLeod**, **LCpl Taff Davies**, **LBdr** 'Bri' **Balde** and **Sig Byrne** completed the DANCON March that **LCpl Leanne MacLeod** had kindly volunteered the department for. Cheers mate!

The DANCON March is a 25km march carrying 10kg. After 5 km, **WO2 Gillies** started complaining about blisters and didn't stop complaining until a week later. **Sgt Powell** only completed the

march to save face and win 50. There was a sweepstake to say he wouldn't pass the half way mark!

We said from the start that we would complete the march as a team, but due to the bad admin and poor preparation from **Sig Byrne**, our aim became to beat him as he was carrying 28 kg, had bad feet and a really bad headache. Less than 500m from the start, **LCpl Hunt** and **LCpl Davies** sped off, as we were going too slow. Unfortunately, **Sig Byrne** sped up on the last 100m and caught us all up and we crossed the line in 4 hours 30 mins. A great day was had by all.

OP AGRICOLA 9 FIVE-A-SIDE FOOTBALL COMPETITION - 13 OCTOBER
by Sig Byrne and Sig Bodle

During Op AGRICOLA 9, two soldiers from MNB(C) HQ and Sig Sqn (228) decided to boost morale around Slim Lines Camp. So they decided to set up a five-a-side football competition, and within a very short space of time a lot of interest has been generated.

Sig John Bodle and **Sig Dave Byrne** organised the competition, and it was held on the HLS at Slim Lines. In true squaddie fashion, the LAD made the goal posts and cam nets were used for the nets.

Ten teams were entered and they all played their hearts out. Everyone who entered played very well, apart from **LCpl Jenkinson**, who had a beast of a time in goal for the MT.

The day went well, with only a few cuts and bruises to show. **Sgt Jules Portlock** was introduced to the HLS floor, busting her nose, **Sig Shrubsole** demonstrated excellent gymnastics skills damaging her leg (aww) and **LCpl Booker** (a.k.a. mini-Klinsman, diving all over the place), soon had to leave the pitch with a swollen ankle (poof). The eventual winners were the Techs (choppers) who scraped a win past the runners up 'No blood no foul'. The Golden Boot (Combat high) went to **Sig Dunkin** for most goals scored. Special thanks go to **Sgt Steve Lock** for refereeing most of the games and to **Ginge**, the metal-smith from the LAD attached from the RN (ooh sailor).

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj IWR Seraph**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) MJ Crowther**

A SIGNALMAN INVITED TO BUCKINGHAM PALACE
by Sig Lamb

Being based in London enables individuals to tread the tourist trail quite easily, and Buckingham Palace is a sight that is experienced on an almost daily basis - but only from the outside.

The call for applications for invitations to one of **Her Majesty The Queen's** garden parties was received, and I thought 'Why not?' I was accepted and duly received two tickets (although the ticket confused me as it invited *Signalman and Mrs Stuart Lamb* - my wife isn't called Stuart) More to the point, it meant I had to buy my wife **Rebecca** a new frock and hat.

The day arrived and I felt proud as punch as both **Rebecca** and I set off for the Palace all dressed up in No1 dress ceremonial uniform and **Rebecca** in her posh frock. To start with, we felt apprehensive. A Signalman sampling **The Queen's** refreshments on her back lawn just doesn't happen, does it? But no snide comments were made - none that I heard anyway. It turned out to be a truly memorable occasion. Although iced coffee and cucumber sandwiches aren't my idea of party food, mingling with Britain's finest and most famous people was an honour. As time went on, we relaxed and felt quite comfortable as we exchanged pleasantries with **HRH Princess Anne** and the Prime Minister, the **Rt Hon Mr Tony Blair**. As for **Her Majesty The Queen**, no such luck there. The nearest we got to her was about 10 feet, before **Her Majesty** was introduced to someone more befitting to attend a Royal Garden Party.

1600 hrs arrived and the assembled audience were gently asked to leave. It had been an enjoyable and memorable occasion that both **Rebecca** and I will treasure for a long time.

RADIO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Heidi Grierson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Ian Tait**

2002 has been a busy year for 238 Sig Sqn - particularly with the **Queen Mother's** funeral and the Jubilee taking place - and Radio Tp has certainly been heavily involved. As the year draws to a close, the last outstanding fixtures on our calendar were Remembrance Sunday, the associated Diplomatic reception at Buckingham Palace and The State Opening of Parliament.

There have been a few comings and goings in the Tp recently and these events gave those concerned either their first or last opportunities to attend such ceremonies. Of the departures, **LCpl Grant Mockett**, who is leaving us for 101 Log Bde Sig Sqn, was particularly keen to take part and felt very saddened at the thought of not being able to wear his No 1 dress any more. Poor bloke! For the recent-ish arrivals, **Sigs Mark Smith** from 216 Sig Sqn and **John Ellson** from 30 Sig Sqn, it was their chance to try their now 'perfectly' fitting No 1 dress and to experience the bread and butter of the Tp's main duties. They soon realised that if you are not sweating profusely in your No 1's in the heat of summer you'll probably be frozen stiff stood outside the Palace in the winter. It was however a good experience for everyone involved, and the food served up at the Palace wasn't bad either. Apart from the rainy weather, Remembrance Sunday went by without a hitch, as did The State Opening of Parliament. So to everybody's delight, there won't be anymore early morning rehearsals for a while.

THE FTRS EXPERIENCE
by Sig Fournier

As a TA soldier, I volunteered to do Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS), and I was asked if 238 (London) Sig Sqn would be allright. I jumped at the chance to be based in London, and to learn something about Ceremonial duties. Seven months on, and with the end of my tour looming near, here are my thoughts and tribulations: -

After two weeks at Chilwell doing my mobilisation course, I reported to the Sqn on the 10 September and was assigned to Radio/Ceremonial Tp. My first day at work was spent getting my room at the Chelsea Hilton (off Sloane Square, don't you know!) sorted out, kit signed for, drinking lots of tea in the rest room and meeting the rest of my new Sqn. I met quite a few characters, so I knew my time here would not be boring. My first evening out in London was quite an eye opener! I nearly fainted at the London prices, but the majority of people living in Chelsea obviously don't have the same money problems that we do. Luckily there is a Sqn bar to start the evening with.

Within Radio/Ceremonial Tp, I was assigned to the MT Sec as a driver. I was shown 5 key barracks and how to get them. That was my introduction to driving in London. I'm still getting myself lost, which is easily done. And that's not because I'm female! The rest of the MT section comprises **Mr Gary Stevens** (MTO), **LCpl Tony Dobbing** (2IC), **Sigs Ian Cragg**, **Chris Main**, and **Emma Watson**, and 3 civilian drivers.

My first ceremonial duty was Remembrance Sunday, driving a motley crew to their key positions. The funniest moment was when a policeman at a set of barriers stopped me. I asked if it would be possible to drive through, and he asked if this was a military vehicle? Considering I had military plates on, a military works ticket, a load of soldiers dressed up in their No 1s, with my Troop OC sat at the front, I did think it was an unnecessary question!

We've also been busy with OP FRESCO, which has had me driving all over the country, in a lovely Iveco van the majority of the time. This was to collect MOULD radios, which have since then been replaced by Cleartone.

Our Battle Camp at Folkestone was our first outing with my new Regt, 10 Sig Regt. This consisted of a range package, which I thought was brilliant and a day out in the field on exercise at Crowborough Camp. The different ranges were The Village (simulating one in Northern Ireland), The Gallery (where my team managed to shoot more civilians than terrorists!) and the IBSR range, which was hard work but good fun. I was covered in bruises by the end of the week, but well worth it, since it's usually quite hard to get on these ranges.

We celebrated Halloween by having a Sqn function in our bar, organised by **Cpl Shaun Childs**. We all had a brilliant time and held an auction, which managed to raise the total sum of £500 for Cancer Research (Children's Leukaemia). This was then followed by karaoke, and a buffet and, of course, a little drinking.

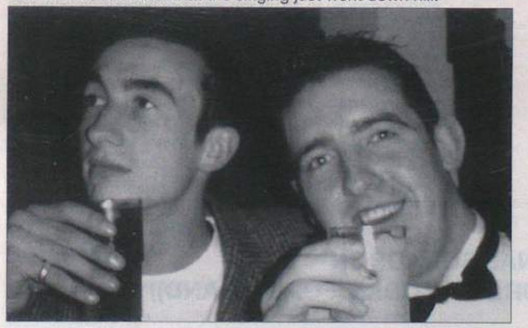
We're now entering a quiet period, although OP FRESCO could change that, and we are all looking forward to our Christmas leave. There are quite a few annual ceremonies that I have missed out on, but I now know how much work and practice goes into it.

I've had a really good six months here, met lots of new people and I would definitely work back here again, if I were given the chance.

HALLOWEEN
by LCpl Dobbing

Yes it was that time of the year again when Halloween was upon us, and the majority of us did not have to dress up. The Sqn held its annual Halloween fancy dress party (except for 3 people who tried to look normal, **LCpl Meirion Hawkins**, **LCpl Tony Dobbing** and **Capt Grierson** actually turned up in fancy dress!)

The party started at 1900 hrs and first up for the karaoke was **Cpl Paddy Ensor** giving us his best Elvis (actually sounding like Elvis Costello), which turned out to be OK. The problem was that there were only 5 people in the audience, because the coach driver dropped the Chelsea Pensioners off at the wrong bar, thinking it was the NAAFI. After that the singing just went down hill.



LCpls Hawkins and Dobbing starting as they mean to go on.

The party really got started at 2100, when, after all the singing, it seemed a good time for **Cpl Bart Storey** and his compere **Cpl Shaun Childs** to start the charity auction. £584 was prised from unfortunate punters, by fair means and foul, in aid of Cancer Research (Children's Leukaemia). Hats off to **Paddy Ensor**, who paid £101 for a genuine signed photo of Michael Owen.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 1977 AND TODAY
by Cpl S Storey

It's amazing how 25 years has flown by. It seems like only yesterday when we rolled out of 8 Sig Regt's Catterick camp gates in the infamous out-of-date Green Goddesses. As a young sig, this was a new, daring and dangerous adventure. Exactly how dangerous this wooden box on wheels would become, we would find out later. We arrived eventually at Ouston, home of the Junior Leaders, 11 Sig Regt. There we were fed and watered and deployed the very next morning to our operational area, which was Hexham TA Centre, North of Newcastle. After a very quick settling in period, we checked the equipment and trained, checked and trained till it became second nature. The main difference between then and now is that in 1977 the firemen went on strike continuously. Today it is on and off, 2 days here and 8 days there. In 1977 we at least knew whether we were coming or going and got into a routine straight away. Our equipment consisted of:

1 x battle bowler (tin helmet), 1 x greatcoat,
1 x pr leggings, 1 x pr wellies toe cap steel, and
1 x pr rubber gloves.

At last, on 17 November, we were called out. There was a fire in Ponteland. We donned our equipment (as you can imagine, a Health and Safety nightmare) and sped off into the night with our Police escort, who later admitted he never got out of first gear. The opening night of Green watch soon turned into a disaster when, at 0500hrs we hit black ice, the G.G skidded and overturned ending up as kindling no bigger than match sticks (pictures can be seen in *The Wire* pages 34-35 of Dec77-Jan78). Luckily I was the only injured fireman Sam out of whole the crew. I did ask if I could have the bell off G.G. SYN370, but the reply was, 'Sorry it's gone of to forensics'. I didn't realise that the Officers' or was it the Sgts' Mess at 8 Sigs was a forensics lab! It's probably in Blandford now?

In early November 2002 a shiver ran down my spine, as if somebody had walked over my grave. For the first time in 25 years, I was faced with 6 of the old girls rolling into Chelsea Barracks. It was a blast from the past, the only difference being the blue light and air horns - the bell had been removed. Hopefully, the strike will not go on for too long or it definitely will be a long winter.

MIKE TP

Tp Comd	**Capt (TOT) Kev Wilson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Andy Cannadine**

As the summer months draw to an end, winter gets ever colder and the days get shorter (hopefully!), the Tp bids farewell to **Cpl Paul Bungay**, who is posted to Blandford, and **Sig Sam Robinson** who leaves us on a moped to oblivion (Civ Div). The Tp is, as always, more than willing to cram as many technicians into the luxurious London accommodation as possible. We welcome **Cpl Oly Neeve** from 21 Sig Regt (AS) and straight from the factory, a deluge of baby techs, in no particular order, **LCpls Geoff Smith, Lewis Wright, Simon Wilson and Mark Ryan**.

EXERCISE BLAZING BRUNO
by Cpl Park, Cpl Neeve and LCpl Wright

EX BLAZING BRUNO was a 2-week Battlecamp on the ranges of Lyde and Hythe, Folkstone. On the first night we all had to prove that we could use the rifle in a safe and competent manner, some more safely than others. (No names, no pack-drill). An early start on the first morning for a spot of PT to freshen us up for the APWT, which resulted in a 100% pass rate! The next two days were spent engaged in a tough range package learning to fire in varied positions and surroundings – a little different from the norm, so everyone had something to take away. The final two days were spent in the field learning how to set up pyrotechnics and learning basic fieldcraft skills – again! Map reading being high on the agenda for our 264 candidate, **Cpl Wes O'Connor**. The following morning was ENDEX and the end of a thoroughly enjoyable week. Back home to warm beds and McDonalds all round.

OP FRESCO

Just a short paragraph on the role we've played during the firemen's strikes. The Ops room took a while to perfect, but after weeks of new plans and great ideas, and with the help of **SSgt Andy Cannadine**, it was seen that the original plan was indeed the best after all. It's all character building stuff! 24-hour support has been needed to ensure the Green Goddesses, and now the Red Goddesses, get the correct fire location information. This must be the only unit where techs actually do some work and earn those pop star wages.

The work effort has been intense with many people putting in a lot of hours. **Sgt Angie Thickett** arrived bright eyed and bushy tailed at work to collect a delivery of new radios at 0200, only to miss an attempted break-in of the stores by half an hour.

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Janes**

EXERCISE LONG LOOK 2002 – *by SSgt Pauline Cuppleman*

At the beginning of May I boarded the RAF flight to Sydney to begin EX LONG LOOK 2002. After a very long haul flight, which saw several stopovers in the Middle and Far East, I finally arrived at Sydney. After an overnight stop, I then flew on to Brisbane, where I was met by my exchange person, **Sgt Gary Holsten**, RA Sigs. He would be flying to UK several days later. I was to spend the next four and half months at 1 JSU (Joint Signals Unit), at Enoggera, a short distance from Brisbane. There were two other British military personnel attached to the Unit, **Lt Chris Dixon**, R Sigs, and **Sgt** 'Spud' **Murphy**, RLC.

After an initial interview with the CO, the three of us were quickly whisked away to one happy hour after the other, where we were introduced as the 'Pommies' on EX LONG LOOK. That first day we seemed to hear the same thing from each Aussie we spoke to: 'You'll be alright with the exchange rate then'. They seemed to be under the impression that, as the rate was A$2.5 to the pound, we actually received two and half times our wages whilst we were in Australia. Unfortunately this was not the case, although our wages did seem to go a lot further there.

Brisbane is part of the Sunshine Coast, which luckily lived up to its name. Throughout the tour it was winter, but apart from the odd downpour, the sun seemed to shine continuously, and the temperature very rarely got down to below 20°C during the day. It was up 30°C before we were to depart in their springtime. I was quite happy that I had been there in wintertime

I soon settled into the Australian Army working day, the average day beginning at 07.30hrs, with a parade and then PT (something which most people loathed, but which I actually enjoyed). My job was System Admin Tp SSgt, and although very few tasks were given to me, as a visitor to their Army, I soon occupied myself with tasks of my own to complete.

Going 'out bush' was certainly a different experience with 1 JSU. Their admin and communication was often pretty poor, which did not do much for the morale of the troops, although they inevitably got the job done. I found the Australian soldiers whom I worked alongside to be professional and experienced, and this came to the fore on the exercises. Being an IS Op, it did not take long to discover that the Australian IS Op trade was far more advanced than that of the British Army, with the soldiers of all ranks being experienced and skilled in many areas of IT. One thing I certainly won't miss about going 'out bush', is digging trenches everywhere we went, and the 'honeypot', the not so delightful field toilet, which in hot weather attracted all sorts of insects. I participated in three ex's, the first of which was the equivalent to our battlecamp, where I participated as enemy. Then there were two comms ex's, which provided a very good insight in the Australian Army and the way it works.

It is not until one goes on a road trip in Australia that you realise just how vast the country is. We were lucky to go on two liaison trips, the first to the south, which included visits to units in Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. The drive to Sydney from Brisbane took us 12 hours, and throughout our stay we were accommodated at the navy base. The liaison visits left us plenty of time to take in the local sights, Sydney Opera House, Bondi Beach, Sydney Tower, the War Museum, Blue Mountains, Jenola Caves, to name but a few. The weather in the south was extremely cool compared with what we had become used to, so I was certainly glad that I had been sent to Brisbane.

In August the three of us took our second liaison trip, this time to the north, escorted by a young Australian Lt. We could only presume that the logic behind this particular officer being our Liaison Officer, was that whilst he was away from the unit, it was a safer and happier place. The first part of our journey took us to Airlie Beach, in the Whitsundays. This phase was to take us 16 hours. Luckily, **Lt Chris Dixon** kept us amused many hours with his unique sense of humour. The Whitsundays were truly breathtaking, and although the weather was hot, the vast beaches were mainly unoccupied. But then I suppose it was their winter period. After several days we moved onto Townsville, where we visited HQ 3 Bde and 103 Sig Sqn, which is famous for its talking pet parakeet, **Bert**, who knew a lot of the soldiers' language. Our last stop on the trip was to take us to Cairns. It was here that I went scuba diving on the Great Barrier Reef, took an early morning balloon flight over the mountains, and was introduced to the Aboriginal culture. Diving on the Great Barrier Reef was an awesome experience, which was only to be outdone by a tandem hang gliding flight off Mount Tamborine near the Gold Coast. This took me on a half-hour flight across the mountains, a truly memorable experience.

All to the soon it was time to depart Australia, leaving behind the hot weather to return to the bleak British Autumn. I learned a great deal about the Australian Army way of life in the four and half months, and discovered that our two Armies are similar in many ways. I had a truly fantastic time with 1 JSU. I feel extremely lucky to have been able to participate in EX LONG LOOK, where I made many new friends, and have many great memories to treasure.

249 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ALLIED COMMAND EUROPE MOBILE FORCE (LAND))

OC **Maj Alan Hill**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Shean Dewar**

THE UKRAINE ADVENTURE
by SSgt (YofS) Holden

October saw 50 members of the Sqn deploying to North Ukraine, in support of EX CO-OPERATIVE ADVENTURE EXCHANGE 02, billed as the final nail in the AMF (L) exercise coffin.

In addition to our task of providing ISIS and SATCOM to the AMF (L), the Sqn was also given the task of providing life support to all other deployed UK elements (some 100 individuals). This allowed **Maj Alan Hill**, OC Sqn to use the 'self styled' grand title of Force Commander United Kingdom, or FCUK for short.

This extra logistical commitment played heavy on the support elements of the Sqn, with the QM, **Capt Chris Laycock** and **WO2 (RQMS) Robinson** often having to retire to the sanctuary of log base to issue socks and swap war stories.

The deployment set the scene for the whole exercise, with the Sqn using a combination of road, ferry, train and luck to get into theatre. Fortunately, prior to our 68-hour train trip to the Ukraine, via Germany, Poland and numerous sidings, the Sqn was accommodated at Elmpt Station over night. This stop allowed us to get a final hot meal, shower and gave **Sig Patterson** the chance to display his geographical knowledge by creating a very life like map of Africa on the QM's camp bed (fortunately the QM was not in it at the time). Border crossings and customs checks became the norm while we travelled through Europe, with **SSgt (YofS) Holden** getting numerous headaches from corrupt border guards and officials.

Once in location, life continued at a fast pace, with ISIS Troop and the sleepy SATCOM crews providing a first rate service to the staff. SYSCON was run by **LCpl King** and his merry band, under the usual multi-national philosophy that when things go well, the

G6 staff have worked well and when things go bad the screams of YofS and FofS ring around the HQ.

During the ex, the troops were kept fed and happy by **Sgt Gray** and his chefs (they are not cooks!) who produced excellent results with food from dubious sources. One of these was a local gent who spent much of his day attempting to sell the good Sgt local mushrooms and a wide selection of fresh hedgehog.

Each member of the Sqn was allowed to spend some down time in the local city of L'Viv, the cultural centre of the Ukraine, on a little R and R, staying in the overpriced 'Sputnik' Hotel (a cross between a Holiday Inn and Salvation Army hostel) for the princely sum of USD 18 per night. A good time was had by all, with special credit going to one of the Sqn augmentees from 12 Mech Bde Sig Sqn, **Sig Soppitt**, who showed outstanding teamwork throughout the exercise, but especially during R and R.

The return journey was much the same as the outbound, with the addition of an extra 12 hours on the train, no electricity or heating in the carriages and the ERV being stranded on the German/Polish border due to it having 'grown' during the deployment, making it too tall to return on the train! Always operating within the law, the OC and YofS had to 'persuade' (bribe is a bad a word!) the Ukraine Customs to let us out of the country with a selection of UK and USA ration packs.

All in all, the exercise was a success, mostly due to the hard work and long hours put in by all members of the Sqn, ensuring the AMF (L) swansong went with a bang!

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Mark Bentley**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Mo Pay**

REMEMBRANCE DAY - *by Cpl 'Danny' Pearson*

The Sqn paraded at 10.00 hrs on a chilly Sunday morning when, under the direction of **SSgt Wilson,** the men were brought smartly to attention (well they were brought to attention) and were inspected before embarking on, very sadly, the last remembrance day parade that 249 Sig Sqn AMF(L) would be attending together as a Sqn. However, not at all fazed by this sad event, we marched smartly to the garrison church, boots shining in the morning sun and medals clinking together (for those of us with medals anyway!) led by young **Sig Morgan** who was proudly flying the Sqn standard reminding everyone in the garrison that we may well be disbanding but WE ARE CERTAINLY NOT GONE YET. After arriving at the church we all filed inside and paid our respects to our fallen comrades. We all managed to fight back the lumps in our throats as the Last Post was played, but there were a few 'I had smoke in my eye' excuses coming out as we left the church. We then formed up again and were marched smartly by **SSgt Wilson** to the garrison pub were we enjoyed a few beers. Some of the Sqn members even deployed themselves to Amesbury British Legion were they enjoyed a few beers with the veterans. All in all a good day was had by all.

AMF(L) DISBANDMENT PARADE - *by LCpl 'Rob' Drabwell*

It started (as things usually do in this Sqn) at 04.00hrs on a wet October morning as a mixed contingent of RSigs, RLC, RA and one member of the RMP prepared to deploy on the AMF(L) disbandment parade.

Things went from bad to worse when we laid eyes on our transport, a battle bus that we were to spend the next 14 hours in. After driving through every country in northern Europe we arrived in Heidelberg, the HQ for the AMF(L). We were soon taken to our accommodation, which was a 5 star hangar type with en-suite ablutions (well they were only a 20 minute bus journey away) and after a quick squaddie shower' we made our way into town to sample the local nightlife.

On our first morning in Heidelberg we thought we'd set ourselves up for the long day ahead with a trip to the American consolidated dining facility. We soon discovered that the Americans have funny ideas about a fry up - only one meat product allowed, but you can you can have as much syrup as you like on it. **Cpl Fielding** managed to get around the only one meat product rule by convincing the chefs that he required more meat on medical grounds. The rest of the day was taken up with drill practice.

Some of the old and bolder members of the Sqn had to be given some guidance by the younger lads on some of the more technical drill movements like the present arms. Clearly all the drill we do at 249 had finally come in useful! The other contingents on the parade managed to entertain the Brits by performing some bizarre drill movements, especially the Turks whose drill resembled a step aerobics class! On the actual day Comd AMF (L) and Comd NATO Forces Europe were in attendance and both seemed suitably impressed with those who took part in the parade, and conveyed their thanks to all involved. After the parade, everyone retired to the beer tent were the British contingent managed to dazzle all the other nations with their beer-drinking prowess. We then retired for a good night's sleep before setting off for the long uncomfortable journey back to Bulford.

EXERCISE COOPERATIVE ADVENTURE EXCHANGE
by LCpl Matt King

Only two people from Oscar Tp went on exercise to the Ukraine, **Sig Alex Rockett** and I, **LCpl Matt King**.

After a drive to Harwich to catch the Sea Cat to the Hook of Holland, the Sqn drove to Elmpt Station in Germany for an overnight stop before we went to the railhead at Munchengladbach to load the wagons onto the train. This was to be our last glimpse of freedom as after this we would be stuck on the train for three days solid with two men per cabin and only limited entertainment facilities (the welfare TV and DVD player). After the third day we arrived in the Ukraine, which looked very similar to the Balkans. Another short drive later (this time escorted by the Ukrainians) we were on the training area that was to be home for the next couple of weeks.

When the ex got under way, **Sig Alex Rockett** was off driving OC Sqn all over the place visiting everyone, whilst I was stuck in good old SYSCON, answering phones and inputting data into spreadsheets - definitely the most mind-numbing job in the world.

However, R&R in L'viv was absolutely outstanding and, as the last group to go, the lads made sure we went out in style. We spent the forty-eight hours like rock stars - we couldn't believe how cheap it all was. Forget going to Ibiza or Cyprus. Get yourselves to L'viv - it's blinding! Congratulations to **Sig Alex Rockett** for coming off the LCpl board. Get the beers in!

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Steve Cadywould**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Ollie Oliver**

The end of an era is nigh as 249 Sig Sqn is drawing down, soon to be just a memory in the minds of those who braved the Arctic conditions and, of course, anyone who watched Blue Peter. However before the Sqn sails off into the sunset, there are a few final experiences to be shared.

September saw probably the last deployment for the members of Papa Tp in an AMF(L) environment. The only assets deployed from the Tp were the two SATCOM detachments, commanded by **Cpl Fielding** and **Cpl Stewart**. They deployed on Monday 02 September, and had to endure a long train journey to the Ukraine. On arrival they moved into location to establish the satellite link, and this was where they were to stay for the duration of the ex. This was much to the delight of **Cpl Fielding**, as no moving meant no driving, and no driving meant..... well, I think you can work that one out for yourselves! Around the halfway point of the ex, the crews dusted of their best civilian clothes and re-deployed to the Ukraine's second city for a spot of R and R. The information I received via phone was that 'one could live as a rock star, everything is so cheap.' I believe this meant accommodation, food and the odd occasional beverage - nothing more.

Last but not least a few bonjours, au revoirs and congrats. A warm welcome is extended to **Cpl Everleigh**, who is posted to the Tp but is yet to be seen as he has deployed straight onto his Class 1. A farewell to **LCpl Maybank**, who has left the Tp to enjoy a massive seven weeks leave before taking his new post in 216 Sig Sqn. This is clearly the best possible preparation for P-Company. Congratulations to **LCpl Allan** and **Sig Johnston**, who have both passed the White Helmets selection course and will be posted there early next year. Also to **Sigs** 'Buz' **Burrell**, 'Gaz' **Polhill** and **Sokolowski**, who have all been selected for promotion.

MIKE TROOP - *by LCpl Cooke*

TP Comd **WO2 FofS Dave Coffey**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Paul Farrington**

As our last Sqn deployment before our disbandment, EX COOPERATIVE EXCHANGE, Yavorov, Ukraine had a small tech presence. IC ERV was **LCpl Reeves**, with **LCpls Cairns** and **Patrick** as assisting techs, and myself providing SATCOM with tech assistance.

The highlight of the deployment seemed to be R'n'R in the city of L'viv where everyone's dollars went a long way and Casino's, Champagne and Caviar were on the menu most nights (well perhaps not the caviar!). On return from Ukraine, close down has been the main activity in the workshops, with much counting, accounting, bagging and tagging in preparation for back loading our equipment.

Welcome back to **Cpl Sivewright** from his Junior Comds' Course, Blandford, and to **Cpl Dyson** and **LCpl** 'Jo' **Binder** back from Cape Town, on the Corps Cricket tour where they enjoyed cheap beer, food, the sights of the odd ghetto or two.

Congratulations go to **Cpls Dyson, Fielding** and **Sivewright** for passing their Class 1 Entrance exam. Finally farewells go to **Cpls Griffiths, Burr, Dyson, Sivewright, Davidson, Wilks, Fielding, Weight, Archer** and **LCpls Reeves, Patrick** and **Binder** (the majority of the Tech Bn), leaving a lonely six to take us through to 1st April (disbandment day).

Q TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Chris Laycock**
RQMS **WO2** 'Robbo' **Robertson**

The Ukraine exercise started off with a cruise to the Hook of Holland where, on arrival, the Tp split up. Half went on to Holland to pick up the server vehicles while the other half went to Bruggen, where they all had a good time on a sight-seeing tour around Germany, thanks to **SSgt (YofS) Holden's** route card. When they eventually arrived 4 hours later, they all met up again and then had to endure 2 days of R&R before the rest of the Sqn arrived and the ex could start. The ex went well, and we even found time in the busy schedule to move Ech at least once. On the social side, **SSgt Wilson** was delighted to prove that he could out drink and arm-wrestle the Germans. At the end of a very hard exercise the Sqn relaxed with a well-deserved party, where everyone was looking forward to the train back. But this time it was like being in Norway, as the train had no heating and was like a freezer. After we all got back from the Ukraine, **LCpl Rodgers** and **Sig Snape** went back to Germany for the AMF (L)) disbandment parade, taking their total count to 8 countries in one week.

With everyone back to work, it was time to start closing down the Sqn and getting rid of the fleet and stores. Meanwhile the LAD, under the watchful eye of **Sgt Owers,** and stores section under the RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Robertson** were working hard around the clock to do as much as they can before Christmas. To date we have already got rid of half the fleet.

People are eager for their postings now and most know where they are going - apart from **Cpl Collins** who has come off the Cpl to Sgt board and still does not know. It's the first thing he says in the morning and the last thing he says at night – and he's driving us nuts! The EDs must also get a mention as they are working hard - not just switching generators on but also switching them off.

We would like to say goodbye to **LCpl Abbott**, who has been posted to 2 Sig Regt and congratulate **Sig Smith** on coming off the Sig to LCpl board.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Wally Drain**
TP SSgt **SSgt R Owen**

HAILS AND FAREWELLS

Revolving door syndrome for the Sqn this month. We welcome **LCpls Kev Hebenton** and **Matt Richards**, who have both arrived having recently completed their T3 course at Blandford. We also say hello to **Cpl Mick Frain**, who joins us from 1 Div. Farewells go to **LCpl Kyle Lovell**, who has returned to civilian life after a brief but highly entertaining military career, and to **Cpl Steve Davies**, who is off to 16 Sig Regt after two very successful years with the Sqn.

VISIT OF COMMANDER 2 SIG BDE, BRIGADIER JE THOMAS MBE

The Sqn has twice had the privilege of playing host to **Brig JE Thomas MBE**. On 16 October, after being welcomed by **Maj Wally Drain** and **SSgt Rick Owen**, the Brigadier was treated to **Capt Keith Roach's** new and improved version of the Sqn presentation - a rare treat indeed. **Brig Thomas** returned to the Sqn on 22 November, when the OC, **Maj Wally Drain** and his glamorous assistant, **SSgt Rick Owen** gave him a full guided tour of the Sqn and introduced him to both the military and civilian members. This visit was rounded off in fine fashion in the WOs' and Sgts' mess with a delicious Ghurka Curry prepared by the Sqn 2IC, **Major** (Retired) **L B Gurung**. Smiley faces and full bellies all round.

JEANS FOR GENES DAY

The annual Sqn charity day took place on the 4 October. It was organised once again by **Mr Derek Keen** who, in his final year of involvement with this event (due to his pending retirement), surpassed his own high standards and drove the Sqn on to raise over £2400 for this very worthwhile cause. Well done, **Derek**!

Jeans for Genes Cheque – SSgt Owen & Mr Derek Keen representing the Squadron's efforts

MINOR UNITS ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS

On the 6 November, 251 Sqn entered and won the Royal Signals Minor Units Championship held in Blandford. We beat many teams, including the normally dominant 216 Sig Sqn. Better luck next year, lads! The 251 squad were **Sgt Andy Dobson, SSgt Colin Holcombe** and **WO1 John Harden**. Well done, team!

SQUADRON LIFE

Congratulations go to **Sgt Pete Nealis** for passing his Sgts course and to **Mrs Christine McKenzie**, who received her certificate of unit credit for her NVQs from the OC.

Last but by no means least are the Sqn's operational personnel. **Cpl Eddie Hart** is still hard at work defending the local bar from any Argentinean Special Forces that may have been tasked to deprive the islands of Malibu and Coke. **Sgt Ritchie Bryan** has just arrived in Pristina and should be congratulated for setting a new speed record. The engines on the plane hadn't stopped spinning when he'd already booked his return flight home and his replacement's flight out.

Mrs Chris McKenzie receiving her NVQ from the OC, Maj Wally Drain

280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Harris**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Holland**

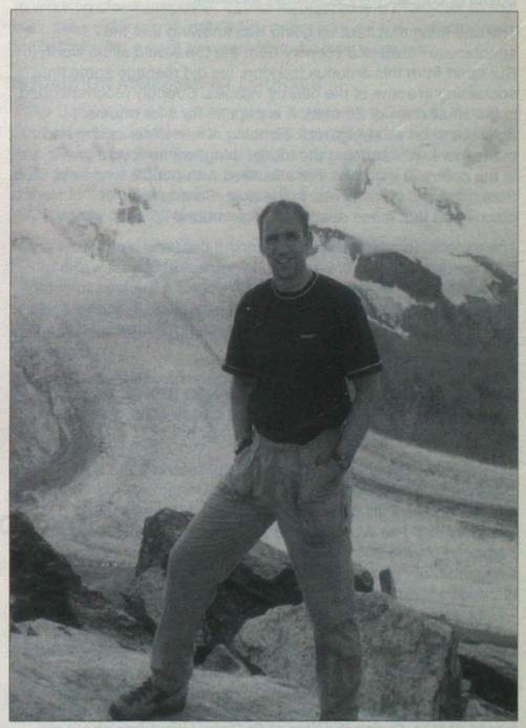
EXERCISE ALETSCH BACKSTOP
By Sig Ragni

Ex ALETSCH BACKSTOP was a high altitude trekking expedition in Switzerland from 28 August - 4 September 02. Three of the expedition party were REME, including the expedition organiser, **S/Sgt (Art Veh) Adam Tamea** and the other four were Royal Signals, including the expedition leader, **Capt Andy Arthurton** JSMEL (S) from 7 Sig Regt. The aim of the expedition was to gain as much trekking experience as possible and also to qualify those new to the activity up to Summer Mountain Proficiency (SMP) standard.

The expedition was to start on Tuesday 27 August, but an unexpected vehicle change delayed us until the following morning. (Our thanks to 2CS Regiment RLC in Gutersloh for helping us out with this.) After eight hours' driving we arrived at our first camp, having listened to the same two CDs for the whole of the journey. (We know the "Pink" and the "Red Hot Chilli Peppers" album off by heart now.) The campsite was situated in the small town of Grindelwald and was within walking distance of the town centre. After putting up our tents we went in for a couple of drinks (just to help us sleep on the hard floors) and then had an early night for the arduous day ahead.

Our first trek was to the top of the Faulhom, with some people (not to mention any names, expedition organiser!) feeling the effects of the night before. We climbed to the dizzy height of 2680m, but the weather was overcast so the view wasn't as good as it could have been. The weather and the visibility were much better the following day, when we walked up to Rots Gufer via the hutte at Stieregg, following the Grundelbonldglacier. Although the path was quite good, the sheer drop to the gorge on the right-hand side made us quite wary. We stopped for lunch at a good vantage point and were lucky enough to watch a series of mini avalanches as the mid-day sun melted the glacier. Spectacular! This was a much more enjoyable trek for all. The next day, Saturday, was an admin day (thank God!) and we all nursed our sore heads and feet, from the day/night before. We packed our kit away and headed off to our next campsite at Tasch, just outside Zermatt. On this campsite, we opted for a hut instead of erecting our tents. This turned out to be cheaper and more comfortable, particularly since the issued (summer) sleeping bags weren't the warmest we'd ever had.

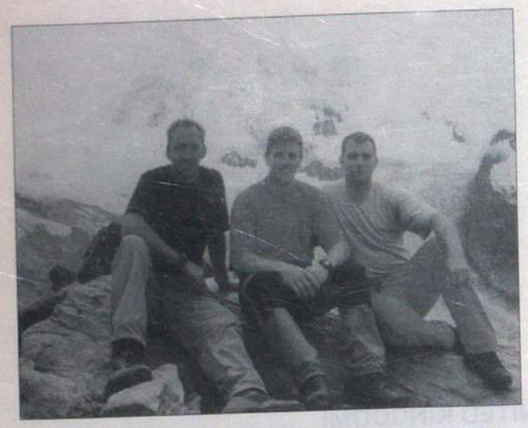
The hardest day yet was to be upon us, the walk up to Gornegrat. It was the highest mountain we were to climb during our week's trekking, and, at around 3300m, it was also the highest any of us (apart from **Capt Arthurton**) had ever been to. Although we had taken the cog railway up for the first few hundred metres, we paid for it in the subsequent climb- a right thigh burner: the next day walked up to the Wein Garten Base around the Tasch Horn. The climb was incredibly steep, gaining 800 metres in less than 2km. Once at the top we could hear the sound of avalanches on the Tasch Horn but couldn't see them because of the cloud cover. Part of the Horn had collapsed during the previous summer, sending large boulders bounding through the local village.



SSgt Tamea on Steiregg

Early next morning we drove to a small town called Fiesch. The weather had now changed totally - no more sun, just constant drizzling rain. We walked along side the Aletsch Glacier, the longest in Europe at 24 km long and 1fi km in width in some places. Looking down on it from the mountain, it looked like a giant road that seemed out of place between the mountains.

The expedition had consisted of five days of trekking in the areas of Grindelwald, Zermatt and Fiesch, with each trek being about 18



SSgt Tamea, Sgt Butterfield & LCpl Winstanley by Monta Rosa

km a day. This may not seem very far in a day, but I can assure you that some of the gradients were as much as 1:1, where three points of contact were absolutely essential.

The one thing that kept us going was knowing that the spectacular views and scenery from the top would all be worth it. But apart from this arduous trekking, we did manage some time socialising in some of the nearby villages. Strongly recommended is the small town of Zermatt. It is popular for a lot of other activities such as skiing, rock climbing, white water rafting and many more. Whilst doing the tourist thing, we noticed a graveyard in the centre of the town that was filled with people who have died from climbing, trekking etc. in the area. Surprisingly, we discovered that these deaths average around 25 each year.

The expedition area offered outstanding beautiful alpine scenery with spectacular glaciers and imposing peaks. Casual walks to incredibly hard climbs are available throughout the area to cater for novice walkers to experienced climbers alike. If anyone feels they would like to gain experience in trekking, Switzerland is an ideal place to learn.

WINNER JUNIOR FISH DISH (COMBINED SERVICES CHAMPION) COMBINED SERVICES CULINARY SERVICE CHALLENGE 2002 - by Pte Smith

On the 30th September **Sgt Boyle**, **LCpl Newing** and I, **Pte Smith**, left Javelin Barracks for St Omer Barracks, Aldershot, where we joined the rest of the team, **WO 1 Jackson**, **Sgt Walstercroft**, **Pte Watt** and **Pte Maccol**, all from JHQ. We were competing in the 2002 Combined Services Culinary Competition. I was glad that I had been chosen for the competition because I wanted to build my confidence up and my experience in catering – but I was a little nervous.

First thing Monday we were all in the classroom working on our dishes. **Sgt Boyle** had decided on my dish before we left Germany, but I had never worked on it before, and we still had to decide how it would look on the plate and in what sequence I would cook it. During the time at St Omer I would do about six practice runs before the real thing. It was coming to the end of the week's practising for me and my nerves were building up. My chosen dish was pan-fried smoked salmon on a bed of bubble and squeak, with asparagus tips, surrounded by a blanc sauce with tomato and leek.

I left St Omer Barracks at 05.30 hrs on Tuesday 8 October 2002 to go to Sandown Park for the competition, and at 08.00 hrs it was my turn. In my kitchen I found myself competing with five others: RN, RAF and other Army teams. All I can remember is the judge telling us to start. Then I didn't look up until I had finished. As I was cooking, the judges talked about each indicated person and the dishes they were cooking. I plated up each of my dishes and took them out to the front, one by one. When I had finished, all the judges came to inspect and eat my dish. Even though I had finished cooking, I was still nervous as waited for the results.

I did have a feeling I would win something, because one of the judges had asked me who had shown me how to make my sauce. When I saw the results up on the wall, I ran to look. There was my name at the top, **Pte Smith**, Gold, Best in Class! I started crying, my Sgt shook my hand and then I got on the phone to my parents. I was really pleased, and feel that I have learned a lot physically and mentally. I found it fun, but a lot of hard work.

RHINE AREA GOLF LEAGUE 2002
By SSgt Maw

The Rhine Area Golf League has been an enthralling competition throughout the past six months. The Sqn's move from St Tonis to Elmpt station has certainly made travel arrangements far easier. Four minutes from Sqn HQ to the first tee makes 280 Sig Sqn a dream posting for any good low-handicap golfer!

The team was drawn from a nucleus of six: team captain **Sgt Ski Nowosielski** (unfortunately posted in July) with **Dave Maw**, **Sgt Taff John**, **LCpl Matt Hutchinson**, **Sig Tony Bird** and **Sig Steve Lawrie**. Under the guidance of the team captain, who applied strategy and planning to each game, 280 Sqn remained unbeaten throughout the year, and in doing so retained the League Trophy for the second year running.

Sgt Taff John often combined a little cross-country and orienteering with his golf, spending a lot of his time in the woods looking for his ball - or indeed, his club! **SSgt Dave Maw** saw his handicap fall from 12.3 to 8.5. This is so he can leave the Army next October as a single figure golfer. His ambition is to play in the Mexican Open. The Sqn team will now continue to train all winter (weather permitting) and hopefully have a good start to the League in spring 2003.

BONFIRE NIGHT WENT WITH A BANG
By Capt (QM) Schofield

If you had wanted food, drink, entertainment and importantly warmth, then the inaugural Elmpt Station Bonfire Night was the place to be on the 5th November. The Station Commander officially opened the night with a special thanks to 280 (UK) Sig Sqn for their organisation of the event and particular thanks to **Capt (QM) Schofield** and **W02 (RQMS) Holland** for bringing everything together. It was pointed out by the Station Commander that the Sqn had been asked to build a bonfire, but in fact it looked very much like another hangar had been constructed. Under the guidance and direction of our resident pyromaniac, **Sgt Walsh**, the bonfire literally rose from the ashes, quickly becoming a tourist attraction for its size. The Great Pyramids of Egypt would struggle to be as impressive.

The crowds thronged into the arena at 6 pm waiting for the big lighting ceremony. How would it be lit? A best guy competition had been organised and judged by the **Maj Russell Edwards'** wife **Sophie** and the Station Commanders' wife, **Rachel**. By a unanimous decision the winner was the **Browett Family** from 7 Sig Regt and their prize was to light the bonfire. So with a plunge of the red button by the family, the bonfire was alight. **W02 (RQMS) Holland** was in attendance to the rear of the fire, just in case things didn't go to plan. Thankfully, he wasn't needed, but he did do a fine impression of a man trying to put himself out.

Whilst the fire roared and the RQMS put himself out, the 500 strong crowd were provided with a number of stalls selling gluhwein, hamburgers and popcorn. Special thanks went to the SSAFA, the Anglo German Association and the Silkman Café for providing stands. **LCpl Winstanley** served popcorn for 3 hours and wishes not to see popcorn again! **Sgt Atkinson** and his merry helpers sold Day-Glo jewellery, modeling it with total success selling out quickly. A colouring competition was organised by **Sgt Butterfield** for two age groups and the winners were **Dianna Jackson** and **Charlie Marsh**. The MT came third!

A German company provided the fireworks, with a fabulous exciting display that lasted an age. For the first Bonfire Night at Elmpt Station, it was a glowing success, which brought a sparkle to the children's eyes. We look forward to making it bigger and better for next year.

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

OC **Maj Billingham**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) D Scott**

With the Sqn looking forward to a well-earned Christmas break, we have a few notices. Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Badger' **Miller** and **LCpl Tony Burton** who have each recently married. Best wishes to **Capt John Collyer** who leaves us for JDSC. He is replaced by **Capt Mark Davis** from HQ ThTps. We congratulate the following on picking up their third stripes, **Sgts Shrewsbury, Litchfield, Roberts** and **Macgillivray**; picking up his second stripe, **Cpl Teo**; and picking up their first, **LCpls Aston, Lock, Clarke** and **Quantrell**.

EXERCISE STRIKING LYNX

During the period of 21-24 October members of the Sqn deployed on EX STRIKING LYNX. This was conducted at Yardley Chase Trg Area and was aimed to prepare personnel for the Det Comds Course. Another jolt on the brakes from **Cpl Pete Stainforth** indicated our arrival and the beginning of the ex. **Sgt Syd Cleworth** wasted no time, and after a bit of refresher training we were digging into our harbour area and receiving orders for our first task.

A constant downpour during the first night made things more interesting, especially for **Cpl Sonja MacMillan**, who had to swim out of her shell scrape before we could begin the second day. Over the next couple of days we conducted a lot of training and put in a lot of hard work to culminate in a very successful final attack. Overall the attack was a success, with all personnel having fully refreshed their skills and furnished themselves with new ones.

EXERCISE PROGRESSIVE LYNX

PROGRESSIVE LYNX was a joint TA and Regular exercise conducted in and around STANTA OBUA Village. After a long journey from the TAC on the Friday, we picked up our kit, and deployed into a hasty harbour. **SSgt Dave Churchward** was in charge of the exercise, and he had managed to procure a several enthusiastic OBUA instructors from 101 Log Bde. This ensured a tight schedule, with several lessons packed into the long days.

The first day consisted of, amongst others, lessons on assaulting villages, methods of entry, room clearance, and the prospect of finishing the day with a quick journey through the village via the confidence course. Unfortunately there had been a nasty accident ten days previously, so it was decided to give the confidence course a miss.

The evening was taken up with pyrotechnic safety demonstrations, including the new training grenade, and building a model for that night's orders. After a couple of hours' hasty model building, orders were given and each patrol deployed onto the Training Area to conduct recces ready for the morning's assault. Two brief hours' sleep later, the platoon moved to the FUP, recced earlier by 3 Sec. The assault went in at approx 05.30 hrs, and half a street (and several hours) later ENDEX was called.

It was a thoroughly absorbing and well-organised weekend. A lot was gained by al, since this is one of the rare times the Sqn gets to work so closely together to test leadership and character to the max. New skills learnt, only a few minor injuries, the Sqn returned to Bletchley for a swift turnaround and a long weekend.

SQUADRON ASSESSMENT COURSES

1 Sig Sqn (SC) will be running three Assessment Courses during 2003. Held in Bletchley, the course is 4 working days duration, and will comprise various basic skill and trade tests and will include various other tasks, such student presentations. A detailed information pack is available from Trg Wing, 1 Sig Sqn (SC) upon request. Dates are as follows:

Course 1: 17 - 21 February 2003
Course 2: 12 - 16 May 2003
Course 3: September 2003

If students are deemed suitable for further training they will be put on to the next Special Communications Course starting on 03 November 03.

Any soldiers interested in applying for service with 1 Sig Sqn (SC) should complete SOinC's PD 206 (available from your Trg Wing) and send a copy to Trg Wing, 1 Sig Sqn or call 1 Sig Sqn (SC) on:
94240 8547 (mil)
01908 638547 (civ)

60th SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Jon Wopling**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Terry Ward**

94 (BERKSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd: **Maj Hugh Robertson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) PETER WATSON**

60/94 (BY) Sig Sqn is not yet an officially recognised unit in the Corps' Order of Battle, let alone the Army's. It is the product of a unique experiment, and a very successful one at that. Normally, 60 Signal Squadron (based in Aylesbury and High Wycombe) and 94 (BY) Signal Squadron (based in Windsor and Reading) are separate Sqns which are roled with the task ofproviding CNR comms to 11 Sig Bde. However, for both Sqns' Annual Camp in October 2002 (EX ARRCADE FALCON 2) it was decided that this role could best be fulfilled by combining both Sqns to form a composite CNR Sqn.

Several pre-Camp meetings between the respective Sqns' head sheds attempted to deal with the myriad of questions raised by the attempt to integrate two Independent Sqns into one. Who would command the combined Sqn? Who would provide which dets? Which Sqn's SOPs would be used? It soon became evident that a lot of the detail would have to be worked out on en route to Germany and on the ground once there.

The combined Sqn officially came into being in the illustrious surroundings of Doncaster North Services on the M1. 94 (BY) Sig Sqn took the driving seat for the first phase of the exercise – the move to the Concentration Area at Leconfield and onwards to Javelin Barracks (formerly RAF Bruggen), via Hull and Rotterdam courtesy of P & O Ferries. After a few days into the exercise 60 Sig Sqn took over, handing back to 94 (BY) Sig Sqn shortly before ENDEX. With the workload that was placed on the combined Sqn, there were few 'spare bodies' and anyone at a loose end was soon put to work in 11 Sig Bde HQ.

The combined Sqn provided a Main and Step Up RADCON, 6 RR dets, 5 Rear Link dets for each of the TA Trunk Regts in 11 Sig Bde, and 3 LO dets for tasking as necessary. The flexibility of CNR soon proved its worth with some of the Trunk Regts taking 48 hours to get comms in and the Bde Comd holding his daily conference calls over the VHF(Z) net until the Trunk comms were established. It was generally agreed that the combined Sqn experiment was a success and it remains to be seen whether it will be repeated in 2004 for 11 Sig Bde's next foray to Germany. In the meantime, both 60 Sig Sqn and 94 (BY) Sig Sqn have moved to 2 (NC) Signal Brigade, to 71 (Y) Sig Regt and 31 Sig Regt

respectively, but still retain a bi-annual role with 11 Sig Bde.

MY FIRST TA ANNUAL CAMP – *by Sig Melanie Hill*

'Who are you?' asked the caterpillar. Alice replied rather shyly, 'I hardly know, Sir, just at present - at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I must have changed several times since then.' (Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland)

The first thoughts at the front of my mind were not soldierly. They were more apprehension (blind panic) at what exactly I had let myself in for by agreeing to go on Annual Camp. Firstly I knew no German, and secondly I had only just finished my recruit and trade training. What use would I be to anyone? Being a woman in the field I also had other concerns: Did I have enough money in my bank account to shop with on R&R? Did I have my nail-file?!

We left Aylesbury on the morning of Saturday 5 October after much 'hurry up and wait', vehicle First Parades, map folding and other miscellaneous last-minute preparation the previous night. When finally ready to start our journey, flasks of coffee and chocolate biscuits in tow, we set off for Leconfield, near Hull. After many stops and starts on a seemingly never-ending drive up the M1, we arrived, set up for the evening and headed for the cookhouse. Walking into the dining hall was our first glimpse of just how large this exercise was and how many people and vehicles were involved. It was also a chance to catch up with friends from other units last seen at Blandford and on other courses.

After a wet and windy night and a long wait for our Police escort we set off for Hull Docks, to be faced with another long wait to board the ferry. We spent several hours in the departure lounge all wondering how the 'Rapid' got into the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps and looking forward to reaching Germany. Once on board, we discovered that the ferry was amazingly equipped with fantastic facilities and food, not to mention the duty free shops stuffed with tasty extra rations to fill our bergens with!

We were treated to a night's entertainment and although the cruise was 'dry' we all enjoyed the 'Tarzan and Jane' re-enactment by some of our men. All I can say is the poor, unsuspecting 'Jane' was a civilian and is probably still suffering from the experience! We were also delighted with the dance antics of a Kung Fu fighter from 40 Sig Regt.

The following morning, with our luxury haverbags, we left Rotterdam for Bruggen, travelling through the Netherlands with another Police escort, which fancied itself as the California Highway Patrol, but seemed oblivious to the fact that a fully loaded Land Rover and trailer is not designed to go at 70mph! We pushed on over the border into Germany, finally arriving at Javelin Barracks where we were re-supplied with fuel and food, and sorted out into new packets according to our respective tasks (mine being RRB 3) destination unknown.

From this moment onwards it was full steam ahead. First we were tasked to help set up RADCON. The biggest dilemma here was trying to remember how to set up something I had never seen. That night we tested our equipment and waited for our deployment orders, which arrived early the next morning. We then all set off in our respective directions. Arriving in our location we set up, hoping to get comms in, but to no avail. After moving the masts around until the small hours of the morning, it was decided by the powers that be that we would have to relocate 50 miles to the east.

After a quick drive to Schermbeck, we set up in a car park in front of a factory, not being able to find our exact location on the 1:100,000 scale map which had been issued to us. With the locals watching our efforts in awe, we set up two masts and having got both VHF and HF comms in, there were whoops of joy all around until another green and black Land Rover appeared. The occupants emerged to ask exactly what we thought we were doing in a public car park. It turned out that our intended location was *behind* the factory in a field in which were the biggest cow pats anyone had ever seen. We established VHF comms but weren't making much progress on HF, when we were summoned to a meeting with 33 Sig Regt, who were co-located with us. We duly headed over the field in the dark, with a good percentage of the said cow pats sticking to the bottom of our boots. One detail I was grateful for was pan-bashing in the field kitchen, as recompense for which I received fresh rations rather than having to face two weeks of compo.

On the second day our Det Comd, **Sgt Alex Brown**, was injured and we had to return to 'Slipper City' (as A2 Ech was affectionately named) with another crew member, **Sig Michelle Smith**. Here we met up with some of the other casualties of the exercise, including **Sig Sam Potter**, who had received his 'war wound' while attempting a head-first dive from the top of a wall. After much needed recovery (sleep!) I was re-deployed to RADCON and the Radio Village. With 'cow pat central' now a distant memory, I was shown huge maps of comms assets scattered throughout Germany. Bearing in mind I had only done one 2 hour trade exercise and one 8 hour shift on the RRB, I had no idea what I was letting myself in for. However, I managed to cope, being well looked after, coached and mentored by the Det crew from 94 (BY) Sig Sqn.

The week rolled on and finally ENDEX arrived. We duly set off for Maastricht for our our R&R. **SSgt Alec Wilkie** decided to take a detour through Belgium, but we eventually all arrived safely at Tapijn Barracks, our sights firmly set on the showers and the bar (in that order). After transforming ourselves into clean people with clean clothes, we proceeded to the bar where the coffers were opened and copious amounts of Heineken consumed by all. We then braved the town, where we attempted to try every nightclub and danced the night away enjoying the local hospitality and being amazed at the native linguistic skills of **Cpl Paul Chambers**. It all proved too much for **SSgt (FofS) John Clarke**, who became navigationally challenged and had to book himself into a local hotel in the early hours after several hours searching for Tapijn Barracks without success. After a day of hangovers and shopping we had an early start to drive to the Hook of Holland to board the return ferry to Harwich. The journey home was uneventful, save for bidding farewell to 94 (BY) Sig Sqn at South Mimms Services in the early hours of the morning of Saturday 19 October.

81 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj C R Tillotson**
SSM	**WO2 J I Penman**

786 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Nick Welch**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt John Collins**

DEPLOYMENT FALKLAND SOUND 10-31 OCTOBER 2002

DEPLOYMENT FALKLAND SOUND saw 786 Tp deploying to Mount Pleasant Airfield (MPA) in the Falkland Islands. An aim for all deployments is to integrate with local units as much as possible, and this deployment was no exception – 786 Tp worked closely both with the resident Joint Communications Unit (JCUFI), headed by **Maj M Emslie**, and the civilian contractors from SCIDA.

The exercise involved two overlapping deployments, employing a half tp each. A number of projects were to be undertaken, including installation of new fibre cables, improving pit infrastructure, labelling existing cables and valuable assistance with MPA's IT and Internet system.

Prior to the Tp's deployment, an excellent job was done by 81 Sig Sqn's FI expert, **SSgt Stew Beveridge** to ensure a successful start for the project, and that all of the necessary details were in place. His contribution included arranging a professional photograph of 786 Tp, conducting a battlefield tour and introducing the Tp to the delights of the penguin colony at Bertha's Beach.

SSgt Terry Molyneux and **Sgt Al Keys-Minton,** did a splendid job of managing the technical aspects of the projects. With excellent guidance from **Sgt Andy Powell** from JCUFI, everything was quickly up and running. This meant that a couple of days' recreation could be afforded, and Tp Comd, **Capt Nick Welch** knew they would work even better with some cultural and historical stimulation.

So the Tp went on two battlefield tours, the first on Mt Harriet, the second on Mt Longdon. The Mt Harriet tour was a case of DIY, as the resident Para coy were otherwise engaged. **2Lt Mark Arscott** kicked off proceedings with a PowerPoint presentation and video, which set the scene for the battle site tour. After a 45-minute journey from MPA to Mt Harriet, just outside Stanley, the Tp climbed up the mountain on the same route taken by the men of 42 Cdo on a Falkland winter's night in 1982. From then on, **SSgt Stew Beveridge** and **Sgt Malcolm Penn** took over the tour, expertly showing the group around the battle site. **Sig Steve Marshall**, formerly a RM Commando, added some narration at the site of **Cpl Newland's** heroic single-handed destruction of a position of 10 Argentinean soldiers. **Sig Marshall** had been instructed by the then **Sgt Newland** during his basic training in 1986.

The Mt Longdon tour took place a week later, and was led by **Capt Tam Noble** of 2 Para, who fought on the mountain 20 years ago. The group was also honoured to be accompanied by a number of Para officers and NCOs who also fought on the mountain, and for many it was their first return to the FI in 20 years. A truly privileged and memorable outing.

SSgt John Collins and Sig Steve Marshall at the Commando Memorial on Mount Harriet

During the camp period, the Tp were visited by **Lt Col Simon Leigh**, CO of 10 Sig Regt. **Lt Col Leigh** got the chance to meet and greet the Tp informally during the Mt Longdon battlefield tour and at an afternoon's go-karting on the MPA airfield. **Sgt Al Minton** later gave a tour of the projects undertaken by the Tp, during which the CO even got the chance to assist in some cable-labelling of his own. Feedback indicated that a quality job was undertaken.

LCpl John Durrands showed great initiative in booking the go-karting a full six months previously, and it is worthy of a special mention. The track was quite unique, the pit stop is housed in a Tornado hangar, the track is fast but tight. Before racing was underway, the local fire-fighting unit wet down the track to save on tyre-wear (or so they said). This didn't seem to affect **Sig Paul Rivett's** shunting skills. He was accompanied by **2Lt Arscott**, **Capt Welch** and **Lt Col Leigh** in the final. Unfortunately they were all skilfully beaten by one of the local hustlers, a sig from JCUFI Tp. Luckily 786 Tp didn't go away empty-handed, as **Cpl Trevor Saint** picked up the 'Miss Daisy' booby-prize for the slowest driver with **SSgt John Collins** coming a close second (to last, that is). Not bad for a former Sqn MT Sgt! Rumour control indicates that **Cpl Trevor Saint** is applying for the Sgt MT spot....

A few members of the Tp were lucky enough to hitch a ride in a Chinook on a supply run to some of the outlying islands. The flight included dropping off a Sherpa van to be used for live-firing target practice by the Paras on an ex later that week, and a visit to the remote station at Mt Alice. At great expense **Sgt Steve Pickering** was treated to a repeat flight the next day, so he could get some decent photos of the experience, rather than the detailed shots of the lens cap he attained on the first trip.

786 Tp worked well with JCUFI although not just at work. Two instances are worthy of note. The first took place in 'Sharkies', the JCUFI bar, where **LCpl Pete McCarthy** was awarded the shark hat for skilfully chatting up three successive females for five minutes each. Not bad for 15 minutes work. Amazingly, not long after, **SSgt Collins** relieved him of his trophy. Well done that man! (although a stitch up was suspected). The second was a five-a-side football match. Both sides worked hard and fought well, but 786 Tp finally edged it with a 4-1 win. Note worthy performances, **LCpl John Durrands** for some excellent goal-keeping, **Capt Welch** for two wonderful goals, and to **LCpl Graham McDougall** for coaching the team and leading the warm-up.

A special commendation must be made to **Sig Jim Wanless**, 786 Tp's 'Senior Signaller'. **Jim** joined 81 Sig Sqn in 1978, and retires from TA service early next year. After 24 excellent years with the Sqn, he was presented with a 4.5 inch navy shell, fired by HMS Westminster (not at him). The engraved shell was presented at Sharkies bar. A big thank you from everybody at 81 Sig Sqn for your contribution to the squadron and exemplary efforts over the years, **Jim**!

854 SIGNAL TROOP

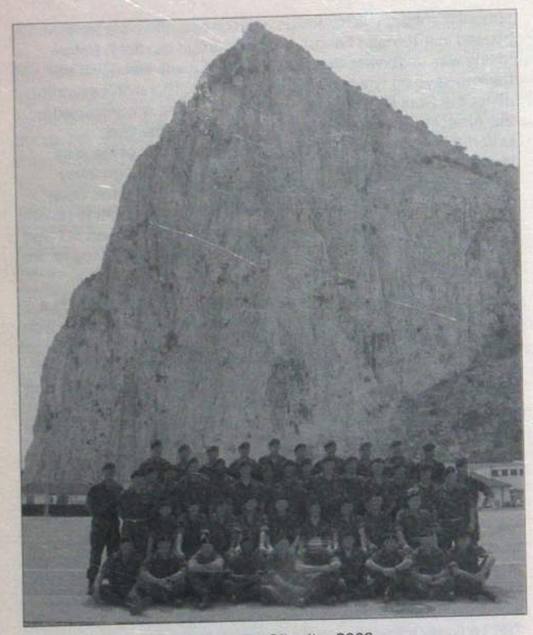
Tp Comd	**Capt Steve Clout**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt M Allen**

DEPLOYMENT FIRST ROCK

DEPLOYMENT FIRST ROCK 02 took place in September 2002, with a full deployment of 854 Sig Tp and additional manpower, totalling 45 people. Under the command of **Capt Steve Clout** and his team of SNCOs and working closely with the resident 642 Sig Tp, the Tp worked on two major projects which involved laying two lengths of copper cable within the Rock itself. PROJECT BUCCANEER involved laying 3km of 300 pr cable from an MDF on the Rock's northern peak to an MDF buried deep within the Rock. Part of this route involved 500m of near-vertical rock-face, which had been professionally laid by 642 Sig Tp prior to 854 Tp's arrival. PROJECT HARRIER involved the laying of 3km of 500 pr cable from the Rock's southern slopes to the same underground MDF.

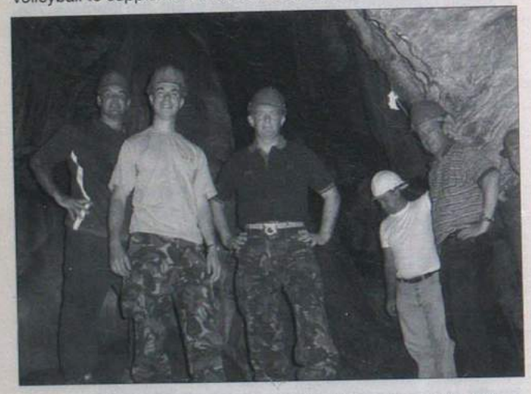
Most of the time the soldiers worked in the Rock's famous tunnels (of which there are over 35 miles!), and after two weeks they were starting to resemble moles – light skin, narrow eyes, sensitivity to bright lights etc. A suggestion was made to nickname the Tp 'The Tunnel Rats'. However, we made up for this and took every available opportunity to get out in the sun, including excursions to Torremolinos and Tangier.

During the deployment 854 Tp had the honour of being visited by CO 10 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Leigh**, who was ably shown round the projects by **Sgt Neil Weaver**. The CO had the chance to see the work in progress (which involved manually pulling 500m sections of 500 pair copper cable through the tunnels) and took time to have a packed lunch with some of the Tp members. His visit also included a tour of the Lower St Michael's Caves (led by SSM **Pete Jackson**) and a pool-party BBQ and games evening at the Nuffield Pool, arranged by **Capt Tony Woolaston** and members



854 Sig Tp Gibraltar 2002

of 642 Tp. A big thank you too all of those who helped make it a memorable evening, with energetic games of water-polo and volleyball to supplement the beer, food and sunshine.



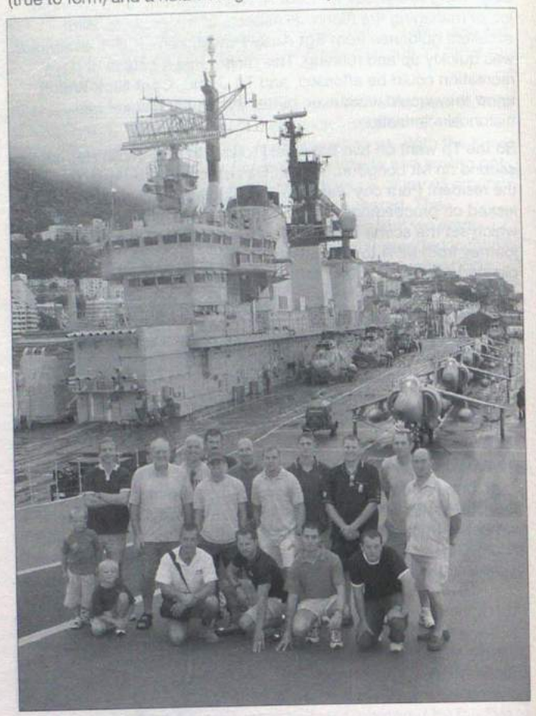
'The Tunnel Rats' - CO 10 Sig Regt with members of 854 Tp

Another visitor was 81 Sig Sqn's TOT, **Maj David Corrie**. He was immediately welcomed to Gibraltar with a tour of HMS Ark Royal (described as 'the daddy of all ships'), in harbour on her way to ex's in the Med. Attempts to stow him onboard were foiled when shouts for help were heard from the bilge area and the stowaway was released.

Working from 642 Sig Tp's offices, the project team managed all of the teams and tasks, working closely with and involving when necessary, the skills of 642 Tp's personnel. **Sgt Torrington**, **Cpl Eddie Longford** and **Cpl Carl Stephenson** are just a few people who receive thanks from 854 Tp.

Working in the tunnels was a new experience for some; for others, it was an opportunity to discover whether ghosts really do exist. One close encounter involved **Cpl Greg Stone** finding out that ghouls don't always live in dark spaces – only ducts, cables and the odd limestone drip. Oh, and on novelty key-rings kindly supplied by **LCpl Marcel Anderson.**

One evening was designated 'Fancy Dress' evening, and an excellent turnout followed. James Bond, Coco the Clown, Tango Man and Marcel Marceau joined Darth Vader, Dennis the Menace (true to form) and a hula-hula girl for a truly memorable night out.



854 and 642 Sig Tp – aboard HMS Ark Royal

During the course of the evening, this motley crew were even filmed by the local Torremolinos TV station. Alas, nobody hung about long enough to find out whether the film was ever aired!

Fitness was also on the agenda, and during their daily pre-breakfast run the Tp officers, **2Lt Mark Arscott** and **Capt Steve Clout**, were pleased to see **LCpl Marcel Anderson** and **Sig Dave McRitchie** out for an early-morning walk, apparently taking on fluids in preparation for a hard-day's work.

The deployment was not without it's injuries though. Firstly, **Cpl McCarthy** was unlucky enough to find that heading a footballer's boot was not the best thing to do. It meant that of the two days he had off, one was spent in hospital and the other was raining! Secondly, **Sig Collins** had an exciting encounter with one of the local females. Here is an extract from his accident report (said with a Jordie accent for authenticity): 'Whilst posing for a photograph with a monkey, it turned and bit me on the arm, drawing blood.' Afterwards, when asked whether he was hurt, **Sig Collins** replied 'Hurt? I'm devastated. It's been two weeks now, and she hasn't written, e-mailed - not even a phone call.' The last reported sighting of the ape mentioned 'foaming at the mouth' and 'rather short tempered.'

A deployment report cannot be complete without a mention of football exploits, which whilst scarce, are still worth highlighting. A 13-a-side match, involving both 854 and 642 Tp members, was played in the blazing sun under the gaze of the Rock's northern peak. **Sgt Ticehurst** and **Sig Rob Weldon** rate mentions for their inspired goals, whilst **Cpl Mick Wood** can be congratulated for his nimble footwork and excellent passing skills.

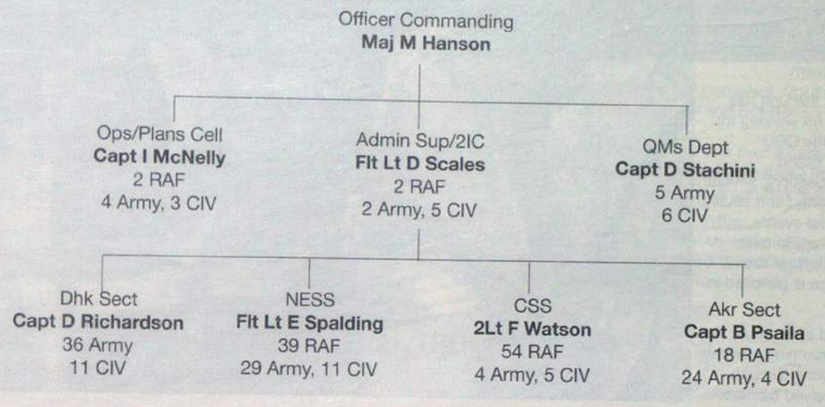
OFFICERS' AND SNCOs' PLANNING WEEKEND, CORSHAM, 23/24 NOVEMBER

The weekend 23/24 November 02 saw a total of 45 Offrs and SNCOs of 81 Sig Sqn in Corsham for a weekend of deployment, training and promotion planning for FY 2003. Full and comprehensive discussions and planning took place throughout the Saturday culminating with a Sgts Mess Dinner in Corsham and an Offrs' dinner at the Pear Tree restaurant just west of Corsham town.

CYPRUS COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (CCU)

OC **Maj M Hanson**

The 275 strong Cyprus Communications Unit (CCU) formed on 2 Sep 02, and is made up of a mixture of Army (approximately 110 R SIGNALS), RAF and Civilians. It is the result of the amalgamation of 259 Sig Sqn and parts of 12 Signals Unit RAF and is now one of the most complex and diverse communications units across the Services.



CCU manages and maintains several communication systems including fixed telecomms, computer networks and radio comms, as well as rear links, Naval broadcasts and ground-to-air comms.

The Unit has progressed tremendously since its formation just a few months ago. One of the major events so far has been the Amalgamation Parade held on 25 September 2002 with CBF **Air Vice Marshall Rimmer CB OBE** taking the salute. A spectacular pageantry, which saw the Last Post being played as the 259 Sig Sqn Flag was lowered for a final time followed by the Reveille as the new CCU Flag was raised.

CCU in full swing

Another Landmark event was EX BRAVE STANCE, the Unit Training Camp, two weeks of training involving a mixture of battlefield procedure and adventure training. This provided a great opportunity for further integration between the RSigs and RAF elements of the Unit, with the Army leading the way on the beach assaults (apart from **LCpl King**, who left his rifle at the bottom of the ocean), and the RAF providing the majority of the Fire Support team.

Air Vice Marshall Rimmer CB OBE inspects the Amalgamation Parade

Other events that the Unit has undertaken are a hill walking trip in New Zealand; the CCU Walkdown (an all island orienteering competition); several other sporting events; and several family-based social events, with more to look forward to over Christmas and the New Year. A trip to South Africa is penciled in for March 2003.

CCU has enjoyed a very busy first few months, overcoming several hurdles and breaking through several pre-conceived barriers. We have achieved a lot in the first few days of the Unit and intend to continue this way as this quote from the OC illustrates: 'Life will be difficult at times, as we come from many backgrounds – Army, RAF and Civilian. This should not be seen as a barrier, but rather as an opportunity for diversity. Let's take the best from all areas and improve upon them.'

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION SATELLITE GROUND TERMINAL F17

NATO SGT F17 BALADO BRIDGE

Stn Cdr	**Capt Chris Gill**
Stn Foreman	**WO2 (FofS) Richie Paterson**

Balado Who? Contrary to belief we do exist! This remote Scottish NATO Satellite Station located in Kinross, some twenty miles north of Edinburgh, has barely a dozen technicians, a couple of electricians and a storeman.

What do we do? Our role is maintaining a Satellite Ground Terminal in order to provide strategic and maritime bearers as part of the NATO satellite communications network. Aside from this we endeavour to participate in as many charity and adventure training events as possible.

The Station has been extremely busy this year in terms of communication upgrades and we have recently said farewell to the Stn Comd, **Maj Paul Gaffney** and **Sgt Ewan Kinear**. The new Stn Comd, **Capt Chris Gill,** has quickly settled into the Station and is making some sweeping changes!

EXERCISE TARTAN SCRAMBLE 9

A two-day adventure training exercise in the 'wee glens of Scotland' organized by **Sgt Matt Mullan**.

Day 1 was spent navigating the Bidean nam Bian Peaks of Glencoe. There was a perfect typical Scottish weather-front to get the ramblers motivated for a 7-hour, 1100-metre ascent. After finding the peak of Stob Coire (the place in the clouds), there was serious debate about the location of Coire nan Lochan (the lochs), fortunately, armed with **FofS Richie Paterson** and **SSgt Mark Robinson**, we had just the right ingredients for, well, geographically misplacing ourselves. And misplace ourselves we did! But to keep this short, let's just say 'Compass 0; GPS 1', and I'll leave you to draw your own conclusions.

The remainder of the route leading down to Allt-na-Reigh was hard going, but pleasurable. The day's success ended in the traditional Scottish way – whiskies by the fireplace of a small public house.

Day 2 was spent climbing Ben Nevis 'the daft way', and we had an even better start for it. The previous day's weather-front had cleared to make space for yet another one! Appropriately dressed this time, our eager hikers navigated their way up the largest peak in the UK from the Carn Dearg side (the daft side). 6-hours and 1344 metres later, the weather-beaten team approached the top of Ben Nevis, appearing like something out of 'Gorillas in the Mist' at the summit.

The decent to Fort William was more like a race – a race which **Sgt Craig McGowan** did not approve of. But again, all's well that ends well, and all ended with a round of drinks in the centre of Fort William.

CHAS

One very passionate and intensely serious part of Balado Bridge's annual efforts is to help provide for the Children's Hospice Association, Scotland (CHAS). Not only do we ensure a modest annual contribution to their cause through our innovative sponsored events, but we also help maintain their hospice by physically lending a hand now and again. This year the Station proudly offered a cheque for £1,000 to **Mrs Elsa Sinclair** of CHAS and helped out with a spot of digging at the same time.

A spot of labour. L-R: Sgt Bowkett, Cpl Campbell and Cpl Kear

MOUNTAIN BIKING – GLENTRESS FOREST

Glentress Forest offers the most technically challenging mountain bike routes in the whole of Scotland with the severest of black routes intended for professional users only – just the terrain for the Balado Bridge Non-bikers Club!

Picture this: Gale-force winds, torrential rain, zero visibility, sludge-ridden tracks, slopes even lemmings would cower from and… a banzai-crazed psychopath called **Sgt Taff Meaden** dragging ordinary-minded individuals over a nasty black route mountain bike course. It is moments like these that bring the best out in us and **Cpl Gordon Campbell** and **Sgt Marty Bowkett** were named appropriately.

Presenting the Cheque. L-R: Cpl Campbell, Cpl Kear, Maj Gaffney, Mrs Sinclair, WO2(FofS) Paterson and Sgt Bowkett

The route was outrageously arduous and muddy, but the hot chocolate and cakes soon warmed the souls of all the bikers - well, except for **SSgt Mark Robinson** that is!

600 SIGNAL TROOP

OC	**Capt Phil Cooper**
CDPT/ Troop SSgt	**SSgt JC Cordery**

HAIL AND FAREWELL

The Tp extends a hearty welcome to its new commander, **Capt Phil Cooper** and his wife, posted in from Blandford. A big hello also to the two new Foremen, **SSgt Nige Kenyon** and **SSgt Paul Mayer** and their families both posted into the respective hot seats of RSSST Ptarmigan and Satcom System Support teams. **SSgt (YofS) Marcus Bailey** is currently taking over the reins from **SSgt Rab Marshall** in PCGC. Enjoy your stay behind the big steel door! Last but not least we welcome **Cpl Jay Davis** and family, posted in from 3 Div, into the MT Cpl Slot as part of the Equipment Support Team.

Fond farewells go to **Cpl Trotman**, finally posted back up north to 2 Sig Regt in York, and to **SSgt (FofS) Gaz Walton** and **Maz** who are off down the road to 21 Sig Regt in Colerne, but not actually moving house! We also bid farewell to **Campbell Hamilton** who is retiring from PCGC. Finally the Tp says adios to **Maj Ron Kirkwood** and **Carole**, posted after two years of hard work just across the way to the Big House and a position in 10 Sig Regt. Thanks for all your efforts in maintaining and improving the Tp's high profile.

LOOK FORWARD (AND BACKWARD)

It's customary at this time of year to look back at what has been achieved during the last 12 months, and to look forward to forthcoming events in the New Year. The last year has been particularly busy for 600 Sig Tp, with the UK Hub here at Corsham being further enhanced with added support to 'commercial' type communication systems, such as those in the Balkans. Members of the RSSS Team (UK) have deployed to Bosnia, Kosovo, Florida, Canada and the Middle East as well as carrying out their everyday functions, such as advice to outside units, screening Processor and Satcom installations, providing exercise support, and attending meetings and trials all over the UK.

600 Sig Tp have also represented the UK as the Interoperability Engineering Team on EX CID BOREALIS, which was an interoperability exercise involving participants from America, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. We completed an adventurous training exercise in Scotland as well as a battlefield tour in Belgium (which was combined with a tour of NACOSA, the NATO communicators). We also deployed a SNCO in support of BATUS training in Canada.

The Tp has been on parade again, as we are now part of the newly reformed 10 Sig Regt. All this, as well as our numerous Tp social functions completes a very busy, but balanced life here at 600 Sig Tp.

This coming year looks no less busy than the last. Already programmed in are numerous commitments to support exercises, attend equipment trials, meetings and implementation programmes along with our normal Processor and Satcom screening programmes, and the introduction into service of the TSC 503 and PSC 504 Satcom equipments. Skynet 5 and Paradigm are also on the horizon for next year it should be quite interesting to see what develops when we switch over to what is hailed as a major leap forward in strategic satellite communications.

ABCA – THE EXERCISE CID BOREALIS EPISODE

by WO2 (FofS) Ian Walling

Whilst **WO2 (FofS) Ian Walling**, **SSgt (FofS)** 'Gaz' **Walton** and SSgt **Dave Doody** availed themselves of the '1st Class' area of a C130 for 2 days, **Maj (TOT) Ron Kirkwood** was already in Canada attending pre-deployment meetings for EX CID BOREALIS. This was a, British, Australian, Canadian, American and New Zealand (ABCA & NZ) communications interoperability demonstration based in Kingston, Canada.

The aim of CID BOREALIS was to test CIS interoperability among the participants in order to prepare and enable those nations to operate together in support of coalition tactical operations. The scope of interest for testing included achieving, confirming and documenting tactical interoperability as a quality of current national CIS. This includes the network domain level, end-to-end user capabilities of land-based CIS systems and the user domain associated with C2 and EW applications.

The Ex was split into 5 phases: Phase 1 & 2, the design, planning and development, which had taken place over the last two years, has already been recorded in previous versions of *The Wire*. The Ex started for real at Phase 3 with the pre-deployment. The main UK body was made up from 222 Sig Sqn, with augmentees from 7 Sig Regt, 14 Sig Regt, RE TOPO, a TacCS Team from Blandford and, of course, 600 Sig Tp. Upon arrival at Kingston, 600 Sig Tp

prepared for the start of the Ex, whilst all the rest waited for the arrival of the installations that had been shipped by sea, by doing lots of PT and a (very) little sightseeing.

Once all 5 nations and their equipment had gathered, the Ex began with an Opening Ceremony in the form of a formal parade. The parade falling out was the most interesting part, as all nations turned to the right and marched the mandatory 3 paces - only to bump into the Americans, who just strolled off in all directions.

The initial part of Phase 4 involved focusing on achieving interoperability within technology specific workshops on a bilateral and inter-workshop basis. Each workshops ran an activity where similar technologies were interconnected, i.e. Switch-to-Switch, Radio Relay-to-Radio Relay, LAN-to-LAN, etc.

On the whole, this was successful, with the exception of the Switch Workshop, which had limited success. This had a knock-on effect in the next stage, where sub-networks of the Coalition Tactical Network (CTN) should have been proven using Router-to-Switch-to-RR type connectivity. However, since the Switch interoperability was sketchy, it was attempted to interface the Routers directly to the RR Installations. This was progressing slowly until one of the nations called a halt to 2 of the nations taking part because of crypto implications! Finally, using equipment that had been proven to be capable of interoperability, the (revised) CTN was built and measurements of stability and data throughput were conducted.

With that all over, Phase 5 began, starting with the closing ceremony. The highlight of this was a 'Haka' from the New Zealand contingent, involving everyone from their Colonel downwards. This was a total surprise to everybody. 3 children sitting on the front row nearly burst into tears and the non-rugby playing nations hadn't a clue what was going on.

After this, the tear-down commenced, wagons were shipped out and we should have been on our way home. But we decided to have an unplanned stop-over at Trenton Airbase, as the flight was 24 hours later than our admin staff had anticipated. All that remains to be done is the analysis of the technical test results so that, hopefully, they provide a quantitative insight into the interoperability characteristics of ABCA & NZ CIS and a useful tool for planners and engineers alike.

RON KIRKWOOD – THIS IS YOUR LIFE - *by SSgt Rab Marshall*

Following three months of detective work, and seizing every opportunity when he was away, a brief history was put together to show the life and career of **Maj Ron Kirkwood**. This involved lots of cloak-and-dagger clandestine meetings between **SSgt Rab Marshall** and **'Mum' – Carole Kirkwood**.

Embarrassing photos of his early childhood, including a rare snap of **Ron** in a dress, basic training, career moves and more recent Tp activities were carefully choreographed into a presentation along with video messages, letters and the now famous theme tune from the 'This Is Your Life show.' This was professionally printed and mounted into 'The Big Red Book', and an accompanying CD was created. The presentation was then finely tuned as new and more revealing photos surfaced, and more and more dirt was dug up!

Having arranged for a curry buffet at the WO & Sgts Mess, the scene was set for the surprise of **Maj Kirkwood's** life – his Life! With **Sgt Taff Tanner** controlling the presentation using laptop and widescreen TV, and the theme tune echoing through the Mess, we proceeded to show off the ins and outs of **Big Ron**. There were lots of faces from the past and goodwill messages from as far afield as Australia. Finally at the end we presented him with the now infamous Big Red Book, with the traditional bouquet of flowers for **Carole**. After a moving farewell speech, during which **Ron** unveiled his talents as a poet, the bell was sounded, and the Tp partied on until the small hours, and a very good time was had by all.

We wish **Ron** and **Carole** all the very best for the future and hope he enjoys his new position over in 10 Sig Regt. In the time-honoured tradition, on his last working day we towed **Maj Kirkwood** all the way to his new place of employment, some 600m, which was quite an achievement for some of the older Tp members!

600 SIGNAL TROOP CROSS-COUNTRY RACE - *by Sgt Taff Tanner*

In what can only be described as a moment of temporary insanity, the Tp SSgt, **SSgt JC Cordery** decreed that all available Tp personnel would take part in the JSU Corsham Cross-Country Race held at Corsham on 26 November 2002. The course briefing vaguely mentioned some gentle slopes and slightly slippery areas on the 9km run. It also indicated that towards the end of the race there was a steep but short hill. Halfway round the first loop of the course it became apparent that the only slightly slippery part of the course was the Start/Finish line, with the remainder being a sea of mud.

At the end of the exhausting run, we found ourselves at what seemed like the north face of the Eiger, as nothing else could possibly be that steep! All thoughts of running straight up it went out of the window, and it became a case of crawling on hands and knees to the summit. Next year we plan to carry a Tp pennant around the route so that we can claim the summit as our own, and refuse passage up it for the year after!

VISIT TO ARMY AIR CORPS MIDDLE WALLOP - *by Sgt Taff Tanner*

Despite the Tp's busy schedule, we found the time to visit the AAC at Middle Wallop. While there, we were treated to a short hop in a Lynx, a free lunch at the WO & Sgts Mess, and after an interesting overview of some of its capabilities, we were given our very own Apache Attack Helicopter literally to crawl all over! With lots of reminders not to press any buttons we were all allowed into the cockpits to see if any of us could cut the mustard as an Apache pilot. Sadly, despite lots of war faces and some of the best helicopter noises made since childhood (over forty years ago in some cases!) none of us was able to convince the AAC to enlist us!

Tony Rathmell prepares to dish out some Corporal punishment!

ROYAL SIGNALS ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS - *by Cpl Jamie Davis*

Recently we entered the Corps Orienteering Championships held at Blandford. Because of work commitments, the only orienteers available to form a team were the Troop OC, **Capt Phil Cooper**, **SSgt JC Cordery** and **Cpl Davis**. The weather was simply horrendous for the first day, and it was extremely difficult under foot. Thankfully for all competitors, the weather conditions improved on the second day. Performances varied, and the team finished overall seventh in the Minor Units competition, which under the circumstances was a credible effort for what was effectively a novice team. After a slight confusion in the prize giving, **Capt Phil Cooper** was given the runner-up prize in the M40 class. Must remember to take my compass next year, too!

VISIT OF HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL - *by Sgt Scott*

At the beginning of September we were warned about the possibility of **HRH, The Princess Royal** visiting the Tp towards

the middle of October. This turned into a full-on visit to the Bde, and with the acres of space available within the confines of the Tp, it was decreed that everyone involved would set up their stands in the garage.

After cleaning the Tp lines for the umpteenth time and after all rehearsals were finely honed and perfected, the day finally arrived. To coin a phrase, 'every officer and his dog' turned up for what was the most prestigious event of the year to date.

The Tp Civvies rub shoulders with Royalty

With a photographer on hand to cover every aspect of the visit, and escorted by the Bde Comd, **Brig JE Thomas, OBE**, **The Princess Royal** was introduced to all the individual stands from other members of the Bde, and briefed accordingly.

After what seemed like an eternity, it was finally the turn for the Tp personnel to meet **The Princess Royal**. Any last minute nerves were put on hold as the role of 600 Sig Tp was explained by **Maj Ron Kirkwood** and **WO2 (FofS) Walling**, before introductions were made to the new Tp Comd, **Capt Phil Cooper**.
Capt Cooper then presented the remainder of the Tp, and some of the unsung heroes who operate in the background making the Tp run as smoothly and successfully as it does. The visit was deemed to be a major success, and we look forward to once again becoming the focal point for the next high profile visit.

Radar Noott reminisces when he last met a Royal – Queen Victoria!

ARMY CADET FORCE

BLANDFORD DETACHMENT, C COMPANY, DORSET ARMY CADET FORCE

OC	**Sgt Major Instructor Gary Pugh**
2IC	**SSgt Instructor Ian Cook**
Instructors	**Sgt Sara Pugh**
	Sgt Paul Wallis

The past 12 months have seen dramatic changes at the Army Cadet unit in Blandford. First was the arrival of **SMI Gary Pugh** as the new OC, second, was the rebadging to the Royal Signals from the Devon & Dorset Regiment (which makes sense if you're in the home of the Corps), and third, recruiting. When **SMI Pugh** arrived, the number of cadets attending the detachment was well below the required number to keep it running.

Blandford is one of 19 cadet detachments in Dorset and parades 2 nights a week in Kingston Close on the outskirts of Blandford Town Centre. The Detachment is open to boys & girls aged 13 to 18.
All instructors in the ACF are volunteers and give up their free time to train the cadets in addition to their own work and family commitments. Despite their efforts, the numbers had been foundering for some time, but not any more! From the 8 cadets in March 2001, the detachment has grown to 30+, largely due to **SMI Pugh's** hard work to provide interesting training and fun activities. This has been boosted by the support given to the detachment by its parent unit, 11 Signal Regiment.

The past 12 to 18 months has seen the Cadets visit Blandford camp on many occasions to use the Gym, the indoor & outdoor climbing walls, and to hone our marksmanship skills on the Garrison Small Arms Trainer as well as (with the **RSM Kemp's** blessing) several Drill sessions on Hawke Square. The cadets have even ventured as far away as RAF Brawdy for a 4 day 'Look at Army life' visit organised by our old friend **Sgt Archie Gemmell** and the Signals Recruiting and Liaison Team (which we hope to do again next year please **Archie**!). Cadets have assisted with the marshalling of the Combined Services mountain bike events held on Camp and are looking forward to many more visits to improve their knowledge of the Corps and its various trades. At the time of writing, all the cadets are currently trying to earn their Crossed Flags to become cadet signallers, and are engrossed in the joys of the PRC 349, ANTENNA THEORY, BATCO and LINE.

The high point of the year was the awarding of the Colonel Fox Trophy for the most improved cadet detachment. This was presented at this year's annual camp at Penhale, Cornwall along with Golden Jubilee Medals for **SMI Pugh** and **SSgt Cook**.

The detachment is proud of is new cap badge and looks forward to maintaining the good relations with its sponsor unit. **SMI Pugh** wishes to thank **Lt Col Nicholson** and **W01 Kemp** for their support during their time at Blandford and looks forward to meeting the new CO and RSM in the near future. Thanks also go to the following: Master at Arms, **Capt Black** and **W01 Carey**, OC 4 Squadron, **W01 Walters**, and **Mr Ledger** for the use of the SAT Range; to the MTO, **W02 McGarry** for the assistance with transport; and to the SQMS, RSG for the support with radio equipment.

The final word goes to any Signal regiment or squadron that has or knows of a Cadet unit near you. Please get in touch with them or their County HQ. It makes a real difference to have the support of a Regular Army unit, even if it just providing transport or letting the cadets use your range. It gets them out of the confines of the detachment (we're not all in TA centres), allows the unit to expand its horizons and hopefully to recruit more into our Organization. It has worked for Blandford. So much so that there are at least 10 cadets wanting to join the Signals when they leave school.

CADET FORCES SIGNALS ADVISOR AND NATIONAL ACF/CCF INTER-DISTRICT RADIO NET

ALL CHANGE IN CATTERICK BUILDING

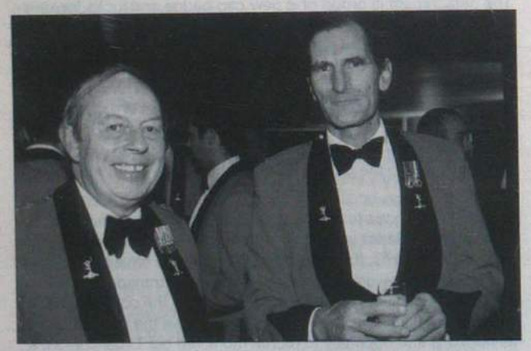
It is probably true to say that the Office of G3 TA/Cadets at the Royal School of Signals will never be the same! Well how can it be with both office holders, **Capt Mike Buckley** and **Maj Peter Bowles**, retiring at the end of 2002, having given a combined total of 84 years' service to the Corps?

Mike first joined Royal Signals as a national serviceman in 1955 on course No.55718 at 7TR in Vimy Lines, subsequently moving to 4TR to train as an OKC (operator keyboard and cipher) before posting to 2 Div Sig Regt. Within hours of arrival, **Mike** remembers being dispatched on a Christian leadership course in Iserlohn and then, on return, finding himself in the Pay Office as a temporary clerk! BAOR wasn't such a bad place in those days and happy hours were spent in the back of White half-tracks and even further happy hours with the Cub Scouts who had the use of a room in the roof of one of the accommodation blocks.

Returning to Civilian life, **Mike** volunteered for service with the Cadet Forces rather than serving three and a half years in the rather rundown TA of the day. He was subsequently commissioned to take command of a Cadet Detachment in New Addington on the outskirts of Croydon in South London. Cadets in those days lived on the back of the Army, using their leftovers. Thus it was that a signalling interest was renewed from much earlier days in the CCF when 4 x 18 sets and 8 x 38 sets arrived along with a number of Tele D Mk V's. Despite being badged to the Parachute Regiment, the Cadets engaged themselves in signalling, building up an enviable reputation for efficient signalling under the leadership of their Royal Signals OC. A number saw the light and went on to join Royal Signals, though it has to be said that there were a few who saw an attraction in jumping out of aircraft with nothing more than a few pieces of silk and a handful of cords.

Since the early days of signalling in the Cadets, **Mike** has been able to sell the Corps and signalling in general to many more cadets than he can now remember! In the last ten years alone, since he obtained early release from civilian employment, he has seen an estimated 800 cadets trained in the art of Combat Net Radio and line laying to a standard for the award of the coveted Crossed Flags. This process continues.

National signalling in the 1960's revolved around 19/19HP/22 and 52 sets. Much later, when 8 x 62 sets were issued to each Cadet signal platoon, something approaching mayhem broke out as every cadet seemed to want to use the National Radio Network (NRN) (with or without permission or a knowledge of the correct procedures). How many will remember, at this time, purchasing 19 sets in Lisle Street or Tottenham Court Road, complete with all their valves for just £2.10 (that's £2.50p today). Some will also remember how they were used in very illegal ways to broadcast (some said portable from a pram!) But it was from these small beginnings that many of our Senior Officers came to the Corps, and **Mike** was not averse to suggesting such a career to them.



(Left) Capt Mike Buckley Cadet Forces Signal Advisor (Right) Maj Peter Bowles SO G3 TA/Cadets Royal School of Signals.

Thursday 10 October was a day in the final chapter of 47 years, when the **Master of Signals** said farewell to **Capt Mike Buckley** on behalf of the Corps at the Master's Guest Night in the Headquarters Mess, Blandford.

As always, this was a splendid occasion when, amongst other things, the Signal Officer in Chief, **Brigadier David McDowell MBE ADC**, was invited to join the Band and play his own rendition of Amazing Grace on the pipes. How many SOinC's can beat that one?

Being Dined Out by the Corps was certainly a signal honour accorded to one who was never actually commissioned into it, but rather into the ACF. It seems likely that this will not be the end of one who has put so much into the Cadets and through them, The Royal Corps of Signals.

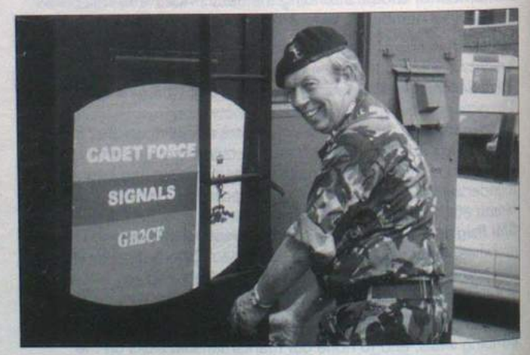
CAPT MIKE BUCKLEY RETIRES AS CADET FORCES SIGNALS ADVISOR AND ACF/CCF NATIONAL RADIO NET SENIOR MONITOR

Capt Mike Buckley has been an officer in the ACF for 42 years serving with SW London ACF, having previously been in the CCF for 4 years at Whitgift School, Croydon and a National Serviceman, Cpl Teleprinter Op, R Sigs. On completing his National Service in 1957, **Mike** immediately joined the ACF, first as an Adult Instructor and was then commissioned in 1960. During this time he has also acted as Sigs Offr for Trinity School CCF, Croydon. In 2001 **Mike** was awarded the 4th Clasp to his Cadet Forces Medal.

For the past 20 or more years **Mike** has given unparalleled devotion to his main task as Cadet Forces Sigs Advisor to the ACF and CCF. At times he has had to perform this duty unloved and unsupported, yet his tireless endeavours have guaranteed that signalling in the Army cadet world has remained to the forefront. **Mike** possessed an amazing capacity for sorting out the trickiest of cadet signalling problems especially by obtaining Sigs kit for active cadet units, which otherwise would have found its way onto the surplus market. Another highlight of **Mike's** activities has been the production, each term, of a comprehensive newsletter to the cadet signalling world.

Perhaps **Mike's** greatest contribution to the organisation has been by way of the 'Crossed Flags' courses which he has run, almost single handed, at school half terms. These courses have been an unqualified success, since without them, most of the CCF cadet units which still indulge in signalling would not now have any trained cadets to use the issued equipment, and would have folded.

Despite now being over the retirement age for ACF officers, **Mike** has continued with customary zeal to keep watch over his charges until the protracted business of finding a suitable successor has been resolved. Each day **Mike** has produced a multitude of e-mails and probably dealt with an even greater number incoming.



Captain Mike Buckley about to carry out one of his duties as 'caretaker' of the Cadet Signals cabin outside the Royal Signals Museum

NEWS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH

2 SQUADRON ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SIGNALS

THE CYRIL BASSETT VC MEMORIAL TROPHY

On 7 November 2002, **Col Mark Wheeler**, Comd 2 NZ Land Force Group in Linton Military Camp presented **Cpl (now Sgt) Karl Claasen**, a Telecomms Engineer in 2 NZ Sig Sqn, with the Cyril Bassett VC Memorial Trophy for 2001.

The Cyril Bassett VC Memorial Trophy was instituted as a memorial to **Lt Col Cyril Royston Guyton Bassett VC ED**, after his death in 1983. His widow then indicated to the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals that she wished her husband to be remembered by a trophy to be competed for by members of the Corps.

Lt Col Bassett was a corporal during the Gallipoli Campaign, and was awarded the Victoria Cross for most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty on Chunuk Bair Ridge, Gallipoli on 7 August 1915.

The citation for **Corporal Bassett's** Victoria Cross reads: *'after the New Zealand Infantry Brigade had attacked and established itself on the ridge, Corporal Bassett, in full daylight and under a continuous and heavy fire succeeded in laying a telephone line from the old position to the new one on Chunuk Bair. He has subsequently been brought to notice for further excellent and most gallant work connected with the repair of telephone lines both by day and by night under heavy fire'*.

The Award is made annually to the corporal of the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals who, throughout the calendar year, by performance in their trade and by display of soldier and leadership skills, is judged by their superiors, peers and subordinates to be the most outstanding Corporal in the Corps.

Corporal is the rank where leadership skills are put into practice at the lowest level of command. At Signals detachment level many corporals are required to operate in isolation from their troop and squadron headquarters. Considerable reliance is placed on the trade, soldier and command skills of corporals in the Corps.

The recipient for 2001, **Sgt Karl Claasen** held the rank of substantive corporal from 8 March 1999 until 8 August 2002, and has been a serving regular soldier with the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals since 06 July 1993.

Cpl Claasen demonstrated his abilities as a tradesperson and a soldier many times throughout 2001. As sole charge Telecommunications Engineer during his deployment in East Timor as part of NZBATT3 on OPERATION CASTELL, he established and maintained both internal and external communications links between East Timor and New Zealand. During the tour, he also acted as Assistant PTI to provide the unit with essential physical training.

As a sole instructor, **Cpl Claasen** demonstrated his ability by conducting a range of cryptographic machine maintenance courses, which provided RNZSigs with a pool of trained telecomms engineers. As an instructor, he also assisted the Trade Training School to deliver quality radio maintenance training.

Cpl Claasen has demonstrated above average trade and soldier skills in a variety of working environments. He is a committed and honest non-commissioned officer who consistently exceeds in the areas of dress and bearing, physical fitness, problem solving, attitude, and example.

Cpl Claasen is an excellent role model for both junior and senior members of 2 NZ Signal Squadron. His displays of loyalty, courage, responsibility and initiative throughout all aspects of his employment with the New Zealand Army make him an exceptionally worthy recipient of the Cyril Bassett VC Trophy.

Editor's Note: See back cover photo. The trophy is very meaningful in a number of ways. Firstly, it very accurately depicts Cpl Bassett laying the line at Gallipoli, using the equipment of the day. Secondly, the carving is in kauri, a New Zealand tree that is now recognised as holding a spiritual significance, particularly for the Maori. During the early 19th century, the timber was much prized for its length and straight grain and many thousands used tfor the masts of Royal Navy ships. The tree is now highly protected and a number of specimens over 1,000 years old still exist in national parklands, where they are highly revered.

CHANGE OF RSM

by Capt Patricia Hilliam-Kareto

The mantle of responsibility of the RSM of the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals has passed from **WO1 Dave Smart** to **WO1 Nigel Shields**. 2 NZ Sig Sqn paraded at Linton Camp on 18 October 2002 to witness the official handover. **WO1 Shields** returns to the NZ Corps from the Inspector General's Office at Army General Staff. **WO1 Smart** is soon to deploy to the Multi-National Force and Observers, Sinai. The parade coincided with the presentation of New Zealand Operational Service Medals to 2 Sig Sqn members. **Sgt Andy Thomson** was also presented with the United Nations Special Service Medal for assistance in de-mining in Mozambique. The occasion was marked with an official unit photograph, dinner and evening function.

OC 2 Sig Sqn, Maj Karyn Te Moana, watches as WO1 Smart (L) congratulates WO1 Shields)

EX SILVER FERN

by LCpl Pam Green, RNZSigs

EX SILVER FERN was held in the Waiourou training area, a desolate high altitude region in the middle of the North Island of New Zealand, that resembles (both climatically and topographically) a mixture of Falkland Islands and Dartmoor. Based on a low scale conventional warfare scenario, the exercise ran from the 21 October –5 November 02. The aim was to exercise and evaluate the new nodal structure in 2 Sig Sqn, to practise and evaluate within this structure 1 Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (1RNZR)'s regeneration, and to provide an environment in which to practise combined arms operations within a brigade group. 2 Sig Sqn's objective for the ex was to

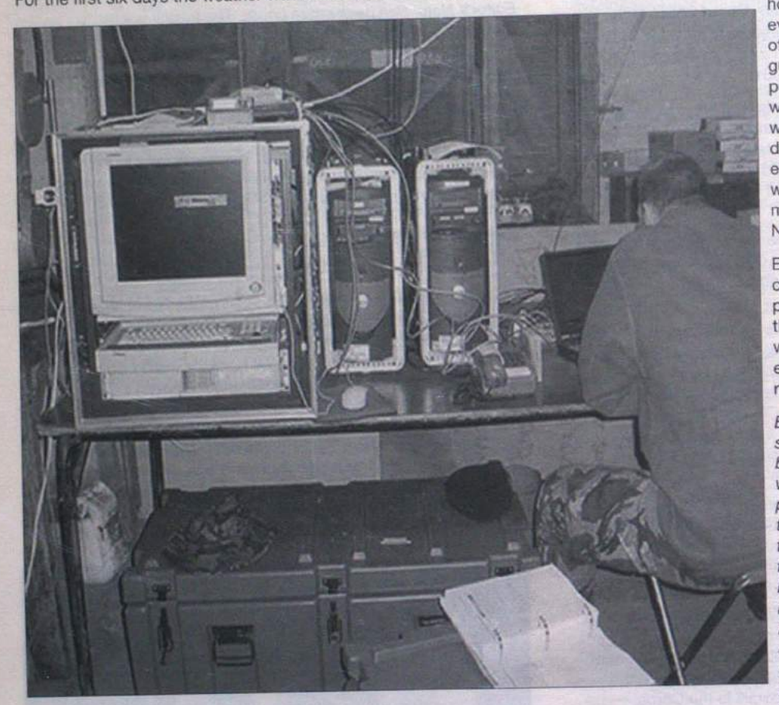
exercise and evaluate the CIS nodal structure in this environment, and to deploy 2 nodes to support the NCE/EXCON and the Bn Gp HQ.

For the exercise, 2 Sig Sqn was augmented by personnel from 3 Sig Tp from Burnham Camp. The Sqn nodes comprised 80+ personnel and ranged from CNR dets, Retrans dets, CP, Step-up, Comcen and CIS dets, with an average 3 personnel per det. For the lucky dets working with the Bn Gp HQ, life was kept interesting, relocating every day, setting up rapidly in each new location, digging in and establishing comms. This added a little excitement to the ex as it gave people a chance to improve their dets drills and their teamwork.

For the first six days the weather was beautiful, then, in typical Waiourou fashion, it turned to four seasons in one day with rain, hail, snow and wind. This wasn't appreciated by Bn HQ personnel, as it made gun picket and Stand-To a cold and wet experience. There were one or two days of light snow, which was enough to make people a little grumpy, but the contacts were fun and it certainly warmed everyone up.

The CIS side of the house went well and we provided LAN and SWAN at both locations. The digging in of line was challenging for the Bn CIS and line dets.

I was moved to the NCE/EXCON at Helwan Camp for the last eight days of the exercise, where I worked with the Comcen. Life was pretty slow here, but the food was great compared with that at Bn Gp HQ. You also had shower and toilet facilities available, hot-box meals and hot brews on tap, even a TV and warm bed to sleep in. So of course I was feeling guilty, as all the guys with Bn HQ were still eating rat packs and doing gun sentry. Comms were all good most of the time and if you weren't on shift then you'd be asleep or doing PT. But though I was lucky enough to work at both locations, life with the Bn Gp (at the sharp end) was more interesting than that with the NCE/EX CON at Helwan.



Ex Silver Fern - a typical CP set up

EX SILVER FERN gave our sig dets a chance to work within a Bn Gp HQ and practise our nodal structure and, being the largest such exercise in four years, it was a worthwhile and enjoyable experience for 2 Sig Sqn and 3 Sig Tp respectively.

Editor's Note –New Zealand's is quite a small Army and for many years it has been deployed in small packets in various parts of the world on mainly peace-keeping operations. Although they had done a lot of overseas service, the experience of more than a third of the participants of this exercise had been limited to working in small groups in a peace-keeping role. Ex SILVER FERN's aim was to help them re-focus on mid-intensity conventional operations. With 1200 soldiers involved, it was the largest Army exercise held in New Zealand since 1998

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SIGNALS COPS DAY CELEBRATIONS NOVEMBER 2002

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SIGNALS CORPS DAY CELEBRATIONS NOVEMBER 2002

by Bob Shaw

OFFICERS AND NCO's CORPS DINNER

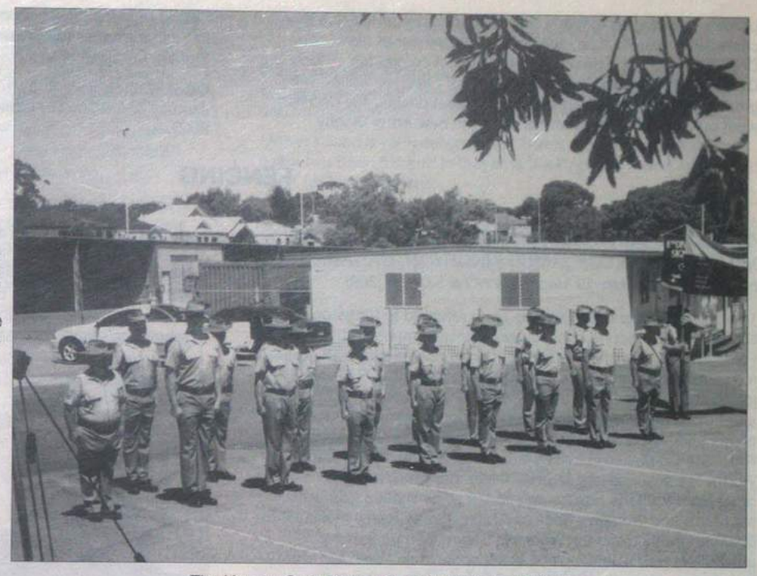
The Corps dining-in night held on Friday 15 November was at the Officers Mess 152 Sig Sqn, Irwin Barracks, Karrakatta. A formal dinner, with 36 Serving and Association members taking part, it was a small affair, due 109 and 152 Sig Sqns' overseas commitments. OC 109 Sig Sqn, **Maj Brian D'Cunha**, arranged the dinner and guests included the Association's Colonel Commandant, **Col Peter Fitzpatrick AM**, and our President, **Bill Sneddon**. A good night was had by all and the evening finished around midnight. It was not until I attended one of these dinners that I came to realise how much I miss Army life. It was great to be back, keeping in touch with the Army of today, which is very different from the Army of my day. But we must learn to live with these changes. We cannot keep saying that did not happen this way in our day, we can only listen and learn how it is done today.

Over dinner we must have solved all the worlds problems – a pity nobody ever listens to what we have to say on these dinner nights.

The Royal Australian Signals Memorial

CORPS DAY CELEBRATIONS 2002

These were held at 109 Sig Sqn on Sunday 17 November 2002. The parade formed up facing the Signals Memorial, with the Association banners at the rear of the parade. The Association Patron, **Maj Gen KJ Taylor AO** and our Colonel Commandant, **Col Peter Fitzpatrick AM** were among the guests. The Memorial Service commenced at 10.30 hrs. First the Padre from 152 Sig Sqn, Campbell Barracks, Swanbourne, addressed the parade, finishing with the Royal Australian Signals Prayer. We then had the laying of the wreaths, one from each Sqn, one from 13 Bde Western Command, one from the Association and one from a sig from 152 Sig Sqn. The Last Post was sounded then 2 minutes silence, then Reveille. The Colonel Commandant, **Col Peter Fitzpatrick AM** addressed the parade and the theme of his talk was commitment. It was an excellent address, which went down very well with all who attended. Finally the Association presented annual awards for the best soldiers. For 109 Sig Sqn the award went to **Sig G Whitehouse**, for 152 Sig Sqn, **Sig A Logan** (received on his behalf by the SSM), and for 501 Aquinas Royal Cadet Unit, **Sgt L Hunt**.



The Honour Guard from 109 and 152 Sqns RASigs

When the parade was dismissed, we marched off led by the banners of the Association. Morning tea/coffee followed at 109 Sig Sqn for all Serving and Association members of the Corps and their families. As with last year we were a bit thin on the ground due to overseas commitments, but they still managed about 30 from each of the Sqns. The Association could only come up with a handful of people, (the reason for this I don't know) but those who did attend enjoyed themselves. Corps day ended around 12.00 hrs as people started to make their way home.

SPORT

ARMY DINGHY SAILING CHAMPIONSHIPS

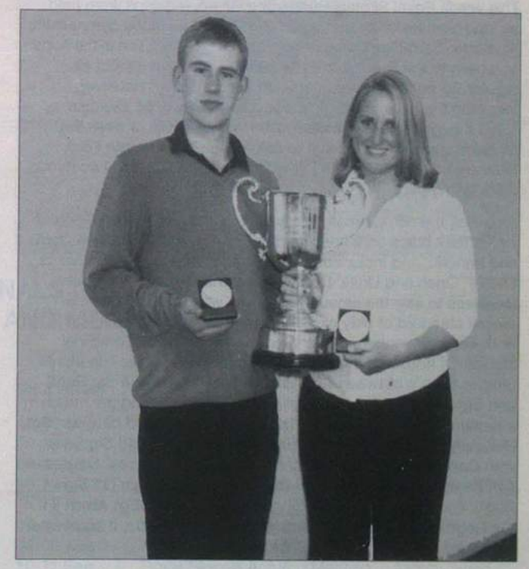
by OCdt Ewan Watson

The first day of term at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst for **OCdt Rachel Thompson** and **OCdt Ewan Watson** was not spent on the drill square. In fact it wasn't even spent at RMAS, but at Netley Sailing Club, Southampton competing in the Army Dinghy Sailing Championships.

The road to success began last term when **OCdt Thompson** approached me at the Reels by the Lake Ball and asked if I would sail with her in the Army Dinghy Sailing Championships. I did not know it at that time but I had undergone a strict vetting process and had emerged the best of her possible candidates.

Having never sailed together, or even in a Laser 2000 (the class of dinghy to be used), we arranged for a training/ practice session at **Rachel Thompson**'s local sailing club, where we hired a Laser 2000 and competed in three races. Our day confirmed the wisdom of the decision to practise, as our results ranged from last in the first race to first in the last. By the end of the day our movements had become slick, and our teamwork good, leaving us feeling confident.

The Championship consisted of ten Laser 2000's, crewed by the Army's top dinghy sailors based in Britain at that time. It was to be decided over four races in winds ranging from force 2 to force 4. We got off to a good start with a second in the first race, and a hard earned first place in the second, putting us in first place overall at lunchtime. The last two races were spent duelling with the boat lying in second place, and during a very close and heated mark rounding in the third race, the rules of racing were



OCdt Ewan Watson and OCdt Rachel Thompson with the Army Dinghy Sailing Trophy

broken, requiring us to lodge a protest against our rival. We then came second in the final race, leaving the winner of the Championship to be decided by the protest committee. After **OCdt Thompson** had expertly argued our case, we waited with great anticipation for the result. To our great delight, the decision went our way, leaving us winners and the new Army Dinghy Sailing Champions. It also meant that the huge silver trophy sitting in front of us now belonged to Sandhurst and the Royal Corps of Signals.

OCdt Watson goes to 3 UK Div HQ and Sig Regt at Bulford in January and **OCdt Thompson** will be joining the Corps in April 2003.

FENCING

COMBINED SERVICES FENCING TOUR 2002 - ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE (RMC), KINGSTON, CANADA

by Capt EL McLellan, 19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (209)

The Combined Services Fencing Team returned to Kingston, Ontario for the second consecutive year to compete in the RMC Fencing Championships which is open to both civilian and military teams in North America. **Capt Elisabeth McLellan** R SIGNALS joined **Capt Chris Roberts** RLC, **LCofH** 'Woody' **Woods** (HCMR) and **LCpl Jane Perry** (REME) to make up the Army contingency, the remainder of the 14 strong team coming from the Navy and RAF. The Combined Services entered all 6 events (Men's and Women's Epée, Foil and Sabre). Every team successfully proceeded from the pool rounds to direct elimination (DE), with the Men's and Women's Epée and Men's Sabre teams making it to the quarter-finals and the Women's Sabre team performing particularly well to find a place in the semi-finals. With some 150+ teams competing, the Combined Services were particularly pleased to be placed third overall in the Championships (beating both US Academy West Point and RMC Kingston).

The week wasn't all Fencing however and the team did manage some socialising, with time spent in Toronto (in the snow) and a trip to Niagara Falls.

It has been particularly pleasing to see fencing circles grow at Corps, Army and Combined Service level over the last few years. Anyone who has fenced in the past or would like to try the sport for the first time would be very warmly welcomed into the Army Fencing Union fold. There are quite a number of competitions and events forecast for the next year and it would be fantastic to see the Corps strongly represented. **Capt Elisabeth McLellan** is Ladies' Rep, AFU and can be contacted on Mil: 94731 2819 (2IC 19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (209)) or Email: elisabeth.mclellan@virgin.net.

The Combined Services Team take a break to visit Niagara Falls.

BADMINTON

ROYAL SIGNALS BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS 2002

This year's Royal Signals Badminton Championships were held, by kind permission of the CO 21 Sig Regt (A S) in the gymnasium, Azimghur Barracks, Colerne from 15 17 October. The initial flood of replies to the event Admin Order indicated that almost all regular Corps units were interested in competing. However, following the usual cries of, 'Oops, I forgot I was on exercise' or 'Oh, I thought you meant Badminton Horse Trials' or even the more disappointing, 'I forgot to ask my boss, and when I did, he/she said 'No", we were left with only five major and two minor units taking part.

As usual, the competition was arranged in seven events, each of which took place on a specific day. The first day of play was fast and frenetic, and included the Men's and Ladies' Singles Events, Ladies' Open and Units' Doubles, and the Mixed Unit Doubles. Needless to say, the amount of activity was nonstop and the overall standard of play excellent. The quality of competition in both singles events had improved markedly by the SemiFinal stages. Of note was the highly entertaining and close-run Men's Singles Semi's between **Cpl Abbott** (3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt) and **Sgt Pengelly** (11 Sig Regt), with the latter taking the match in a demanding final game. The final was then decided between **Sgt Pengelly** and **Capt Morton** (16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn), with **Capt Morton** the winner. In the final of the Ladies' Singles, **Cpl Raynor** (11 Sig Regt) just outpointed **Maj Dallyn** (11 Sig Regt). The Men's Plate Competition was won by **SSgt Amrit** (I I Sig Regt) with **W02 Scott** (14 Sig Regt) an energetic, if somewhat red faced runner-up.

Other event winners from the first day include:

Ladies' Team Doubles: Winners: **Maj Dallyn/Cpl Raynor** (11 Sig Regt)
Runners Up: **Cpl Burley/Sig Walker** (3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt)
Ladies' Open Doubles: Winners: **Maj Dallyn/Cpl Burley**
Runners Up: **Cpl Raynor/Sig Walker**
Mixed Doubles: Winners **Sgt Pengelly/Maj Dallyn**
Runners Up: **Maj Duggan/Cpl Raynor**

The second day focused on the Men's Units' and Open Doubles competitions, and brought with it a marked increase in the speed of play around the courts. Those novice players who thought badminton was a plodding game of 'pingpong' soon realised that perhaps there was more to the game than they had first thought and began to raise a considerable sweat. After some quality games and hard-fought matches, the Open Event culminated in undoubtedly 'the match of the championship' between **Sgt Pengelly/Cpl Ford** and **Capt Morton/Cpl Abbott**. The latter pair were the eventual winners, following some exceptional play that showed us the quality of the players we have in the Corps.

In the other event that day, **Maj Duggan/Sgt Pengelly** (11 Sig Regt) won the Team Doubles with the untimely withdrawal of **YofS Redstone/Capt Morton** (16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn). **W02 Parle/SSgt Griffiths** (14 Sig Regt) won the Doubles Plate.

The final day saw the team events and the beginning of the Inter Unit competition. Five teams entered including 2 Sig Regt, 11 Sig Regt, 14 Sig Regt and amalgamations of 3 Div/16 Air Asslt, and 16 /21 Sig Regts. The competition was run on a round robin basis, with each team playing the other in a best of nine-rubber match, each player competing in three games per match. Having already had two day's hard play, some of the more senior players (or put another way, almost all of the14 Sig Regt (EW) team) were finding it hard to get their limbs going. Having liberally applied the John Smith's and Fosters Deep Heat Elixir the night before, they

commenced the most demanding competition of the day, with the early favourites, 2 Sig Regt, quickly getting into their stride with wins over 14 Sig Regt and 3 Div/16 Air Asslt. The decider, coming late in the afternoon, was between 11 Sig Regt and 2 Sig Regt, with 11 Sig Regt the winners and 2 Sig Regt the runners-up.

Also squeezed into the final day was the Veterans' Event, which was won by **Maj Duggan/SSgt Amrit** (11 Sig Regt) with **Capt Rajendra/SSgt Laxman** (2 Sig Regt) the runners-up.

Special mention must go to all of the 14 Sig Regt team, headed by **WO's Newton** and **Parle,** for their continued high spirits, low waist lines and permanent smiles. The award for Most Improved Players went to **Cpl Sharp** and **Sig Etchell** (16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn), who showed that once they could be dragged away from the running machines, that they were aspiring badminton players.

Thanks go to all those who attended but did not get a mention, and to **Maj Dave Duggan** for the co-ord. See you all next year!

CORPS COLOURS FOR SPORT

The following individuals were awarded Corps Colours for sport during 2002.

SAILING

Lt Col Bristow	1 Armd Div Sig Regt
Sgt Gale	RSYC

SWIMMING

Capt Hargreaves	21 Sig Regt (AS)
LCpl Angelidi	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Sig Lovell	11 Sig Regt
Sig Renshaw	11 Sig Regt

WINDSURFING

Sgt Black	21 Sig Regt (AS)

TUG OF WAR

SSgt German	7 Sig Regt
Cpl Barnett	7 Sig Regt
Cpl Hewitt	7 Sig Regt
LCpl Cave	7 Sig Regt
LCpl Clarke	7 Sig Regt
LCpl Hall	7 Sig Regt
LCpl Martin	7 Sig Regt
Sig Mulholland	7 Sig Regt
Sig McCallion	7 Sig Regt

FOOTBALL

Maj Smith	DCSA
Capt Goodwin	1 ADSR
Sgt Brady	HQ ARRC
Sgt Collins	7 Sig Regt
Sgt Kidd	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Cpl Richards	ATR Bassingbourne
LCpl Stephenson	7 Sig Regt
Sig Hukin	1 I Sig Regt

RACE THE SUN

2 Sig Regt runs an annual charity event called Race the Sun. The competition comprises a number of running, cycling, canoeing and marching events around a circuit to the north of York.

Money raised is for local charities. This is the fourteenth time the event has been run and in that time the Regt has raised more than £85K for local charities.

RACE THE SUN 2003

YORK

15 MAY 2003

FOR MORE INFO:

CAPT M J McKENNA 94777 5743

WO2 D J WHITE 94777 2261

ROYAL SIGNALS GOLF
DATES OF MATCHES AND MEETINGS 2003

MATCHES

DATES	OPPONENTS	VENUE
23 Apr	AGC	Tyrells Wood
07 May	RN (Comms)	Kings Down
30 May	RAOC	Catterick
16 Jul	RMAS	Aldershot (pm only)
25 Jul	RAGS	The Berkshire
15 Aug	REME	Blackmoor
26 Aug	RE	Hankley Common
29 Aug	AGA	Farnham
03 Sep	AAC	Salisbury & South Wilts
10 Sep	RLC	Fulford York

MEETINGS

12-16 May	AGA Matchplay	Royal Porthcawl
29-30 May*	Royal Signals Championships	Ashley Wood
09-13 Jun	AOGS Championships	Southport
20 Jun	Royal Signals North (organised by Brian Cullen)	Catterick
04-06 Aug	AGA Strokeplay (scratch)	Little Aston
04-06 Aug	AGA Strokeplay (handicap)	Ashley Wood
10-11 Sep	Royal Signals Autumn Meeting	Ashley Wood

*Please note this is a change of dates.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Major General A. H. Boyle CB

Vice Chairman: Brig N. F. Wood Area1; 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. F. Carter MBE — **Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C Conlan**
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Cornick — **Membership: Mr P. J. Cuckow**

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.

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 MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

Branch News: It was with sadness that we were informed of the formal closure of the **Doncaster Branch**. It is hoped that former members of the branch will continue to support the Association through either the Rotherham or Sheffield Branches. Our thanks goes to **John Pell** for trying to keep the branch running. The newly formed **Edinburgh Branch** was officially ratified by the meeting of the Central Committee on 8 November.

Corps Carol Service: It was good to see so many Association members at the Corps Carol Service, which was held at Westminster on 19 December 02. Around 130 serving and retired members of the Corps enjoyed a wonderful service. Our thanks go to **Lt Col John Chambers** for all his hard work in arranging the event. Sherry and mince pies were enjoyed afterwards in the church hall, during which **Maj Gen Sprackling OBE** presented **Lt Col (Retd) Ian Hamilton** with the Master of Signals Award for 2002.

Farewell/hello: We said a sad farewell to **Lt Col (Retd) Ian Hamilton**, who left in December to enjoy full retirement. Thank you Ian for all your hard work for the Association over the past 7 years. We welcome **Lt Col (Retd) Carl Conlon** as the new Assistant General Secretary and wish him good luck in post here at Regimental Headquarters.

Website: Have you checked out our revised website lately? See www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals

Postings register: Assn HQ maintains a register of members' postings. Participating members may ask for the list of any unit and if any familiar names are found, contact can be re-established. If you have not yet submitted your form, why not ask Assn HQ for a copy. Call 01258-482090 or e-mail:- rsa@rsignals.net Please be assured that addresses or telephone numbers will not be disclosed. To date around 2300 members have their details recorded. Eventually it is hoped to display the lists on the Association's website. Branch Secretaries are requested to invite their members to participate.

New Members: A warm welcome is extended to the following recently enrolled Life Members:

Rank & Name	*Branch*	*Served*
Brig Roly Borthwick	Aldershot	1941-73
Col Tom Moncur	Aldershot	1968-94
WO1 D Gallacher	Berwick	1954-79
Maj Michael Davis MBE		1963-02
Sig Gerald Vining		1992-95
SSgt Rod Rodriguez		1971-95
LCpl Richard Pearce		1985-95
SSgt Neil Allamby		1979-94
Capt Fiona Nelson		1977-02
WO2 D M Morris	Edinburgh	1972-92
Sgt F M Morris	Edinburgh	1979-87
SSgt Dave Watt	Edinburgh	1956-92
Cpl Norrie Bishop	Edinburgh	1964-82
Cpl David Crampton	Edinburgh	1989-date
Maj Fiona Downie	Edinburgh	1984-date
LCpl Vic Kissock	Edinburgh	1968-80
Cpl J Law	Edinburgh	1974-86
Sig Graham Robertson	Edinburgh	1974-78
SSgt Bob Harvey	Edinburgh	1981-date
SSgt Barbara Gowan	Edinburgh	1970-85
WO2 Ian McKay	Edinburgh	1966-84
LCpl Alan Robertson	Edinburgh	1974-85
Maj Jan McClean	Edinburgh	1982-date
Sig David Vickers	Bradford	1962-69
LCpl Tony Rose	Aldershot	1945-48
LCpl Donald Shell	Berwick	1971-80
Col Richard Holmes		1968-02
Sgt Nick Plowman		1978-95
Capt Leslie Virgin		1941-46
Maj Alan Unwin	Preston & Blackburn	1970-01
Sig Fred Willetts		1955-57
Cpl Paul Woodworth		1982-95
Sig Steven Williams		1991-98
Sgt Simon Bembridge		1987-02
Col Peter Innocent		1964-02
Capt Nicky James		1997-02
Maj Phil Grey		1970-02
Cpl Ronnie Mutch		1970-77
Sgt Sharon Chambers	Edinburgh	1979-91
LCpl Nick Bond		1982-92
Cpl Martin Corfe	Chester	1980-89
Cpl Dave Brown	York	1975-93
Capt Malcolm Fluendy	Edinburgh	1952-74
SSgt Bill Cree	Edinburgh	1957-84
Cpl Anne Alexander	Edinburgh	1972-80
Sgt Joyce Logan	Edinburgh	1971-89
Sgt Ian Marshall	Edinburgh	1980-95
Cpl Jack Grange		1949-52
Sig Simon Steele		1987-95
SSgt Kevin Tierney		1979-02
Sig Will Milby		1989-95
Sig Rob Oakman		1992-95
SSgt Jacqui Smith	Edinburgh	1987-date
Sgt George Hunter	Edinburgh	1962-87
Cpl Frances Devlin	Edinburgh	1982-88
LCpl Vicky Cornwall	Edinburgh	1999-date
WO2 Rowena Clarke	Edinburgh	1986-date
Sig Jim Dunbar	3 Div Sigs Reunion Club	1958-60
Col Steve King	Aldershot	1939-66
Brig Martin Lance	Aldershot	1963-98
Maj Paul Durrant	Aldershot	1949-68
Lt Col Keith Haycock	Aldershot	1941-75
Lt John Uppard		1940-46
Sgt Steve Haresign		1976-00
Cpl George Unwin		1959-65
LCpl Ian Beat		1963-69
Capt Ronaid Jephcote	Edinburgh	1969-79
WO2 Helen Jephcote	Edinburgh	1979-date
Maj David Marshall	Edinburgh	1948-77
Capt Lloyd Bowlby		1978-02
Capt Georgina Tyndale		1993-02
Capt Kevin Mosby		1991-02
Maj Keith Danby		1965-02
Maj Paul Peel		1983-02
Maj Gavin Grant		1984-02
Sgt David Leaning		1980-02
WO2 Syd Brown		1952-77
Cpl Peter Davenport		1962-71
Sig Dereck Parsons	Chester	2000-date
Cpl Edgar Weekley	Norfolk	1960-66
WO2 Bob Casson		1947-59
LCpl Reuben Cureton		1977-90
Sig John Fogden		1958-60
Cpl Rob Young	Newcastle	1962-74
Maj Mick Pawlak	Cornwall	1965-02
LCpl Martin Rowley		1978-86
Cpl Alex McGregor		1970-85
LCpl Adrian Moore		1989-95
Sig Gordon Barton		1950-52
LCpl Keith Walker		1977-84
LCpl Stuart Metcalfe		1992-98
Sig George Banes	Australia	1943-47
LCpl Benjamin Williams		1998-02
Maj Duncan Ker		1950-75
Cpl Frank Mills	Middx Yeomanry Assn	1958-67
WO1 Michael Doherty		1971-95
Sig Philip Foot		1957-60
Sig Conrad Smith		1989-95
Sig Leonard Exall	Aldershot	1940-80
Sgt G M Rose	Aldershot	1953-67
Lt David Muir		1955-57
LCpl Gary Neeve		1984-95
Sgt SR(Chalky) White		1979-03
Sig Derek Lambert		1981-83
Sig Stan Parry	Aldershot	1953-55

COTSWOLDS BRANCH

Chairman — **Maj (Ret'd) A C Cropp**
Secretary — **Mrs M E Cropp**

The Branch has had a very busy period with the Remembrance Services during the last few weeks. **Mr George Blake** planted a Corps Cross at the Dedication of the Field of Remembrance and the Branch's Poppy Wreath at the Sunday Service in Cheltenham. Several members attended the Festival of Remembrance at Cheltenham Town Hall on the Sunday evening. The Branch Standard was paraded at the Remembrance Day Parade and Service at Tewkesbury by **Mr Alan Wingate** and was represented at Northleach and Sherborne War Memorials.

The Branch held a Dinner at the Victory Club, Cheltenham on their usual meeting night, Tuesday 10 December 2002, when an enjoyable evening was had by all.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman — **Mr J Ballantyne**
Secretary — **Maj Gen J M W Badcock CB MBE DL**

On 13 October forty or more Members gathered at the Chapter Arms, a new watering hole in Chartham Heath on the outskirts of Canterbury for a sumptuous lunch, which was followed by a most interesting and amusing talk by **Lt Col Graham Hoskins**, erstwhile Principal Director of Music, Royal Marines. **Graham** spoke of his career and some amusing incidents, including some of his experiences on board the RY Britannia. He was presented with a cheque for £100 by our Chairman, **John Ballantyne** to help towards the Romanian Children's Charity which **Graham** and his wife run.

On 10 November the Branch provided the largest contingent (other than that of the Royal West Kent Company) to march to the Cathedral for the annual Remembrance Day Parade. This was, of course, accompanied by very wet weather, but did this deter our Chairman and his stentorian word of command at the Saluting Base? It did not! The snap of heads swivelling to the right was heard throughout the City, and the applause from our travelling support group of wives amongst the onlookers was heartening.

A delicious lunch awaited us at the Chaucer Hotel and as on this day our Hon Sec, **Maj Gen John Badcock** also celebrated his 80th birthday, one can possibly imagine that this was to be a very special day. Amongst the many cards and assorted 'presents' was a birthday card which, that had come via **Trevor Allison**, from the Regimental Secretary, **Col Andrew Carter**. It was signed by several past Masters of Signals, the present Master and other contemporaries of **John**. A suitably decorated cake with candles completed the Hon Sec's embarrassment and the Committee congratulated itself on another successful day. Christmas Lunch this year was held at the Marine Hotel at the seaside in Tankerton overlooking the Thames Estuary. 97 of us sat down to another sumptuous lunch, accompanied by much good talk and merriment.

Mr Jim Hehir, **Mr Roy Andrews** and **Mrs Pamela Hand** are all under the weather at the moment and we wish them well. It is with the greatest regret that we must report that **Lt Col (Bert) Sawyer**, the Founder Chairman of the Branch, has passed away. His funeral service was attended by many Members of the Branch at Barham Crematorium.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman — **Maj (Ret'd) P Burton**
Secretary — **Maj (Ret'd) J B Greenwood**

As we approach the end of one year and the beginning of another, we thought this would be a good time to reflect on our activities

since our last notes, compiled in April. At our AGM in April the whole of the Branch Committee were re-elected under the Chairmanship of **Paul Burton.** In May some of our members, along with the local REME Association, had a social evening with the Pensioners at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

In June, Branch members and our Standard took part in the Freedom of Redbridge parade with 36(Eastern) Sig Regt (V) and the Corps Band. Back at Ilford TA Centre, we had a bandstand performance by the Corps musicians while we enjoyed our lunch. At the end of June, under the eye of Secretary, **Barry Greenwood**, Branch members and our Standard attended the RSA Annual Reunion at Blandford, which included the Princess Royal parade. September brought our second visit to Royal Hospital, Chelsea when some of our members, together with the West London RSA, were invited to a social gathering there. Later in September around 40 members went on a coach trip to the Corps Museum at Blandford. As a bonus to a great day out, we were invited to lunch in the Sgts Mess.

October saw twelve members make the pilgrimage to Ypres to visit the Menin Gate and some of the Commonwealth War Graves in the area. (See **Paul Burton's** report below). On Remembrance Sunday, seven members attended at the Cenotaph in Whitehall. Although they all got extremely wet, **Ted Head**, described the occasion, as very moving and not an experience to be missed by anyone who gets the chance to go in the future.

Meanwhile back in Ilford, **Rob Dyball** went as Standard Bearer with **Alan Turner** to lay a wreath on behalf of the Branch. Other members attended the Wanstead parade with everyone invited to lunch with the local dignitaries in the Officers Mess at 36 Sig Regt.

Sadly, because of the Firemen's strike and the TA Centre being used as a base for Green Goddesses, we had to cancel our pre-arranged Italian Supper with a live band in November. The strike also caused the cancellation of our meetings in October and November. But the latter was re-scheduled and moved to the Ilford Royal British Legion, where we were made very welcome.

Looking forward, we have our annual Dinner Dance on 8 March 2003. We are expecting a high turnout and places will be snapped up early. The social committee are also working on various possibilities for day trips. These will be announced in due course.

Although we have a thriving Branch here in East London, with over 100 paid up members and a regular turnout of between 30 and 40, we always welcome more members and would encourage anybody living in the East London, South and East Essex area to join us. Our meetings are normally held in the Sgts Mess of 36(E) Sig Regt(V) in Gordon Road, Ilford, at 8pm on the fourth Tuesday of each month (except December).

THE PILGRIMAGE TO YPRES, OCTOBER 2002.

Twelve members of the East London Branch together with twenty-five members of Woodbridge Royal British Legion made the pilgrimage to Ypres to visit the Menin Gate and some of the Commonwealth War Graves in the area.

Of course, we picked the weekend when there were gales in the Channel and this made the ferry trip to Calais rather uncomfortable. But by the time we had reached our hotel, all had recovered and were well enough to visit the Menin Gate for the 8 o'clock Ceremony. Some changes have been made since our last visit. Now each day is dedicated to a particular person and a dedication is read out about the particular battle in which they were killed. On the Saturday the person was a Royal Marine and a detachment of Marines laid a wreath. We had wreaths from our Branch, the Woodbridge Royal British Legion and the London North East Branch of SSAFA/Forces Help, and these were laid by our ladies. We also had two Standards on parade, that of the Branch and that of the Royal British Legion. The buglers from the local fire brigade sounded 'Last Post' and a former Marine gave the Eulogy.

On Sunday morning we went to visit both Commonwealth and German Cemeteries before taking a trip to the last First World War trenches still in existence. Our coach got boxed in by two trees blown down in the gales and we had to wait for the fire brigade to clear them before we could carry on. But we got back to our hotel in time to freshen up to go to the Menin Gate for the second

Our Standard Bearers Ted Head and Roy Bilby at Ypres

evening. At this ceremony our two Standard Bearers, **Roy Bilby** and **Ted Head**, were again in attendance and **Paul Burton** gave the Eulogy. A very proud moment for us all.

On Monday morning we left in the coach for one more visit to find a particular grave which hadn't been visited since the early 1930s and then on to Bruges for lunch. We then had the compulsory visit to a Wine Supermarket before catching the ferry home - thankfully on a much quieter sea.

EXMOUTH BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Goodman**
Secretary **Mrs O Irving**

The Exmouth Branch of RSA has recently been honoured to have the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen Ian Sprackling OBE** and **Mrs Annie Sprackling** at our annual Christmas Dinner and Dance. This function was held on 29 November at the Royal Beacon Hotel, in Exmouth.

Following a first class dinner, eighty members and guests tripped the 'light fantastic' to a superb dance band playing music that brought back lots of happy memories. The first tune played post-dinner was 'Begone Dull Care', when the vast majority of the guests stood up cheering and clapping. The Master of Signals was heard to comment 'I have never heard the Regimental March played quite like that!'

The Exmouth Branch is now entering its third year of existence and is going from strength to strength. We recently purchased our Branch Standard and the members look forward to parading at Blandford. I have it on good authority that our Standard Bearer **Miss Sally Reggler**, has set her sights on winning the competition that is held each year for Standard Bearers. So it should be a lively competition at the Annual Reunion at Blandford.

The Branch meets at the Great Western Railway Staff Association Club in Exmouth the third Tuesday of each month. New members are always welcome, as are partners. Anyone with any queries should contact Olive Irving for further details. Contact numbers above. Our Annual General Meeting is due to be held in February 2003. The dedication of our Standard is planned for this meeting.

Certa Cito

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J M Keegan**
Secretary **Miss I Muir**

At the Branch meeting on Tuesday 13 October it was decided that, due to the exigencies of the Service (where have I heard that before?), it was not possible to hold the annual dinner/dance on either of the dates planned in November. As December is a crowded month it was decided, by unanimous vote of members present, to hold the event in March 2003, on a date to be arranged by the Branch Committee.

The date for the 5th annual Burns Supper has been arranged for the 15th January 2003. Members were notified by **Bill McNamara** and asked to complete the pro forma supplied, noting the number of tickets required. As usual it will be held in the TA Centre at Jardine Street.

The normal Branch meeting for November was cancelled, due to the Army fire fighting crews having to be accommodated at Jardine Street, their Green Goddess fire engines covering the Glasgow area during the firemen's strike. Should the dispute continue, it was possible that the next Branch meeting and the Christmas Draw in December could be cancelled. Members were to be notified of any changes.

23 Branch members attended the Remembrance Service at the war memorial in George Square, Glasgow. It was a bright dry day and **Bobby Gilchrist** laid the Branch wreath. The **Lord Lieutenant of the County** and the **Lord Provost of Glasgow** took the salute for the march past. Branch members then boarded the bus returning to Jardine Street, where they marched onto the parade ground with the members of the Regiment. A meal awaited them prepared by **WO2 Chef John Wren** and the 32 HQ chefs. The Branch Honorary Colonel, **Lt Col Alastair Petrie** and his wife **Mrs Norah Petrie** were also present.

Unable (due to age) to attend the Glasgow Remembrance service, this scribe attended the service at his hometown memorial in Bishopbriggs, where he laid a personal poppy wreath with the Royal Signals badge centrepiece. Wreathes were also laid by the local youth organisations who paraded with their standards. I also attended the short memorial service on Monday, 11 November when the two minutes silence was observed - all traffic being stopped by several police officers. (I've never seen so many coppers in the town before). **The Provost of East Dunbartonshire District** laid a wreath on behalf of the Districts residents. Both services were attended by the local church ministers, vicars and priests.

HULL BRANCH

Chairman **Mr R Drewery**
Secretary **Mr J S Brown**

Having survived the Christmas and New Year celebrations our first meeting of 2002 was the AGM in February. The present Committee were voted in to serve another year. Our first major event of the year was Blandford Reunion where 12 members attended. August saw members head off to the Edinburgh Tattoo, where a very enjoyable time was had by all. We held our Annual Regimental Dinner in October at the Halifax Barracks, where 40 members and guests sat down to an excellent five-course meal provided by chef **Stuart Key**. Special thanks go to **W02 Alan James** for pulling the event together, also our branch president, **Maj David Sixsmith** for his support and informative speech on activities in 34 (N) Sig Regt.

November saw a good turnout for the Remembrance Parade in Hull, where our President laid a wreath on behalf of the Branch, and lunch was provided back at Halifax Barracks. The following weekend saw 14 members attend the social event at Middlesbourgh. Our thanks go to Hon Sec, **Margaret Dadson** and her members for a pleasant day. The monthly luncheons have been well supported, and our final one of the year our Christmas dinner was also well attended.

As we end 2002, we look forwards to 2003 when we celebrate our 50th anniversary with a full year of events. Finally, thanks go to **Lt Keith Holdstock** and members of 745 Sig Tp for making us welcome, and to all Branch members for your support throughout the year. Branch meetings are held at the Halifax Barracks, Hull on the first Thursday of the month (except January) starting at 20.30hrs. For more information contact the Hon Sec, **Jim Brown** 01482 655963.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Secretary **Sgt I Wolfe**

We start on a sad note once again. The Branch Officers and Members offer their sincere sympathy to **Chris Stitt** on the recent passing of his Mother. This coming so soon after his Father's death has been particularly hard for **Chris** and the family.

The Remembrance period was once again a busy period for the Branch, starting with the British Legion Northern Ireland Festival of Remembrance, which was attended by a number of Branch Members. At Belfast City Hall, Councillors and representatives of the Forces and ex-Services organisations laid wreaths and crosses. **Jim Reilly** and **Jim Vance** laid crosses on behalf of the Branch. **Lt Col (Ret'd) Terry Lightfoot** represented the Branch at a ceremony at the Palace Barracks, Holywood, Garden of Remembrance. On Remembrance Sunday, Branch Members joined with 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) in a parade and church service. Branch Standard Bearer **Billy Dixon** paraded the Standard while **Jim Reilly** laid the wreath at the church. On return, **John Loveday** laid a cross on behalf of the Branch at the memorial in Clonaver Park TA Centre to our past Chairman, **Tom Maguire**.

At the November Branch meeting we had a surprise talk (arranged by Hon Sec **Ian Wolfe**) by **Capt David Wilson**, 2IC 66 (City of Belfast) Sig Sqn, 40 (U) Sig Regt (V). He spoke on the history of Royal Signals and while several present might have assumed they knew the subject, his knowledge, his research and his presentation left all present in no doubt that they had learnt a great deal more about Royal Signals.

John McAreavey, Branch Hon Welfare Officer is as usual at this time of the year organising his band of willing helpers to visit our incapacitated Members and Widows over the Christmas period.

We read in the last issue of *The WIRE* that **Mrs Jacky Herring**, Assistant Editor has decided to move to another position are sorry to see her go. As the writer of *The WIRE* articles for the Northern Ireland Branch for many years now, I would like personally and on behalf of the Branch to thank **Jacky** for her help and assistance over the years and to wish her well in her new post.

As we come to the end of another year, a very big thank you is due to all at Royal Signals HQ, particularly to **Peter Cuckow** for all his help and patience and to *The WIRE* Editorial Staff and wish all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

SOUTHAMPTON & DISTRICT BRANCH

Chairman **Mr S L Smith**
Secretary **Mr A A T Dear**

The Branch Christmas Lunch was held on the 3rd December 2002 at the Archer Road Social Club. The event opened with a new unrehearsed Christmas game 'who's sitting in my chair'. The list of those attending numbered 28, chairs laid out numbered 29, and numbers sat down to lunch 30. It all came right in the end. After a very good typical Christmas lunch, our President, **Brig Johnny Clinch CBE** paid tribute to the Committee for the excellent work done over the past year and for the continuing support of the members. On a personal note he thanked all who had sent messages to him for the recovery of his son, **David**, who had been seriously ill.

Johnny then had the pleasant task of presenting **Chris Cluett** with the Honour/Associate Life Membership Badge, an Illuminated

Address and a personal letter from the Chairman of the RSA, **Major General Tony Boyle CB**. It is safe to say that **Chris** was quite overcome and delighted and we all felt that she had thoroughly deserved the recognition. She enlisted in the ATS in 1942. After training at Honiton, her first operational posting was at 'Z' Gunsite at Penarth in Wales. In 1943 she was promoted Cpl and then Sgt in 1944. **Chris** was finally de-mobbed in 1946, and in 1947 she joined 25 AA (V) Regt at Southampton. Commissioned as a 2Lt in 1952 and promoted Capt in 1955, she resigned from the TA in 1956. Her husband **Bill Cluett**, was a TA Sgt, radio ham, keen RSA member and Branch Treasurer until he died in 1989. **Chris** took over from him as Branch Treasurer and remained as such until this year when she relinquished the position through health problems. **Chris** still attends Branch meetings and keeps a very active mind through bridge, which she plays three or four times a week. She loves the challenge of crosswords and if that wasn't enough she does volunteer work at her local church office.

The event ended with a raffle organised and run by **Ruth Dear**. Everyone brought a prize so everyone received one.

Another year has passed and the Branch is still going strong, although some members cannot now attend the monthly meetings and events due to age or ill health. However, they still keep in touch through the Newsletter and personal contact by our Chairman, **Sid Smith** and our Secretary, **Tony Dear**.

The tragic death of **Ronald Stanley Ford** (Ex Beverley Boy) has been widely reported. On the 11 November 2002, the funeral took place at Hart Plain Church, Cowplain. More than 200 family, friends, and Royal Signals comrades filled the small church to capacity. Ron was interred at the Waterlooville Cemetery. **Tony Hull**, Secretary of the Beverley Boy's Association and several members of this Branch attended and our Standard was carried by our Standard Bearer, **Bryan Littlecott**.

The Branch has needed a new Standard for some time and this was brought home at the 2002 Reunion at Blandford. Since then we have diverted proceeds from the monthly raffles to that end. In addition, two of our ladies, **Ruth Dear** and **Margaret Davies** have been organising Craft Tables at which articles made by the members are displayed and sold. We hope to have the new Standard ready to be paraded by our Standard Bearer, **Bryan Littlecott** at the 2003 Blandford Reunion. Therefore, at that event, and 'armed' with the new Standard, we expect to win the Standard Bearer's Competition.

WEST WALES BRANCH

Chairman **Mr E Davies**
Secretary **Mrs L Davies**

NIJMEGEN MARCHES 2002

Between 16 and 19 July this year **Major (Ret'd) Dewi Treharne**, a member of West Wales Branch RSA took part in and completed successfully the 2002 Nijmegen Marches. This was **Dewi's** third time at the Marches. He first took part as a serving soldier in 1954, and then in 1998. This year he succeeded in raising, through sponsorship, the sum of £100 in aid of the RSA Benevolent Fund. Well done, **Dewi**.

The photograph was taken after completing the Marches, the flowers having been presented by spectators along the route on the last day. It was taken by the landlady of the guesthouse where **Dewi** stayed. She also placed the Union Flag on her house to welcome him back.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J D Anderson**
Secretary **Mr M Morris**

In pursuance of its active social programme, the Branch held a dance on 8 November to the music of **Ken Mackintosh** at the Croydon Bowling Club. All members entered the full swing of the occasion and, as they say, an enjoyable time was had by all.

Members gathered again on 29 November for Christmas dinner, again at the Croydon Bowling Club. Our principal guest was **Phil Pacitti**, the Chairman of the Bowling Club Social Committee, and his wife, **Frances**. As usual, this was an extremely friendly and enjoyable occasion. Thanks go to **Doug Anderson**, the Branch Chairman (that's him holding forth in the photograph), his wife **Maureen**, **Anne White** for force-feeding us with raffle tickets, all the other volunteers and to the Bowling Club catering and management staff for accommodating us.

The Branch meets on the second Thursday of the month at 1930hrs at the Bowling Club in Nottingham Road, Croydon. The Branch always welcomes new members or visitors and further information can be obtained from Secretary **Mick Morris** on 020 8540 1868.

South London Branch Christmas Dinner

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

The Beverley ExBoys banner flag held by Mick Teague, John Beasley, Tony Hull and Albert Trevor at the Reunion on 12 October 2002. (Photo reproduced by kind permission of the Hull Daily Mail.)

A small get-together was held at the home of our Treasurer, **Arthur Cotillard**, on Saturday, 30 November. His wife, **Daphne**, provided a very nice curry lunch and cold buffet. Our President, **John Beasley**, attended with his wife, **Pat**, having just come back from a month's cruise in the Caribbean. Our membership is now 200 and we welcome the following new members:

D A "Benny" Newell	22296564
David Walker	225153088
Brian Mortimer	22569401
John Eric Davies	22569114
Vernon Jones	22776790

Next year's Reunion will be held on 4 October 2003 at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Watford. Booking forms are available from **Tony Hull**.

It is with deep regret that the Beverley Ex-Boys Association reports the sad loss of **SSgt Ronald Stanley Ford**, who was murdered in Gambia on 29 September 2002. His obituary appeared on page 468 in the December issue of *The WIRE*.

Ron was devastated when his wife, **Betty** died in 1999 and he lost his son, **Colin** in 2001. **Ron** was a radio ham with call signs G3NKO, DA1FR, V29NK, C56RF. About 18 months ago **Ron** built a house in Gambia where he had space to build really large antennae. He had gone there in September, but disappeared 12 days later. Police investigations revealed that he had been enticed over the border into Senegal by his houseboy and 3 other men on the pretence of buying more aerials. There he was shot and buried in a shallow grave.

Ron's body was brought bank to the UK on 2 November and his funeral was held at Hart Plain Church, Cowplain, on 11 November 2002. There were over 200 mourners at the funeral including members of BE-BA and Southampton Branch, who sent their Standard Bearer, **Brian Littlecott**, and Chairman, **Sid Smith**. **Cpl Bilby**, a bugler from the Corps Band sounded the Last Post when **Ron's** body was laid to rest at exactly 11.00 hrs and Reveille two minutes later. What more could an old soldier have wished for than to be buried at the eleventh hour of the eleventh month when so many other servicemen and women were being remembered.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his daughter, **Sandra**, and sons, **Peter**, **Ronnie** and **Kenny**.

John Spiers and Ron Ford at Waterloo Station on Christmas leave from 6(B)TR en route to Germany to stay with relatives)

AIR FORMATION SIGNALS

by Ex WO 2 Norman 'Taff' Davies

Over the years *The WIRE* has published reports and articles about 21, 11,12 and 19 Air Formation Sig Regts but few, if any about 10 AF Regt. Hopefully the following personal 'history' will activate other surviving members of 10 AFS to write in to *The WIRE*.

I realise how much the operational structure and functions of Air Formation has changed since I left the Corps in 1968. The present day technology and the technical knowledge required by today's

Sig Technicians looking after the Air Force, makes our role in the past look positively 'stone-age'.

I joined 10 AF Sig Regt as a Sgt Technician and one of the founder members, in December 1954. The Regt formed up at Ogbourne St George, Wiltshire in one of the coldest winters on record. It was commanded by **LtCol AJ Blower TD**, affectionately known as 'Puffpuff'.

After two weeks I left with an advance party to our new home at RAF Station Goch in West Germany, on the German/Dutch border to await the arrival of the Regt.

My initial job with 10 Regt was i/c M Tp under a **Maj (ToT) Brown**, but within three weeks I was posted to 2 ATAF HQ at Rheindahlen, where I took over the Main System Control situated in the basement of that building, known then as the Kremlin. I answered to **Maj Dickie Dirs** and to **Maj (ToT) Brennan**.

There was a great tension in the world. The cold war was in full swing and the role of 10 AF Regt was stretched to the full, to keep the operational airfields and the vast network of ground communications on top line. It was the age of the 'A' Bomb carrying Canberra Bomber, The Gloster Javelin night fighter and the allweather interceptor and Hawker Hunter F6. Exercises were held monthly as a matter of routine, with surprise alerts thrown in for good measure. The wailing of the alarm sirens over the airfields, inevitably in the middle of the night, acted as a spur as we headed to action stations on foot or by car. Even before the sleep was out of our eyes, the earth shattering roar of the planes taking off from the QRA's (quick reaction alert sites) added a sense of urgency. The planes would then head towards their pre set targets, halted only by the East/West German border. Meanwhile, we would set out in convoy to pre-determined exercise sites. These were never far from the airfield, a matter of about 10 to 15 miles. As all the airfields were primary targets for Russian nuclear response we sometimes gave thought to why we moved in the first place, as the sites were well within the radius from ground zero. Once a year HQ 2 ATAF would head for the pine forests around Aachen, where we set up the Communications Main System Control in an 'ancient' Bedford RL (which was still being used for exercises when I left the army in 1968), plus miles of German Steka mufticore cable.

10 AF Regt took over the ground communications of all the major 'clutch' airfields, Laarbruch, Wildenrath, Bruggen, Gutersloh, Geilenkirchen and other RAF units, complimenting 11 and 12 AF Regts, also in West Germany at that time. Eventually 10 AF Regt HQ moved to RAF Butzweilerhof and then to RAF Wildenrath, from where, in July 1958, I was posted to Singapore as a SSgt.

In June 1961, after a XI upgrading course at Catterick, I arrived at the newly formed 21 AF Sig Regt, (10, 11 and 12 had now amalgamated), with its HQ at RAF Laarbruch. Once more I found myself in charge of M Tp with **SSgt (FoS) Don Hazell**. After a couple of weeks I handed over and reported to a **Major Masser** at 2 ATAF HQ, Rheindahlen, and found myself back in charge of the Main System Control. *Nothing had changed.* The equipment, systems and networks were just as I had left them in 1956. Then in June 1962 I was back at HQ Laarbruch, where I took over the duties of Assistant Regimental Lines Officer, supervising Signals Works Service projects under **Major Pettifer**.

I was posted to Singapore again in 1964, for two more years and then volunteered to return to 21 AF Regt. Imagine my surprise when the application was granted. In September 1966 I was back in my old stamping grounds at RAF Laarbruch as a WO2. I took up the reins as Assistant Regimental Lines Officer, this time under **Captain Bill Oates**. Our CO was **Col Gordon Neilson**. There I was to remain until I took voluntary redundancy in 1968.

At that time the Chief Air Formation Signals Officer (CAFSO) was **Col Johnny Clinch CBE**, now Brig (Rtd), and President of the Southampton & District RSA, of which I am a member. **Johnny** oversaw many changes to AF comms, such as the introduction of the BRUIN System to the new Harrier Support Sqn allowing it to communicate with 1 (BR) Corps, which it was supporting. Also a STD system over microwave links between all Clutch Stations and HQRAFG.

Those years with AF in Germany were some of the best of my service. Maybe somewhere out there, are exsignallers who served with me during those times. Should they wish to contact, I still retain some technical skills and can be found by e-mail taffy@normeg.fsnet.co.uk.

The author at 10AF Sig Regt, Goch, April 1955

260 SIGNAL SQUADRON (SAM) ASSOCIATION SEEKS THE HELP OF MEMBERS OF THE CORPS PAST AND PRESENT

260 Sig Sqn (SAM) Association are trying to trace over two hundred exsoldiers who served with 260 Sig Sqn (SAM), 654 Sig Tp (SAM) and 655 Sig Tp (SAM) in the period 1965-1977. We were formed in June 1998 and currently have a membership of about eighty members and another eighty potential members. Our objective is to trace a further 200 in time for our reunion in April 2003. It is our belief that all former members of the Sqn will have completed their service with the colours, but it is felt that sons or daughters of these servicemen may now be serving in the Corps.

It is also believed that some former members of the Sqn and Sig Tps may be members of the RSA but are not aware of the existence of our own Branch of the Association. This is why we are asking all Branch Secretaries if they would be kind enough to send out details of our Association to all their members. Since April of last year our Web Master has been hard at work promoting our activities on the Internet and we have gained support from the *Soldier* magazine as well as many local newspapers across the country. But we feel that the best support for our project lies at the heart of our extended family the Corps itself.

Our next Reunion will be held on the weekend of 11/13 April 2003 at the Jarvis Hotel, Loughborough, Leicestershire. Partners are most welcome. We will be having our Standard dedicated on 12 April at 16.00 at All Saints Parish Church, Loughborough. For further details contact **Roy Andrews**, 7 The Heath, South Tankerton, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3HJ, Tel.01227 264551 or email: roypat.andrews@ic24.net or visit our website at http://www.260sigsqnsam.abelgratis.co.uk.

ARE YOU READY TO COME BACK AND JOIN US?

REUNIONS

254 OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION REUNION

For the uninitiated, the 254 Old Boy's Association was born out of the Boy soldiers who were recruited in the period 1942-1948. 'F' Company Boys stopped recruiting in 1939 when war was declared. Their final intake was almost ready to join the men's service when recruiting was started again at the end of 1941. At that time, the seven-figure service number beginning 254 was allocated to Boy soldiers at Aborfield, Chepstow and Catterick.

The Association takes its name from this three-figure group. Gradually, with two intakes per year, the Company grew in strength, until approximately 300 boys were in training at any one time. Many of these boys served on in the Corps, completing forty years of service and attaining ranks up to Brigadier. Many were also decorated and honoured for outstanding bravery and service. Irrespective of rank and honour the boy soldier spirit lives on at their reunion, as once more, they are the Boy soldiers of long ago.

This, the Thirteenth Reunion, was a special one, as we were celebrating:

(a) The formation of Boys' Company Royal Signals in April 1942 and
(b) The Sixtieth year since the 254's joined in April and October 1942.

Fourteen of these originals attended, and they are seen in the photograph below.

Back row, L to R: Frank Pedley, Peter (PEC)Davies, Alan Crabtree, Geoff Oakley, Maurice Tym, John Dove, George Severs. L to R Front row: Don Turner, Ron Nicholas, Stan Whitehead, Alan Searle, Ron Gillman, Stuart Dunlop, Geoff Pickering.

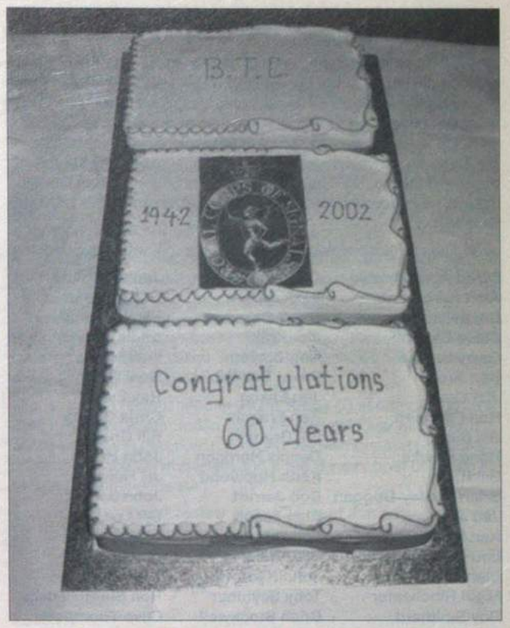
This year, with a change of venue to the Mickleover Court Hotel in Derby, 254's and their ladies began to gather for the reunion on the Thursday, and a total of sixty sat down to dinner that evening. Our band of Thursday volunteers gets bigger yearly. As usual, Friday was the day when the bulk of the 254's arrived, and in no time at all the hotel was alive with old acquaintances renewing their friendship and swapping tales, told and re-told a hundred times. Strangely, the wives seem to enjoy this also. By the time that dinner was served, we had almost a full complement and the reunion was in full swing. After dinner it was a case of circulating and getting to know each other once more, and of course, keeping the bars at full stretch to lubricate the throat muscles.

Eventually all went to bed to get some beauty sleep prior to the very full day on Saturday. The organised trip on Saturday was to the Heights of Abraham, near Buxton, in the Derbyshire Peak District. Three full busloads departed and I'm told that they all had an extremely enjoyable day. Those left behind who had other venues in mind were soon on their way, leaving the hotel staff with an easy day to prepare for the semi-formal dinner in the evening.

The 254's of the 1942 Intakes had arranged a champagne reception prior to dinner, a gesture that was appreciated by all. Those attending received an address book and pen, both inscribed 'BTC Royal Signals 1942 – 2002', a gift thoughtfully provided by **Colin Williams** and brought all the way from the U.S.A. The dining room had the tables decorated in Light Blue, Dark Blue and Green and were set with silver, a very nice gesture from the hotel.

The dinner was soon over and the president **George Severs** called upon **Peter McNaughton** to toast our departed comrades. Prior to proposing the toast, **Peter** took the opportunity on behalf of all present to thank the 1942 Intakes for their generous gesture of hosting the champagne reception. He wondered if we would have to wait for a further sixty years before they bought us another drink???

Peter then reminded everyone that the Roll of Honour now stood at one hundred and fifteen, including the three 254s who had



The 60th Anniversary Cake

passed away during the year, **Eric Parrott**, **Nick Neame**, and **Alan Spedding**. **Wilbur Morris**, a cadre member, had also passed on, as had the wives of **Alan Leach** (**Carol**) and **Eric Potts** (**Joan**).

As usual, **George Severs** then gave his President's speech. He welcomed our overseas members, **Ann** and **Peter Kent**, and **Anna** and **John Dove** from Spain; **Evi** and **Tony Taylor** from Germany, **Don Turner** from Australia; and **Mary** and **Peter Davies**, and **Carla** and **Colin Williams** from America. Nearer to home there were **Nan** and **Colin** (**Jim**) **Stear** and **Moyra** and **Nat Preece** from Bonnie Scotland. Representing Wales we had **Patsy** and **Deri Smith**. Our widows were not forgotten: **Val Forster**, **Jean Johnson**, **Miranda Hewitt** and **Norma Timson**. Neither were **Mavis** and **Bill Ramsay**, who, although **Mavis** is wheelchair bound, never fail to attend. **George** then said a few thank-you's to **Val Forster** and **Clare Brown** for the collection of the raffle monies (our Club's source of income), to **Janet** and **Dave Ross**, who are the custodians of all our cash, and to **Maureen** and **Pat Soward**, who are the purveyors of Club merchandise.

Brian Fisher has handed over the Secretary's duties to **Jess Weir**, but **Dot** and **Brian** will continue to produce the magazine 'Jimmy's Journal' and the annual update of the nominal roll with addresses, telephone number and e-mail addresses. This is quite an undertaking, and both of them are to be congratulated for the excellence of their work. Last but not least, to the organisers of the event we all owe a debt of gratitude. **Ann** and **Pat Fox** put in hours of work (well, **Ann** does anyway). **Pat** is the perfect front man, and between them, every year we have a perfect Reunion. **George** then drew attention to the fact that although the OBA seems to be as popular as ever, sadly the trend has set in that more are departing than are joining. This we knew was bound to happen, but when the reality arrives it is a sad thought. He then referred to **Don Herring** and his OBA Roll and Photo Album, the second edition of which is on sale at present. **Don** has spent many an hour perfecting his baby and is to be congratulated on an excellent publication.

George then read out an e-mail received from **Lee** and **Bob Shaw**, from Australia. They sent special greetings to the September 1945 intake. The signatures were **Olive** and **Terry Beare**, **Pam** and **Charlie Leggat**, **Pat** and **George Punnett** and **Betty Angel**.

He next mentioned those who had called off because of sickness: **Dai Rees**, **Ron Pearsall**, **Jim Chiverton**, **Buster Slade**, **Arthur**

Ports and **Dennis Burge**. Excused boots is no excuse for non-attendance.

Finally we got to the dance floor and once again, until midnight enjoyed the music of the Del Poulton Band, celebrating their 13th Reunion with us. Bedtime came, and all too soon it was Sunday when people started to depart for places near and far. Still, there were the few who were to spend another night in the hotel. Like the Thursday arrivals, there seemed to be more Sunday stayers. If they keep this up, we'll have to declare it a Four-day Reunion. All in all, a very successful Reunion. Same place, same time in 2003, God willing.

In addition to those already mentioned, the following attended:

David Abercrombie	**Charles Ashton**	**Jack Batham**
Alan Alfred	**Jack Allison**	**Doug Bower**
Bill Bailey	**Geoff Baker**	**Mick Bayliss**
Steve Bresloff	**Jim Braid**	**Eddie Brewer**
Gerry Brewer	**Reg Brewin**	**Wally Brown**
Ken Brown	**David Bussell**	**Noel Clark**
Jim Crow	**Jim Esson**	**Ray Evans**
Ron Fairbairn	**Ken Francis**	**Chris Gentry**
Bill Gibson	**Bill Graham**	**Bill Grieve**
Hang Hawke	**Dennis Harrison**	**John Heard**
Bill Hill	**Keith Hopwood**	**JR Hewson**
Brian Huxley-Duggan	**Bob Jarratt**	**John Jarratt**
Jim Jenkins	**Alan Leach**	**Bill Leech**
Ken Lloyd	**John Mann**	**Tim Martin**
Lou Munday	**Ted Mellor**	**Don Nichols**
Stan Parry	**John Radford**	**Terry Reeves**
Nigel Ribchester	**Toby Seymour**	**Ron Shuttleworth**
Roy Smithard	**Brian Stockwell**	**Clive Thompson**
Cliff Wood	**Ernie Webb**	**Peter West**
Ken Wood	**Bruce Howie**	

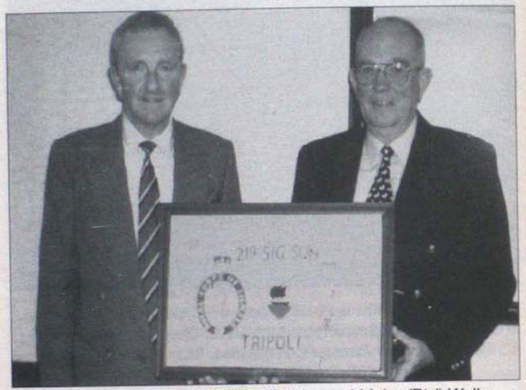
MALTA/LIBYA COMMAND

Malta members. Back, L to R, Alan Willis, Dennis Croot (holding framed tapestry made by Ewe Leslie) Peter Maiden, Tony Mifsud. Front, L to R, Rita Croot, Don Shrives, Margaret Shrives, Sue Maiden.

Another successful reunion was held at the Jarvis Hotel, Loughborough 4/5 October. It was agreed that they get better every year. Next year is our 10th, so we are hoping to make it a special one. This year the old met the new, our guest was **Major Rab Young**, OC of the current 219 Sig Sqn, 2 Sig Regt, York. He enjoyed himself so much that he said he would bring other members of the Sqn with him next year (operations permitting). He presented the club with a 219 shield and was in turn presented with a small embroidered pennant by our chairman, **Mr Roy Andrews**, on behalf of the old 219 Sig Sqn, which disbanded in 1967.

We are still looking for new members, so if you were in any of the following units, 219 Sqn,Tripoli, Tripoli 1 Div Sigs, Tripoli Sigs, 3 R Force, 234/235 Malta. 245 Benghazi, 25 Armd Sigs, El Adem Sigs, please contact the Secretary on: 01227 264551, Email: roypat.andrews@ic24.net

245 members, L to R, Eric Pratt, Barry Vargus, John Hamilton, David Thornton. (Pennant was presented by Eric Pratt)



Major Rab Young, O.C. 219 Sig Sqn and Major (Rtd) Wally Hammonds, who was a Sgt with the old 219 Sig Sqn in 1964

FOUND – ZIPPO LIGHTER

Found: A 'zippo' lighter with 'Dave, MT Tp, 266 Sig Sqn (SA) Jan-Jun 1988' engraved upon it. Claimant should call Mr Waring on 01709-360063.

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

Jill Saunders is trying to locate men who served with her father, the former **Sig J T Saunders** of 40 Div Sigs Tp, 3 Sqn, Kowloon in 1951. Anyone who can help is asked to contact Jill at jilljs71@aol.com or 07961 122118.

E-mail from **Carl Braganza**, carlbraganza@extelmfg.com

I was a serving member of the RSigs from Nov 1968 to Nov 1977. My number was 24159886. I left the UK after an honourable discharge from the Signals with the rank of Sgt. I believe I am a permanent members of the RSA. My last posting was the Forward Scatter Station in Maidstone, Kent. At the time I was attached to an RE regt.

The only member of the service I have kept in touch with is former **FOS Ken Downton**, who resides not far from Blandford, in Swindon. I served under (at the time) **Lt John Doody**, and had (at the time) **Major Conrad Garton** as a Sqn Comd. This was at 16 Sig Regt, Krefeld Germany in 1972. Are these officers still in the service or have they retired? Just curious. I do not know if they would even remember me.

The soldier I am trying to locate is a former **Cpl Ron Scaife**, who left the forces in Germany in 1971, and the last I heard was living somewhere in Derby. Can you, with his permission, send me any contact information if you have any. I would also like to contact **Ray White**, who also served in 16 Sig Regt.

I have been residing in Houston, Texas, USA for the last 20 years.

I travel back to the UK on business and for family visits and would like to make contact with **Ron**.

I would appreciate a response.

Thanks.....

From: **Martin L Gibbs**
Poynings
Upper Street, Stratford St Mary
Suffolk CO7 6LW
Tel: 01206 322516

Dear Sir,

I have been endeavouring to find out a little more about my grandfather who was killed whilst serving with the British Expeditionary Force in Belgium in 1940. I was wondering whether any of his military colleagues may still be surviving and have any memories of him or the units that he served with. I have tried placing adverts on the Signals website, in *Soldier* magazine and with the British Legion, all without success. However, I was contacted by someone from the Signals regiment who suggested I try your magazine.

My grandfather was **787566 Sgt Harold Herbert Edmund Gibbs**. He was embodied from the Territorials in September 1939 and taken into the Royal Corps of Signals. He was assigned to 4 Div Sigs, J section (attached to 10 Inf Bde) at Dibgate Camp, Kent. He saw overseas service with the same unit from 27 September 1939. He spent most of late 1939 and early 1940 at Roubaix, just outside Lille. On 26 May 1940 the unit was located at Roncq & Linselles, again just outside of Lille. Between this date and about 28 May, in the withdrawal to the Belgian coast, he was injured in a shell explosion, and later died of his wounds, possibly somewhere near Kemmel.

If anyone can give me any information about **Harold** I would be grateful if they contacted me at the above address.

Yours faithfully.....

Mark Renshaw is seeking his former pal **Julian Rideout**. Julian joined as a Junior Leader in 1983. He was a Data Tg, serving in 2 Sqn, 21 Sig Regt at Osnabruck and 16 Sig Regt in Krefeld and Rheindahlen. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Mark** on:- mark_renshaw@hotmail.com

SIDNEY CHARLES HOOTEN

We have had a note from the Corps Manning and Career Management Division at APC Glasgow to say that during a recent clear out of a cupboard they have came across two documents issued 60+ years ago to **Sidney Charles Hooten**. They had originally been forwarded by RHQ Grenadier Guards, who found them in their archives. The first is his Warrant Officer's Warrant issued on 1 June 1939 and the second is his Commission Parchment in the rank of Lieutenant issued on 23 December 1941.

They would like to have these parchments returned to **Mr Hooten** if he is still living, or to his family if he is not. If anyone knows of him or any member of his family, would they please contact either **the Editor** on 01258 482 079 or **Mrs Liz Robinson** at CMCMD on 0141 224 3274.

I would like to contact ex RSigs friends. From 1960 -1961I was stationed in Cyprus with 9 Sig Regt (Four Mile Point) Famagusta. Does anyone know the whereabouts of **Alan (Al) Jordan**, last known address is either Great Bar or Perry Bar, Birmingham.

Also does anyone know the whereabouts of **LCpl Tony Hodges**, last know address Hessle or Hull.

Please contact **Pete Pennock** on 01723 378302.

Anyone who knows the present whereabouts of the former Dvr **John C Robertson**, who served 1941-45 in Egypt, Iraq, North Africa and Italy, is asked to contact **Neville Brown** on 01937 586402. **John** came from Brechin, Angus and his last known address was in Perth, Scotland around 1960.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **Mr W. Cameron**
1 West End Drive
Ardersier
INVERNESS IV2 7RT
Email: williamcameron@talk21.com

Dear Sir,

How many of us are left?

In July 1939, I was one of 50 RSigs personnel who formed up in Jerusalem from various units in Palestine, our destination 'somewhere in Africa'!! The party arrived in Cairo, thence Khartoum, from where we proceeded down the Nile on a 'steel-decked boat' to a place called Juba. We then proceeded across country to a railhead called Sorote. It was here we were informed of our final destination – Nairobi.

The party was commanded by **RQM Tebby** (?) assisted by **WOTT Solly**. We were in the Sudan when we were told war had been declared. I regret that time has dulled the memory and I can only remember a **Sig Chamberlain** and a **Sig Bevan**, both of whom I believe, are now deceased.

It would be wonderful to hear from anyone of that party if they are still with us. My network call sign was RNA and we used No.9 sets. I eventually finished up with 12 East African Div and covered that campaign.

Many thanks.....

From: **Maj (Ret'd) John Trotter**
9 Ferney Green Drive
Windermere
Cumbria
LA23 3HS

Dear Sir,

When, more than half a century ago, I had the privilege of serving in Airborne Royal Signals, the cap badge worn in our berets was located above the left eye. Judging from photographs in *The Wire*, this would seem to be the practice in today's Corps, with the exception of soldiers of 216 Signal Squadron on parade at Caythorpe (photograph on page 503 of the December 02 issue of *The Wire*).

Perhaps they empathize with their fellow French paras, who prefer the left temple as a cap badge locator, but it is sad that a long standing Corps tradition is being ignored by these otherwise outstanding upholders of all that distinguishes Airborne Royal Signals today.

Yours faithfully.....

From: **DF Hamblin**
20 Danvers Way
WESTBURY
Wiltshire, BA13 3UE
Tel: 01373 822426

Dear Sir

You must surely have already had your attention drawn to the enclosed item (Obit – John Gooch on page 349), which appeared I the August edition of *The WIRE*. I thought everyone knew that **Churchill** was PM (even those who were not alive at the time). If I remember correctly, **Bevan** was Minister for Labour.

Incidentally, whilst I was living in Berkshire I was a member of the 63 (M) Sig Regt (TA) for 7 years. I had hoped to have seen something of it in *The WIRE*, but as there has been no mention, I assume it has gone to the wall. I would be most grateful for the address of the Reading Branch of the Association in order that I may attempt to contact ex members.

Yours sincerely....

PS: Perhaps the BBC should be asked to present 'World at War' again!

Thanks for drawing my attention to the historical error. Reading Branch Address has been duly passed on. - Editor

From: **Maj (Ret'd) D Collingwood-Gittins**
Windshadow
Avenue Road, Hurst Green
Clitheroe
Lancs, BB7 9QB
Tel: 01254 826375

Dear Sir,

I was most interested to read your article 'A Little Bit of History' on page 531 of the December *WIRE*. I do believe that one of the members present, **Captain RG Williams MVO** was my great uncle **Robert Gardiner Williams**, who was appointed a Member of the Victorian Order by **HM King George V** in 1917 during his visit to the Army in France. On entering his office, **The King** asked to see the person responsible for providing and installing the communications equipment and my great uncle, then a Warrant Officer, was there and then appointed MVO for personal services to **His Majesty**.

My great uncle served throughout WW2 at the War Office as a Lieutenant Colonel.

In the summer of 1944 my mother took me to meet him at his home in Welwyn Garden City. Little did I realise then that within 18 months I would be serving in the same Royal Corps as a Boy Apprentice Tradesman.

Yours faithfully.....

DONATIONS

Brig Stoneley	£1000.00
Indian Signals Association of Great Britain	£ 250.00
David and Kate Hopkins	£ 100.00
Southampton Branch RSA	£ 50.00
Mr D. Smith	£ 12.00
Mr A. I. MacMillan	£ 10.00
Mr J. E. Uppard	£ 40.00
RSA Salisbury Branch	£ 50.00
RSA Poole Branch	£ 50.00
West Wales Branch	£ 25.00
Glossop & District Signals OCA	£ 25.00
Joan Greenstreet	£ 25.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£ 10.00
Mr D Muir	£ 10.00
In lieu of flowers in memory of Bert Rowbottom	£ 100.00
Col & Mrs G G L Hinde OBE in memory of Lt Col P. A. Duke	£ 50.00
Mrs M.S. Good in memory of Lt Col P. A. Duke	£ 10.00
Mr B. Styles in memory of 'Ginger' Cockroft	£ 25.00
Mr B. Styles in memory (belated) of John Harvey	£ 25.00
Edgar McCall in memory of Tom Maguire	£ 10.00
Mr P Mills in memory of Stan Hardy	£ 10.00
Mr D. W. Randall in memory of those comrades in 10th Indian Div Sigs who did not return	£ 30.00
Reading Branch	£ 130.00

LAST POST

Balharry - Sig W. Balharry	Served 1942/46	Died 2002
Barber - Maj R. E. Barber	Served 1945/78	Died 12/10/02
Barlow - Maj R. J. Barlow	Served 1939/62	Died 22/08/00
Boardman - Maj M. R. Boardman	Served	Died Sep/Oct '02
Calder - Cpl J. G. Calder	Served 1946/48	Died 24/11/02
Cobb - Capt E. J. Cobb	Served 1940/46	Died 09/02/01
Collins - Sgt W. F. Collins	Served 1940/46	Died 14/11/02
Dickinson - Capt F. Dickinson	Served 1940/46	Died 20/10/02
Eady - H. B. Eady	Served	Died 07/10/02
Earl - Sgt A. R. Earl	Served 1934/46	Died 04/12/02
Evanson - Cpl G. H. J. Evanson	Served 1945/49	Died 12/08/01
Ford - WO2 R. S. Ford	Served 1952/91	Died Oct '02
Furtado BEM - Maj R. G. Furtado	Served 1935/71	Died May 98
Ingham - Sig J Ingham	Served 1941/46	Died 01/12/02
James MC - Maj J. G. James	Served 1940/75	Died 29/11/02
Jeffrey - Maj D. C. Jeffrey	Served 39-46	Died Dec '00
Jewell - Sig W. C. Jewell	Served 1949/51	Died 31/10/02
Johnson - Sig A. Johnson	Served 1939/46	Died 07/12/02
Nallon - SSgt W Nallon	Served 1943/65	Died June '02
O'Connor - LCpl T. P O'Connor	Served 1965/78	Died 29/11/02
Power - Sig J. C. Power	Served 1940/46	Died 01/11/02
Potts - Capt R. A. M. Potts	Served 1933/45	Died 17/10/02
Pryor - Cpl J. R.Pryor	Served 1955/83	Died 29/12/02
Redfern - Cpl E. F. Redfern	Served 1941/46	Died 30/11/02
Sawyer - Lt Col A. Sawyer	Served 1939/74	Died 25/10/02
Thorne - SSgt C. Thorne	Served 1935	Died 14/10/02
Thornton-Kemsley - Capt N. S. Thornton-Kemsley	Served 1957/64	Died Aug '01
Walsh - Lt P. Walsh	Served 1942/45	Died 11/10/02
Watkinson - Cpl J. B. Watkinson	Served 1946/49	Died Dec '02
Wreford - WO1 J. P. Wreford	Served 1940/46	Died 01/11/02

YORK-MILLER - Major Michael York-Miller (Mike) died on 7 July 2002.

On 17th July 2002, a gloriously sunny day, many friends gathered in West Malling, Kent to celebrate the life of **Mike**. He had died ten days earlier of a brain tumour diagnosed the previous December. A keen and competent sailor all his life, **Mike** had spent many hours on the water sailing in all parts of the world. Having just taken early retirement, this illness had robbed him and Lesley of the hours of sailing they had planned in his recently purchased Nicholson 35.

Born on 3 February 1938, **Mike** entered Sandhurst from Welbeck in 1957. After being commissioned in 1959, he went to RMCS Shrivenham to complete his degree course. In 1961 he was posted to 3 Div Sig Regt and married **Lesley** in the Memorial Chapel at Sandhurst, her father, **Lt Col S H Beaumont**, being the Master at Arms at RMAS. Following his TE Course at Catterick he was posted to Ghurka Sigs in Borneo in 1966. After only four months with the Ghurkas and with the Confrontation with Indonesia being over, he moved to Singapore to join 18 Sig Regt. In 1969 he returned to Blandford as an instructor at the School. In 1971 he moved to 22 Sig Regt in Lippstadt, then to the SRDE at Christchurch. In 1976 he was appointed second in command of 9 Sig Regt. He enjoyed three years in the sun of Cyprus moving to Senior Operations Officer halfway through his tour and putting his considerable technical skills to good effect. In his spare time in the sun he spent many hours refurbishing the Corps yacht and enjoying some sailing.

A further tour at Blandford followed before he was posted to New Jersey USA. **Mike** fell in love with America and the American way of life and he planned to remain there after retirement. He retired from the Army in the USA and enjoyed the unique experience for a British officer of a US Battalion Farewell Parade. Unfortunately, despite working for some months in the States, he could not obtain a permanent work permit. So, in 1985, he began his second career in the UK with Logica. He enjoyed his time with this company and they looked after him extremely well, even after his retirement.

As well as sailing, **Mike** was keenly interested in railways and all matters technical. He had a lively sense of humour and was a good friend to have. He will be greatly missed. Our condolences go to **Lesley**, their two sons **Richard** and **Charles**, and their daughter **Kate** who lives in the USA with her US Army doctor husband and their two children, **Sarah** and **James**.

THORNE - S Sgt C F H Thorne, Royal Signals - CPO CFH Thorne, Royal Navy (Charlie) died in Carrickfergus on 14 October 2002.

Charles Thorne was born in Plymouth, Devon on 28 November 1920, and enlisted in the Royal Navy as a boy sailor in 1935.

After initial training, he joined HMS Edinburgh as a signaller in 1937. The ship was engaged in policing British protected islands in the Pacific against the increasing threat of Japanese activity.

After the outbreak of World War II, **Charlie** was transferred to Russian convoys and served in that theatre until the War ended. He served in HMS Tartar, whose Signals Officer was the writer and broadcaster, **Ludovic Kennedy**, and he witnessed the sinking of the Germany pocket battleship Bismarck on 27 May 1941.

After the War, **Charlie** returned to marry his wartime pen pal, **Isabel**, and they remained together for over 57 years until his death.

After the wedding, he was at sea once more and went round the world, taking over 3 years to do so. He saw, at first hand, the devastated city of Hiroshima, and returned to UK in 1949. Posted to Malta in 1951, he remained there for 3 years. Later he would serve on minesweepers during the Suez crisis, and in 1955 he was posted to Scotland.

In 1957 he returned to Portland and, on being informed that he was to go to sea again, refused to join his ship. This caused quite a stir, as senior CPO's did not "jump ship". Fortunately, **Charlie's** Commanding Officer on HMS Edinburgh, now a Rear Admiral at Flag Office, Sea Training, got to hear of his situation. A staff car was sent to **Charlie's** house and he was offered a transfer to the Army, which he readily accepted. He was quickly re-trained in Army ways, joined the Royal Corps of Signals, and was posted with his wife and family to Singapore, where he remained for three years until British withdrawal.

He left the Service, holder of two North Atlantic Stars, the Victory Medal, the Defence Medal, the LSGC for the Navy and the GSM (Army) with the Malaya Clasp. He has now been awarded medals by the Soviet Union, which were withheld during the Cold War. He served in 13 ships, 3 shore stations and in the Malayan Emergency.

Charlie is survived by his wife, **Isabel**, who lives in Carrickfergus. His granddaughter, **Sgt Louise Rigby** and her husband, **SSgt Tim Rigby** are both now serving in Royal Signals.

RUSSELL – Major H W Russell (Bert) died 1 November 2002.

Bert had a long and happy career with the Royal Signals and leaves behind one son, **Geoffrey** and two daughters, **Daphne** and **Cindy**.

Coming from the south of England, **Bert** joined the Army in 1930 as a linesman in the Corps. Shortly afterwards, he was posted to India for more than 10 years, where he was awarded the 1939/45 Star and the India GSM. For the last three years of this posting, he was joined by his wife, **Anne**. During his time there he was attached to the Indian Army, and we know that these were among his proudest and happiest times.

On his return to UK he was posted to Rippon, N Yorkshire, where he was commissioned in 1951, then as a family, we moved to Northern Ireland.

Three years later, following a short stay in the UK, we moved to Germany for more good times. In 1960 the family found themselves in Cyprus, where 'Happy Valley' held a special significance for them. It meant many a happy hour watching Dad running up and down a football or hockey field, and even the odd night standing in a boxing ring - but as a referee. He was no fool!

Bert's last posting was in Gloucestershire where, much to his regret, he retired in 1964. From Linesman to Major in 32 years is not bad for a country boy. To keep his eye on the Corps, the family moved to Catterick.

At 91 years of age, **Bert** leaves behind lots of friends at home and abroad. By way of *The Wire*, the fmaily would like to thank all who made his last years so happy. They believe that he has gone on ahead to join family and friends.

SAWYER – Lt Col A Sawyer (Bert) died on Friday, 25 October 2002.

Bert Sawyer served in the Corps from 1941 to 1974 and was one of the first ex-infanteers to be trained in Cipher Operations in HQ British Troops, Egypt in Cairo early in 1940. Having enlisted in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment in January 1937 as a Supplementary Reservist, he subsequently rejoined as a Regular in January 1939. **Bert** served the majority of his career overseas, starting in Egypt, Palestine then back to Egypt. He subsequently joined 8th Army Signals in North Africa, Malta, Sicily and Italy and for a period, as a WO1, commanded the cipher detachment serving **General Montgomery's** Tactical Headquarters. He also served in Italy with 14 L of C Signals in Rome and Florence and finally with AFHQ Caserta, prior to returning to the UK in 1945. He was then posted to 49 Divisional Signals in Germany, pending discharge on completion of his seven years' Regular service.

He continued with his cipher trade in civvy street, employed as a cipher clerk in the Colonial Office, but he could not accept the humdrum of civilian life and re-enlisted a WOI in June 1947 for his 12/22 years service. He was on the first conversion course, Cipher Operator to Operator Keyboard and Cipher (OKC) at 3 Intelligence School Harrogate and a Training Regiment at Catterick, becoming the first BI OKC in the Corps. Posted in November 1947 to GHQ FARELF, Singapore, he met **Meta** and married her in St George's Garrison Church, Tanglin. He was commissioned as a Lieutenant (Cipher) in March 1950 and was posted directly to 3 GHQ Sig Regt, Canal Zone, Egypt for a year, then back to War Office Sig Regt, UK for a short period.

In May 1951 he was sent to Paris to establish the SHAPE International Crypto Centre, joining 228 Signal Sqn when it was formed under **Major H B De M Hunter (Harry)**. In May 1954 he was posted to a detached squadron of 16 Sig Regt, based at Grobbendonk, Belgium, with Advance Base British Forces, where he commanded the Signal Centre and several out-stations. His next posting in February 1957 was to Cyprus District Signal Regiment, Nicosia and subsequently to GHQ Episkopi. In May 1961 he was posted back to Paris to command the SHAPE International Communication Centre for three years. Following this NATO appointment he finally received a UK posting to 10 Sig Regt, Eastern Command, Hounslow, looking after the Eastern Command, London District Signal Centres and TRC Beaconsfield with out-stations in Dover and Colchester.

From Hounslow **Bert** was posted to CR Signals Staff at 1 (BR) Corp HQ in Bielefeld, where he was heavily involved of the traffic aspects of the fielding of BRUIN. Promoted to Lt Col (Traffic) in December 1968, he was posted to War Office (Signal 6) for what he thought was his last few years in the UK prior to retirement. Unfortunately, a NATO organisation called NICSMA was formed in Brussels in late 1971 and required a Crypto specialist with knowledge of NATO. **Bert** was selected and, arriving in February 1972, was one of the first project managers to be appointed in that organisation. He was responsible for the development of Technical Specifications, Procurement, Development and Implementation of security systems to protect NATO's voice, medium speed data (Inter TARE and IVSN Switching Systems), High Speed Data (SATCOM), Facsimile Systems and many other aspects of secure communications required by all NATO nations. He was well suited to this task and gained a healthy reputation among those contracting agencies bidding for NATO's requirements. **Bert** was due to retire in September 1974, but none of the NATO Nations were in a position to replace him with a military officer. He was therefore offered the job as a civilian and

stayed in the post until July 1984, when he finally retired and returned to the UK.

He settled in Deal in Kent and enjoyed his fishing, swimming and membership of PROBUS of which he was President in 1991. In June 1991, together with **Maj Gen John Badcock**, he started the East Kent Branch of the Royal Signals Association and became its first Chairman. He held this post for three years, handing over to **Col John Francis. Bert** was a tireless worker and offered his knowledge and guidance to anyone seeking it. Throughout his career he had been involved in high level cipher communications and often spoke of his experiences with personal messages to and from **Winston Churchill**, **Generals Wavell**, **Wilson**, **Alexander**, **Montgomery**, **Eisenhower**, **Clarke**, **Darling**, **Gruenther** and **Ridgeway**.

He will be greatly missed by his many friends and associates in both PROBUS and the Royal Signals Association, and we extend our greatest sympathy to his wife, **Meta** and children, **Pamela** and **David**.

BARBER - Maj R E Barber (Roy) died on 12 October 2002

Roy Barber enlisted in the Corps in 1945 at the age of seventeen, having just finished education at Peter Symonds' School, Winchester, where amongst other useful attributes, he had been Signal Platoon Sergeant in the school's Junior Training Corps contingent. He had no intention of waiting long enough for the National Service callup to turn him into a common or garden 'foot-slogger' – he joined Royal Signals. Qualifying first as an Operator Wireless & Line (OWL), he was rewarded almost at once by a posting to 171 Wireless Tp, British Army Staff, France, 'key bashing' in the very centre of Paris.

Roy was commissioned from R Signals OCTU in 1947 and thereafter was often heard to remark that he must definitely be the holder of the Corps record for 'nonservice' in training establishments, especially Catterick. He produced as evidence a long list of postings in Germany, (including Berlin, where he first met his wife, **Eva**), France, Egypt, Cyprus and Belgium, as well as the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. With a gift for foreign languages, he qualified over the years as an official Army interpreter in both German and Russian. This led to a number of interesting situations, both in and outside the Corps.

Among his most memorable Corps appointments were: - Command of two of two UG line construction tps manned entirely by greenuniformed German (GSO) personnel, responsible for the supervision of all static communications on the tank and artillery ranges at Hohne and Munsterlager, BAOR, and providing field line networks for 1 (BE) Corps during major NATO exercises. Leading a specially formed radio tp despatched from the Suez Canal Zone to Cyprus at the start of the EOKA troubles in 1955 in order to provide the island police force with its very first radio network. Command of a UKLF Sig Tp specifically tasked to maintain all communications for a bunkered 'Regional Seat of Government' in Southern England; and, much later, commanding 4 Sqn, 16 Sig Regt, attached to HQ 1(BR) Corps at Bielefeld not the least because the Sqn consisted of 60% WRAC personnel!

He held a number of Staff appointments during his career, both in and outside the Corps, including: IO (Interpreter) HQ BAOR, S03 HQ Radio Group BAOR, Staff Captain (A) West Midland District/HQ 48 Div (TA) and S02 (Signals) HQ Northern Ireland. His last uniformed post was in a 'R Signals tied' appointment with the UK Support Unit at SHAPE HQ, Mons, Belgium, where in early 1978 he elected PVR at age 50 in order to transfer to the Civil Service as a 'Retired Officer' to return to Intelligence work in HQ BAOR as S03 Int. (Orbat Sov). He held the post for almost fifteen years, gaining an international reputation amongst the NATO intelligence community as 'Mr GSFG'. As one of his British colleagues once put it 'There must be about 350,000 armoured and softskinned vehicles in the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, but **Roy** knows exactly when each of them is due for an oil-change!'

Fittingly enough, after a Service career which had extended for the whole duration of the Cold War, he reached final retirement age in December 1992, just as the Soviet forces decided to withdraw from East Germany and the MOD found that there was no longer a pressing need for his particular analytical skills!

Roy Barber decided to remain in Germany during the whole of his retirement, living in a village only eight kilometres from his former office door. Having been elected an honorary member of an Officers' Mess in Rheindahlen, he was able to maintain his Service connections and interest in the British military scene to the very end.

POTTS - Capt R A M Potts, (Dick) died on 17 October 02.

Richard Arnold Merthyn Potts was born in Cheshire on 18 August 1916 and was educated at Chester Grammar School. At 15 years of age he ran away from home (his family having been badly hit by the slump) and enlisted at Wrexham in the Royal Signals. He was under age, but the recruiting sergeant said to him, 'Go out of that door, go round the block, and when you come in again you will be 16.'

After Catterick and Bulford, **Dick** was posted to Egypt Signals, where wartime found him a skilled operator and a fluent French speaker with some German and Arabic. He was eminently suited to be transferred to the newly formed LRDG and later as Liaison Officer with the Free French and Foreign Legion. For his services with them at Bir Hacheim he was awarded the Croix de Guerre with Silver Star. After El Alamein and seven continuous years in Africa, with the intervention of **General Horrocks**, he was transferred back to the UK. D Day saw him at the centre of operations of the invasion and a few days later, **Dick** started his service in Europe, landing at Arromanches on a motor bike.

After the War he left the Army, becoming an excellent French schoolteacher in Surrey. His last eleven years were spent quietly in the beautiful countryside in the Ludlow area.

An account of **Dick's** time in the LRDG (written by him) can be found in *Desert Explorer*, a biography of **Colonel Patrick A Clayton**, written by his son, **Peter Clayton**.

SAWYER - WO1(FofS) W Sawyer (Wilf) died in September 2002.

It is with deep regret that the death of **Wilf Sawyer** is announced. **Wilf** died after a relatively short illness in September 2002. **Wilf** was a native of Leeds and joined the Army in February 1950 as an Apprentice at Harrogate. He was one of the youngest members of intake 50A, being barely fifteen. He completed his training at Harrogate as a Radio Mechanic in September 1953.

His first posting was to 18 Army Group Signals at Herford and Essen in BAOR. This was followed by postings to COMCAN Singapore (where he met and married his wife **Mary**) to SHAPE in Paris and then back to Singapore, this time with 18 Sig Regt. After three years in the Far East **Wilf** was posted back to BAOR, 28 Sig Regt at St Tonis Krefeld, by which time he was a Sgt technician. He took and passed his Foreman's entrance exam and was selected to attend 21 FofS course. He successfully completed the course and was away to BOAR, Hildersheim. After this there followed postings to 234 Sig Sqn Malta, 8 Sig Regt Catterick, 35 Sig Regt (V) Birmingham as PSI, and finally 260 Sig Sqn in Dortmund and Northern Ireland.

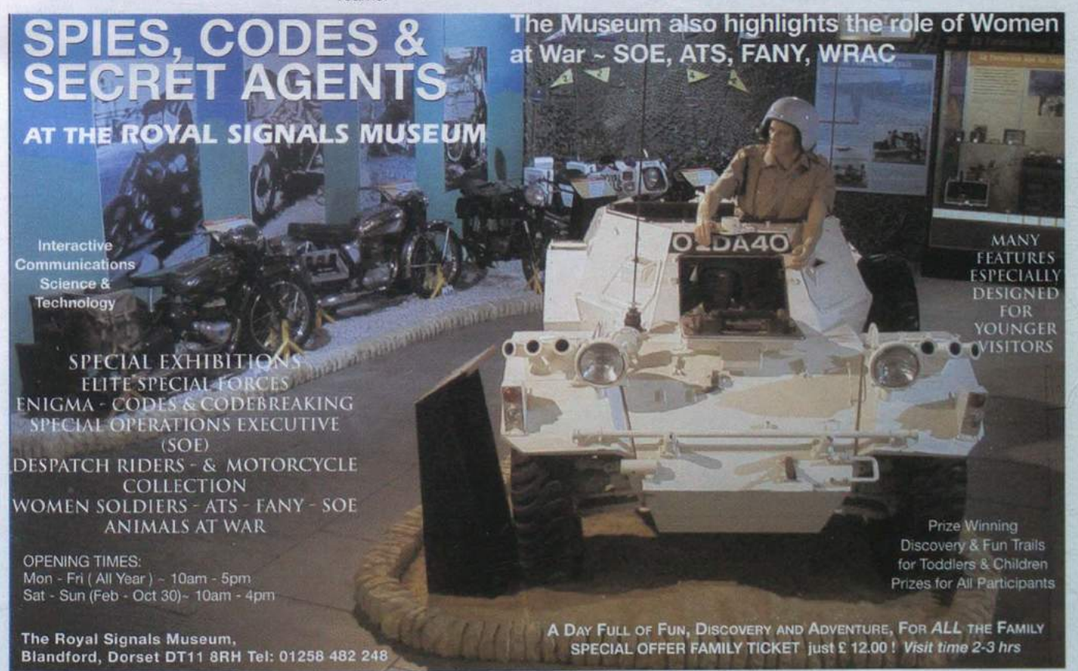
Wilf retired in August 1977 after twenty-seven years' service. He settled in LeighonSea and was employed by Marconi at Basildon, Essex, until his final retirement in January 2000. **Wilf** was a Life member of the Association and a member his local Royal British Legion branch.

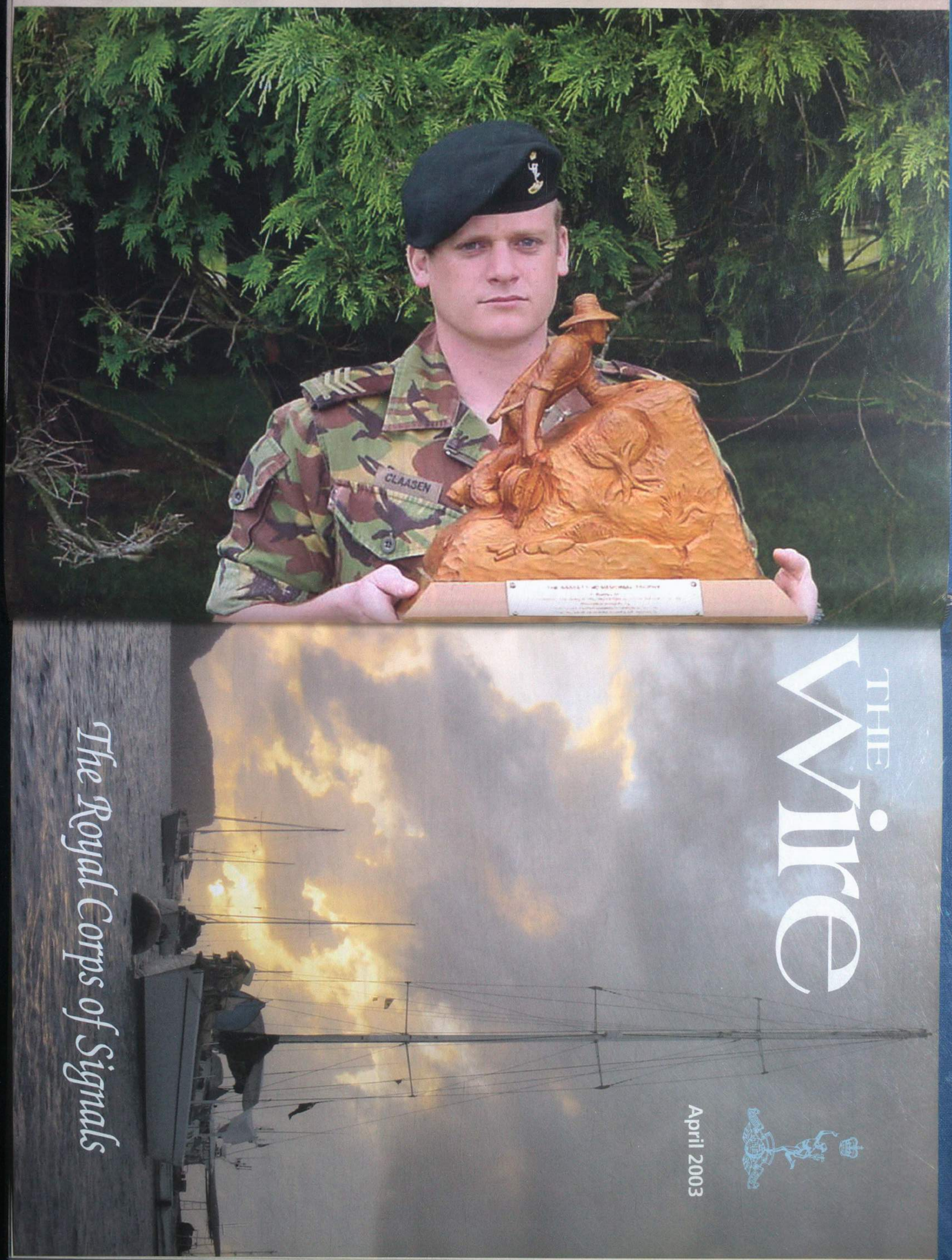
His wife **Mary** predeceased him by some years. Our condolences go to his children and grandchildren. His family and his many friends in the Corps will sadly miss him.

*In the photo **LCpl King** shows **The Master** the equipment used by the Sqn's Forward Repair Teams.*

MASTER OF SIGNALS' VISIT TO 3 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

On 20 November, 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn hosted visit from The Master of Signals, **Maj Gen IOJ Sprackling OBE**. Aware that it was **The Master's** third visit to a Sigs unit in the Province in as many days, the Sqn pulled out all the stops. So out came the chocolate biscuits that they had been saving for a big occasion! **The Master** spent the morning touring the Sqn, receiving a number of insightful briefs from the sections. Especially interesting and current was **Cpl Lynn's** brief on OXBOW, the new Heli-Teli asset, the demonstration of which, showed its impressive capabilities. The Sqn was also able to show **Maj Gen Sprackling** the significant improvements that have been taking place in Portadown, namely the new single living-in accommodation and cookhouse. **The Master** showed great interest in all members of the Sqn and their activities. They in turn were glad to prove their considerable abilities to him by winning the Military Skills contest in Magilligan the next day.





THE Wire

April 2003

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE VISIT OF THE COLONEL-IN-CHIEF TO MULTI-NATIONAL BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228) 4 - 5 FEBRUARY 2003

- by WO1 (RSM) Carter

Following a rather exciting arrival at the VIP area of Pristina airport (courtesy of some very enthusiastic Russian and Italian offrs and soldiers) **Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal** was whisked away for a visit to the RLC (of whom she is also Colonel-in-Chief). The Multi-National Military Police (MNMP), manned all the junctions and vulnerable points, and the Royal cavalcade swept smoothly along the roads.

After the visit to the CSS Sqn, **Her Royal Highness** was taken to Slim Lines to retire in the Royal accommodation for an hour or so. For those of you who have been to Slim Lines, Block E has never looked so splendid, with the QM, **Maj Fred Payet**, the RQMS(A), **WO2 (RQMS) Sam Parke** and the SQMS, **SSgt (SQMS) Pete Mullen** pulling all the tricks in the book to produce accommodation truly fit for a Princess. Of course security was at the top the priority list, and a complex security plan to keep the Princess safe was designed by **WO2 (MTWO) Trev Croxon** and **SSgt Alex Alexander-High**, and led by **Cpl Jamie Slade**.

Maj Paterson presents Her Royal Highness to the Sqn Comd team. L-R: Maj Payet, Capt Corkery, Lt Barker, Lt Bermingham (14 Sig Regt), WO2 (RQMS) Gillies, WO2 (YofS) Meehan

The Princess Royal was then invited to a reception in the combined Offrs and SNCOs Mess at Multi-National Brigade (Centre) (MNB(C)), Slim Lines. The Bde Comd, **Brig JS Shaw** (late Para) was presented to her before introducing Senior Offrs, Offrs, WOs and SNCOs serving in theatre. **Her Royal Highness** then attended a dinner party for a select 20.

Her Royal Highness meets some of the SMART team after their rigging demonstration

Following all the intense activity of the preceding 22 hours, **Her Royal Highness** finally arrived for her visit to the Bde Sig Sqn just before 1100 hours on Tuesday 04 February 03. She was greeted by the OC, and the 2IC and RSM were presented, before she was invited to be photographed with the Sqn. The gods were certainly smiling on us at this point. All the poor weather from earlier that morning had disappeared and the picture was taken under clear blue skies.

It was then over to the Bde Conference Room to meet the Sqn Offrs and WOs and to be briefed by the OC. The briefing included recent and future Sqn activities and events, such as the handover to the Finnish Command, 6-8 weeks on SPTA re-learning the armour, conversion to Bowman and the move to Bulford in early 2004.

Her Royal Highness was then shown to System Control were she met the crew and was briefed by **WO2 (YofS) Paul Meehan** on the complexities of the handover to the Finnish Comms Coy. She was then escorted to the aerial tower by **WO2 (FofS) Rob Clifford**, where she watched a demonstration of rigging techniques by **LCpl Phil Brewster** and **Sig Pippa Lavenu**. Whilst listening and looking at equipment used by our installation techs, the Princess demonstrated her very current and informed knowledge of RSigs matters. **Sigs Gibson** and **Sturdy** were not the only ones to be impressed by our Colonel-in-Chief's knowledge not only of our working practices, but also the improvements in latest technology.

The work environment over, **Her Royal Highness** returned to the combined Offrs and SNCOs Mess. Here she was invited to sign the Sqn's visitors' book and present 3 of our youngest Sigs with their Kosovo Medal. The lucky recipients were **Sig Roberts** from 14 Sig Regt, **Sig Jemma Proctor** and **Sig Rob Lewis**. The Princess was then invited to a light lunch to meet as many of the RSigs cap-badged offrs and soldiers we could muster, including members of 14 and 32 Sig Regts. Sadly members of 21 Sig Regt could not make it, as they were still up in the hills, providing comms for the helicopter flights. The RSM then called for 3 cheers for our Colonel-in-Chief, The Princess Royal which signalled the end of the visit and time to leave for the airport.

Behind the scenes the 2IC, RSM and many others were trying frantically to smooth the waters with the Russians and Italians (another story) at the airport for the return journey. But we had forgotten the grace of the Princess. With a smile, she charmed those around, ensuring a successful farewell on the Royal flight. Overall the visit was a great success, thanks to many long hours of planning and preparation and the professionalism of all those involved with the visit.

Her Royal Highness awards the Kosovo Campaign medal to Sig Proctor

The Royal Signals Magazine

The Wire

April 2003 Vol. 57 No: 2

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Editor Maj (Retd) B L Redshaw
Deputy Editor Mrs M-A Field

Member of the Association of Service Journals

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FRONT COVER

EXERCISE CARRIBEAN ENDEAVOUR. Capt Rob Francis and SSgt Terry McIntyre of 36 Signal Regiment (V) went to Antigua to join a Joint Services sailing expedition in January, during which they sailed over 700 miles with 44 night hours. This is their yacht, *HMSTC Discoverer*, a Challenge 67, moored in English Harbour.

BACK COVER

BALDRICK VISITS THE BLACK ADDER SQUADRON. As everyone knows, 101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (261) wear the Black Adder shoulder flash. On Tuesday 4 February, 261 paraded to be inspected by the Reviewing Private, Pte Baldrick of the TV series. He is pictured here with the Sqn after that event.

NEW YEAR'S HONOURS 2003

We congratulate the following members of the Corps who were awarded honours in the New Year's List 2003:

Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Maj (QGO) Navindrabikram Gurung MBE
RHQ QGS

Maj Frank Gledhill Kirkham MBE TD
Sheffield UOTC

WO2 Maxwell George Paterson MBE
Army Personnel Centre

Maj Andrew Desmond Smith MBE
38 Sig Regt (V)

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EDITORIAL

I was delighted at the response I have had so far to the changes that we initiated in the February edition of *The WIRE*. I have lost count of the number positive comments that have come in. It shows that we are on the right track. There were also a few helpful ideas that I can use in the future. Thank you.

Another change, which you will see in this issue, is the Guest Editorial. I must come clean here and admit that I have pinched this idea from *The Craftsman*. But I will take the idea further. Instead of having contributions only from senior ranking officers, I intend to invite lower ranks as well. So if you have a view you wish to express about the Corps or your experiences in it, do please contact me.

In this edition's Guest Editorial, **MajGen Tony Boyle CB** speaks of the comradeship within the Corps family. I must say that, having become a singly, I know well this family feeling and I appreciate its value. It felt it strongly when I joined the Reading Branch of the RSA; it has become stronger since I have been in this job at RHQ; and as I go about visiting units and RSA Branches, the feeling becomes stronger still.

Speaking of visits, I had a most enjoyable one at a combined meeting with the Aldershot RSA Branch and members of 251 and 261 Sig Sqns. Not only was I warmly received (and well-hosted by **Brig Noel Moss** and his wife, **Edelgard**), I also witnessed an excellent bridging operation between the retired and serving Corps – a link that **MajGen Boyle** seeks in his Editorial. There must be more opportunities like this that can be opened up. *The WIRE* will do all it can to help with these links.

I also had a most successful visit to Elmpt Station in February. Here I was able to see 7 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt and 280 Sig Sqn both on exercises and going about their day to day tasks. Then it was up to Rheindahlen to DCSA 252 Sig Sqn to see how they are coping with the changes they are currently going through (and they're doing well). It was really great talking to Corps people at all levels, to understand what they are doing and to know how they feel about the job – and, of course, about *The WIRE*. My thanks to COs, OCs and all ranks of these units, particularly to **Maj Pete Doherty** of 16 Sig Regt who made the arrangements.

During February there have been changes in two appointments that connect with this office. **Col Neil Donaldson OBE** leaves the job of DCOS/Regt Col for a civil defence type job in the north. His place has been taken by **Col John Ewbank**, who has moved down the hill from Commandant RSS/Blandford Garrison. The Editor of *The Journal*, **Col Bill Kennedy**, retires (for the third time, so he says!) to make way for **Col Tom Moncur**, who moves down from Surrey. I shall personally miss **Neil** and **Bill**, both of whom have given me a lot of support in this job. I welcome **John** and **Tom** and look forward to working with them.

I have at last a detailed story on OP FRESCO (see 2 (NC) Sig Bde's report on page 128). I had been frustrated at seeing in the media only stories and shots of soldiers driving Green Goddess's and squirting hoses, but little or nothing of the soldiers (us!!) who patch you through from your 999 call to the ops rooms. Now we have such a story. What I am looking for next are some early stories on OP TELIC. I don't want to see just the usual stories of tanks and strike aircraft. I want to see more of the Corps involvement. After all we are a vital and essential element of this op. I want to see us get a bit of credit for it. So if you are out there, please send me a story about what you are doing and how it's going. I don't mind if anyone sends me material direct, so long as I get it quickly.

My thoughts are with all those abroad on ops at this time, especially, OP TELIC. My wish is that you all come through safely.

Bernard Redshaw

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE.....

Royal Signals Junior Commanders Course – Impressions from a Participant

Cpl Cowley gives his impressions of the RSJCC. 'It's best to go on this with the attitude to pass it first time..' he says.
See 20 Amd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn's report on page 174.

Royal Signals Group Expedition to Chile

Members of 212 Sqn travelled via the Falklands to Chile for EX REFUGIO DIAMOND, a ten-day adventurous training expedition. **LCpl Wignall** describes the trip in 212 Sqn's report on page 132.

A Squadron is Disbanded

There were lumps in many throats of the remaining members 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)) who marched off after their disbandment parade at Bulford on 9 January. But the SOinC(A) and Comd, UK Element AMF(L) were there to see them off, and they had the companionship of 18 veterans from the Sqn's FARELF days in the bar later.

See 249 Sqn (AMF(L))'s report on page 178.

Another Jump at Arnhem

The Polish DZ at Arnhem, soon to be turned into a huge industrial park, had not been jumped on since 1944. So before its demise, a group of 30 parachutists, including **Sgt Brewin** and **Cpl MacDonald** from Radio Systems Group, RSS, did a final memorial jump there. **Gen Sir Michael Jackson** and many Polish WWII veterans were present.

See Radio Systems Group report on page 114 .

Blackadder's Staff Visits Aldershot

101 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn's RSM came up with 'a cunning plan' to invite 'the best soldier ever to take the King's Shilling' to visit them in Aldershot. So on 4 February the Sqn eagerly awaited the Reviewing Private's arrival.

Read about **Pte Baldrick's** visit in 101 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn's report on page 182.

OP FRESCO Watchkeepers

At last we have an OP FRESCO story about Corps people working in their true role on this op. Most media reports on OP FRESCO have been about soldiers driving Green Goddess's or squirting water. **2Lt Aidy Matthews** and **Lt Huw George** tell us how they planned and set up an ops room to provide CIS for OP FRESCO. The learning curve was steep and there were many problems, but, in true RSigs tradition, they found solutions to all of them. However, they did sound a little disappointed when the FBU called off the strikes.

See 2 (NC) Sig Bde's report on page 128.

Elmpt Station One Year On

Formerly RAF Brüggen, Elmpt Station, which includes Javelin Barracks, is now not only an Army establishment, it is also one of the largest concentrations of RSigs personnel. Housing 16 Sig Regt, 7 Sig Regt and 280 Sig Sqn (around some 1300 Corps personnel), there's a good chance that many Corps personnel will serve there at some time in their careers.

As 'host unit', 16 Sig Regt has written an article on Elmpt one year on from the Army's takeover, pointing out the many advantages of postings there. Their aim is to make it the best community in the British Army.

See 'Elmpt Station' in the centre spread.

GUEST EDITORIAL

- By MajGen AH Boyle CB, Chairman, The Royal Signals Association (RSA)

The invitation for me to write a guest editorial provides a welcome opportunity to provide a higher profile for the RSA among the serving Corps. So what is the RSA? It is the embodiment of the Corps family, of those who have served before you, and it includes those in the serving Corps, Regular and TA, to which this message is primarily directed.

The RSA has two primary objectives. They are 'Welfare' and 'Comradeship'. Thanks largely to you in the serving Corps, the vast majority of whom subscribe to the one day's pay scheme, the RSA is able to make available some £350,000 annually to past and present signallers, and their dependants, who are in some form of need or distress. We are additionally aided in this welfare objective by the Army Benevolent Fund, SSAFA and the Royal British Legion, with whom we work closely. **Mrs Jan Cornick** is the Welfare Secretary, working on the staff at RHQ in Blandford. She pulls all the threads together, but is aided by a very large network of volunteers who serve on the welfare committees and among the many branches around the country who alert the system to needy cases.

Most serving soldiers know that their one day's pay provides funds for the likes of sports and adventurous training. Few are as aware of the very worthwhile contribution it makes to the less fortunate among us.

Under the 'Comradeship' banner, we aim to foster comradeship and morale within the Corps family, serving and retired. We do so largely through the 70 Branches located around the nation and more than 20 Affiliated Branches. The former are geographically based and bear the names of their locations, such as the Aldershot Branch. The latter are based upon a unit or function, such as the Indian Signals Association or the Airborne Signals Association. Many individuals join both their geographical and their unit affiliated branches. **Mr Peter Cuckow** is our Membership Secretary at RHQ, providing the link to all parts of the RSA. You, as serving members of the Corps, may be familiar with some Branches. The 3rd Divisional Signals Reunion Club and its members are well known to the members of the serving unit, and many geographical Branches meet regularly on TA, and in some cases, Regular unit premises.

We need to strengthen our links with the serving Corps and are currently embarked on a study to do so. I know this objective has the strong support of the Signal Officer-in-Chief and of the Master of Signals, who is President of the RSA, and I know you will hear more of the RSA in the coming months. For those of you who are nearing the end of your service, at whatever stage or rank in your military career, Regular or TA, you will find a warm welcome and a helping hand in your local or unit based branch of the RSA. Our members have already been where you are heading and can help. You have but to ask. As you begin to consider leaving the supporting atmosphere of the serving Corps for the world outside, you should know that there are, right around the country, those who have shared experience of the Corps who are ready to welcome you.

The RSA is currently improving its web site.You can find it linked to the Corps' own Home Page at www/army.moduk/royalsignals/rsa. Many Branches have their own websites, which you will see are also linked, and many others are about to initiate their own. If these sites do not answer your questions, then our Membership Secretary will be happy to try. You will find his contact details on the site.

I hope this short article provides some useful information for you about the RSA. It is your Association as much as it is of those who have served before you. One day, you too will leave the serving Corps. The RSA is a country-wide network that stands ready to help those in need and to welcome comrades of the Royal Corps of Signals, from whatever era.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM

by Colonel (Retd) Cliff Walters

SILVER JUBILLEE PRESENTATION TO OUR COLONEL-IN-CHIEF

- by Col (Retd) Cliff Walters, Museum Director

On Page 312 of the August *WIRE* is a photograph of our Colonel-in-Chief wearing two pieces of jewellery. The caption states, 'For the first time **Her Royal Highness** wears a badge on her hat -the Jimmy presented to her the previous evening'. The presentation of the 'Jimmy' was a significant event in Corps history that is worthy of bringing to the attention of Corps members. It was presented at the Colonel Commandants' Dinner by the **Master of Signals** who, in his speech, explained the background to the brooch.

The brooch that is being worn on her left is of gold design and the stone is decorated with a 'Jimmy' that is difficult to see unless the viewer is close to it. **Her Royal Highness** was presented with this brooch on 20 February 1978, shortly after she was appointed our Colonel-in-Chief. The presentation was made by **MajGen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL** and **MajGen AAG Anderson CB**, who were then Representative Colonel Commandant and SOinC respectively. **Her Royal Highness** wears the brooch whenever she visits the Corps.

We are all aware that 2002 was the Silver Jubilee year for our Colonel-in-Chief, and the Corps Committee determined that an appropriate presentation should be made to her to mark the event in an appropriate way. A wide range of ideas was proposed, but the outcome was to present the diamond Jimmy brooch that is seen adorning her hat on the photograph.

For the first time our Colonel-in-Chief wears two Jimmies

This brooch was originally presented to our first Colonel-in-Chief, **Her Royal Highness, Princess Mary** on 8 October 1936. **Brig H Clementi-Smith DSO**, Representative Colonel Commandant, made the presentation on a parade of troops at Catterick. In his speech, he stated that it was being presented on behalf of 12,388 members of the Regular Army, Supplementary Reserve and Territorial Army.

Our records show that in July 1935, the Corps at large had been requested to seek donations from individuals. 'It has been calculated that, if all officers subscribe at the rate of 6d (about 2p) and all British other ranks at the rate of 1d, the requisite sum will be realised.' The brooch of diamonds and platinum was made by the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Company, 112 Regent Street, London and was supplied with a suitably engraved inscription on the leather jewellery box all at a cost of £60. It was recently valued at many thousand of pounds. **Princess Mary** wore the brooch on many Corps occasions and after her death in 1965 it was returned to the Corps, eventually becoming an exhibit in the Corps Museum. A replica brooch has now been made to replace this exhibit.

Thus, the brooch that I am sure many of the Corps will see our Colonel-in-Chief wearing at future events has a significance that takes us back over 65 years of the Corps' illustrious history.

MEDAL DONATION TO THE MUSEUM

by Colonel (Retd) Cliff Walters

On the 18 February the Museum received the medals of **Lieutenant Colonel W J (Bill) Morris MBE MC** who died in 1995. They were presented on behalf of **Bill's** wife, **Lilly**, who unfortunately could not be present, by a friend of the family, **Mr Don Humphreys**.

Bill had a very interesting military career to say the least. He was born on 22 May 1899, entered the Merchant Navy in June 1913 and transferred to the Royal Navy in July 1916. By then he had qualified as a Marine Radio Operator. He saw out the Great War, with operations in Gallipoli, Mesopotamia, East Africa and Home Waters, during which he was Mentioned in Despatches. This was to be his first of many recorded acts of selflessness.

On 13 January 1922 **Bill** attested into the Royal Artillery but soon afterwards he transferred to the Royal Signals with whom he served until 3 May 1953. On the outbreak of war in 1939 he was commissioned into the Corps and set sail with the British Expeditionary Force. Soon after he returned to the training organisation to prepare the many newly called up soldiers for war. In April 1941 he was assigned to the conflict in North Africa, and in April 1943 whilst commanding No 1 Company, 8th Army Signals, he was awarded the Military Cross. His unit was responsible for laying out the cable system used for control of the tank battle at EL ALAMEIN. The citation goes on to say, '*...During the advance his company was responsible for the reconstruction of many hundreds of miles of permanent route which had been mined and booby-trapped. His car was twice blown up on mines but he carried on and, without thought for personal safety, continued his reconnaissances of forward routes in order to bring back the information to allow the formation of Signal plans.*'

In 1943 **Bill** was involved in the planning of the Salerno and Anzio landings. For his services to the American Forces in the period September 1943 to June 1944 he was awarded the American Bronze Star. As a Lieutenant Colonel he had worked tirelessly on interoperability with the Americans. The American citation stated, '*...Displaying a very high degree of professional skill and leadership and an outstanding devotion to duty in performing the multitudinous duties incident to his membership on the Fifth Army Wire Board, his accomplishments contributed materially to the success of the Allied war effort.*' Because of the classification of the time the citation does not mention that he was also deeply involved in siting, in Italy, various stations of the highly secret 'J' and 'Y' Services.

Later in the war, in Italy under operational conditions, he supervised the satisfactory trials of the No10 Set. This set went on to provide vital communications for 21 Army Group in the advance across Europe. Before the war was over he would again be Mentioned in Despatches.

Bill left the Army and set up his own telecomms company, but in 1951 was recalled. He spent two years in Germany as the Telecomms Liaison Officer where he was deeply involved in repairing the communication systems and setting up No1 Wireless Regiment.

After his military retirement, he joined GCHQ. He also became a staunch supporter of the Royal British Legion, for which he was the County Chairman from 1964 to 1971. He was later awarded the MBE.

The Trustees of the Royal Signals Museum wish to thank **Mrs Lilly Morris** for her kind donation of a most superb collection of medals that portray a life of selfless devotion to King, Queen and Country.

Colonel Cliff Walters receiving the medals from Mr Don Humphreys, with Mrs Humphreys and friends, Mr and Mrs Rob Winney in attendance

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
FEBRUARY 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col J K Ewbank	DCOS HQ SOInC(A)
Lt Col A H Campbell-Black	39 Sig Regt
Lt Col P J Davies	COS HQ SOInC(A)
Lt Col J E Richardson	R Sigs/Int Div
Lt Col D B Hudson	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Maj R J Carter	HQ 3 (UK) Div
Maj R J Craig	Theatre & Formation Comms IPT
Maj E C Dale	R Sigs/Int Div
Lt E Metcalfe	228 Sig Sqn
Capt S G Jackson	Royal School of Signals
Lt L J Brereton-Martin	399 SU (Army Element)
Lt L Clark	202 Sig Sqn 3 (UK) Div
Lt V J Galloway	Royal School of Signals
Lt B J Henderson	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Lt K L Milner	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Lt B E Norton	ATR Lichfield
Lt P C Wettenhall	HQ Sig Sqn 7 Armd Bde
Lt C J H Wootten	Royal School of Signals

WOS AND SNCOS
FEBRUARY 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
A/WO1 YofS P R G Tonks	BOTAT
A/WO1 RD R G Dalton	OCE Sarajavo
A/WO1 RD A Dick	2 Sig Regt
WO2 RD A E Buckle	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO2 RD A Gemmell	32 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 RD P V Davis	7 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD P T Haughton	2 Sig Regt
SSgt T Davies	HQ DFTS
SSgt G Davies	16 Sig Regt
SSgt J C Goldsworthy	JSSU (Aylos Nikolaos)
SSgt K J Ripley	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt P J Robinson	AFCO Newcstle
SSgt D C Whitworth	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
Sgt S Blakey	2 Sig Regt
Sgt A Buchan	34 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt E J Cassee	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
Sgt R M Groundsell	15 Sig Regt
Sgt P Henderson	225 Sig Sqn
Sgt A Nuttall	2 Sig Regt
Sgt M A Partington	DISC Support Unit
Sgt M J Peace	14 Sig Regt
Sgt D Purdon	242 Sig Sqn
Sgt L Rigby	600 Sig Tp
Sgt P C Walledge	Royal School of Signals
A/Sgt S A Tremain	16 Sig Regt

MARCH 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 RD F E Roberts	11 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD M A Ginty	JSSU Digby
A/WO1 RD T A Henry	40 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 RD J R Stillie	39 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 YofS C R Quinn	MOD Centre Block
WO2 RD G Dewar	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
A/WO2 RD N G KMcKenzie	Edinburgh UOTC
A/WO2 J M Williams	SHAPE Regional Sp Gp
SSgt D B Holroyd	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt S R Pickering	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt P J Alford	7 Sig Regt
Sgt N M Asquith	16 Sig Regt
Sgt R J P Bowden	7 Sig Regt
Sgt S Bruce	11 EOD Regt
Sgt N A Coombs	251 Sig Sqn
Sgt G Cox	2 Sig Regt
Sgt C S Eden	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt M P Galley	30 Sig Regt
Sgt R M Godfrey	30 Sig Regt
Sgt N D Howard	16 Sig Regt
Sgt M G James	28 CTT
Sgt N D Jones	243 Sig Sqn
Sgt W T Jones	6 Bn REME
Sgt K T Jukes	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
Sgt S G McIlroy	21 Sig Regt
Sgt C J O'Neill	HQ Brunei Garrison
Sgt N Roberts	16 Sig Regt
Sgt D A Royle	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt D Taylor	The Royal School of Signals
Sgt J R Towers	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt M G Weeks	Royal School of Signals
A/Sgt S Kerr	Royal School of Signals

RETIREMENTS

FEBRUARY 2003

Maj J Coffey	08 Feb 03
Capt S A Knight	06 Feb 03

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

ROYAL SIGNALS MOBILE PRESENTATION TEAM

OC **Lt Eddie Maskell-Pedersen**
2IC **Sgt Billy Wishart**

The RSMPT is made up of 8 very dedicated soldiers who are all working together to promote the Corps in Schools and Colleges all over the UK. We visit schools, give them a presentation on the Corps, showing and telling them what the it has to offer and get them involved in exercises and activities linked to Royal Signals including, using radios.

The team also participates in various outside events. One of these was the Manchester Skill Festival (the biggest tech festival in Europe) held on 11 November 02 at Salford Quays. A team, comprising 5 RSMPT personnel and members of 2 Sig Regt recruiting team participated in the Army exhibition throughout the event. It was a challenging task and we worked hard to ensure that we presented ourselves well and stood out from the other corps that attended. More importantly, we needed to demonstrate how professional we were as an IT/Comms organisation because we were exhibiting against other comms companies from all over Europe. It was a very successful event and as a bonus, some of the team members got to meet celebrities such as **Mandy** from *Hollyoaks*, **Miss England** and **HRH Prince Charles**.

After many months of driving from one end of the country to the other, we are currently at the end of the winter season. Over the months the team members, including the hierarchy, have changed many times. We welcome **Maj Dallyn,** who replaced **Maj Anderson** as SO2 HR. **Capt Simon Bristow** left in November to NI, leaving **Lt Eddie Maskell-Pedersen** to take over as OC. **Sgt Guy Padfield** left after being on the team for 18 months to take on another difficult role as a Cadet instructor in Winchester, leaving **Sgt Billy Wishart** to fill the post of team Sgt. Cpl **Dave Shepherd** arrived in January from 21 Sig Regt to replace **Cpl Phil Parish**, who decided that he no longer liked the cold in the UK and has been posted back to Cyprus. The team would also like to say a final farewell to the Regimental Colonel, **Col Neil Donaldson MBE**, who leaves the Army in March.

If you like what you have read in this article, enjoy a challenge, and would like to represent your Corps, you can find more information about the RSMPT from your RCMO, or you can contact the OC RSMPT on Blandford 2098.

The Royal Signals Mobile Presentation Team

The White Helmets

CO **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Captain **Capt J Malcolm**
CI **SSgt P Boughey**

With the 2002 Display Season at an end the Team swung into training mode and most particularly the Induction Course in November 2002 for potential new riders for the 2003 Display Season. The Induction Course is a demanding 12 days that challenges an individual's courage, determination, willingness to be a team member, not to mention their sense of humour. When asked what he thought of the course as he completed the Trials Day, one attendee could only answer 'Awesome'.

The first day on any course is always daunting and this one is no exception. After being issued with full sets of Barbours, goggles, gloves and helmets, candidates are then introduced to the Honda XR 250 cross-country motorcycle, the one used for the first week's training. Many who arrive on the course have never sat on a motorcycle, never mind ridden one. The functions of all of the controls that stick out everywhere are explained. Unlike a car the hands have to operate the clutch, front brake and throttle while your feet do dances on the rear brake and gear change. It is often more advantageous not to have ridden a motorcycle before, because the riding skills they will be taught would give the average licence examiner a heart attack!

From learning the basics of controlling a motorcycle the students then spend 5 days on Bovington tank training area, where they learn to go anywhere that a tank can go, but more often can't. Remember this is November and it is very wet, very muddy and very cold! They all complete numerous objectives to examine their personal motivation and attitude toward teamwork.

This is what **Sig Dave Kruczek** thought of the course:
'The first day was spent on the airfield of Blandford camp and it was the start of an intensive 2 weeks. The course was sorted into two groups, riders and non-riders. 9 out of 13 of us had never ridden a bike before. We then spent the day learning basic operation controls of the Honda XR 250 machines. Once the course was competent enough and had completed a CBT, it was off to Bovington training area, where the fun and bruises would begin.

'Each day would start with a light PT session taken by **LCpl Mick Woolnough**. His lessons were designed to loosen up the muscles from the previous days riding. Then, off to the cookhouse for much-needed breakfast. The 5 days on Bovington training area would prove very difficult, especially trying to count how many times we hadn't fallen off. **Sig** 'Fitzy' **Fitzgerald** held the record for the number of times for falling off in one day. **Sig** 'Jonno' **Johnston** came a very close second. With excellent instruction and demonstrations by the experts, only a few minor injuries were sustained. I was one of the few, requiring 5 stitches in my chin after riding into the very red and extremely easy-to-see team quad bike.

'The new team Captain, **Capt Jon Malcolm** showed true team spirit by joining in all of the riding tasks set out. Needless to say he fell off just as much as anyone else (nice to see that RHIP does not work in every unit).

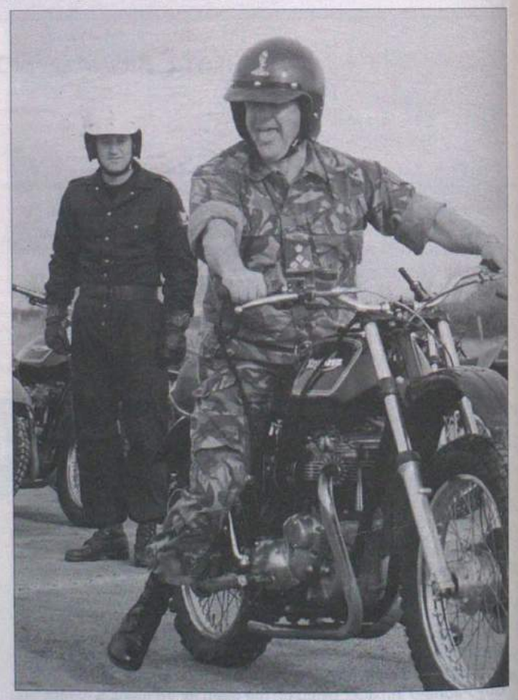
'Day 5 was cross-country time trials day. It was time to put into practice everything we had learned. Two separate courses were marked out on the training area. The student with the fastest aggregate time over both courses won. This turned out to be **Sig Craig Moore**.

'The second week of the course saw the introduction of the Triumph Tiger 750cc display bikes. Remember, most of us had only been riding bikes for a week, and now we found ourselves standing on them, in all sorts of weird and wonderful positions. During this week, each student had also been given the task of delivering a 5-minute presentation. **Sig Suzi Bowles** gave an

Teamwork works on the 3 Bike Fan

interesting presentation on how to get yourself into a Bergen. Being a contortionist he found this very easy. We were all given a very valuable insight into interview techniques by the OC, to give us confidence in public speaking and reacting to live interviews on TV or radio. The week continued with us riding the display Triumphs, learning and practising what the experts refer to as 'basic riding tricks'. We were also warned that, by the end of the week we were to present a short display to an invited audience.

'On the final day of the course, the SOinC(A), **Brigadier David McDowell MBE ADC**, visited the Airfield. He watched us practising for our mini-display and saw a number of us complete



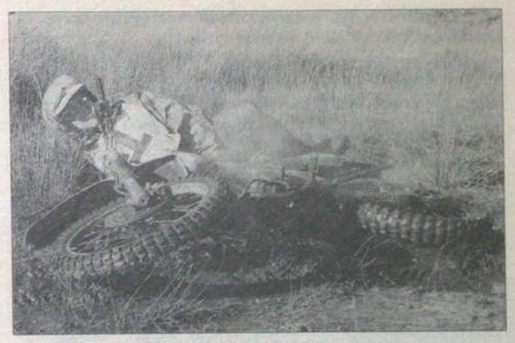
Easy Rider rides again

the dreaded fire jumps on the Honda motorcycles. He then offered us some kind words of encouragement, wished us all good luck and then swiftly jumped onto one of the Triumphs to show off his skills at fast riding and control (it's the fire jump next for you, Sir).

'The Regimental Colonel, **Col Neil Donaldson OBE**, was invited to be the inspecting officer for the mini display. He seemed to be suitably impressed and commented on the high standard we had achieved in such a short time.

'Having been successfully selected, I then joined The White Helmets in January 2003. I have since started serious training to be a rider in the 2003 team. I look forward to a very demanding and hopefully enjoyable tour with The Team.'

The next Induction Course to select volunteers for the 2004 season will be held 3 - 14 November 2003. Contact your Orderly Room and ask to read SOinC(A)'s Policy Directive number 204 to see how you can apply.



Cpl Dickinson tries to retrieve his leg

NEWS OF TRAINING

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

CO **Lt Col AP Hudson MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) DM Forrester**

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT INTER-SQUADRON HARROGATE CUP BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2002 - *by WO1 (SMI) Carey APTC*

The final event of the Harrogate Cup Championships of 2002 was the Inter-Squadron Boxing Competition which took place on 3 and 4 December, with only one point separating first and second place.

As arranged, at 0700hrs on Tuesday, 3 December, the Sqn boxers, who had trained so hard for over 2 months, turned up at the Gymnasium for their much awaited pre-bout medical and weigh-in. With all boxers passing, the draw was conducted by **Capt (MAA) R D Black APTC** and myself.

At 1400hrs the stage was set and the first bout was underway. It was a Light Welterweight Bout between **Sig Birtwhistle** of 1 Sqn and **Sig Roberts** of 3 Sqn. **Sig Roberts** soon took command of the bout with some good straight punches, which, despite the obvious courage shown, soon became too much for **Sig Birtwhistle** and the bout was stopped in the 3rd round by the Referee in favour of **Sig Roberts**. As the day continued some excellent boxing was displayed with 14 of the 19 Bouts going the full 3 round distance. Day 1 finished with over 4 hours of good tactical boxing shown by all who entered the ring.

The Finals Night commenced at 1930 hrs on Wednesday, 4 December, with the Garrison Commander, **Col J K Ewbank**, in attendance. Ten bouts of boxing were scheduled, with 2 female bouts each in the 57-60kg weight category. The night began with the first female bout between **Sig Murphy** of 1 Sqn and **Sig Leatherby** of 3 Sqn. This bout set the tone for the rest of the evening with a high standard of sportsmanship being shown by all the boxers. Both boxers kept a tight guard to start with, but as the bout went on, **Sig Leatherby's** guard dropped to let in a flurry of blows to the head from **Murphy**, giving **Leatherby** a standing count in the First and Third round. **Murphy** continued to apply pressure, always looking for that uppercut which luckily for **Leatherby** didn't arrive. **Murphy** went on to win by a unanimous decision of all three Judges.

An outstanding bout, with toe to toe boxing for all three rounds was between **Sig Mannion-James** of 2 Sqn and **Sig Anderson** of 3 Sqn in the Lightweight Contest. Both boxers gave their all in the first round, giving each other a standing count. **Anderson** also taking a combination of blows in the third round to receive another standing count. The bout was first class boxing courage

Sig Hull of 3 Sqn boxing Sig Harris of 2 Sqn

with nothing left to give, going **Anderson's** way by a majority decision.

Sig Kani of 1 Sqn boxed **Sig Stanyer** of 2 Sqn in the Middleweight Contest, **Stanyer** giving **Kani** a standing count in the first round with a good clean blow to the head. However, as the bout went on, **Stanyer**, who had two bouts the day before, started to run out of steam, receiving a standing count in the third. Both boxers fought to their last breath treating the crowd to an outstanding show of true grit and determination to win, but the bout finished in favour of **Kani** with a majority decision.

Out of the twenty boxers in the Finals Night, 3 Sqn had ten entrants - a remarkable achievement. The awards for the Harrogate Cup Boxing Championships were as follows:

Overall Winners	3 Sqn
Best Boxer	**Sig Anderson**, 3 Sqn
Best Runner-Up	**Sig Stanyer**, 2 Sqn

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JGJ Howes CD Royal Canadian Signals**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Nigel Roberts**

1 Sqn welcomes both a new OC and SSgt to Rhino Tp. Firstly **WO1 Neil Furnival** and wife **Lynne**, from ATR Bassingbourn and secondly **SSgt John Morley** and wife **Tina**, from 16 Sig Regt. We wish them all a pleasant stay at Blandford and hope they settle in quickly to the way of life in Dorset. Unfortunately we also have some farewells. **WO1 Bob Clubb** and wife **Sharon** remain in the local area on **Bob's** retirement from the Army. We wish him all the best and hope he puts his resettlement chainsaw handler's course to best use. **SSgt Dave Smith** and wife **Jane** left us in November on promotion for Cyprus, we do not need to wish them any more luck as Dave is grinning away behind a diving mask at this very moment.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj Rob Gibson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Haynes**

CHARITY CAR WASH TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE SALVATION ARMY

- by Sig Ormsby

On a cold and wintry weekend 2 Sqn embarked on a mission to wash as many cars as possible in one afternoon under the expert management of **Cpl Jay Carty**. Members of Iron and Beaufighter Tps went to different supermarket car parks to begin the charitable work. After washing a few cars, some of the Iron Tp team had built up an appetite and went to a café for a well-earned breakfast. **Cpl Jay Carty** and **Cpl Matt Lee** spent the majority of the day ensuring that the cars were being washed properly and that we were all working hard. In all about sixty-five cars were washed, and between us all we raised £539.00 for the Salvation Army. We left it up to the public how much they wanted to pay to have their car washed. It was a good effort by all and enjoyed by most. I later had the honour of presenting the cheque to **Capt Richard Hutter** from the Salvation Army.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Maj Alan Hoench**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Bousfield**

THE LIGHTNING TROPHY

Sig Jamie Russell received the Lightning Trophy on 16 December 02, for achieving an outstanding grade during his systems engineering (radio) technician course. He is now posted to 30 Sig Regt.

3 SQN BOXING TEAM

Three months of training was on offer for would-be members of 3 Sqn boxing team. Under the tutelage of **Cpl Natey Dorrian** of Ulster Tp, and **Cpl Dave Worsfold** of Lightning Tp, this combined early mornings with hard work and skilled training. Fitness levels were improved and the Squad was whittled down to size. After starting with over 50 phase 2 trainees, it was reduced to 20 as the demands of the training took its toll.

The Chief Instructor, Lt Col J Dryburgh presents Sig Jamie Russell with the Lightning Trophy

The 3 months training culminated in the inter-Sqn boxing night between 1, 2 and 3 Sqns. The results of the bouts would count towards the Harrogate Cup Competition. Unfortunately, not all of the 20 boxers could participate on the night, but a good night was had by all. Several members of 3 Sqn won their bouts, including **Sigs Hull**, **Sinclair**, **Anderson**, **Parker**, **Rana** and **Carbery**.

VICTORY IN THE HARROGATE CUP

The Harrogate Cup is an inter-sqn competition comprising 10 sporting events that are scored on a points-based system. The 3 Sqns in Phase 2 Training provide the competitors for the events, allowing the soldiers to express their individual and team skills and achieve the ultimate goal of winning the coveted Harrogate Cup. The competition began in the spring with the Basketball event, which was won by 3 Sqn. The following four events also proved to be a good run for the Sqn. We won 3 of the 4. The second half of the year provided some well-deserved competition from the other 2 sqns, with the overall points becoming so close that the entire competition balanced on the winners of the final event - Boxing! After an excellent competition and show from all of the Sqns, the final victors and winners of the Harrogate Cup 2002 were 3 (Harrogate) Sqn.

The Commanding Officer presents Sig Katherine Carbery with the Harrogate Cup 2002

4 (MILITARY TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC **Maj Colin Russell**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dyer**

ROYAL SIGNALS LEADERSHIP COURSE 121

Upon arrival at Blandford Camp it became apparent that the Leadership Course was going to be a little bit 'special'. However, with **LCpl Burns** assigned as the duty student, what could possibly go wrong! Without going into too much detail or giving secrets away, we can tell you our fluid intake doubled and taking an interest in the news and current world affairs became important.

The dark humoured OC, **Lt Dean Atkinson** assisted by **Sgt Russell Heynes** provided a full programme for students with a helping hand from **Cpl Darren Pickard** in the form of personal development.

It is not always apparent what is happening on this course. Predictability of events is like guessing the weather. A certain amount of military skills are rolled in amongst a variety of tasks, some enjoyable, others not so! Each syndicate is assigned a professor, who loves to go everywhere with you. On days of personal development he likes to bring his brother and his mate on a family stroll. We keep getting told it's for our benefit. It doesn't feel like it! You don't get to wear a different coloured beret or a special badge after this course, but you do get to leave after a great deal of development and a huge sense of achievement. Some would say it isn't worth it, but like many things in life, anything that is really worth doing often isn't easy.

MILITARY TRAINING TROOP TA TRAINING TEAM

Tp Comd **WO1 Gary Waters**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Trev Austin**

RSigs Recruit Course 02/007 took place in Blandford in January this year. All training was conducted around the Blandford area and SPTA. Out of a total of 34 Students who arrived, 28 passed out on Friday 25 January.

The course was very demanding with regards to the elements that front this hilly feature in winter. One of the highlights of the course was on week 2 on Salisbury Plain, when all recruits were being tested on their administration and survival in a field environment.

The awards for course 02/007 are as follows:

Top Student	**Sig Mathews**, 36 Sig Regt
Best Endeavour	**Sig Cooper**, 38 Sig Regt
Top Shot	**Sig Plant**, 36 Sig Sqn
Top Academic	**Sig Cruickshank**, 37 Sig Regt
Top Physical Performance	**Sig Bush**, 37 Sig Regt
Top Field Soldier	**Sig Moir**, 81 Sig Sqn

Those who passed out are to be congratulated and are welcomed to the Corps. A very special thanks from all the team goes out to **Lt Col C R Owen**, CO 35 Sig Regt who carried out the duties of Reviewing Officer.

CIS WING

The first Supervisor Information Systems (Supvr IS) course run at RSS commenced on 6 January 03 at RSS. Its focus is Comd and ICS Management training, with a strong emphasis on IS Management. Due to the operational commitments within the Corps, there are now only five candidates remaining. The next course is due to start in June 03, and is now a prerequisite for the Supvr IS appointment.

Rear L-R, WO2 Craig Collins, WO2 Andy Roberts
Front L-R, WO2 John Williams, WO2 Neil Evans, WO2 Andy Burns

In 1992 the RSS formed an association with the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists (WCIT), one of many Livery Guilds located in the City of London. The WCIT have since 1999 awarded the RSigs IT Apprentice Medal to the best student on the basic Sys Engr Tech course. In 2002 it was decided that this medal was better awarded to the Info Sys Op Class 1 course. On the 15 Jan 03 the CI, **Lt Col Jim Dryburgh** and **Capt (TfcIS) Mick Brooks**, had the honour to attend the WCIT New Freeman's Dinner at the Stallholders Hall in London. At this dinner the IT Apprentice Medal was presented to **Sgt Crawford Samuel** from HQ SHAPE. **Sgt Samuel** had been chosen as the overall best student from the six Info Sys Op Class 1 courses that had been run over the training year 02/03.

The Master of the WCIT Mr Peter Morgan and Sgt Crawford Samuel

The Wing has started to see the gaps filled with Military instructors posted in and Civilian instructors recruited. We say welcome to **Sgt Chris Alston**, **Sgt M G Weeks**, **Cpl M T Kennie**, **Mr Trevor Legg**, **Mr Colin Knaggs** and **Mr Barney Patel**. We also say a sad farewell to **WO2 (Supvr IS) George Murray** (22 years service), **Mr Keith Robinson** and **Mr Keith Woollicott** and thank them for their dedicated support in IT training. A special mention should be made to **Mr Keith Robinson** on receiving a GOC's Commendation as a result of his tour in Bosnia.

DATA AND SECURITY WING

OC **Maj Ian Parry**
YofS **WO1(YofS) Andy Drummond**

Since our last contribution to *The WIRE*, there have been a few changes in personalities in D&S Wing. **Maj Ian Parry** has taken over as OC, **SSgt Mandy Strawn** has moved from CBT Section to become the Wing SSgt, **PO(RS) Tommy Steele** has handed in his Naval uniform is now an IO(TS) in the Wing and **Sgt Chalky White** has moved on to civvy street.

The Wing is very busy and looking forward to the new equipment projects (GKM, BEDERAL and PASCO) that we will be starting to teach this year. General Key Management (GKM) is the new electronic crypto keying material storage, management and distribution system, BEDERAL is the new cryptographic system to replace AROFLEX and PASCO is the Navy's contribution to the Defence Formal Messaging System, now part of the Defence Messaging Group in DCSA. The Wing will be instructing it on behalf of DMG.

DATA & SECURITY WING GREAT SOUTH WEST WANDER

On the 29 January 03, D&S Wing embarked on a Comms Recce from Lulworth Cove to Weymouth along the South West Coastal Walk (a whole 17Km). Members of D&S Wing, including **YofS Cse 56** (nine weeks to go), two Civilian instructors and the Naval Rep, **RS Ralph Hart**, set off on a team-building hike. When looking at the first hill, it quickly became obvious that that this was not going to be as easy as first thought. This was compounded as we reached the summit to see the second, third and fourth peaks. It was at this point that **Mr Ian Flooks** and **Mr Mac McCafferty** looked like they were regretting volunteering to join us on this

sunny winter's day. As the teams set off, it soon became apparent that **WO1 (YofS) Andy Drummond's** group were going to use their initiative and conserve energy by skirting around all the peaks (Good idea, **Sgt Mark Allen**!). For some strange reason this caused much grumbling from other groups, especially **SSgt Tim Vanandel's** team (who obviously were very jealous and failed to acknowledge the prearranged Combat Indicator). Most of the teams enjoyed the leisurely walk, but the members of **Sgt Bart Simpson's** team which included the OC, **Maj Ian Parry** did not realise they were in training for the Lanyard Trophy! As the walk came to an end, all teams congregated in a local drinking establishment to complete **SSgt Daz Bailey's** quiz from Hell. The winning team proved that watching too much TV during the RSSC does have its benefits. The day was a great success and a big thanks must go to **SSgt Daz Bailey** for organising the day.

FMVT/CBT SECTION

No doubt every Radio and Area Systems Op trained in the last few years at RSS Blandford will know what FMVT section is all about. Many others taught before that at Catterick will also know what it means: many hours sat in front of a computer, working through typing scripts, CBT packages and finally paper exercises, most of you trying to get through the section in the shortest possible time.

For those who didn't pass through the section, and don't know what we deliver, we provide typing training and basic Message Handling instruction, along with enriching knowledge delivered via CBT on subjects such as DCSA and Army Organisation. To deliver this we use a dedicated computer network of some 130 workstations, together with a mix of military and civilian instructors. This busy section processes over 700 new operators every year for the Corps. In addition to this vital phase 2 instruction, CBT section has been providing conversion training for operators, helping to convert the Corps Radio Ops into Radio Systems Ops. It is a very busy department that never sleeps. There are always students in the Section, and although target standards may change, training standards never do.

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

HEADQUARTERS

OC **Maj Guy Benson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Rob Melotte**

There has been no let up since the Christmas break. The work load has increased with the realisation of BOWMAN and FEPS just around the corner. However, the OC, **Maj Guy Benson** has managed to take time out and get himself on secondment to Colchester for 4 weeks to sit as a member for a number of Courts Martial. So by the time this article gets published, we wish him a big 'Welcome back' and confirm that we look forward to receiving further evening and weekend emails. **WO2 (SSM) Rob Melotte** has been on the warpath grunting at those personnel who have not completed their mandatory training tests and he has assured everyone that weekends can be made available.

The OC, Maj Guy Benson reverts to his original WWII switchboard training whilst FofS Conway looks on in amusement

PROJECTS SECTION

FofS Projects **WO1 (FofS) R Conway**
YofS Projects **SSgt (YofS) D Martin-Woodgate**

With the advent of BOWMAN and other projects, there was a requirement for the Group to form a project team. In the last quarter of 02 there was a trawl for the most competent FofS and YofS in the Corps to come forward and offer their services. Unfortunately with manning being particularly poor in these areas, we had to accept **WO1 (FofS) Rich Conway** (Corps FofS and AFCEA God) and **SSgt (YofS) Dave Martin-Woodgate** (Newly arrived from YofS Cse 55).

BOWMAN System Management (BSM) conversion training is expected to begin in Apr 03, where all required personnel will be trained here at RSS. Work is already under way to convert current classroom facilities to Computer Aided Instruction (CAI) classrooms.

EQUIPMENT SECTION

HIO **Mr Peter Braithwaite**
2IC **SSgt Smuj Smith**

Our intrepid SSgt, **SSgt Smuj Smith**, returned safe and well from touring South Africa (lucky chap) with the Corps cricket team. The tour itself consisted of 2 weeks in South Africa, where **SSgt Smith** had the key role of Tour Manager. The first week of the tour took the Corps cricket team to Pretoria, where they were hosted by the Republic of South Africa (RSA) Signals. During the week the Royal Signals Cricket Club (RSCC) played the RSA Signals at the Wonderboom Military Base (home of the RSA School of Signals). After an exciting finish the RSCC won the match (and the Jimmy Trophy) off the last ball of the innings.

The second week of the tour was spent in Cape Town and was a more relaxed week. During the week however an arduous trip up to the summit of Table Mountain was taken, although it transpired later that the cable car route was used and not the footpath. RSA Signals hope to tour the UK (subject to funding and approval) in the summer of 2003, where it is hoped that another exciting match for the Jimmy Trophy can be arranged (this time in the sun-drenched location of the Blandford Oval). *The South Africa tour is covered further in the Sport section - Editor*

SSgt Smuj Smith and the RSA School of Signals Chief Instructor, Lt Col John Smith (no relation) at the entrance to the RSA School of Signals

OPERATOR SECTION

HIO **Mr M Altham**
2IC **SSgt S Bartleet**

Sgt Nige Brewin and **Cpl MacDonald** (from Radex) recently travelled to Holland to carry out a parachute jump on behalf of the WWII Polish Airborne Veterans of Operation Market Garden. The Polish DZ was situated near a village called Driel on the southern bank of the Rhine, not far from the Arnhem Road Bridge. The DZ, soon to be turned into a huge industrial park, had not been jumped on since 1944, so 2002 would be the last chance for this to happen. **Sgt Brewin** was jumping with an experimental parachute, a standard PX1 Mk IV parachute which had been converted to be steerable. In all a total of 30 men jumped onto the DZ, where **Gen Sir Michael Jackson** and the Polish Veterans were present. Once again, many thanks go out to the OC and SSM for giving us the time to travel and parachute in Holland.

We welcome **Sgts Andy Brown**, **Steve Gray** and **Scouse Lloyd**, who both join the section on promotion from Radex Tp. (now get the beers in!!).

RADEX TP

Tp Comd **Capt Darran Cooper**
Tp SSgt **SSgt John Batts**

Not much change in the usual routine of the Tp, which is probably the hardest working Tp in the Corps. Exercises continue in earnest with virtually everyone deploying once every 2 weeks. In our spare time, just to keep the pressure on, the OC, **Maj Guy Benson** continues to sneak around the garages, conducting vehicle inspections and visiting exercises trying to find out what's going on. **Sgt Chas Fox** believes in the conspiracy theory, others believe that's the OC is keen on telling as many war stories as possible!

We would like to welcome **Cpl Alay Austin**, who arrives for his second tour with the Tp (Just can't keep away). In addition a big hello to **LCpl Ollie Smith**, from 21 Sig Regt and we would like to reassure him that there are no tramps in the Tp. We say a fond farewell to **Sgt Steve Gray** and **Sgt Scouse Lloyd**, and also to **Cpl Cooper**, who is off to join the White Helmets, and **Cpl Robinson** and **Sig Becky Graveston**, off to Mil Trg and Aldershot respectively.

We congratulate **Cpl Toni Galaghar** on being selected to play for the Army rugby squad, **Cpl Kim Tregunna** on getting married, **Cpl Norrie Crook, Cpl Dave Haskel, Cpl Lee Nichol** and **LCpl Paul Kennedy** on the recent additions to their families. We wish you all the best with the long nights.

RADEX TROOP CADET LIAISON TEAM

In recent weeks **LCpl Somerville, LCpl Traynor** and **Sig McClennon** have been involved in the testing and continuation training of the local Blandford Cadet Detachment. We recently took them through their Sigs Classification course, which we are glad to report saw a 100% pass rate. Since then our continuation training has consisted of the introduction to manpack radios currently in service with the RSigs. Our future involvement is likely to see the introduction to mobile communication equipment and practical tasks.

POWER SECTION

Course Co-ord **SSgt Graham**

The Sec has recently said goodbye to **Mr Malcolm Woodman**, who after giving 16 years of his experience, professionalism and dedication to Pwr Sec has moved North for family reasons. We all hope that **Malcolm**, his wife **Pat** and the kids have settled in. We cannot thank you enough for your support and we wish you all the best for the future. We are also happy to report that the Sec is back up to full strength with the return of **Sgts Shaun Seraphin** and **Pete Stidwell** from Egypt. Since their return from the diving expedition, they have found it difficult to talk of anything else. Stories of treasure, booze and birds will probably continue into 2004.

Sgt Shaun Seraphin winning first place in an underwater beauty competition

TROOP COMMANDERS COURSE TC 54

The Tp Comds course was definitely beginning to exceed the expectations we had gained from all the rumours heard through the grapevine. So much so, four of our peers could not handle the pace and were recalled back to their units to deploy to sunnier climates. Goodbye and good luck to **2Lts Claire Cassidy, Aileen Grant, Matthew Mallet** and **Holly Richardson**. We miss you already. At 01.00 hrs in the morning, the corridor just seems far too quiet now that you have left us. **2Lt Lee Chamberlain** also seems to be suffering with some rather interesting withdrawal symptoms.

For the last 6 weeks we have been with ASG. As well as increasing our Ptarmigan knowledge, thanks to **FofS Steve Davis**, we now can be safe in the knowledge that we know the difference between the Lesser-Spotted Common Blandford Bat and the Rowntrees Fruit Gum Bat.

In Spite of the intense work regime, we have still had time for more than just a little bit of fun. The doctors and nurses Christmas livers-in party was certainly a sight for sore eyes. Enough to scar anyone for life! Any excuse to wear rubber gloves and for **2Lt David Allen** to don a PVC G-string and dress. Not bad legs though!

Doc & Timmy protecting their modesty

The most recent social event was the Garrison guest dinner night on Burns Night. As everyone knows, Scottish country dancing is a common occurrence at Burns Night dinners and requires nimble feet and quick thinking. However TC54 had come well prepared, as we had had several extremely amusing, not to mention exhausting lessons in the weeks leading up to the event. The guest dinner night was a very enjoyable and entertaining evening. The poem written by **2Lt Sarah Clifford** about the TC 54 lads and acted out by the course lasses caused more than just a few laughs, however the boys are sure to get there own back in the near future, so watch out girls!

THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST (RMAS)

THE SIGNALS TRAINING WING

Chief Instructor **Capt JK McColl**
RSMI **WO1(YofS) PA Sutcliffe**

The Signals Training Wing (STW) is an All Arms Training Wing established, at RMAS to instruct all Officer Cadets, Regular and TA in communications procedures and equipment. A third of the personnel in the Wing are RSigs. October 2002 was a busy period for the Wing. Whilst the remainder of the Academy spread to the four winds on a long-weekend pass, the Wing undertook a charity endurance event, followed a week later by the inaugural Annual Dinner Night.

STW SPONSORED ENDURANCE EVENT

Sgt Jase Styles, 9/12 L proposed earlier this year that the twenty-one Wing members should undertake an epic simulated journey from RMAS to Paris via Plymouth, in aid of the Prostate Cancer Appeal. The simulated journey of 679 miles was to be run, rowed and cycled within the confines of the Academy. Preparations and training were ongoing until the start on Thursday 10 October 2002, when the RSMI, **WO1 (YofS) Paul Sutcliffe**, set the standard by completing 8 miles within an hour. Every member of the Wing then followed suit (most of them twice) to complete the 210 mile run from Camberley to Plymouth in just under 26 hours. **Cpl Kev Dacosta** picked up the extra lap and completed 10 miles in an hour. At 0200hrs on the Friday it was on to the rowing phase, where a distance of 119 miles (Plymouth to Roscoff) was to be completed on rowing machines. The legs were weary and aching by the final phase, the cycle ride from Rostock to Paris, a distance of 350 miles. **Sgt Jasper Scarrot** kicked off at a blistering pace and **Capt McColl**, despite being 6 months pregnant, assisted the team by doing her fair share of the cycling. The grand finale took place at 1030hrs on Sunday morning with all participants completing the final 2 miles around the Academy. On completion of the event, STW have raised approximately £4000 for the Prostate Cancer Appeal.

The Endurance Team

ANNUAL DINNER NIGHT

It would seem that STW was now on a roll and needed to celebrate the completion of the Endurance Event. **Sgt Ian Owen, CHESHIRE** not to be outdone by **Sgt Jase Styles, 9/12 L**, set about organising a Dinner Night. One of the stipulations of the evening was for every member in STW to invite a past member. The night was a resounding success and past STW members came creeping out of the woodwork.

Past RSigs guests included **Major Nick Yardley, Mr Tony Redman, WO1 (YofS) Russ Darlington** and **SSgt Ted Page**. The Wing was entertained by a quartet from the Corps Band followed by an illusionist. The event will now be run yearly, so any ex Wing members wishing to attend should get in touch.

FAREWELLS AND WELCOMES

Capt Jules McColl (maternity leave), **SSgt (YofS) Mick Murphy** (posted on promotion to 21 Sig Regt AS) and **Cpl Kev DaCosta** (T1 Course) are wished all the very best on leaving the Academy, and we welcome their replacements, **Capt Adam Shakespeare, SSgt (YofS) Si Barker** and **Cpl John Barber**.

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT (LICHFIELD)

ARMY

CO **Lt Col NS Chapman MBE CHESHIRE**
RSM **WO1 P Mort PARA**

In April 2002 the training of (Single Entry) Royal Signals Recruits moved from Bassingbourn to Lichfield. Lichfield had previously trained recruits of The Prince of Wales Div, The Parachute Regt and Army Medical Services (AMS). RSigs and RE recruits now account for the vast majority of trainees at ATR Lichfield within its 3 training sqns, 28 Trg Sqn RE, 1 Trg Sqn RSigs and C Trg Sqn (the last an amalgam of RSigs and RE).

The role of ATR (Lichfield) is to turn civilians into soldiers. This is achieved through the Common Military Syllabus (Recruit) (CMS(R)), a 12-week progressive training package. This incorporates all aspects of basic training and development to ensure the soldier is fully prepared for the rigours of Army life and fully understands what it means to be a soldier.

The CMS(R) course is constantly being developed. The new version now being still has PT as the backbone of the syllabus but now includes a BPFA and BCFT. It includes more time spent on exercise with a 6-day final exercise in Sennybridge. The shooting package has also been revised to be more progressive. Soldiers must continue to pass an APWT in order to progress from. Additional emphasis has also been placed upon improving practical map reading skills. The intention is that the revised syllabus will more fully prepare RSigs soldiers for the rigours of service life.

1 TRAINING SQUADRON ROYAL SIGNALS

OC - **Maj JP Townsend R SIGNALS**
SSM - **WO2 K Marsh PARA**

The Corps identity is now becoming firmly established in the new home of RSigs basic training. 1 Sqn provides the focus for the RSigs at ATR Lichfield. The Sqn consists mainly of RSigs instructors and staff with the Parachute Regt providing vital infantry expertise and support to the training process. We are always on the lookout for good quality instructors ranked Cpl to Sgt. The Regt provides excellent career opportunities for all CEQs, providing you are suitable and willing to take up the challenge of training recruits. It is a sad fact that we currently only have one Driver Lineman instructing at ATR Lichfield. If you are interested in a different type of posting and in the training of the future soldiers of our Corps, then speak to your chain of command about a future posting here.

At Lichfield great emphasis is placed on developing the young soldier's esprit de corps and a sense of belonging to RSigs. To this end the tp names within the Sqn were chosen both as a mark of respect for the courageous deeds conducted by former members of the Corps and to inspire our young soldiers. These individuals provide excellent role models for today's recruits to aspire to. 1 Sqn consists of Cook, Mather, Smith, Townsend and Waters Tps. C Sqn contains Deane-Drummond, Bagnold and Forge Tps. The Regt has recently been fortunate enough to have three of those individuals visit as our honoured guests for their respective Tp Passing Out Parades.

MATHER TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Oz Muhammed PARA**
Tp Sgt **Sgt S Roughton R SIGNALS**

The Tp is named in honour of **Sergeant Joseph Gordon Mather,** RSigs, awarded the MM for outstanding leadership and example in the Falkland Islands. **Sgt Mather** commanded a four man SAS patrol, tasked with int gathering, specifically enemy dispositions and installations in the Bluff Cove and Stanley areas. Inserted by helicopter, **Sgt Mather's** team gathered int over a period of twenty-eight days prior to the repossession of the islands, evading capture and defying enemy direction finding equipment.

The guest of honour Mr Gordon Mather MM presents the award for the best at drill to a Signaller

Mr Gordon Mather MM and **Mrs Mather** were kind enough to attend the Mather Tp Passing Out Parade on 24 October 2002. The day included a variety of tp trg stands, during one of which **Mr Mather** was able to critique the standard of pair's fire and manoeuvre. All recruits on the parade were greatly inspired by the presence of **Mr Mather**, and took the opportunity for photo calls. **Mr Mather** kindly presented the prizes and the Mather Trophy for the recruit considered best of each Mather Tp intake. Sadly despite the Sqn Comds best efforts, it was a Sapper on this occasion, hence the reason why he is not pictured.

TOWNSEND TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt GJ Clarke R SIGNALS**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Fadzilah R SIGNALS**

The Tp is named in honour of **Lance Corporal MK Townsend** RSigs, who was awarded the DCM for his 'inspiring example of the highest gallantry and military ability' whilst serving with the 22 SAS Regt in Dhofar 1974 – 1975. **LCpl Townsend** was the leader of a four-man liaison patrol attached to a company of the Sultan of Oman's Armed Forces, when they came under heavy fire from guerrilla forces. Noticing that no one else was returning fire, he and two other men dashed forwards, engaging with the enemy and encouraging others to return fire. His initiative saved the day.

Townsend Tp Trg Team hosted **Mr Mel Townsend DCM** and **Mrs Townsend** as the guests of honour for their first Passing Out Parade on 16 January 2003. The reviewing officer for the parade was Comd RS S, **Col J Ewbank** and he was accompanied by **Mr Townsend** on the tour of inspection. ATR Lichfield are extremely grateful for the visit, not least OC 1 Sqn as it finally dispelled the rumour that he named the Tp after himself.

The guest of honour Mr Mel Townsend DCM inspects the troops accompanied by namesake Major JP Townsend

WATERS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Karen Thomson R SIGNALS**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Topping PARA**

The Tp is named in honour of **Cpl Thomas Waters** RSigs, who was awarded the MM for his heroic and operationally fundamental actions during D-Day. In the battle to hold the key Caen Canal Bridge, it was imperative that wireless comms between 5 Para Bde HQ and HQ 7 Para Bn were reinforced by a link line. In a failed attempt to lay the line, the entire line section were wounded by enemy small arms fire. Witnessing this, **Cpl Waters** recovered one of the injured men to safety and then dashed across to HQ 7 Para Bn, laying the line as he went. Although it was frequently broken by shellfire, **Cpl Waters** repaired and maintained the line all day, despite heavy enemy small arms fire.

The latest intake for Waters Tp formed up on the 13 January 2003. The recruits deployed on EX NEW ADVENTURE (locally known as combat camping), which is the first opportunity for the

recruits to go on exercise to conduct basic field craft. Importantly this provides an escape from the classroom and an opportunity for the young soldiers to put into practice what they joined for. As a secondary aim the exercise is used to promote character development and teamwork. This is achieved through a series of command tasks centred on the trust element of team building.

C TRAINING SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Page RE**
SSM	**WO2 Stronge RAMC**

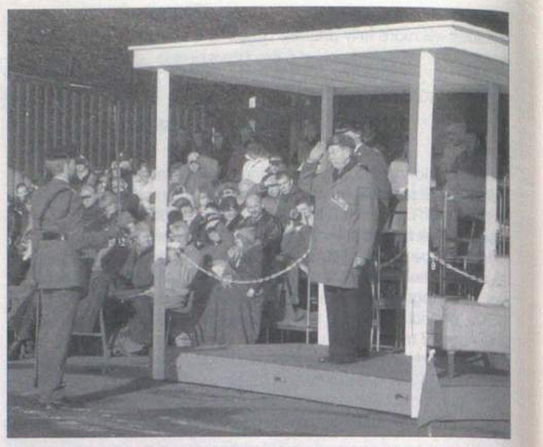
C Trg Sqn was named after C Telegraph Tp, to show the historical link between the Corps of Royal Engineers and the Royal Corps of Signals. To demonstrate this linkage the Sqn flag has a RE flag background with a 'Jimmy' on it. The Sqn includes three RSigs tps; Bagnold, Deane-Drummond and Forge.

DEANE-DRUMMOND TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt J Wadia R SIGNALS**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Evans RGBW**

The Tp is named in honour of **MajGen Deane-Drummond CB, DSO, MC and Bar (late R SIGNALS)**. **Anthony Deane Drummond** was amongst the first of Britain's parachutists and was attached to the 11 SAS Bn in the early days of the airborne movement. He was involved in OP COLOSSUS in 1941 and OP MARKET GARDEN in 1944 and on both occasions was captured, only to escape in spectacular style. He went on to command 22 SAS during the Malaya and Oman Campaigns and later 44 Para Bde (TA) and 3 Div. He retired in the rank of Major General as ACDS (Ops).

It was a great honour for the Regt to host **MajGen Deane-Drummond** on the 30 January 2003 as the Reviewing Officer for



Major General Anthony Deane-Drummond CB, DSO, MC and Bar takes the salute

Deane-Drummond Tp's Passing Out Parade. **MajGen Deane-Drummond** has provided a great source of inspiration to the young soldiers passing through ATR (Lichfield) and indeed RSigs soldiers for many years. All those on parade considered themselves very lucky to be associated with such a distinguished member of the Corps. It was commented that the General was indeed quicker on his feet than many of the younger generation of reviewing officers who have inspected the troops, a fact not lost on those on parade on this cold winter's day.

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

BRITFOR SIGNAL TROOP OPERATION PALATINE

XVI

Tp Comd	**Capt Vanessa Galloway**
TSM	**SSgt Kenny Macpherson**

The past couple of months have been a fairly busy time for the lads in the TSCP, with all of them gaining valuable experience in their present employment. The busiest of them has been the ISM Team, having to deal with the HQ Staff on a daily basis and assisting the outlying Infantry stations in theatre. One of their many tasks has been trying to locate the elusive **Sgt** 'Daz' **Brady** and his shadow, **Sig Gotch**, who could be anywhere in theatre at anytime, except in the TSCP. It has been an ongoing game of hide and seek between them and **Sgt** 'Tommo' **Thompson**. The team would also like to welcome **Sgt Kenning** who has joined us to replace the half-a-tour **Sgt Brady.**

The helpdesk boys have been busy in their own inimitable way. Mainly **LCpl** 'Jonno' **Johnson** and **Cpl Golding Smith.** They seem to be using their male animal instincts to the full with the opposite sex using e-mail or bluey (with some, let's say, interesting replies!) **Cpl Garner** has been busy using his managerial prowess with the computer systems and now on his EFP1 – bless him!

The FRT Team has been busy deploying throughout theatre, due to weather conditions causing a few problems with the MYRA system. In particular, **Sgt Francis** had a bit of fun on the roads.

We said farewell to **SSgt Kev East**, who has returned to the Regt and gave a warm welcome to **SSgt Ritchie Cleminson**.

But it hasn't been all work and no play out here. The Tp helped **SSgt Kenny Macpherson** to celebrate his birthday on Christmas Eve by having a toga party in the Tp bar. A good time was had by all, with one sore head in particular the next morning - **SSgt Scoots**, who for once, indulged and regretted it all Christmas Day! Other birthday celebrations have included **Captain Galloway**, aged ??? and **Cpl Ashurst**. We have also had a visit from a galaxy of comic strip/film heroes and villains, namely, Batman and Batgirl, The Riddler, Robocop, Darth Vader, Bananaman, The Incredible Hulk, Angel and John McLean. There were also others from peoples imaginations.

One last thing: the Tp would like to thank the ever-present not so SMART team for their huge contribution to *The WIRE* notes. They are obviously far to busy concentrating on their radio war with the Kosovo SMART team! What was it, Lineys with kroner tools?

The Tp have now done over half of their tour in Bosnia and the R&R plot is well and truly underway. We watch with interest as the rest of the Army prepares for the Gulf deployment and wonder how long it will be before we all join them. Better get our POTL...

I can tap into the feelings expressed in this last sentence. With so much attention being focussed on OP TELIC, there is a distinct danger of important ops in other theatres fading out of the limelight. I don't want this to happen. The sterling efforts of our lads and lasses in these other areas still need to be recognised. As you can see, we have unfortunately had very little in from the Balkans for this edition. So can I ask units out there to keep the stories coming in – or I'll have to come out there and get them myself! - Editor

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (NORTHERN IRELAND)

OC	**Capt Bobby Strawbridge**
YofS	**WO1 Bod Horan**
FofS	**WO2 Rick Gorman**

The boys and girls of JCU(NI) are as busy as ever. We've been enjoying the full delights of winter, working in all weather but somebody has to do it.

Over the last month or so we have had a large turnover in manpower. First off a big welcome goes out to all our new colleagues. New to our stores team are **SSgt Al Keir**, **Cpls Daz Warner** and **Claire Edwards**. Also fresh in are **Cpls Steve Minto**, **Linda MacPherson**, **Carl Tindall**, **Matt Griffiths**, **Chris Barr**, **LCpl Mo Morris** and **Sig Chris Cairns.** Welcome to all!

We sadly bid farewell to a few familiar faces with **Sgt H Harrison**, **Cpl Daz Flay** and **Sig Jay Emmett** leaving us for sunnier climates. Good luck in your new jobs.

Congratulations go to **Sgt Gav Rickard** and his wife **Nikki** on the birth of their first child, **Josh**. For the child's sake we all hope that he takes his looks from his mother. **Nikki** will be joining the Unit in May, and there are rumours that **Josh** has been pencilled in for a Riggers slot sometime in 2021!

The wksps have been enjoying a three-week reprieve from adventurous training fund-raising. For the first time in months it has been safe to come to work with money in our pockets, as **SSgt Rosey Rosendale** and his partner in crime, **Cpl Richie Palfrey** are off sampling the delights of Thailand. Only joking. We all appreciate the hard work that's been going toward the cause. Look out Newquay, we're coming back.

SOinC(A)'S VISIT TO JCU(NI) - *by Cpl 'Kirky' Kirkwood*

On Wednesday 12 February JCU(NI) welcomed the SOinC(A), **Brig D McDowell MBE ADC**. The SOinC was escorted around the workshops by **Capt Bobby Strawbridge** and **W02 (FofS) Rick Gorman**. The visit went smoothly and finished with **Brig McDowell** chatting to the wksp personnel over a cup of coffee and some buns. During the conversation, he was able to enlightened all those gathered that the Yeoman's recent selection for commissioning was aided by a crisp £50 note, but **Bod** (to be known as **Matthew** from now on) would neither confirm nor deny this. Nor could he recall his whereabouts between 1990-92. The SOinC was also kind enough to notify the Foreman of his selection for promotion to WO1 ahead of the official proclamation. Well Done, **Rick**! Looks like the beers are on you!

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

XV

CO	**Lt Col N P Metcalfe MBE**
RSM	**WO1 J McNaught**

At Christmas time, the Regt finished off a busy year in fine festive merriment and a good old singsong in the Garrison church. In November we had the privilege of hosting the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen IOJ Sprackling OBE**, who had a very busy visit to all sig units throughout Province. He was able to see some of the work and Military Skills activities and enjoyed every single curry he had at each unit. This month the Regt is saying farewell to its Adjt, **Capt Katy Caie**, who has received an overwhelming amount of Christmas treats (chocolates and whisky) from her subalterns. Not surprising, considering she is going to Glasgow to become their desk officer. To replace her in the short term is **Capt Lucy Thirsk**, moving from her position in the Regt as 2IC 233 Sig Sqn.

REGIMENTAL PORT PACKAGE - *by Cpl Leanne Barker*

It appeared to be just another busy and entertaining week in the Province for members of the Regt who were to take part in a fun-filled week down at the sand dunes of Ballykinler. However, as the package progressed, it proved to be not only entertaining but also very educational and eye opening, with a lot of skills learned and tested.

The first morning kicked off with an APWT to get the blood circulating. It showed us that the Regt had a number of wannabe snipers, though some of us needed more time (and practice) than others to get the blood circulating and make the targets fall down!

Rumours had been rife about the activities that had been planned for us, and there was apprehension about if and how the DS were going to give us a traditional military 'beasting'. Not wanting to disappoint, we were 'pleasantly' surprised with a CFT. Luckily, the weather was about as good as it gets in Northern Ireland, and there were few stragglers, though **Cpl Hill's** feet were a sight for sore eyes afterwards. Once finished, there was time for a quick shower before heading straight back into lessons. For once, it was the girls who had the last laugh, as the wonderful facilities of Ballykinler failed to provide hot water for the lads!

Wednesday started early with the formation of 3 multiples. The day was spent honing our infantry skills with lessons and stands that included VCPs, rural patrolling techniques, and plenty of practice doing these in Newtown Village. The day prepared us for the main delight of the week, the 36-hour exercise. This involved lots of active patrolling, QRF and of course, 'stagging on'; (exercises wouldn't be the same without it). This was hard work, but fun and interesting. There was, however, one very important lesson – don't believe everything you're told! Nearing the end of the exercise there was the usual problem with the 'locals', (I'm sure that I recognised a few). At the end of it, the multiple commander was tipped off that there would be no more 'problems' to deal with that night. This was seen as an excellent opportunity for everybody to take some much-needed rest before the final part of the package. The gross error in judgement became apparent when a proxy bomb was dropped off by the front gate, and the multiple commander realised that maybe he shouldn't have sent everybody to bed after all!

The reward for all the hard work done by the team was a day with WIS. Back on the ranges, we were treated to a vast range of weapons, including pistols; rifles, shotguns, and even a WWII machine-gun! A few of the smaller members lost their balance when firing the larger shotguns, and a few have attractive bruises in their shoulder from unexpected kickback.

Thankfully, the whole week passed with no rain, (a first for the

Province, surely?), and everybody had an excellent time. It was an excellent week that practised and tested our leadership, fitness and teamwork, and was of great benefit to everybody who took part. Everybody left having learned a lot and experienced something new, and I'm sure that I'm not the only person to confess that I learned a lot about myself as well. Thanks and congratulations must go to the RSM and his team of DS for the planning and execution of such an excellent and worthwhile event!

MERCURY CUP MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION

- by Capt Simon Bristow

Within days of arriving in Province and while still on my hand over, I was given my first responsibility. I was to lead the Sqn's team in the Military Skills Competition, the final instalment of the Mercury Cup, (a competition between all the RSigs Sqns in the Province). No pressure? The OC told me that failure wasn't an option – we were leading the overall competition, just, and a failure here could lose it for us. I took my chances and unpacked my MFO anyway!

The team was assembled from all those who were not on shift and an afternoon was set aside for training. We were introduced to the HK MP5, (as close to the HK53 as we could get), refreshed on our general weapon handling skills, re-acquainted on our first aid, and brushed up on our military knowledge.

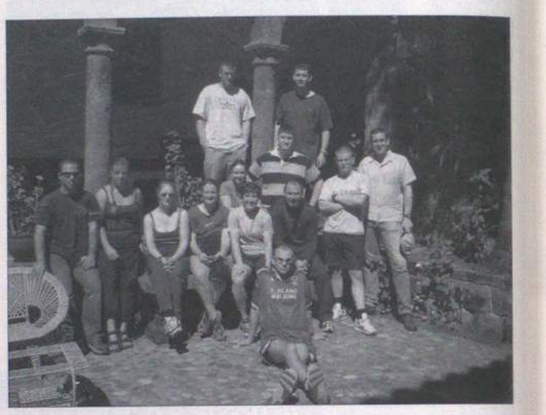
A couple of days later, we were en route to baron and windy Magilligan. Morale was high as we looked out to the misty sea, and there were no raindrops coming from the decidedly grey sky above. There was a strong gusting wind, but thankfully the direction meant that it would push us along rather than hold us back! With about 16kg on our backs, rifles in our arms, we were off. The pace was fast and hard, but with double points for the timed march, we knew what our priority was. We frequently redistributed weight between team members to ensure that the super-fit eased the pains of the not-so-super-fit. After a long 24-minute slog, we were all relieved to see the first stand, where we knew we had a 30-minute recovery before the march continued. We arrived to find that only 6 individuals from our team of 10 would be participating. **Cpl** 'Sniper' **Hubble** did an excellent job in hiding her 'Army 100' badge, despite the 8 Bde DS looking for it, (they had been tipped off), and she was fortunately chosen to be one of the 6 shooters. The shooting was good, considering the conditions, and we left happy. We once again pushed ourselves, but we were all grateful that the longest leg was over. The remaining stands were as fun as the first, and included a falling plate competition, shotgun range, paramilitary weapons recognition, military knowledge and a first aid scenario. As the competition progressed, it was clear that all members of the team were starting to feel the strain. With the pain threshold barrier long surpassed, we continued to give it everything we had. From the other results we managed to lay our eyes on, we appeared to be doing very well, but it was no time for complacency. The wind was still behind us, and the morale was still very high. We were determined to give 100% to the end. In the last leg, the pain was starting to take over, but we knew HQ Sqn was hard on our heels. Outstanding individual performances by **Cpls Lowe, Phillips, Ansell** and **Adamson** kept the team going, dragging and encouraging those at the back and carrying extra weight where necessary. That should not detract from the performances of **Sgt Collins**, **Cpls Smith** and **Hubble** and **LCpl Burns**, who also gave it their all. And with mighty relief, we reached the end. It was over, and all we could do was stretch off and wait for the other results to come in.

As the results appeared, it was clear that our attitude and determination had paid off. 3 Bde had clearly put a lot of effort into training, and were worthy winners of an excellent competition run by 8 Bde. Well done and many thanks respectively! However, our efforts meant that we were not far behind. We had earned a thoroughly deserved second place. 3 Bde collected the prize for the day's competition from the Master of Signals, but we earned and received the one we wanted – the Mercury Cup.

EXERCISE SACRED VALLEY FINN - *by Sig Stevens*

Our expedition began on the 17 October 2002, although we had done some preparation spending a night out on the Mournes previously. There were two days of gruelling travelling including in total approximately 15 hours of flights, from Belfast to London and then Lima via Madrid.

Lima, Peru's capital city is a vibrant place with a population of 3 million people and growing. Its huge population had also led to it becoming squalid and many of the homes we saw were little better than hovels, with rubbish strewn across the streets. It was an eye-opener for some of our party. We were met at the airport by our hostel owner who drove us to the hostel located in the centre of Lima. The drive in itself was probably the most terrifying part of the expedition. Peruvian driving is fast, furious and involves as much use of the horn as possible. Our hostel was excellent, and after settling in we set out into the city for a delicious meal, although none of us were as yet brave enough to sample the local delicacy of guinea pig.



The Expedition Team

Rising early the following morning and eating a breakfast of bread and jam (which seemed to be a staple diet in Peru) we returned to the airport to catch a flight to Cuzco. Cuzco is a much smaller city than Lima and much cleaner. It is famous for its many historic sites, especially those related to the Incas. We spent three days in Cuzco acclimatising (the city is located 3500 metres above sea level) and during this time we visited local places of interest, such as the Llama Temple. This was the point when we first noticed the Incas' alarming preoccupation with placing everything of interest at the top of a colossal flight of steps.

Finally we were ready to head for the Inca Trail itself, and set off for its starting point at Kilometre 86. There we met our guides, who were promptly nicknamed **San** and **Miguel** by **WO2 (YofS) Eddy Yates**. We set off along the trail for a relatively easy four-hour hike amongst magnificent surroundings until we arrived at our campsite next to a small farmhouse. That night we watched as goats devoid of any sense of self-preservation leapt madly about upon semi-vertical mountainsides.

The next day proved to be the most arduous of the journey. We had to climb 800 metres in only 3 Kilometres, a steep climb even without the altitude. As it was, many of us had difficulties and were forced to travel in 50-metre spurts to catch our breath. Eventually we reached a height of some 4300 metres above sea level! After a brief respite we set off again, this time mercifully downhill, to reach our campsite at 3800 metres. That night we were caught in a storm and would have been flooded out of our tents, had a drainage ditch not been dug around the camp. Day three on the trail began well. The weather had cleared and the day became even better as we entered the strangely beautiful cloud forests. At times we passed through tunnels of foliage which resembled something out of *Jurassic Park*. As we progressed, the air became more humid and humming birds flitted past us in the foliage. Now we began to see more Inca ruins lookout posts for Machu Picchu and were encouraged by the fact that our goal was so near. As we camped that night, we had some wine to toast our guides and said our farewells. **2Lt Lawrence Roach**, our translator, led us in an impromptu singsong. The next morning we rose at 4am to beat the crowds. We stumbled through the dark for hours until finally we could look down upon Machu Picchu from the Sun Gate. We stared down at the fascinating spectacle in awe and used up whole rolls of film before heading down to the historical town. For hours we walked around the city, our guides telling us about the Incas ancient sites, such as the Temple of the Sun and Moon. Then tired but satisfied, we caught the bus down to Aguas Calientes, where we stayed the night visiting, the hot springs and the club to sample some of the local beer.

The following day we returned to Cuzco before catching a luxurious bus to Puno, where we were to see the world's highest navigable lake, Lake Titicaca. We travelled by boat across the lake visiting the floating reed islands, where people lived in reed huts with solar panels! We stayed in a native hut made from mud on one of the lake's natural islands, Tequila Island, and trekked the island visiting ancient ruins. We were told there was a curse on the stones of these sites and, despite general laughter at this, idea nobody moved a stone. Taking the bus back to Cuzco, we then began the R and R phase, some of us going white-water rafting and everyone loading themselves with souvenirs.

Eventually we were reluctantly forced to travel back to Lima, where we finished the expedition with a singsong lead by **Lawrence** again, and joined by the bemused locals. We flew home with an experience we will all remember for the rest of our lives.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj D T H Wilson**
SSM	**WO2 G Steel**

November was an extremely hectic time for the Sqn. The Master of Signals - **Maj Gen IOJ Sprackling OBE**, had just visited the Regt whilst the Sqn was conducting monthly weapon training and weapon familiarisation in preparation for the Mercury Cup Military Skills Competition.

November also saw the Sqn come in as runners-up in the CO's Cup Swimming Competition. The team was put together by **LCpl Worrall** of the QM's Dept with assistance from **Sig Acock**.

As mentioned earlier the Sqn took part in the Mercury Cup Military Skills Competition, held at Magilligan Training Area on 22 November 02. The team comprised **WO2 (SSM) Steel, SSgt McGachy, LCpl Shakelton, LCpl Meadows, LCpl Smiejowski, Sig Weir, Sig McAulay, Sig Colling, Sig Brennan and Sig Newbold**. We finished a creditable 4th and recorded the third fastest run time. A big well done to all competitors, especially **LCpl Meadows** and **Sig McAulay** who stepped in at very short notice.

HQ Sqn is immensely smug at the moment. At the recent LCpl to Cpl and Sig to LCpl promotion boards we had a total of ten people selected for promotion. LCpls selected were **LCpls Roberts, Shakelton, Broderick, Fitzpatrick** and **McDiarmid**. Sigs selected were **Sigs Colling, Hobbs, McDiarmid, Newbold** and **Sheehan**. Congratulations to all concerned.

The Sqn would bids farewell firstly to **Sgt Roger Bradley** after 22 years service. After **Roger** completed his phase one and phase two training, he immediately started resettlement (or so it felt like). He was dined out on Friday 15 November 02 at the WOs' and Sgts' Mess by the Offrs, WOs and SNCOs of HQ Sqn. All the best in your future career.

THE COMMANDING OFFICERS CUP - RUGBY 10'S COMPETITION

The CO's Cup Rugby Competition took place on the 3 October 02 and was organised by 233 Sig Sqn. The main problem is trying to find ten people who can actually play rugby in HQ Sqn. Even having watched it on Sky Sports qualified you to play.

The competition had to be cut to rugby sevens, much to the disappointment of 233 and 225 Sig Sqns, who could field two teams each and had to toss a coin for the team who were going to thrash HQ Sqn. Our Captain, **SSgt** 'Dusty' **Miller**, guided the team. We were coached by the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Dickson**. Unfortunately it was to no avail. HQ Sqn lost both games scoring no points in either game. And we were lucky to get nil… Congratulations to the eventual winners of the competition, 225 Sig Sqn.

EXERCISE GIB FINN 2002

A team of 12 divers from LGSAC took part in EX GIB FINN 2002 organised by **Capt SA Dickson**, from 4 – 15 November at Gibraltar. The aim of the exercise was to survey a number of wrecks around the harbour and included a skill development package for all diving participants. The exercise SADS were **Capt S Irvine** and **CSgt M Dykes**, who ensured all diving went smoothly - even if all else didn't. The diving buoy making several attempts to reach the coast of Morocco and the crew of *Harry Jay* managing to achieve the impossible by sinking one of the ex-bed inflatable boats were just a few of our problems.

The wrecks visited ranged from the Spanish barges at approximately 15m to a pilot boat at 30-35m for the more experienced diver. One of the more popular wrecks was the *SS Excellent* just off the South Mole in about 20-25m, which has lines from bow to stern allowing divers to swim through the main hold. The newest wreck, which sank only a few months earlier, was a Norwegian fishing trawler, *Sea Hawk*, in about 28m of water. This is intact and upright with all nets and trawl gear removed. Other dives including two night dives and a few unplanned drift dives to ensure that all divers learned new skills and gained experience. **LCpl Martyn Potter** and **Sig Shaun McAuley** completed all the practical assessments for their Sports Diver qualification, almost drowning the volunteer casualty in the process.

Between diving, the team visited the top of the rock (including the obligatory monkeys) and were given a guided tour of the tunnels, the gun emplacements and the hospital. **WO1 (RSM) Jim McNaught** would like to thank the Gibraltar Harbour Police for his personal escort back to the dive boat after drifting into the shipping lane. I would also like to thank all the staff at Gibraltar JSPATU 4 Dock for their help and the recovery of Das Boot (**Harry Jay**)!

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj S J McConnell**
SSM	**WO2 Lapin**

The Sqn would like to say farewell to **WO2 Pete Tasker** and family. He is coming to the end of his 22-year service, and we wish him good luck in Canada. In his place, we welcome **WO2 Lapin** to the Sqn. He has moved from HQ Sqn. We hope you enjoy your tour with 233 Sqn.

INDIA TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO2 McHugh**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Korschel**

India Tp gives a warm welcome to **Sgt Pete Szeremeta** and his family. We hope you don't find the change in weather from Cyprus to Ireland too much to cope with! We also welcome **Cpl Steve Graham** and his family from Blandford on his transfer to RSigs.

In the inter-tp basketball, the Tp started well with a fine win against Romeo Tp, **Cpl Lucas** scoring a monstrous 3 pointer to help us to a 9 - 3 result. But we were narrowly beaten by the other 2 tps, leaving us in 3rd place. In the afternoon, at volleyball we threw away an 11 - 5 lead, to lose 15 – 11 to Romeo Tp. We regained our composure to win the next 2 games, coming back

from 11 - 6 down to beat TM Tp, with an outstanding display from **Sgt Pete Szeremeta**. But somehow we still managed to finish only 3rd overall! A fine day was capped by a couple of refreshing drinks in the Peake Inn, where the pads beat the singlies at Pool.

The Tp say goodbye and good luck to **Sig Gav Williams** who is posted to 621 EOD, and to **Cpl Paddy Briggs,** posted to 16 Sig Regt. Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Toff' **Lucas** and **Cpl Mark Corber** on passing their T1 entrance. Finally congratulations go to **Sgt** 'Mac' **McArthur** on his SECRET wedding to **Colette**, and wish them luck.

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt S J Bristow**
Tp YofS	**WO2 (YofS) Yates**
Tp FofS	**WO2 (FofS) Clarke**

We say hello to **Capt Simon Bristow** who has joined us from Corps Recruiting, and to **Sgt** 'Gibbo' **Gibson**, his wife **Sophie** and their dog **Toby**, who have all joined us from 14 Sig Regt. Then to **Cpl** 'Jack Boy' **Dickson**, who has joined us from 249 Sig Sqn, and to **Cpl Zane Humphreys**, who has joined us from 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

Like all the Corps, we have a busy period behind us and ahead. G6 HQNI have got us working 24 hours a day, and we have asked the padre to pray for 25 hours in the day so we can sleep, but as yet no joy. We have, however, found a little time for the sporting challenges. The McKelvie Cup Competition has been held, and a win in the rugby helped to put the Tp firmly in the lead. A second place in the swimming followed, but later we found that basketball isn't the Tp's best sport. The volleyball provided some of the best entertainment of the year, with a nail-biting match with TM Tp that sadly saw the Tp edged into second place by the slightest margin.

The highlight of the past few months has to have been at **Sgt Rob Murray's** promotion drinks in October, when he decided to play 'dead man's fall' off a barstool. But don't be fooled by the 'Hardman' scar he now bears above his right eye! Hearty congratulations go to **Sgt Matt Booth** and **Cpl Andy Burrows** (now departed) for their recent awards of the GOC's Commendation for their actions and achievements in the Province. Well done to both of you.

The Tp would says goodbye and good luck to **Capt Rob Hamilton** as he settles down to his new life as **Lt** 'Token Jock' **Hamilton** in RNZ Sigs. All the best in your new career.

SAILING IN GOSPORT - *by LCpl Matt Shey*

On yet another wet and windy Province weekend, six members of 233 Sig Sqn set off on the long and pleasant journey to JSASTC on the south coast. The aim was to learn a little about Navy life, by bobbing up and down in boats and earning the Competent Crew qualification in the process.

We arrived at Gosport in the early hours of the morning, leaving a little time on arrival for a long and cosy sleep - in the mini bus! A few hours later, awake and raring to go, the skippers and yachts were allocated. There were three in our boat, **LCpl Feldman**, **LCpl Smith** and myself, **LCpl Shey**. **Cpl Parker** and **LCpl** 'Taff' **Jones** went in separate boats to battle the waves alone.'

The first day started with a lesson about the boat, and with the Solent too rough for novices it was decided that we should just motor to Port Solent Marina and stay there for our first night. It was totally coincidental that there was an array of bars and restaurants on location, and being intrepid explorers, we had to research the local nightlife in order to understand the local population. With that done and out of the way (honest), we spent the next couple of days turning our attention to the water and our boat handling skills, building up the necessary mileage and experience for our Competent Crew qualification.

Midweek saw a night sail from Cowes to Lymington to teach us how to recognise the different coloured lights, their sequences and what they mean. It was also the perfect opportunity to put our new skills to the test, and see who could reach the pub first. Full marks go to the crew of *Voluta* for leaving last and arriving second. Better luck next time, **Sgt Cattle**! Towards the end of the week, with the qualification of Competent Crew under our belts, we were up and down the Solent like we'd been at it for years. All in all a great week.

NCC TROOP

Tp Comd/ OPSO	**Capt Booker**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Johnson**

We say hello to all our new arrivals. **LCpl Slade** and **LCpl Emma Bond** are straight from the factory; **Cpl Phil Chadwick** joins us on completion of his T1 course; **LCpl James Russell** comes from 21 Sig Regt, and **Cpl Paul Howe** from 225 Sig Sqn. We say goodbye to **Cpl Dave Carter**, who has left on promotion to work as Rear Link Sgt for a 6 month tour with the Argyll and Southern Highlanders; to **LCpl Steve Moran**, who has headed for a better life with the EOD; and to **Cpl Dave Phillips**, who has moved to another Tp in the Sqn before heading to 264 Sqn in January 03.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt V Hemmings**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Goodwin**

Hellos go to **Cpl** 'Levi' **Wilson** from Blandford on completion of his Class 1 upgrade and also straight from the factory, **Sig** 'Donnie' **Donladson** and **LCpl** 'Matt' **Caddy**. The Tp says cheerio to the newly promoted **Sgt** 'Al' **Walsh** and family to 16 Sig Regt; to **Sgt** 'Scouse' **Coakley** and family to 6 Sup Regt RLC; and to **Sig Parkes** who seeks new employment in the undertaking trade. Congratulations to **FofS Matt Clish** and his wife, **Emma** on their new arrival, **Nicole**.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj G Inglis**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) B Hogg**

GOLF TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt R J Craig**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D Wilson**

A big hello goes to 2 of our new Techs, **Cpls Levi Wilson** and **Stu Rowbottom**, and a heartfelt goodbye to **Sgts Marc Beckett**, **Mark Partington** and **Cpl Ian Welsh**. We will miss you. It must also be mentioned that **Cpl Matt Adams** successfully completed his Junior Commanders' Course and enjoyed the meteorological delights of Wales during November. Also **Sgt Marc Beckett** and **Sgt Dave Street** bagged their Sgts' Course passes.

The majority of G Tp partook in the inter-Sqn Rugby and Football, with both teams winning very comfortably. In the inter-Sqn Swimming we won the Bronze. On the basketball front, members of G Tp were part of the Sqn and Regt team. The latter came second in the NI Major Units Competition, and we look forward to winning the inter-Sqn Competition.

On the social side, the Oktoberfest was a big hit, introducing some of the new members and reminding the majority of us how good German beer really is. **Capt Craig's** stag night didn't go ahead. Instead we had a hen-night, in which he was a good sport, donning a nice blonde wig, a very becoming dress and a pair of stilettos. A special mention and thank you must go to **Cpl Matt Barmby** and **Cpl Debs Whatmough** for organising the Tp's Christmas function, which was also a big success.

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Morris**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt (Supvr R) Ashworth**

Generally a quiet period for the Tp, and things are running surprisingly well in the absence of **Capt Morris**, who is away for a while on 'essential duty' (skiing). **Sgt John Chambers** recently swanned off to Tenerife to attend EX CANARY GOLD, and proved popular with the exercise DS when he announced that he was there for a 2-week holiday!

Congratulations go to **Cpl Clare Waldron** on successful completion of her RSigs Junior Commanders' Course, where she was reunited with **Cpl Fox**, a former member of the Tp. Meanwhile **Cpl** 'Ginge' **Ware** and **LCpl Howard**, are still allegedly working hard on their T1 upgrading course at the Defence Special Signals School in Chicksands. The Tp bids a fond farewell to **LCpl Thompson**, who is off to Blandford to learn a real trade. Also to **LCpl** 'Muz' **Murray** who is off to Joint Service Signals Unit (Digby) to prepare for the arrival of his first child, and also to wind up the RAF!

On the sporting front, the Tp has been busy preparing for the CO's Cup Basketball and Volleyball competitions, under the watchful eye of **Sgt Phil Berry** and **SSgt (Supvr R) Ball**.

15 SIG REGT ORIENTEERING TEAM - *by Sig Taylor*

15 Sig Regt Orienteering Team
Corps Champs 2002
Back row (L-R) Cpl Salter, Capt Morris, LCpl Thompson
Front row (L-R) Sig Thomas, WO2 (RQMS) Griffiths

On Tuesday 5 November the 15 Sig Regt Orienteering team flew out to England to take part in the 2002 Corps Orienteering Championships held at Blandford. The team consisted of **Capt Blaydon Morris, WO2 (RQMS) Steve Griffiths, Cpl Dave Salter, LCpl David Thompson** and **Sig Steven Taylor** all from 225 Sig Sqn.

The intrepid map-readers and speed demons competed in both the individual event on Wednesday the 6 November and the team event on the following day. Unfortunately the team were slightly disadvantaged from the start with only having five members instead of 6. However in true 15 Sig Regt style we pulled out all the stops in preparation for the forthcoming events.

On the day of the individual event, the rain never stopped and there was a distinct possibility that some of the checkpoints would be washed away. Despite the appalling conditions, we managed to get a half-decent result. **WO2 (RQMS) Steve Griffiths** managed to get second place in the over 35's category, which for such a racing snake, was no surprise. In the under 25's class, **Sig Steven Taylor** achieved an amazing 'almost' victory with 122 points, finishing 2nd (after returning to the start point instead of the finish and therefore loosing 48 points. Oops!) It was difficult to tell if this performance was down to skill, or whether **Sig Taylor** thought that the faster he ran, the faster he could go on the beers in Manchester.

The team event was equally successful. In preparation for this, the team had large quantities of curry at Blandford camp the night before, the idea being the rougher you feel in the morning the faster you will run. Despite some rather dubious map reading skills and one team consisting of only two bodies, we still managed to achieve a good result. No trophies for the team, but a real feeling of success achieved by all - and no rain! In the end an excellent event enjoyed by all, and two more individual trophies brought home!

3 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

OC	**Maj T Carmichael**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) R Hood**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

The Sqn recently achieved a first when, on Friday 13 December 02, the Admin Officer **Maj Max Hanlon** Royal Irish, received his ninth (yes ninth!) accumulated service bar from the GOC, **Lt Gen A S H Irwin KBE CBE**. This is in recognition of 30 years operational service, which has taken **Maj Hanlon** to many different theatres including Georgia, USA.

A sad farewell to **SSgt John Crilley**, who is leaving the Army and returning to civvy street. We all wish you the best of luck. We welcome **WO2 Kay Hart** who is stepping into **John's** shoes.

The Sqn is happy to announce that the Station bar the Whynge (pending new name) is now open for business. The QM has motivated the troops into a frenzy of DIY experts. *Changing Rooms* eat your heart out! **Cpl Hooper** is now the Sqn's Handy Andy. After a long stretch without a drinking hole, and with all the teamwork that has gone into it, it is a bar to be proud of. A big thank you to everyone who has given up their time to help out.

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt F Loxton**
SSgt	**SSgt K McIntosh**

Returning bleary-eyed from Christmas and New Year leave, Comms Tp has settled back into life in Portadown, and we welcome **LCpl Andy Cooper** and **Sig Andy Cook** to Syscon. **Andy** certainly faced a tough acclimatisation from sunny Cyprus to the snowy Province. Also making that brave step is **Sgt Tony Cecil**, who is joining TM Sec along with **LCpl Natasha Morris**. Farewells to **Cpl Dave Hallway** and **LCpl** 'LJ' **Murray**, two top blokes whose experience will be sorely missed.

SUPPORT TROOP

Quartermaster	**Maj M Wright-Jones**
RQMS(A)	**WO2 A Buckle**
RQMS(M)	**WO2 I Wylie**

In Portadown, it's back to the grindstone after a busy festive period. The Tp has to say a few sad farewells. **RQMS Chris Davies** is off to Blandford. (11 Sig Regt watch out!) A cheerio also to **LCpl Horton** who has moved up the road to 15 Sig Regt. Her refereeing skills were an asset to the Sqn. Farewells also to **LCpl Neil Davison**, who has departed to Catterick and to **Cpl** 'Robbo' **Robson**. A warm welcome to **RQMS A Buckle** and his family from 1(UK) Div, **Cpl** 'Ginge' **Major** from Abingdon and **Cpl** 'Tracey' **Fitzpatrick** all the way from 15 Sig Regt.

MERCURY CUP MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION 2002

The military skills competition is the last event of the Mercury Cup 2002, and we needed to win it to have any chance of taking the Mercury Cup back to Portadown. Our team was **2Lt Loxton**, **Sgt McKenna**, **Cpl Topping**, **Cpl Jackson**, **Cpl Neillings**, **LCpl Belshaw**, **LCpl Cooke**, **Sig Squires**, **Sig Whittaker** and **Sig Box**. Blessed with typical NI weather, we set off to the other end of the Province in our quest for victory.

The first challenge we had to overcome was a 2-mile dash to the first stand. We arrived at the accuracy shoot a minute and a half in front of our rivals, but our high spirits were short-lived after a disappointing first stand. 800m later and slightly out of breath, we arrived at the falling plate stand, where, thanks to excellent marksmanship from **Sgt McKenna**, **LCpl Belshaw** and **Sig Squires**, we won the stand and felt we were on a roll. The third stand was clay pigeon shooting and again, due to sharp shooting, by we took another 8 points.

The next two stands were weapons recognition and military knowledge, both run and won by 8 Inf Bde – no connection. However, we were a good distance ahead of everyone else on the march and in a commanding lead. All that was left was the final yet painful stretch to the finish line and a small wait for the results. We were announced as the winners, but unfortunately, just missed out on overall victory for the Mercury Cup. But there is always next year, watch this space!

PORTADOWN GOLF SOCIETY 4-CLUB COMPETITION – *by Cpl Clark*

Being Scottish, I've played in some bad conditions in my time, but the 4-club bimble on 30 January brought a new meaning to the expression extreme sports! **Winston Churchill** once said 'Golf is a good walk ruined ' and on this day members of Portadown Golf Society (PGS) would have been inclined to agree with the great man. The weather was atrocious, gale force winds and so cold a brass monkey would have been in trouble. Speaking of lost balls, quite a few members suffered that loss, especially the first group out on the hole. Every player lost one, if not two balls! The idea was for a fun day out (another great excuse to get away from work) and to get the best score with just four clubs. As the weather had taken its toll on PGS's usual course, Tandragee, a decision was made to move the event to Edenmore. Many in the society had never played this course before and had chosen their four clubs for Tandragee. A vital mistake, as Edenmore golf course is flat without the hills and valleys of Tandragee. Various players tried different strategies to combat the cold and wind, the least effective being **Cpl Ian Clark's** idea of drinking single malt whiskey to aide his morale and improve his game! Lets just say that the man should not drink and drive, as a constant shout of 'FORE' could be heard all around the course! At many times it looked like a scene from the Hamlet ad, minus the look of pleasure coming from the faces of various members as they emerged from the bunkers holding an 8 or 7 iron wishing they had taken a wedge. But at the end of the day someone had to win and that man was the bandit, **WO1 (RSM) Rob Hood**. Thanks go to **YofS Steve White** for organising the event.

CORPS SKIING - TRAINING AND CHAMPIONSHIP 2002 – *by Cpl Jackson*

The mighty 3 Brigaders

Having survived the epic journey from Portadown to Zell-am-See in Austria in one piece, everyone was glad to see that there was snow on the glacier and that skiing conditions were good. We were joining the RSigs Training Camp in its third week. To start with, we were sorted into ability groups. **Capt Gallagher** revealed himself to be a master of the slopes and was placed in one of the top groups. **Cpl Jackson** and **Lt Loxton** were both placed in an intermediate group. **Cpl Jackson** also managed this, despite crashing out right in front of the instructors who were assessing us. **Sgt Wilson** was placed in a beginners group where he concentrated mainly on perfecting his crash outs. **Cpl Ralph** and **LCpl Dansie** were both snowboarding for the two weeks. We trained hard in our groups for the first week and improvements were apparent. The second week was race week, which consisted of individual and team events in Slalom and Giant Slalom. Of the Portadown posse, **Capt Gallagher** was placed the highest individually, achieving a top fifteen result. **Lt Loxton** and **Cpl Jackson** both flew up the seedings, eventually finishing in the top thirty. **Cpl Dansie** did especially well in the snowboarding, receiving a third place for the Women's Individual event. By the end of the second week everyone was exhausted but pleased with 3 Bde's overall result of 6th in the team events.

CORPS CROSS COUNTRY COMPETITION – *by Sgt Bowden*

On Sun 26 January 03, following thorough preparation by the team, we finally set off on our marathon drive from Portadown to Brüggen. Luckily we had a smooth crossing to Liverpool on the overnight ferry and set off for Dover the next morning. We were making good time to Dover when, on the M1, a lorry in front of us decided to park itself through the central reservation and block both directions for 2fi hours. This minor set back would be nothing compared with our return journey.

We eventually arrived in Bruggen and checked into our accommodation. On race day, after getting lost in Elmpt Station, we eventually found the race registration and checked in. The women set off first, with **LCpl McCruden** representing the Sqn (despite being in the RLC) achieving an impressive 3rd place. Soon after, the men set off on the long and hard course. I particularly enjoyed running through the WW 2 bomb craters and the deep sand dunes of the driver training course, not to mention the thick woods and steep hills. Our finishing order was: **Sig Kye Topping**, **LCpl Andy Cooper**, **Cpl Wayne Topping**, **Sgt Bob Bowden**, **LCpl** 'Cooky' **Cooke** and **LCpl George Lucas**. After the mandatory cookhouse chicken curry, it was time for the results. To our amazement, we came 2nd overall and were awarded our Runners- up medals. That night we enjoyed the hospitality of the NAAFI bar. We rose early the next morning to make an early start on our long trek home. This journey proved to be something of a nightmare. We faced massive traffic jams and missed ferries on the continent and, in typical British style, when a snowflake landed on the M25, it caused a huge pile up leaving us to camp in the minibus for 10 hours. Two days after we had set off, we eventually made it to Liverpool.

EXERCISE BUCK FINN – *by Cpl Cooper-Shaw*

On Sat 1 February, members of 3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (203) departed for a week's skiing in the French Alps. We arrived at Lyon airport, where the coach driver who, after a successful application for asylum, decided to take us on a magical mystery tour. Eventually with the help of a mobile phone and the assistance of the ski rep, we found our hotel. The apartment was a masterpiece of French design, with plenty of living space, two bathrooms and a kitchen with every conceivable modern convenience - and a toilet that stank to high heaven, if you were last to use it in the morning.

As soon as the bags were dumped, it was off to the restaurant to sample what was to be the first of many local delicacies, steak and chips. It had been a long old day of travel but we still had time to test the nightlife, and to our surprise, we had to re-mortgage the house just to buy drinks.

The next morning it was off to the slopes. I proceeded straight to the baby slopes with the Master Driver, **WO2 Graham Kryworucka** and **Cpl Craig Craw. SSgt Kenny McIntosh**, having grown up with planks of wood wedged to his feet, proceeded straight to the more advanced slopes with the remainder of the proficient skiers. With expert tuition from **Cpl Sue Turner**, the novice group soon got the hang of skiing and I surprised myself at how easy it really was to fall over. The hardest part was standing up again. By the end of the week, having mastered the rolling bomb, the chin plough and how to traverse into the path of oncoming skiers, it was time to race.

The race was a team event and being the best skier and the fittest member of the group, I was picked last. As anchorman, I was unfazed. I did the job; I bombed down the hill like an avalanche and prayed to God that I would stop before I went off the edge.

On the last day we were up at 0400hrs. It was time to go home. However there was bad news in store for us. Mild snow had delayed flights into Stanstead. But we got home eventually. I had had a really good week and would recommend skiing to anyone.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC **Maj DA Craft**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P Marshall**

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Maj S Harvey R IRISH**
WOIC **WO2 (RQMS) DM Buckingham**

The RQMS Dept had a busy festive season, including a number of functions which everybody always invites stores personnel to. Maybe it's because we are popular guys! The BFBS Awards Evening (where attendance was as a celebrity), saw the RQMS and **Sgt Jase Hawksworth** attend as The King and The Red Indian out of *Village People*.

The Seniors versus Juniors football match also saw some highly entertaining inter-dept battles, with **Sgt Jase Hawksworth** scoring a scorcher and the RQMS rolling back the years by jinxing up the wing, only to nutmeg **LCpl Karl Deakin** in front of his girlfriends. The Dept says farewell and all the best to **LCpl Deakin**, who leaves on promotion to 14 Sig Regt.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt S R Bennett**
Tp SSgt **SSgt PP Corcoran**

OPS SECTION

Firstly a big welcome to **Sig Steve Barber**, from 7 Sig Regt; and **Sig Jason Gillard** and **Sig Sophie Gibson** from 21 Sig Regt. Goodbyes go to **LCpl Ian Walker**, posted to 30 Sig Regt and **LCpl Brad Fox**, posted to civ div. They will be sorely missed.

It has been a slow start to 2003, with the Third Friday Club being the highlight of the month. Volleyball and badminton were the focus of the day and, as usual, Comms Tp prevailed, earning themselves a well-deserved drink in the Bde bar.

We look forward to EX MINI MINDER (a unit training ex) at the start of next month and EX IBERIAN FINN. The latter, being a climbing ex in Spain, will make a welcome change to the normal rainy weather of Lisburn.

TM SECTION

Cpl Chivers was married last year and left at Christmas to join her husband at 16 Sig Regt in Germany. **Cpls Burgon** and **Uppal** have left the Army recently for a change of career in Civvy Street. Best wishes and good luck for the future go to all.

We are pleased to announce the following new arrivals: **Cpl Rawlyk**, from JSG in NI; **Cpl Alexander**, from 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn; and **Cpl Finney**, from 16 Sig Regt. We have also recently received the following five newly promoted LCpls from RSS Blandford: **LCpls Gumery**, **Williams**, **Lawless**, **Fox** and **Currim**.

In addition to these personnel we are pleased to announce another new arrival. On the 3 December 02 **Pte Price**, who lives with **Cpl Jennings**, gave birth to a healthy baby boy, **Cameron Myles Jennings**. We wish all the new arrivals good luck for the future and hope they enjoy their time within the Unit.

RIGGING SECTION

The 39 IBSS Rigging Sec had a demanding work pattern over the festive period, with the arrival of a new mast at MPH, requiring the installation of our own and two other agencies' antennae. After this we had to de-rig the mess on the old mast, but this proved to be a bit easier. We welcome **Cpl Dave Healy**, from 259 Sig Sqn Cyprus and farewell **Sig Derek Slowey** who is off to JCU Aldergrove. Finally many thanks **Sgt Arnie Renforth** for the Christmas dinner.

INTER SECTION RANGE DAY

The day started off with four teams and four stands to complete. The first event was an advanced contact on the ranges, followed by a brief quiz on Bde history. We then went on to a comd task, involving three members of the team being blindfolded whilst the fourth member provided instruction in the construction of a 9 x 9 tent. For some reason, the addition of a blindfold caused a sudden influx of comedy walks, or waddles in the case of **LCpl Ben Williams**. The final event was a closely matched clay pigeon shoot, with certain teams having the advantage of their own shotguns! OSP took first place, closely followed by TM Sec and Comms/Riggers Sec with the HQ team last. At the end of the day a good time was had by all and many thanks to **Sgt Paul Conroy** for organising the event and to his helpers on the day, **Cpls Dave Grimes**, **John Stitt**, **Linsay Payton** and **WO1 (RSM) Marshall**.

CHARITY FUNDRAISING 2002 – by SSgt Lynch

The Sqn has always been associated with fundraising for local charities and worthy causes. Our main event, the annual Bde Charity Day, is a summer open day for all the families in the Station and local areas. However in December 2002 we had an additional fundraising event, the Sports Memorabilia Auction.

Every company I could find an address for received correspondence of some sort (some 700 letters and 200 emails) asking/pleading for donations of money, goods or services that could be raffled/auctioned on the Charity Day. An analyst somewhere had shown that by bombarding businesses/companies with begging letters, the best you could hope for was a 10% response. How right that analyst was! However, those who did respond were very generous and sent in donations ranging from toys to business class flights to anywhere in Europe.

With marquees erected, stalls laid out, arenas built, pitches marked, water pools filled and enough inflatable castles/ assault courses to cover most of the pitches in Thiepval Bks, the day began. Anyone who has every served in NI will know that the weather here is never dependable. Yes, it rained at the start of the day and although the freefall parachute display had to be cancelled due to a low cloud base, the families were not deterred. Soon after the last downpour, families from across the Station started to arrive.

Sgt Mark Murphy co-ordinated the five-a-side football, whilst **Sgt Taff Symonds** fed us and **Sgt Arnie Renforth** watered us. There was an excellent displayby the police dog unit from RAF Aldergrove. **Sgt Bri Rawlings** entertained all with the *It's a Knockout* competition and although he managed to have me thrown into the huge water pool, his team of helpers were certainly not athletic enough to catch **Lt Steve Bennett**, who proved that rugby players can sprint if the need arises. The early rain did not stop **Cpl Donna Chivers** and **LCpl Selena Moffat** from dressing up in St Trinians-style school uniforms with extremely short skirts! Dressing this way resulted in their selling hundreds of raffle tickets, including to some people who knew that they would not be there for the draw.

A fantastic day was had by all, but it was not over yet. To end a very successful day more than 200 people from across the Station were treated to one of the best 'Elvis tribute bands' in the Station Leisure centre. This truly professional band was undeterred by a fire alarm halting proceedings for over an hour and stayed around to play on until the early hours.

Over £3,000 was raised, but rather than donate it straight away it was decided that a 'Sport Memorabilia Auction' may add more to the Charity pot. **WO2 Neil Boocock** and I were soon contacting premiership clubs with letters and phone calls. This time, we used a different tactic. Instead of trying to get them to donate, we sent them shirts and footballs to be signed at their next club signing day. It worked! We were kindly granted the use of the Offrs Mess annexe for the function and it attracted almost 200 people.

39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn presents their cheque to Friends of Malone Road

Entertainment from several bands and a top compere doubling as the auctioneer, resulted in an excellent night in the lead up to Christmas. For an initial outlay of £600 for shirts, footballs and framing of the signed shirts, an outstanding £4,400 was raised on the night.

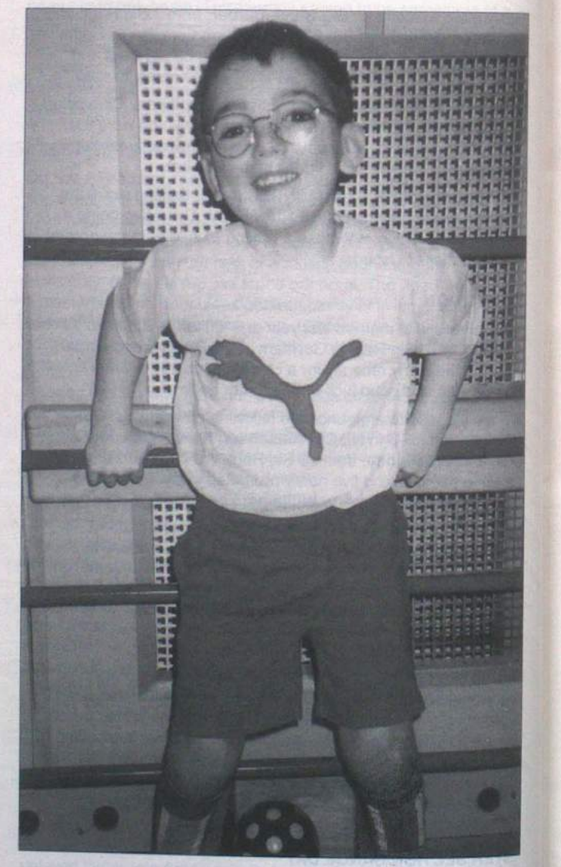
OUR BENEFICIARIES

80 Malone Road is a hostel on the outskirts of Belfast for severely handicapped children and adults. It is not sponsored by the NHS and relies heavily on local fundraising. Although small, the hostel offers respite for families and carers of handicapped persons of all ages. This is a great relief to many members of the community, particularly the parents. They have become our main beneficiary from the funds we raise at our charity ventures. We now refer to them as 'Friends of Malone Road'.

On 10 February 2003 we were able to make a donation of £4,000 to them. This substantial donation will go some way towards the designing and implementation of a landscape garden with water features.

With the fundraising for the year being such a success, a further £2,000 was available to donate to little Harry Withers, whose case had been brought to our attention by **WO2 Neil Boocock**. Harry is a motor-disabled child and lives in Lund Village, East Yorkshire. For the last few years he has attended the Peto Institute in Budapest, where he receives Conductive Education. For his next trip to Budapest, 39 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn will help towards the cost of his stay.

The following is a report we have on **Harry's** progress to date*: 'Harry first started Conductive Education when he was two years old, and we had been told that it was unlikely that he would ever walk. Initially we were looking for physical improvements, but we found that CE was working on all aspects of Harry's development. He became much more mentally alert, his speech improved, he became full of life, happy, confident and self-motivated. CE is now part of his daily life and has to be for him to progress. As he grows over the next few years, extra demands will be put on his body, and CE will help him to re-adjust. He will continue to attend the Peto Institute in Budapest regularly. It will be a long slow process for Harry, but when we see the look of triumph on his face and hear the joy in his voice when he has achieved something new, we know it is worth the effort.'*



Harry Withers

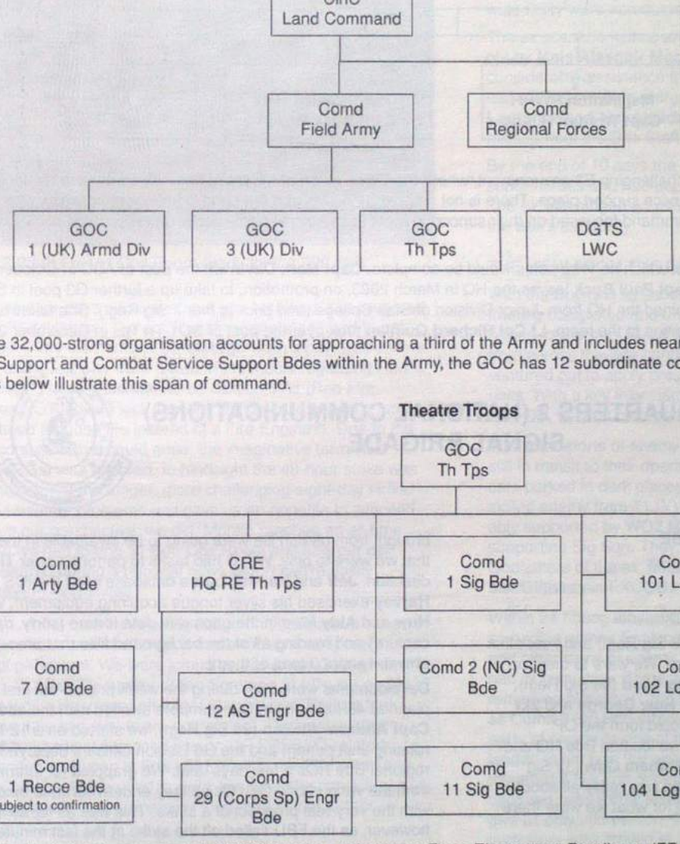
NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

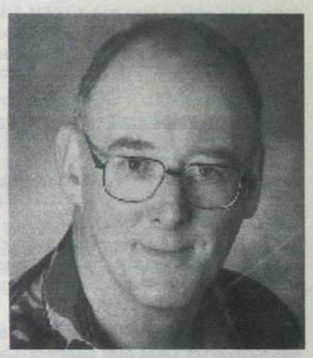
HEADQUARTERS THEATRE TROOPS

By Lt Col Richard J Quinlan, R SIGNALS, SO1 Th Tps

Headquarters Theatre Troops is a product of the review of HQ LAND Command known as LAND*mark*. It sits in the recently formed Field Army as a new 2 star command. Th Tps stands alongside 1 (UK) Armd Div, 3 (UK) Div and Land Warfare Centre and is commanded by **MajGen J M Shaw MBE**, late R Sigs.

Field Army

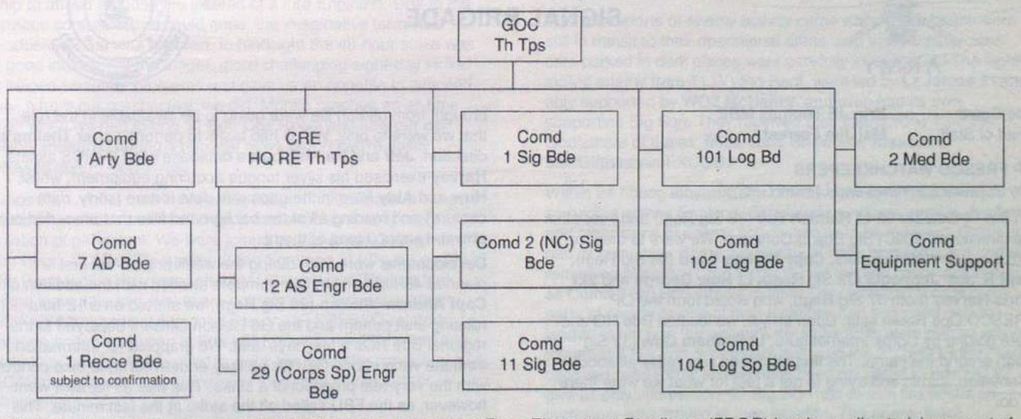




MajGen J M Shaw MBE

This huge 32,000-strong organisation accounts for approaching a third of the Army and includes nearly a third of the TA. Comprising all the Combat Support and Combat Service Support Bdes within the Army, the GOC has 12 subordinate commands at one-star or Col level. The diagrams below illustrate this span of command.

Theatre Troops

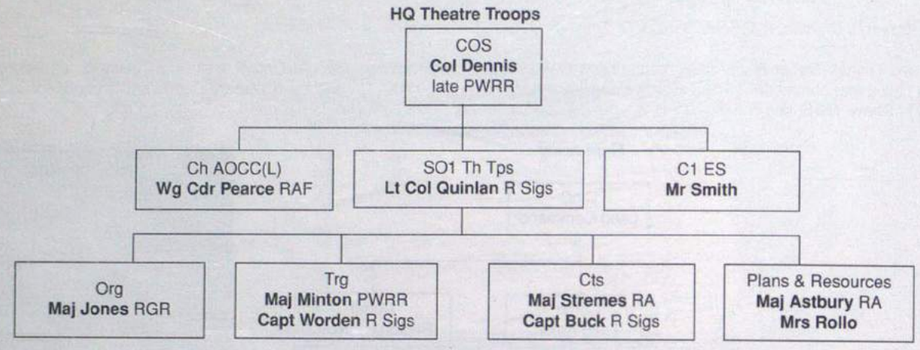


GOC Th Tps' mission is to command OPCOM troops and prepare Force Elements at Readiness (FE@R) in role, as directed, in support of the UK's Defence Strategy. This includes specifically:

- Command in peace all allocated Th Tps.
- Provide forces within readiness to MOD, PJHQ, HQ ARRC and to 1 (UK) Armd and 3 (UK) Divs for training and operations.
- Inform Force Generation process through the provision of specialist Th Tps advice to HQ LAND.
- Through planned training, inform the Force Development process.
- Be prepared to undertake Military Aid to the Civil Power (MACP) tasks in accordance with operational plans as directed.
- Provide support required by deployed operational commanders and Force Elements (FE).
- Provide support to fielding of future equipment.
- Provide recruiting support to Regional Divisions in accordance with the Land Command Recruiting Directive.
- Provide Special Task support around the spectrum of conflict.

- Contribute to the development of the rapid reaction forces including JRRF and those elements assigned to NATO's Graduated Readiness Force (Land) (GRF(L)) pool, e.g. C2, CS and CSS.
- Develop the Air-Land interface in the Field Army by enhancing co-ordination and co-operation with the Air Component.
- Be the Theatre Troops BLB Holder
- Be prepared to take the lead in Land Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) development.

Although expecting to grow over time, the 'small and beautifully formed' headquarters owes much to the R Sigs, PWRR and RA in supporting the current staff levels. In addition to a small private office (ADC: **Capt Alex Senneck** R Sigs, driver **Cpl Simon Emmett** of the Corps and a PS) and SO2 MS, the GOC has a small staff as shown below.



HQ Th Tps is a great place to work in a challenging E2 environment, where the Corps can make a real difference across the too-long forgotten combat support and combat service support piece. There is not an operation involving the Land Component on which our soldiers are not present. With a 2-star command focussed on their support, expect to see increasingly better representation of the issues that matter in the years to come.

Finally a few comings and goings, without which no *Wire* notes would be complete. **Capt Mark Davis** left the post of ADC in October and was replaced by **Capt Alex Senneck**. **Capt Paul Buck** leaves the HQ in March 2003, on promotion, to take up a further G3 post in Sierra Leone. **Capt Michele Worden** has just joined the HQ from Junior Division of Staff College (and prior to that 7 Sig Regt). She takes up the busy SO3 Trg post and is a welcome addition to the team. **Lt Col Richard Quinlan** took over the post of SO1 Th Tps in December 2002. That's us crated!

ARMY

HEADQUARTERS 2 (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

Bde Comd	**Brig JE Thomas MBE**
Chief of Staff	**Maj Jim Forrest**

OP FRESCO WATCHKEEPERS

- by 2Lt Aidy Matthews and Lt Huw George

On the 14 October 02 **Lt Hamish Fell** (38 Sig Regt) and I set off in the direction of 2(NC) Sig Bde in Corsham. We were to meet up with the OIC Watchkeepers, **Capt Thelma Ward** (38 Sig Regt), **Capt R** 'Jeff' **Jephcote** (32 Sig Regt), **Lt Huw George** and **2Lt Chris Harvey** (both 37 Sig Regt), who would form the OP FRESCO Ops Room staff. Upon arrival, we located Bde HQ and were guided by Corps Internet guru, **Lt Graham Gaw** (32 Sig Regt) around the camp. The first afternoon was really all about orientation, admin and trying to get a feel for what we were there to do.

The following week we all worked on setting up the Ops Room. This involved begging, borrowing and stealing the kit that we needed, evicting the Airwave Implementation team from their desks to make room for us (sorry YofS) and harassing various people who were already busy with the **Princess Royal's** impending visit. This may seem like an easy task, but considering that none of us had any knowledge of the work conducted prior to our arrival, or the details of our role, it was quite hard. The situation was not improved by the fact that none of us had worked in Corsham before. We didn't know the personalities with whom we would be working; neither did we know which depts we'd need to liaise closely with. And those of us from different regts hadn't even met before!

As the team started to form, it became evident that the skills we brought from civilian life were going to be invaluable in the role that we were to play. We all had tasks to perform under **Thelma's** direction. **Jeff** and **Hamish** built a database of all the ICS assets, **Harvey** exercised his silver tongue acquiring equipment, whilst **Huw** and **Aidy** filled in the gaps with data torture (sorry, data capture) and reading all of the background files that preceded our arrival – about 3 tons of them!

Developments were swift during the week prior to the first planned 48-hour strike. Our numbers swelled with the addition of **Capt Andrew Whalen** (38 Sig Regt), we started on a 12-hour rotating shift pattern and the G6 Liaison Officers deployed to the regional Bde HQs a few days later. We grappled for information from the various bde G6 LOs as they endeavoured to take control with the very real prospect of a strike. This was as far as it went however, as the FBU called off the strike at the last minute. This was not only annoying after all of the hard work carried out in preparation around the country, but also simply bad manners.

For me (**2Lt Matthews**) the most challenging element of this early set-up phase was getting to grips with the essence of the operation and working at bde level alongside the other services. It meant that I had a very steep learning curve, but had the satisfaction of developing my understanding of 2 (NC) Sig Bde HQ and some of the ways in which the Regular Army works. It was the first time that I have had exposure to operations at the higher level, and I believe it to be a very valuable experience and would recommend it to other young officers, should the opportunity arise for them.

The following week saw the first actual 48-hour strike on 14 November. This gave us our first chance to test the infrastructure that we had helped to put in place - and things were pretty hectic. After re-establishing contact with the G6 LOs, we got to grips with the minor problems that were flooding in at that time. It was the first time that LCSS(R) terminals had been deployed on an operation, and therefore the first opportunity to test user training properly. Over 50 of these had been assembled at short notice, in record time (to the credit of 10 Sig Regt) and due to the immediacy of the FBU strikes, they had to be issued before a comprehensive testing programme could be completed. As a result, a variety of teething troubles were encountered, ranging from damage in transit, to basic user familiarity problems. Just as everything started to run smoothly, the strike ended. It did however, highlight areas for improvement.

2 Bde's Fresco Ops Room ready for the 999 calls

Over the next six days we winkled out any problems and prepared for the eight-day strike. The political atmosphere seemed to hot up as preliminary elements of **Sir George Bain's** pay review were released and questions were asked in the media regarding Red Fire Engines. These were later to be called RFAs (Red Fire Appliances NOT Royal Fleet Auxiliary. Who would expect a large ship to attend a house fire instead of a Fire Engine?). Due to the obvious confusion that could arise, the imaginative term Red Goddess (RGs) was adopted. In hindsight the 48-hour strike was a good indicator to the longer, more challenging eight-day strike. It helped eliminate problems and gave us an appetite to succeed - which from our perspective, we did. Morale reached an all-time high when we had to ring 51 Bde Ops Room and saw our call being answered during a national news report (we're easily pleased during long shifts).

Since then, strike talks have continued and subsequent planned strikes have been called off, which has enabled a temporary rotation of personnel. We were joined by **2Lt Anne Gallagher** (37 Sig Regt), **2Lt Kev Dempsey** (2 Sig Sqn) and **2Lt Dom Leeds** (38 Sig Regt) whilst **Huw** went off to get married and **Thelma** took some leave (the two events are not related). During this 'down time' we have been put to good use on OP FRESCO-related matters and other duties at Bde HQ following the Christmas and New Year break. With no end in sight, we await the conclusions of ACAS negotiations and prepare for the possibility of further strikes.

EXERCISE HORSESHOE 3

INTRODUCTION

EX HORSESHOE 3 was the 2 (NC) Sig Bde FTX providing a culmination of individual and collective training for the past 2 years. The ex was held during September 02 and was planned to test individual, units and the Bde HQ. It deployed across England, Wales and the Channel Islands and involved some 1020 personnel and 220 vehicles from all units of the Bde.

The aim of the ex was to 'Evaluate the Bde's Scheme of Manoeuvre and capability for operations in order to confirm Readiness and determine future development'.

The theme was based around Homeland Security/Defence and involved the deployment of range of ICS and personnel in support of notional military and civilian agencies. A series of exercise objectives included:

Provision of the full range of ICS capability - radio, IS/IT to meet a range of tasks.

Achieve specific tasks in order to ensure the Brigade is able to meet its LAND commitments.

Practice and confirm administration procedures for TA personnel.

Validate and confirm administration procedures for TA personnel.

Introduce and confirm interoperability with other agencies including PJHQ, RAF and Log Bde/Th Tps assets.

Planning for the exercise commenced in 2001. Throughout 2002, regular meetings were held with Trg Majs and other unit representatives. These were used to co-ordinate the ex and scenario development and to enable individual units to include their own trg requirements. A MAPEX was held in May 2002, when the ex concept was introduced to Regtl Teams, the Concept of Ops discussed, and the basis for new SOPs to reflect the Bde's wide utility were introduced.

The ex scenario writing and the running of EXCON was carried out by **Majs Alasdair MacGillivray** and **Tony Shaw**, with some considerable assistance from 71(Y) Sig Regt. This was to be the last exercise prior to retirement for the Dep Comd, **Col Chris Laurence** and **Maj Alasdair MacGillivray**. Both will be greatly missed from the Bde Staff.

By the end of 10 days the Bde staff felt that they had all become super heroes and had participated in their own great adventure. The ex was judged an overall success and a valuable indicator of the Bde's capability.

THE VIEW FROM THE FAR SIDE (EXCON)

With the Bde and its associated units safely deployed, work-up training completed and units ready to communicate, OPFOR swung into action. Small teams of highly skilled personnel drawn from across the Bde concentrated at Leek Camp and bravely ventured out to apply pressure and uncertainty to all exercising units. With a key informant in each unit passing information to the OPFOR, tension mounted.

The first reports of enemy activity came while these teams were still in transit to their operational areas, and several suspicious cars parked in dark places were carefully investigated! The highly skilled enemy from 71 (Y) Sig Regt, were led by **Lt James Evans** ably supported by **WO2 McHenry**, and even had its own supporting Sig Sqn. They received their instructions from the Godfathers of the ex, **Majs Tony Shaw** and **Alasdair MacGillivray** in EXCON.

Within 24 hours, mayhem of a politely controlled nature was spreading across England. Simulated bombings, sniping, leaflets and other signs of enemy activity began to be reported. Every unit had its own story. Some are worthy of note, and some are better remaining hidden. 31 Sig Regt (V) had the first major incident, just as Comd 2 Sig Bde arrived to visit. They admitted a captured party of enemy to one of their locations and searched only the leader. Great was the enemy's joy as ex IEDs were placed around the area! 2 Sig Sqn generously released the 2 OPFOR they had captured before they should have been delivered to Bde HQ to give ex play information. 47 Sig Sqn had to turn fire hoses on protestors who arrived at their location. The enemy were everywhere. One friendly packet at a filling station were extremely surprised when a civilian car drew up alongside, smiled at the young lady co-driver, waved the enemy symbol at them, and then drove off. Exercise play was concluded by 32 Sig Regt(V), who managed to ambush the enemy leader and his supporters, one of whom closely resembling the CO and some of his RHQ staff.

THE ADVENTURES OF FRAGO

(*with apologies to JRR Tolkien*)

Frago and his many friends come from the dark tunnels of Corsham and the Magic Forrest. Many adventures lay ahead in their search for the special horseshoe, also sought by the **Dark Lord**. It was generally known that the evil runes on the special horseshoe translated as:

'One Staff to find them all, and in the darkness confound them
One Staff to rule them all, and in the darkness demux them'

The **Dark Lord** was cursed to travel the land in search of the special horseshoe, and no longer able to fly. In this he was supported by 9 Evil Wraiths, whose disembodied voices would cause uncertainty to any **Frago**. These 9, these black riders were known as The Staff. Chief amongst The Staff, was the smallest of the 9, and she was forever tormented by the **Deputy Dark Lord**, known as **Sauron the Vet**, who divined many things from the entrails of newts and cats. The days of **Sauron the Vet** were numbered, so he tried mightily to drive his red chariot along the roads at speeds mere mortals cannot achieve. **The Dark Lord** strove mightily for a clone, but his magic horseshoe had failed him, so **Sauron the Vet** was soon to be replaced by the red-handed wizard who lived in a great Beacon and spoke in a strange tongue.

Each night the Black Riders would gather in a circle and listen to the distant voices tell of the many Gollocks who had dropped from the various branches during the day. Sometimes the voices would be 'rather dim', and the 9 would cry out to be free of the troublesome DELs, which lived slightly out of reach of everyone. Then the Dark Mistress of the Weather would be summoned to speak of things in the future.

As they travelled the land, **Frago** and his friends were also much troubled by the twin-headed evil of CENOX (known as EXCON) and his dark servants the XXIV/VII Lancers (barbarian horsemen from Kent and Sarf Lunnon). The distant voices would tell tales of many dark servants and the Black Riders would listen in disbelief.

Frago briefly met with other small Hobbits who lived in a kind of mobile hobbit hole called a Tight. The big people found such mobile homes cramped and uncomfortable and instead lived in full sized ISO containers, in which they put less equipment than the Hobbits did in their very cosy Tights. These big people tended to blunder around the countryside unaware of what a **Frago** is and had little awareness of the other Hobbits, who lived in horseboxes.

The Staff would descend on innocent little hamlets, such as Altcar and Otterburn, preceded by a great deal of wailing and lamentation from the very nice people who lived on Honeycroft Hill (the writer wants to eat on the next exercise). These very nice people would travel the land solemnly holding an IRT before them, in search of an incident. Meanwhile, CENOX proved that they could not be trusted, and recruited small children from the place of learning in Leeds to attack the **Dark Lord** and the Staff. The very nice people (with not very nice words) called upon the earth and water (particularly the water) to subdue the children, thus protecting the source of enlightenment.

Then on a high hill, the Special People, who lived under the giant pansy, gathered all the forces for light and good in one place. **Elrond** (half-human), high king of the many, met with the **Dark Lord**. **Elrond** was very tall and very wise and not altogether of our time. With him, **Elrond** brought the **Dwarf King** from his deep mines at Northwood and **Theoden**, King of White Hall. **Elrond** himself, lived in a mythical palace of outstanding architectural design in the magic land of Upavon. **Elrond** looked down on the lands of the Regional Kings and their Tribes and was much pleased.

Finally, the Black Riders were no longer to be seen, but the distant voices could still be heard at night, amidst with the sounds of the dark servants. The many Gollocks had long since been forgotten.

The ENDEX.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

ALLIED COMMAND EUROPE CIS CONTINGENCY ASSETS POOL BATTALION

CO **Lt Col Keith Whitehead**
FofS **WO1 (FofS) Phil Holland**

Many members of the wider Corps will not be aware of the existence of the ACE CIS Contingency Assets Pool Battalion (ACCAP Bn), NATO's only wholly-owned deployable Comms HQ. We are based in Maastricht, NL and are approximately 35 RSigs officers and soldiers in amongst another 170 multi-nationals from 9 different nations.

ACCAP Bn was formed in September 1999 from the remnants of the old Alternate War Comms Sqn and other NATO assets. Since that time, we have exercised in Poland, Denmark, Germany, Turkey, Spain, Italy and Macedonia on OP AMBER FOX, as well as maintaining standing operational commitments in both SFOR and KFOR. Our mission is to 'rapidly extend the NATO CIS infrastructure within and outside of the NATO area and sustain it for a limited period'. Our first CO, **Lt Col Jim Dryburgh**, was responsible for guiding the unit through the difficult early days and trying to establish a coherent and workable unit structure.

The equipment we operate is commercial off-the-shelf, and the training we have to undertake for familiarisation necessitates contractor training or attendance at the NCISS in Latina, Italy. Life is sometimes very tough, but someone has to do it! Our personnel are primarily techs, though we have Tele Op Sys, Dvr/Lmn, Dvr/Elect and Tech Sup Spec at various ranks. We have a regular turnover of personnel, so if you fancy something different, apply through your unit directly to MCM Div in Glasgow.

Life in Maastricht compares favourably with York or Chester, in as much as it is a small city with a university population, which is v ery popular with tourists and the singlies alike. **WO1 (FofS) Phil Holland** offers spiritual technical wisdom to the youngsters - although he recently had one notable failure. Nobody was exactly sure who stole the Christmas tree at the end of the UK Delegation and Support Unit Social, but **Cpl Tyrone Cooke** had 'previous', so the finger of fate pointed steadfastly in his direction.

SSgt Paul Haughton is the gripper, and sets the example and standard for the youngsters to emulate. Indeed he has had much success. We have had very few disciplinary problems over the last couple of years. He departs shortly on promotion to 2 Sig Regt. **Sgt Stu Williamson** recently departed for some much-needed normality in 7 Bde Sig Sqn. He had an opinion on everything and his naturally monolithic xenophobia was a source of great amusement.

Sgt Dave Cascarino, a larger than life character in more ways than one, looks after a busy line section. He is constantly trying to emulate the standards set by his international colleagues and failing miserably! He makes up for this shortfall by constantly regaling stories from the depths of his career, most of which are completely without foundation.

12 June 2001 saw the unit deploy to Macedonia in support of 16 Air Assault Bde on OP AMBER FOX. Under the command of D Platoon OC, **Kapt John Haesen** NLA, CGS-4 left Maastricht under the watchful eye of CO, **Lt Col Jim Dryburgh** and drove in convoy to Naples. A four-day boat trip with the Italian Army to Thessaloniki in Greece followed. It was a good job everyone liked pasta, because that's all you got. After a short stay in Greece the MCM drove to Macedonia to HQ Task Force HARVEST. A further six months in Petrovic, Macedonia saw CGS-4 providing NATO comms, firstly through 216 (Para) Sig Sqn under the command of

Maj Foster, and then under the flag of Task Force FOX commanded by the Germans.

At the suggestion of the CO, **Lt Col Keith Whitehead**, we have introduced a National Day. This allows each of the contingents to organise a day to allow the other 9 nationalities to see how they conduct business. It was no surprise to see the Brits setting the standard. On 3 February we put together a morning of Command Tasks followed in the afternoon by Horse Racing, with a charitable concept taking place in the Anchor Inn. **Sgt Dave Cascarino**, a John McCririck lookalike, was responsible for encouraging the Internationals to put their hands in their pockets – no easy task. Congratulations to our Belgian colleagues who won the inaugural event. Next on the calendar is the German National Day.

The past couple of months have seen a few Brits come and go from the unit. Good luck to **Sgt Frankie Greenwood**, departing on promotion to 16 Sig Regt; **Sgts Mark Gray**, **Shaky Wakeham** and **Lee Johnston**, to 7 Sig Regt; **Cpl Shaun Tunca**, who has recently left to go to 241 Sig Sqn in Donnington; **Cpl Ali Skene**, on promotion to 4 Bde Sig Sqn, **LCpl Ian Andrews**, departing to Blandford; **LCpl Jack Russell**, to 30 Sig Regt; and **LCpls Mick Williams**, **Scotty Bingham** and **Mick Parsey**, who all recently left the Army. Finally congratulations to **LCpls Chris Jones**, **Si Hall** and **McLuckie** on being selected on the last promotion board.

If you fancy something different come and give NATO a try. Applications through your unit to those awfully nice folk at MCM Div in Glasgow.

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Smith MBE**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Reid**

CHRISTMAS FUNCTIONS

As always happens, Christmas began in the Sqn at the end of November to allow all the functions to be fitted in. **Sgt Cowe** (RLC) had the envious task of planning and executing the Sqn's Christmas function. The function was held in a marquee hired courtesy of the RSM, **WO1 Andy Baird**. The ambient temperature outside was a mild -12°, inside a warm +6°. The evening was well supported by the Sqn, with nearly 200 personnel and their spouses attending. It gave OC Sqn, **Major Martin Smith MBE** a chance to thank all the soldiers, and more importantly, their spouses a thank you for their efforts over the previous 12 months. It was a great success, with a band and disco taking us into the twilight hours, much to the amusement of the local German community!

BONE OF CONTENTION RUGBY MATCH

WO2 (SSM) Andy Buckle receives the Bone Of Contention from the Capt Gladwin

It was a freezing afternoon that greeted the players from across the Regt as they met for the Bone of Contention rugby match between the Offrs and SNCOs and the Junior Ranks. **Capt Lawes** inspected the pitch with the referee. It was harder than tarmac. **Cpl Savage**, the team captain for the Juniors prayed it would be called off (who could blame him) faced with the brilliance that can only be created by time and intelligence in the correct messes. Unluckily for the Juniors, the game was on, but it would only be touch rugby as the officers were worried about chaffing their knees. After all they did have the Mess Ball to look forward to that week.

The game was extremely tight. The final score was 10 – 7 to the Offrs and SNCOs, a final drop goal by **Capt Lawes** in the final minute sealing victory. **Capt Simon Godwin** presented the trophy in the absence of the CO to **WO2 (SSM) Andy Buckle**. Better luck next year lads!

LOOK FORWARD

The Sqn prepares for deployment to Kuwait in support of the Regt on EX LUCKY WARRIOR during February 2003. The LAD have worked like Trojans to ensure maximum equipment availability for the ex and their efforts have been appreciated by all of us. Whatever the future brings, we will be prepared.

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj A M Churchill**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Cook**

HERFORD STATION CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Bizarrely, the 2002 Herford Station Christmas Fayre actually took place in November, but this did little to dampen the festive spirit of all those involved, and the day proved to be a huge success. This was almost solely due to the hard work of the organisers, and the grafters of 201 Sig Sqn, who spent the best part of three days ensuring that the rather bland gym looked much more like somewhere you would actually expect to hold a Christmas Fayre.

There was a vast number of stalls at the Fayre, ranging from mini-golf, to the traditional raffle stalls, to the infamous Santa's Ghetto... The highlight however, was the car smashing stand where, armed with a pair of goggles and an enormous sledgehammer, punters were able to relieve their pre-Christmas work (!) tension. Undoubtedly it was the incredibly hard-worked 201 Sqn members going time after time to this stall that helped to raise the amount of money that we did. In total, over £3,500 was raised and distributed between a local charity, Schattenkinder, and the Army Benevolent Fund.

For those who stayed until the end, the grand finale was the final annihilation of the already battered cars, as one lucky raffle winner was able to accompany **Sgt McMinn** in driving over them in AFV 434 (previously Santa, of the eponymous Santa's Ghetto's new sleigh...)

Clearly the day would not have gone as smoothly as it did, had it not been organised so well, by OC 201, **Maj Churchill**, and his trusty aide, namely **Lt Bumby**, whose work advertising the event,

Sgt Mcminn, Sgt Green and the lucky raffle prize-winner test out the adaptability of Santa's new sleigh

undoubtedly helped to encourage so many people to turn up. Thanks go to **SSgt Preece** and his band, for providing some excellent music other than Christmas songs, and to all those involved for their hard work both before and after the Fayre.

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Lucas**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Lloyd**

Christmas couldn't have come sooner for the members of 211 Sqn after a hectic time both on the work and social front. Adventure training in Bavaria marked the start of a busy winter, though it was probably a happier memory for some more than others. **Sig Wilkinson** was a marked man for his appalling attempts at snowboarding, and it took a while to realise that the tea-tray-and-bin-bag approach would have been better from the start. A big thank you goes to **Sig Julia Boon** for performing the best wipe out of the day, but this unfortunately came with an injury. For those who fancied themselves on the water, kayaking brought out another side of many others. Why **Sig Colling** earned the title of 'morale on legs' may be best not to ask, but one suspects it may have something to do with the fact that his head spent more time under the water than on top of it. **Sig Price**, apparently a superb paddler, went for the alternative option of attempting to launch herself *through* the rocks, promptly smashing her teeth - an interesting attempt at lifting morale but it seemed to work.

'Panzathon' still haunts the majority of us. It comprises a radical task involving the transformation of sixteen armoured vehicles and their having to be stripped down and fitted out from scratch to send them off to storage. Theoretically, this would enable the Sqn to focus their efforts on more important tasks!

Winter brought a new influx of willing young men, eager to ply their trade amongst the best. Whether this enthusiasm lasted longer than 24hrs is unsure but welcome to **Sigs Jones**, **Harvey**, **Finch**, **Withers**, **Doherty**, **Mason**, **McClone**, **Walsh** and **McGouran**. Hello also to **LCpl Kimberley**, **Cpl Lindley** and **Sgt Vickers**, who gets a particular mention for his promotion. Congratulations for all the slaving away. Commiseration, however, to Sigs **Scarfi**, **Briffett**, **Jackson** and **Gadsdon**, all of whom were sent from Comd Tp to show Rebro Tp how the hard work should be done. It is certain that **SSgt Robinson** will spread this enthusiasm on arrival at his new posting at ACIO, Newcastle and 211 send their best wishes with him.

December was unfortunately not the wind-down that everyone had hoped for and all the new boys were given a harsh introduction to exercise with 1Div. Plans for EX RHINO STAFF were revealed along with the concurrent RRB exercise. The former involved the task of working alongside both 30 and 2 Sig Regts (theoretically) to enable communications between our American counterparts and ourselves. It was a start anyway!! Ex RRB TEST was a 3-day ex at Minden North, overviewed by **SSgt McKenzie**, a thoughtful move by the hierarchy so that the Tp didn't feel left out. Winter temperatures of -10° were undoubtedly appreciated. The arrival of the Christmas party period was a welcome relief - that is, until the morning after. The livers-in party was held in a marquee rather than the usual cookhouse, and luckily heating was provided. Turkey and trimmings was substituted by a finger buffet style lunch with the officers and SNCOs being slaves for the day…(an unusual occurrence!) It was debatable, however, whether the female group of singers provided the desired entertainment, their being likened by a certain Sig to 'cats being strangled'. However, a good time was had by all, courtesy of **Cpl Wood** and his committee.

After a bit of well-earned Christmas leave the return to work in January saw the start of a new year but also brought the tragic news of the untimely death of one of the Sqn's much loved members, **Cpl Mark Brenen**, after a motorcycle accident. A funeral party, headed by **Lt Cliff Kamara**, returned to the UK for **Mark's** funeral service - a fitting tribute to a truly remarkable character.

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj B Alderson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Buckle**

EXERCISE REFUGIO DIAMOND - *by LCpl Wignall*

Following the initial nervous exchanges made between the new team and the routine passport checks, we boarded the flight to Chile via the Falkland Islands. During our time in urban Chile we relied mainly on the Spanish that **Lt McCafferty** spoke, instead of the designated linguist **LCpl 'Wiggy' Wignall**. After our pictures were taken by a rather small amigo we set off through one of the most beautiful Patagonia nature reserves - the classic Torres Del Paine circuit.

Day one of the 150km trek involved a rather steep incline to our first camp where we were to experience our first wash in freezing cold glacier water - a rather chilly bath! The evening entertainment involved huddling round the fire, our communal meeting point. It was prehistoric man's TV as we all found ourselves staring at the flames late into the night to keep us warm.

Sigs Watson & Davis on Torres del Paine circuit. 'I'm a professional mountaineer, with all the gear!'

On the second day, a distance of 20 km was covered, but our furious pace, even with 25kg bergens, ensured that we made it to Puerto Seron with plenty of daylight left. The weather was so good that our responsible JSMEL(s) tried to ensure that we all wore sun cream. Unfortunately **Cpl Taff Evans** was not going to be told, as he knew that sun cream would not work on his skin! Unexpectedly the designated campsite was shared with 'Bully' the bull. This one tonne steak eyed us up for a good while, but fortunately his only intention was to get to the stream for a nice refreshing drink of water, not squaddie blood. So we all slept soundly that night.

The third leg was a fairly flat route along the valley floor. Consequently we were beset with the awesome sights of magnificent mountains and a variety of colours and shapes that you would expect on a tropical island. The wide valley floor and the Rio Del Paine also ensured that there was plenty of tricky wet ground to cross. **Sig Kirkby** found this out and as a result, blamed the whole group for her slow progress across the marshes. The time and effort was rewarded with a spectacular western style ranch where wild horses roamed and very friendly local hospitality abounded.

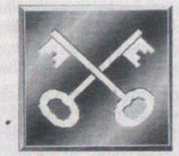
The highest point, Paso John Gardner at 1275m, was reached on day five, following a slight deviation by **Lt Jim King**. He went on to say that if he was on his own, he would have carried on through the 6ft deep snow and clear a way through the impenetrable trees on the almost vertical slope. We were soon rewarded with the massive expanse of ice, Glacier Grey. It was an awesome sight to behold and a memory that all the team will cherish for a long, long time. The tricky descent that followed was not quite as awe inspiring, causing tempers to fray. Fortunately we fell, stumbled and slid down the steep route to the next campsite, but with no broken bones. Standing around the fire that night we were grateful to be told by one of the more intelligent members of the group, **Cpl Lord**, that 'There were too many logs and trees in this forest.' We would never have noticed!

The day's walk toward Lake Grey, the iceberg catcher for Glacier Grey, offered many outstanding views of the glacier and the magnificent snow capped mountains in the distance. Our campsite that night was like a paradise. Refuge Grey offered a welcoming alternative to the twice a day pasta meal as did the hiring of warmer sleeping bags to replace the inadequate Army issue. **Sgt Rawlings** managed to shift teasing of the other travellers in the refuge for a short moment when he declared how inadequate his map was. That was until someone pointed out that it was not actually Chile at all, but Peru!

Awakening the following day was quite difficult for **Sig O'Callaghan's** tent, but the slowness was quickly rectified by the daily pace setter, **Sig Pardoe**. We raced up the hill to the remaining classical viewpoint in Torres del Paine. We were engulfed in vast towers of rock, reaching up to the clouds above, for miles around. Time was taken to relax in the splendid scenery before we retraced our steps down the hill to base camp.

For the remainder of the trek an emphasis was placed on map reading, especially for the team members undergoing SMP training. The stop over campsite was Camp Pehoe, which in the Patagonian Andes, is a bit like a mega mall. The hospitality was second to none and we were privileged to be hosted by 'Bear Fighter', one of the local guides.

The ten day trek culminated in a speedboat ride along the Rio Serrano and then a cruiser out of the remote hills to civilisation, which was a fitting and fun way to cap off a demanding and exhilarating expedition through the Southern Patagonian Andes.



2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol SK MacRostie MBE**
RSM	**WO1 AJ Frost**

2 Sig Regt (plus) is deploying to Kuwait on OP TELIC. With over 150 personnel now already deployed in support of the Joint Force Logistic Component (JFLogC) and a fast ball RSIT thrown in for good measure, the month or so since our return from Christmas leave could be easily described as hectic, chaotic even. The soldiers in the Regt and especially HQ Sqn will no doubt find that to be a typically British understatement….and what the wives must think is probably not polite to print!
In spite of all this, the Regt is deploying in good order (whether it arrives at the other end in equally good order we have yet to see) with its attached personnel bringing us up to a strength of over 900 people. With new eqpts, systems and new tasks, this will certainly be an interesting challenge for the Regt.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj S Clarke GM QGM**
SSM	**WO2 P Griffiths**

As we go to press, none of the above are in station. OC HQ Sqn **Maj Steve Clarke** is busy bullying our American friends into giving up some equipment and real estate on a recce in Kuwait. **SSM Pete Griffiths** is crying himself to sleep at nights in the Falkland Islands because by the time he returns, the Sqn will have deployed on OP TELIC. Still not to worry SSM, as we are sure there will be plenty of opportunity to get involved in some real time interesting issues with the rear party in York?

QM DEPARTMENT

QM (G)	**Maj Dalton**
QM (T)	**Capt McKenna**
RQMS (G)	**WO2 Stillie**
RQMS (T)	**WO2 White**

Both Depts are now back from a well-earned Christmas and New Year break and have jumped straight into preparation for RSIT and the LSI. After a major effort by our resident signallers, **Sig Haley**, **Sig Lee** and **Sig Reid** the Depts aged ESV's received a good report on the RSIT Inspection. Thanks also to **Cpl Richie Howard** who, as well as running the R&I Bay looks after our vehicle fleet. Keeping the younger members of the Dept outside in the cold meant that the more mature members were able to make use of the additional office space indoors.

The annual joust with the LSI team has just taken place. Our team included **Capt McKenna** QM (T), **WO2 Dave White** RQ (T), **SSgt Stu Taylor**, **Sgt Steve Howard**, **Cpl Mick Potter and LCpl Roy Taylor**, along with our civilian staff, **Mrs Conny McIntyre** and **Mr Kev Potter.** All worked long hours in preparation for the LSI, and we received a good report.

And just as we thought working routine and hours would return to some normality, lurking in the background was EX LUCKY WARRIOR/OP TELIC. Once again the Dept, along with the QM (G) side responded well with the preparation for the oncoming EX/OP. We welcome **Sgt Helen McMonagle**, our Sup Con URS (T), **Sig Kelly Grey** and **Sig Jase Kolikata**. And we say a fond farewell to **WO2 RQMS (T) Dave Simpson** who is off to run a Post Office. We wish him all the best and good luck in Civvy Street. We also say goodbye to newly promoted **Sgt** 'Wolfie' **Oldfield** on his departure to the Falkland Islands and then Northern Ireland. We wish him and his family all the best. The last goodbye goes to **LCpl Claire Edwards**, who was posted to JCUNI.

REGIMENTAL RECRUITING TEAM

Team Leader	**Sgt Eden**
Team 2IC	**Cpl Ablott**

Firstly we say goodbye **Lt Mel Crawford** and **Sig** 'Red' **Herring**, who go to 214 Sig Sqn; to **Cpl** 'Jib' **Ablott** who is off to RSS Blandford; to **Sgt** 'Eve' **Eden** who goes to 1 Div; and to **Sig Suzie Kerr**, who was an original founding member of the Team.
During the months November and December the RRT has been actively recruiting in Huddersfield, Halifax, Wakefield and the surrounding areas, as well as visiting school sports events. With the assistance from **WO1 (FofS) Batley** and **SSgt (YofS) Plant**, the Team instructed a course from Huddersfield college on military communications, which was very well received by all. The Team also took part in the Army presentation during the Careers Convention in Manchester in November.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1 (FofS) Batley**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Davidson**

The Tp Christmas function gave us the opportunity to welcome some of our new arrivals since we last went to press, namely, **Cpl Williamson** and **Sgt Bernie Lovick**. We also say hello and goodbye to **Cpl Glen Bruce**, who is still working on Belgium time and is now getting used to South Atlantic time. We also congratulate **Cpl Jooles Roberts** on her new arrival, a baby boy, **Morgan**.

Since returning from Christmas leave and hitting the ground

running (and no sign of stopping yet), work has been very hectic but we have still made time to welcome our newer new arrivals, **Cpl Rick Stapleton**, and **LCpls Steve Figamoto**, and **Joe Binder**.

AGC (SPS) DETACHMENT

RAO	**Capt Potterton**
AGC Det Comd	**Capt Lockitt**

It has been an extremely busy period for the AGC (SPS) Det of 2 Sig Regt. After the mayhem of EXs LOG VIPER 2 and KEY FLIGHT, it was hoped that we could settle back into a working routine. Unfortunately, this wasn't to be. **Cpl Green** and **LCpl Bill Whyman** had already been trained up on AP3 prior to EX LOG VIPER, so off they went to assist HQ 15 (NE) Bde on OP FRESCO.

In between ex's and ops, **Cpl Green** managed to get herself away on some adventure training - something about flying whilst hanging on to a metal frame with some material for wings. Apparently, this course was cancelled, so **Cpl Theresa Green** opted for the real sensible option, to stay and do some paragliding instead. She even passed the course and is looking forward to the next one. Well done **Theresa**.

Meanwhile, Boxing fever had well and truly gripped the Regt. **Sgt Steve Shaw** and **Sgt Dave Smith** (REME) were heavily involved in training the Boxing team, preparing for the first round of the Army Grade 3 Novice Championships against the QDG's in December 02. The evening was a resounding success, and having walked away with a 5-4 win under our belts, everybody was talking about Boxing and the prospect of meeting 2 RGJ in the next round in January 03. We lost this one 5-4, but it went right to the wire in an absolutely explosive evening of quality novice boxing. We live to fight another day!

Both **WO2 Pete Hubbert** and **Sgt Steve Shaw** have enrolled in a cooking course at York College and are testing their results on the rest of the det. So far, no one has come down with food poisoning. Point to note: **Pete** needs to practise his pasta making technique.

The dets now find themselves heavily involved in OP TELIC. It has been all hands on deck since returning from Christmas leave. We have de-centralised, with **Cpl Karen Williamson** and **LCpl** 'Faz' **Farrah** taking over in 219 Sig Sqn; **Cpl Theresa Green** and **LCpl** 'Bill' **Whyman** taking over in 214 Sig Sqn and **Cpl Caroline Johnstone** and **Pte Madeloso** taking over in HQ Sqn. The majority of the det will be deploying. We wish them all a safe deployment and look forward to seeing them all safely back.

CORMORANT IIMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Tp Comd	**WO2 NAC Cooper**
Tp Admin	**Sgt S Dade**

The last Ptarmigan Conversion course finished on 23 January 03. The current course of (Ex) Tele Op Data officially became Tele Op Sys as of Friday 24 January 03. They have all worked hard, especially in the present climate, as some expect to return to their own units to deploy on ops. The instructors, **Cpl Lee Rickard** and **Cpl Andy Rutter**, have given their time over the last two years helping to re-train over a hundred Tele Op Sys or Area Sys Ops. After his EFP course, **Cpl Lee Rickard** is posted to 1 Div in May. He expects to arrive with his wife, **Ally** then join the rest of his unit in Kuwait. **Cpl Andy Rutter** on the other hand was posted to 11 Sig Regt in Blandford, but it looks as though he will be in Kuwait before **Cpl Rickard**. The CORMORANT Implementation Team (CIT) wishes them all the best on their departure from the Dept.

The instructors who are left to teach CORMORANT are **WO2 Neil Cooper**, **SSgt Rob Eden**, **SSgt Rob Fieldhouse**, **Sgt Jim Davidson** and **Sgt Steve Dade**. **WO2 Neil Cooper** is busy teaching **SSgt Rob Fieldhouse** as much as possible, so that he can move to his new job as SSM 214 Sig Sqn. This may seem like a strange move from Subject Matter Expert (SME) to boots and hair cuts, but at least when 214 get the CORMORANT equipment, the lads and lasses will be unable to buils**t their new Sergeant Major.

Even though the Regt is very busy with preparing for deployment on OP TELIC, CIT are still expecting the CORMORANT training equipment to be installed in York before the end of March 2003. After some further training for the SME's, courses will hopefully start again in May 2003 (pending any students!).

DTG/SYS 04/02 - THE FINAL COURSE

On 18 November 2002, the final DTG to Systems re-trade course gathered up at York for eight weeks of arduous training. There were quite a few discerning glances as people took their places in the classroom and memories a plenty came flooding back as more than one familiar face walked into the classroom. There were 14 attendees and our two instructors were **Cpls Lee Rickard** and **Andy Rutter**. All in all, the course was very enjoyable with everybody passing and looking forward to their Class I in two weeks time. This brings to an end two years of hard work by **Cpls Rutter** and **Rickard** - or so they thought, as **Cpl Rutter** packs his Bergen ready for Kuwait

EXERCISE KEY LEADER 2/02 – REGIMENTAL LEADERSHIP CADRE - *by Sig Anand Limbu*

EX KEY LEADER 2/02, also known as the CO's JNCO Cadre was held from 18 – 29 November 02. As in preceding years, the main aim of this exercise was to assess leadership qualities as well as testing various military skills. The ex was divided into 2 phases - a camp phase in week 1 and a field phase in week 2, with the 31 candidates being divided into 3 sections of a platoon.

During the camp phase we were assessed on our personal drill, turn out and physical fitness. This also included command tasks and a group discussion on current affairs. Each candidate got an opportunity to be sec comd. At the end of the week we underwent our final assessment on presentation skills.
We arrived in Sennybridge for deployment into the field phase. This phase was completely different and tougher than the camp

Wet conditions didn't help with a task like this

Sig Barun emerging from the swamp

phase. It started by a burden retrieval of 4 miles. We were assessed on basic infantry skills, involving night navigation, command and control, giving orders, conducting different types of patrols and tactics. Like in the camp phase, each of us was given the opportunity to command a sec. On the final day we carried out a platoon attack followed by an assault course, which brought the exercise to an end. Top student of the course was **Sig Anand Limbu** from 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn. It was a demanding course, with hard work under the pressure of bad weather and the haste with which we were expected to perform the tasks. Nonetheless, it was a great job done, a struggle overcome and a goal achieved.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

ROMAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Frost**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Icke**

For those wanting a quiet life, Roman Tp certainly has not been the place to be recently. The OC and Tp SSgt have had their work cut out for them, with a second line inspection to prepare for just before Christmas and an RSIT three days after arriving back. As if this was not enough, the entire trunk node was then handed over to 246 Sig Sqn the following day. Well at least it brushed the cobwebs away after Christmas!

As well as a lot of things happening on the work front, Roman Tp has been going through a period of upheaval recently, with new personnel arriving right, left and centre. The Tp has recently lost **LCpl Sandeman** to 3 Div, **Sig Smith** to 216 Sig Sqn, **Sig Dixon** to civvy street and **Cpl Chamberlain** to Pennine Tp here on camp. Cpl Chamberlain will be remembered as having the fastest promotion in NATO. He arrived in April 2002 as a Sig and left in the December as a full Cpl, which was thoroughly deserved.

New arrivals have been **Sgt Howard**, **Sgt Glaves**, **Cpl Kadlec**, **Cpl Powell**, **LCpl Baron**, **LCpl Barwick**, **LCpl Ramsden**, **LCpl Marsden**, **Sig Blake**, **Sig Bloor** and **Sig Granger**, who are all warmly welcomed into the Tp. Congratulations are also in order for **Cpl Powell**, **Cpl Chamberlain** and **LCpl Walker** for coming off the LCpl to Cpl board and for **LCpl Barwick**, **LCpl Finlay**, **LCpl Smith**, **Sig Blake** and **Sig Linsley** for coming off the Sig to LCpl board. All the promotions were earned through hard work and determination. The Tp is now looking forward to whatever the future brings but it looks like we could be quiet busy for the next few months!

VIKING TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Mel Crawford**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mark Wigmore**

Firstly we say goodbye to **Cpl Preen**, who has gone on promotion to 30 Sig Regt and to **LCpl Rees**, **Sig Holmes** and **Sig Price** who have been posted to 7 Sig Regt. Hello to **Cpl Hodgson**, from the White Helmets and **Sigs Duncan**, **Jennings**, **Johnson**, **Nevin**, **Symington** and **Wood**, all newly arrived from Blandford. It has been a very busy 02 with deployments to Afghanistan, Tampa, Virginia and Roman Tp during EX LOG VIPER and last but not least, the Corsham Hub. With this, combined with most of the Tp attending courses in preparation for the arrival of TALON, and the commitments of OP FRESCO, we have completed one busy year and are looking forward to the next. The Tp moves into the New Year having collected the first of the TALON SATCOM detachments and with everyone looking forward to the challenges that lay ahead. On a sporting front, a number of the Tp have represented the Regt, notably **Sigs Smedley**, **Gregory** and **Ward**, who were members of the boxing team which reached the quarter finals of the Army cup, to be narrowly defeated by the 1st Battalion RGJ.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Rab Young**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Abson**

PHOENIX TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Keith**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Peters**

The Tp would like to welcome **Cpl's Daz Ormiston** and **Caz Goode**, and say a sad farewell to **Cpl John Hilton**, who we let loose to Civ Div.

Since the last update, the Tp has been somewhat busy to say the least. December saw ECI, which has replaced the much-loved PRE inspection. As usual, The Tp took all the tasks on the chin, rising to the challenge, and were rewarded with a good Christmas Tp bash. Next followed the 219 Sqn Christmas bash, which was held at the local rugby club and was enjoyed by all. January has provided more of the same. First parade on the 6 January brought second line inspections, which rapidly changed to RSIT in the space of twenty-five minutes. Again the lads and lasses took the strain and dug in their heels and after the unwelcome graft, we were rewarded with good reports. At present the Tp are preparing for possible deployments to the various hot spots in the world, which has brought the usual mil trg packages. Mid January has seen many of the Tp depart to the RSS Blandford for various courses and taskings, which include 501, and 503 in preparation for the Regt receiving these equipments into the Sqn. All said and done, a busy start to the year for the Tp, which hopefully will settle down to the usual day to day work in the up and coming months...WAIT OUT!!

EAGLE TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Russell Plested**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Dave Gallagher**

Another busy year has passed for Eagle Tp, and the last 2 months have been no exception. In the run up to Christmas the Tp has been as busy as at any other time of the year, mainly in the bars of York that is! We say a fond farewell to **Lt Abby Parkinson**, **Sig McHugh** and **LCpl Warner**. We welcome **2Lt Russ Plested**. The Christmas Tp function was organised by **Sig Evans** and consisted of a day's bowling down at the local bowling centre. The bowling ability of the Tp did vary, and **Sig Bellerby** walked away with an amazing cash prize of £15 for being the best bowler on the day, although **SSgt Gallagher** was just 2 points away from claiming the prize himself. 'I was robbed' he was heard screaming. Many sore heads have returned safe and well from the Christmas break and we are looking forward to the undoubted many challenges this year will bring.

246 QUEEN'S GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Caesar**
SSM	**WO2 Tara Bahadur Pun**

– notes *by Sig Padam Darlami*
The year 2002 proved to be a hectic year for 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn

246 Sqn Hockey Team

and included the Reformation Parade in May 02. Despite operations, exercises and other commitments during the year the Sqn still managed to participate in several Regtl sports competitions. The first competition was Rugby, and unfortunately we ended up last. We performed much better in the Athletics competition and the Sqn produced some excellent individual performances. Next came the Hockey competition, which we won convincingly, ably assisted by the OC, **Maj Julius Caesar**. After good scores in the Football and Orienteering, the final competition was Basketball. We had some brilliant players in our team and there was no difficulty in beating the other Sqns despite our smaller stature. 246 Sig Sqn eventually topped the list of the rest of the Sqns, just 1 point ahead of HQ Sqn, and proudly achieved the Champion Sqn in the Regt for the year 2002.

3 (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col BD Hudson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) DJ Kelly**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

It's that time again and all change in the top corridor, as **Lt Col P J Davies** departs on promotion to Blandford, where he picks up the reins as the SOinC(A)'s COS. Both he and **Caroline** will be sorely missed, unlike their dog, **Lily**, who has been responsible for several lunches disappearing from the RAO's desk. We saw **Col Davies** off in style courtesy of a Taliban 'technical' complete with armed escort. We wish him and his family all the very best for the future and our thanks for all his efforts on our behalf during his time in command.

A warm welcome to the new CO, **Lt Col David Hudson**, **Thea** and family. The new CO is fresh from 'Big School' at Shrivenham, and all the subbies are eagerly anticipating lots of essays on doctrine as part of their intellectual development. A welcome is also extended to **Sgt Bent**, our new Unicom System Administrator, and to **Sgt Culleton**, who replaces **Sgt Allen**. RHQ's best wishes and thanks go to **Sgt Allen** for all her work and sporting contributions and we wait with interest to see if **Sgt Culleton** can match up to her legendary netball skills. He should find it quite a challenge. We also have a new Ops Offr, **Capt Paul Pearce**, who joins us from 30 Sig Regt. Welcome to him, **Kelly** and his white socks.

It's February and romance is definitely in the air. Congratulations to **Maj James Langley**, OC 222 Sqn, on his recent engagement to **Liz**, and to **Lt Ollie Ford**, who is due to marry **Kate** in the very near future prior to his deployment overseas. The fact that the Adjt, **Maj Graham Ingram**, has recently bought what can only be described as a 'family car' is entirely coincidental...

Lt Col Davies departs Bulford in style

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Andy White**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Matt Wakeling**

The past few months have been very difficult for the Sqn. With both OP FRESCO and OP TELIC, we are loosing manpower faster than they are coming in.

A couple points of interest around the Sqn include **Lt Freemantle** now being eligible for promotion and **Maj White** now qualified to drive every conceivable vehicle in the military arsenal, or so the badges say!!

However, the Sqn has still been able to fully prep for a thorough Board of Officers and to deploy Div Main. This is through the professional approach by all the soldiers. A very big thank you and well done.

INKERMAN TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Matt Freemantle**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Pete Lawn**

As always, a busy time for the Tp as we return from Christmas leave with EX IRON MAPPS taking us to the warm lands of Otterburn. With snow on the ground it was a winner for morale and the sliding Rovers were most amusing (**Sig Blake**) with some being bogged in for 12 hours (well done **LCpl Rodda**). Also EX STAFF RIDE was a testing time for our Class 1 tent erectors, with Div Main being set up and 432's breaking down left, right and centre.

We would like to welcome back **LCpl Andy Martin**, returning from his class one, and two new additions to the Tp, **Cpl Danny Pearson**, and **2Lt Watson** (who replaces **Lt Freemantle**). We say farewell to **Cpl Scott Lewis**, who is leaving us to apply his expertise elsewhere; to **Sig Stevie Ellis**, leaving for 20 Armd Bde (and also celebrating his promotion); to **Sig** 'Simo' **Simpson**, leaving us for Cyprus; and to **Sig Blake**, who is also celebrating promotion and is off to 15 Sig Regt. After being promoted, **Sig Jim Ronald** is leaving Bulford on posting to 12 Mech Bde only to have to re-pack soon after to return to Bulford later in the year. For some there is no escaping!

WATERLOO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Beckie Jacques**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Frank McGuinness**

The Tp returned from Christmas leave refreshed and ready to jump straight back in to the new season, with half of us deployed on EX RED MAPPS in Otterburn, and the rest concentrated on preparing dets for an attachment to 1 Mech Bde and EX STAFF RIDE in Ludgershall. The Tp Comd, **Lt Jacques**, returned from her extended skiing trip just in time to join EX STAFF RIDE and the joy of taking part in her first conference call. The TV programme *Guns & Roses* sprung to mind and she was duly wound up, with phrases such as 'Well I had them all a minute ago Sir'.

Congratulations go to her for making it into BLAST this year and to **LCpl Randy Hussey** for bringing some silver back and making the Army Skiing finals. Well done. With an abundance of wide-eyed youngsters arriving from Blandford, efforts are now concentrating on getting them all track-trained to spare them the wrath of **Sgt** Wilson. The Tp bids farewell to **Sig Hydes** and **Sig Knight**, off to seek their fortunes in Civ Div. Good luck to you both.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R J Freeman**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Buckley**

The Sqn has recently enlarged, following the introduction of the IS Team, formerly part of HQ Sqn. They will provide IS support not only to HQ DSG, but also to Div Main and the 3 Bdes. The Team was quickly put to use supporting both the Div and Bde CPX.

The rest of the Sqn have been busy manning control centres for OP FRESCO and preparing vehicles for deployment and ex's, turning the Sqn YofS's hair grey in the process. Someone will appreciate it!

NORMANDY TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt** 'Emz' **Metcalfe**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Chris Loughlin**

There have been a lot of changes in the Tp over the last few months. We say hello to all the 251 knife, fork, spoons that have all recently arrived from the factory, as well as the odd person who's arrived from elsewhere. (**Sgt Love** and **Sig Reid**) There are also some goodbyes. So whether you've escaped to Civ Div or just pastures new, best of luck. (and get some work done **LCpl Hodge**, **Sig Szejok**, **Mr Cowan** and **Mr Gee**)

The Tp itself has been busy with many ex's and resurrecting 6 entire SAN groups from the dead. True to Army fashion, the course of hard graft never runs smoothly. With having to assist in OP FRESCO and wondering when we might be in line for a 40% pay rise, plus all the other minor taskings, you'll be lucky to find 2 people who actually know one another. So at times, the garages are a bit of a ghost town. Roll on peace and quiet (and yet another BPFA).

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Langley**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Bruce**

The hectic programme of ensuring that the Sqn's newly acquired SCRA(SC) capability is operationally ready has continued apace over the past two months. Following a full Sqn deployment on Salisbury Plain testing SCRA(SC)s in every type of configuration possible during EX RED MAPPS 2, the Sqn was able to develop both the necessary technical expertise and doctrine. Immediately after Christmas leave the Sqn, together with numerous other elements from within the Regt, deployed to the North East of England on EX IRON MAPPS, using both Catterick and Otterburn training areas. Its success was dependent on achieving full manning, so the Sqn was reinforced from elsewhere in the Regt. Thus the ex was also a useful test of force generation. This substantial undertaking had the purpose of proving absolutely the SCRA(SC) installations as an operational capability. It effectively acted to confirm all elements of the Sqn had attained Collective Performance Level 4 (CP4).

Towards the end of the ex and immediately afterwards, it became apparent that the immediate benefits such a comprehensive ex programme were timely indeed. Deployment on OP TELIC now beckons, and should prove an outstanding opportunity for the Sqn to prove its worth. It could not be better prepared that it is now.

ADEN TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Knight**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Turner**

Lt Knight somehow managed to miss EX RED MAPPS 2 and instead travelled to Austria for the Corps Snowboarding Championships. He took with him a group of wannabe boarders, including **Sigs Smallman** and **Cullen** from the Tp. After a gruelling week of high altitude training and four days of racing in sub-zero temperatures, the most prestigious award was finally given to **Sig Cullen**. She returned home with the wooden spoon! Also making an appearance on the winter sports scene was **Sgt Shilton**, who spent a week throwing himself down an icy death slide in a bobsleigh at the Army Novice Skeleton Bobsleigh Championships. He did very well just managing to keep himself intact!

After a much-needed and well-deserved rest over Christmas, we returned for a day before heading north for EX IRON MAPPS. The Sqn grew overnight from 100 to 180; enough even for three man RR dets. Ten days spent in ice, snow and rain in Catterick and Otterburn provided us with a massive training opportunity, especially where the vehicles were concerned. Well done to **Lt Knight**, **Sgt Shilton**, **Sgt Love**, **LCpl Husband** and **Sig Cullen** for their mixture of driving and guiding skills, which ended with four vehicles in ditches and one well and truly stuck (**Sgt Shilton's**). This was the most impressive performance, with his Rover being stuck for more than 30 hours (although **2Lt Speed** was probably partly to blame!). We now feel as ready as possible for our potential deployment to Kuwait in the near future with the prospect of warmer weather causing great excitement.

Finally the Tp are glad to welcome on board **Cpl Adam** from 16 Sig Regt and **Sgt Love** from the other end of the corridor in SHQ Tp. We also say farewell to **SSgt Pickering** who, after four years in the Sqn, is going to 101 Log Bde and Sig Sqn as a newly qualified IS Op (his fourth change of trade!). All the very best of luck to him.

OMAN TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Thompson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dunbar**

Christmas leave for Oman Tp was sandwiched between two major MAPPS trial exercises. EX RED MAPPS 2 on a chilly plain saw us getting to grips with the principles of the Ptarmigan to MAPPS interface. Minus seven degrees Celsius prepared us for Otterburn. **Cpl Sheath** did his best to introduce bumper cars to the Plain. Anyone for reversing school? Then, just as the mince pies were digesting, the Tp deployed on EX IRON MAPPS. This was a substantial undertaking. With the mind focused on recent political developments, the Tp slotted into the MOVCON nightmare of a 130-vehicle move, 300 miles to the north. Service stations on the A1 and M1 have never had it so good.

Phase 1 of the ex saw the Tp shoehorned into a forested quagmire in Catterick Garrison. The addition of the OSC jamboree to the location made for a case of Ptarmigan sardines. The extraction from Phase 1 was helped tremendously by the skill of the Foden team! **LCpl** (now Cpl) **Kelly** chose to stay on in the tundra a while after demonstrating his ability to fell trees with a RR whilst stuck in a ditch at a 50 degree angle.

Following more motorway café meals, and we arrived in an arctic Otterburn. Very low temperatures and a tiny location characterised the first few days. We did move when it thawed – downwards! Full credit to the whole of Mud Bath Tp for driving safely, and getting the comms in in inclement weather. The new faces in the Tp were presented with a particularly steep learning curve, but across the board the lessons learned were substantial. The return journey saw a quick pit stop at Marne Barracks, Catterick, to host the Oman Tp egg-banjo-eating race, after which the Tp cannonballed back to Bulford.

Over the last few months the Tp has welcomed **Sig Perkins**, and waved off **Sig Wooton** and the inimitable **Cpl Austin**. We wish **Cpl Austin** and his menagerie all the best and thank him for his efficiency and effort in the Tp. So what of the future? Rumours abound, ferries await - maybe the chance for the newly-extended TN 083 to perform on the world stage.

SHARJAH TROOP

Tp OC **2Lt Ellis**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Baker**

Sharjah Tp were back into the swing off it as soon as they came back from Christmas leave. After the successful introduction of the new Switching Centrals in EX RED MAPPS 1 & 2 we were off to the north east of England, specifically Catterick and Otterburn, for a full Sqn ex including a number of Regt assets.

We deployed on the 08 Jan 03, driving the TN up to Catterick Garrison - a 12-hr road move in total. It was like Wacky Races driving up the M1, especially when **Sig Hinson** was driving. After a successful start to the ex in Catterick, the switch crew decided to liven up the exercise with a midnight firework display in the form of a tent disappearing in flames. The Tp was soon given the pleasure of having 24 hours off, but instead of visiting the famous nightlife of the North East, they had to spend the time off on a ice rink watching **SSgt (SQMS) Bayliss** and **WO2 (SSM) Bruce** do an almost foot perfect rendition of Torvel and Dean. Having successfully completed the road move to Otterburn, **Sig Prior** soon showed us all how to manoeuvre our vehicles into a ditch and the RR's did a fantastic demonstration of what it's like to be in a wind tunnel. The ex went well, and before they knew it the node was heading back down the M1 towards Bulford. On arrival back at camp, the Sqn was rewarded with a weekend off for all their hard work and an exclusive free sun tan holiday, as we were warned off to deploy on OP TELIC - Fantastic!

We had to say goodbye this month to newly promoted **Cpl** 'Aidie' **Hosking**, who has been posted to HQ 11 Bde, and we welcome **2Lt Ellis**, who will be leading the Tp off to Kuwait.

MASIRAH TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Norton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Clark**

After arriving back following a well-deserved leave, we all would

like to welcome **Cpl Butler** and say goodbye to **LCpl Major** who is now a civilian. On 07 January 03 Masirah Tp deployed to Catterick on EX IRON MAPPS to enhance our knowledge and capability on the detachments and engineering into the Ptarmigan system.

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 6

After months of anticipation the time finally arrived for the 3 Div snowboard team to go on a road trip. With weeks of supplies and 6 hangers on, including **Capt Kemp** and Sigs wannabe **Capt Davies**, the team of eight set off for Zell-Am-See and EX MERCURY GLACIER 6, the Corps Snowboarding Championships. On loading the minibus, **LCpl Longbottom's** home entertainment system seemed a tad over the top for a fortnight's exercise, but it turned out to be in great demand after the hard days of training. Full of excitement and trepidation, the team had a surprisingly uneventful trip and arrived in resort a mere 24 hours later. An initial ground orientation was vital for the team's success, so several hours were spent assessing the local refreshment points.

The 3 Div Snowboarding Team. L-R, Lt Knight, Sig Perry, Sig Smallman, Cpl French, Cpl Brownsword, LCpl Tunnard, Sig Cullen and Cpl Longbottom

Training during the first week was, as always, of an extremely high standard. Conducted by a mad group of Dutch boarders from the company Ripstar, it ensured progression from complete novice to varying degrees of ability. Fortunately injuries were only minor. The second week came very quickly and with it beautiful clear skies and the prospect of some great racing. Temperatures of –10°C and below meant the spectator enjoyment was a little decreased, but otherwise conditions were fantastic. **Sig Smallman** managed to complete all races with a distinct lack of turns, but at least kept the course nicely groomed for others. The team put a huge amount of effort into their racing and deservedly won several prizes, with **Sig Cullen** gaining the wooden spoon for her extra special efforts. Despite his clothing, **Sig Perry** came 2nd overall novice and 2nd in the novice slalom. **LCpl Tunnard** came 3rd in the novice slalom and won the novice dual slalom. **Lt Knight** came 3rd overall and 2nd in the Dual Slalom. The remainder of the team, **LCpl Longbottom** and **Cpls French** and **Brownsword**, did not quite manage to make the prizes, but still had excellent performances. Overall it was a superb exercise, with the only mishap being a slight misunderstanding with petrol payment leading to blue flashing lights appearing behind us and a return trip to a petrol station. It only delayed our journey home by a few hours!

EXERCISE CANARY GOLD - *by 2Lt Richard Bennett*

Early on 30 December 2002, I made my way via Gatwick to Lanzarote with a crew of 5 others of all Services. This was the start of two weeks of sailing, and my introduction to an excellent sport. After an initial shake-out, involving a familiarisation trip around Lanzarote harbour, changing sails and tacking, we were ready for some more serious sailing between the islands. Being New Year's eve, this didn't last, so it was a tired and hung over crew who set sail on New Year's Day. After being dissuaded from making for the delights of Morocco, our first foray was to the island of Fuertaventura. Despite some issues with seasickness, the crew performed very well, bonding rapidly, with plenty of healthy inter–services banter (we had regular and TA Army officers, an RAF pilot and a Chief Petty Officer in close quarters). With strong winds and warm weather, our Vic 34 yacht made excellent progress to Gran Canaria, and then on to Tenerife. Here we turned about, and experienced more testing sailing against the wind in a dash back to Lanzarote. This filled perfectly the two weeks allotted to us, allowing time for a few adventures along the way, including visiting Tenerife's volcano, and one of our crew having an audition with the London Philharmonic choir (very unsuccessfully).

It was a tremendously enjoyable trip that gave me a taste for sailing and a great deal of experience. It is run annually during winter, and two yachts are available, a Vic 34 and Nic 55 with a capacity of 19 between them. EX CANARY GOLD was under-subscribed this year, so I would recommend anyone of any ability to take this excellent opportunity.

EXERCISE ALPINE DRAGON - *by Lt Becky Jacques*

Once more the season had come to stretch stiffened ski legs and fulfil inner longings to don all-in-one Lycra suits. To this end a 3 Div skiing elite of new and old faces was taken by Team Captain, **Lt Becky Jacques**, to compete in both the Corps and Div Championships. Equipped with gleaming pairs of brand new Salomon skis and Tricorn coloured spandex suits (courtesy of a Nuffield Trust grant) the 3 Div Ski Team set forth to the mountains.

The first destination for the Luc Alphande wannabes was to the Corps Championships held in Zell-Am-See in Austria. The Camp catered for varying aptitudes of skiing and after shaking off the cobwebs, all skiers were separated into ability groups led by Army instructors. **Sig Morgans** struggled to remember her ski legs and formed part of the special group, whilst in a huge conspiracy and cloud of unjustness, **Lt Becky Jacques**, **LCpl Dodgson** and **Sig Donna Moore** were allocated to a 'just about skied before' group! With an obviously flawed system, three solid weeks of instruction commenced. This proved of enormous benefit to the whole team, who, without exception vastly improved their technique in preparation for the week of racing to follow.

The week of racing proved challenging to all, particularly those who were experiencing it for the first time. **Lt Becky Jacques** managed to elevate her skiing status, whist **Cpl Harris** growled his way to wiping out in most races. **LCpl Hussey** proved to be hero of the hour in the penultimate week, although revelled in his glory for days, winning third in the GS and most improved skier overall. The Corps Championships as a whole gave excellent preparation and experience to the Team, who were all continuing on to compete in the Div Championships in January.

Prior to commencing two solid weeks of racing in the Div Championships, the Team had two days to work off the mince pies from Christmas and to discover the slopes of Serre Chevalier. The conditions were perfect, with all the valley pistes open and glorious sunshine. The excellent snow conditions meant that the full race programme could be run, including the downhill race. All the team felt that the ante was raised, with the races being longer, more technical, yet hugely rewarding on completion. The nervous adrenaline/absent terror experienced, when teetering on a seeming precipice for the downhill race, adorned with two planks of wood in the start gate should not be underestimated. Even **LCpl Hussey** and **LCpl Dustan**, despite their bravado and general lunatic straight line skiing, admitted being scared. Others in the team, notably **LCpl Nicky Dodgson** and **Sig George Brooksbank**, were more vocal in the apparently ridiculous idea of launching yourself at speed down a mountain. However all, in heroic proportions, navigated themselves around the gates and to the bottom in their own special ways.

In lieu of winning the Div Championships, the Team still found itself proudly clutching a cluster of medals (and not only ones congratulating you for turning up, I hasten to add.) **LCpl Dustan** ruled the day, by winning second overall novice (lunacy has its rewards), and within 3 Div, the Team finished a credible overall third. The male team and **Lt Becky Jacques** further qualified from the Div results to compete in the Army Championships. Once given permission to continue on and compete, we bade the other female team members goodbye and had a day to prepare mentally for racing at Army level.

Racing at Army level was a new experience for all and the standard was obviously high. **Lt Becky Jacques** became part of the British Ladies Army Ski Team for the duration of the competition. The downhill race held on the Olympic black Luc Alphande piste, proved a test of raw courage for all those involved. **Cpl Harris** was in eternal thanks to his generous build, after roaring through the finish of the downhill in excess of 70kph, falling and escaping through all safety barriers to impact with an unforgiving tree. He escaped with relatively minor injuries, zero pride and lots of sympathy.

Unfortunately none of the Team members were selected to compete for the Army in the Inter-Services. That said, the Army Ski Championships proved to be an excellent experience for those fortunate enough to be selected. It was thus as a fully-fledged, race-hardened team, we finished the ex filled with pride and general self-importance at our skiing prowess. Overall the ex proved a huge success and all team members remaining in the Div look forward to bettering their efforts next year.

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col GR Norton**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) ST Archer**

By far the most significant event to have taken place at 7 Sig Regt recently has been the change over of CO's. Sadly, **Lt Col JE Richardson MBE** leaves us after 2 years and 4 months in command and will be greatly missed. The Regt would like to wish **Lt Col Richardson**, **Paula** and their family all the best for their new posting. On 3 February command passed to **Lt Col GR Norton**, whom we all welcome.

EXERCISE BOMB BURST

Whilst the top members of the 7 Sig Regt hierarchy were to attend an NBC Comds Course, the rest of the Regt were to be dispatched on EX BOMB BURST. The task presented to all troops by **Lt Col Richardson MBE** was simple: the entire Regt had to be off site for the two days, 25 – 26 November, engaged in activities which would provide cultural or military development. With the prospect of enforced leave from camp and with funding from 1 Sig Bde, people set to work organising their 48 hour long ex. The admin orders were handed in and the Regt waited for the response from 1 Sig Bde, which came back very positive with the promise of considerable funding for the project.

After two hard military ex's, ARRCADE FALCON and ARRCADE FUSION, everyone was looking forward to the two day long EX BOMB BURST. The arrival of the 25 November saw the entire Regt rapidly disperse from Javelin Barracks to places as far away as London, Paris and Berlin. Their stories are too numerous to mention here, but, in the immortal words of BBC reporter **Brian Hanrahan**, during the Falklands Campaign, 'We counted them all out, and we counted them all back.'

INTER REGIMENTAL BOXING COMPETITION

Following their resounding victory over ARRC Sp Bn in an Inter-Regt Boxing competition, 16 Sig Regt decided to throw down the gauntlet to 7 Sig Regt and the challenge was eventually met on Wednesday 27 November 2002.

Due to some unavoidable commitments, training didn't begin until mid October, but saw **Captain Neil Coatsworth** and **Sgt Robbo Robinson** putting the boxers through their paces three times a day, with a somewhat grueling regime centered on fitness and basic skills. Rather surprisingly, but nonetheless welcomed, was the fact that there appeared to be a significant amount of natural talent amongst the budding **Mike Tysons**, and one or two of the sparring sessions had to be 'calmed down' lest we lose a boxer through injury. We were lucky, however, and on the evening of the 27 November, in a venue **Prince 'NAZ'** would have have been proud to perform in, the two teams of nine boxers met to do battle.

Both teams had prepared well for the contest, and the quality of fitness and skill was commented upon by the CO, **LtCol Richardson MBE** in his final address. This night though, was to belong to 7 Sig Regt, and after some closely contested bouts, we ran out winners, 6 bouts to 3.

A notable performance by **Sig Riz Rizza** saw him presented with the Best Boxer trophy, and the honour of collecting the Inter-Regt Cup was left to **Sig Craig Horsley**, who himself was involved in a memorable victory.

Sig Rizza (left) on his way to victory

A special vote of thanks must go to 16 Sig Regt for organising what turned out to be a superb event, stylishly staged and professionally conducted. We certainly look forward to future events. Finally, but by no means least, congratulations go to both sets of boxers, without whom, the event could not have taken place. Well done.

ELMPT STATION JNCO LEADERSHIP CADRE COURSE 24 NOV– 09 DEC 02

The Elmpt Station JNCO Leadership Cadre Course took place over the period 24 November - 9 December 2002 and was held at the Station Training Centre and ATA Haltern. The course was designed to develop leadership skills and enhance team spirit, so that all students could put these skills into practice during the final week exercise. It was attended by participants from 7 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt, 252 Sqn and 280 (UK) Sig Sqn.

The first week consisted of hard physical training, command tasks, basic military tactics and basic Instructional techniques, and ended with all students giving a 15 minute presentation with some of their OCs present (just to add that little bit of pressure).

The physical training was designed with three goals in mind. Firstly to assess the endurance fitness of each individual, and secondly to ensure that the secs were able to bond and work as a team, with (thirdly) all finishing together with no one left behind.

The exercise phase of the course began with a shakeout day held on the training areas on Javelin barracks, and included patrolling, obstacle crossing, moving into harbour areas and setting up OP's. The day ended with a pyrotechnics demonstration including the new trip flare, which we found a lot easier to set up than the old one.

On Sunday 01 December the heavens opened and the students

morale wasn't good. We got our heads down until 0400 hrs 02 December when we were relieved to see that the rain had stopped. We left at 0420 hrs for the 2 hour trip to Lavesum camp at ATA Haltern where we were met by the training staff and issued with blank ammo and pyrotechnics.

We were then put onto open 4 tonne vehicles and driven into the training area, where we were unexpectedly ambushed. From there we were taken into the harbour area to set up and settle into a routine. We were constantly assessed throughout the exercise by sec cpls, pl sgts and pl comds.

The exercise was divided into 4 phases, with each sec covering all phases during the 4 days we were in the field. We conducted OP's on enemy positions and activities; recce patrols of ambush sites and enemy positions; and harbour drills, clearance patrols, re-supply and guard duties of the harbour area. All this culminated with a platoon wood clearance and assault of the enemy position, with dept heads watching from behind the line of attack. Once the assault was over, the students were transported down to the DS admin area, where we were treated to brunch and the chance to speak to our dept heads to discuss how the course had gone. At this point we thought it was all over but a final inter-sec competition was yet to be run.

Sigs Houghton and McCann carrying the stretcher on a run up Hill 60

We were lined up in sec order and told that there was just one little run left to complete. If any reader remembers Sandy Track from days gone by, then you now what we had to run through. The course was 4.5 km in length but, with all that sand beneath our feet, it seemed a lot further. We did it with all the guts and determination we had developed throughout the course and were rewarded with a coach trip back to Javelin Barracks.

Col David Hargreaves, Dep Comd 1 Sig Bde and Capt C Hymas, TO 7 Sig Regt, inspecting the Course Pass-off Parade)

The course finished in style with the pass-off parade, in sub zero temperatures and a dinner night held in the WOs and Sgts Mess. The final results were announced at the dinner and they were as follows:

Top Student	**Sig Brooks** (16 Sig Regt)
2nd Place	**Cpl Jennings** (252 Sig Sqn)
3rd Place	**Sig Halley** (16 Sig Regt)
Best Field Soldier	**Sig Watson** (280 (UK) Sig Sqn)
Best Endeavour	**Sig Furnivall** (252 Sig Sqn)
Best Section	Section Two

Congratulations to **Sigs Brooks**, **Watson** and **McCormick** for being selected for promotion after their sterling efforts over the previous two weeks. Congratulations must also go out to all the students who successfully completed the course, which was both physically, and mentally challenging.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Campbell**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Shepherd**

QM (TECH) DEPARTMENT

QM(T)	**Capt N Coatsworth**
RQMS(T)	**WO2 (RQMS) T Henry**

Sadly, we say farewell to **LCpl Kev Pack**, who leaves on promotion to join 102 Log Bde in Gütersloh; **Sgt Simon Skipper**, one of our RLC members, who leaves on promotion to join 9 Sup Wskps; and the RQMS(T), **WO2 Trevor Henry**, who is off to become 40 Sig Regt's RSM. Our loss will certainly be their gain. Good luck to you all.

We say hello to **Cpl John Whalley** and his family who join us from Blandford, and wish them a successful tour with 7 Sig Regt. We congratulate **Sig Marshall**, as she became **Sig Howe**, following her recent wedding, and wait to discover if **Cpl Tara Kenny** will finally deploy on OP TELIC after being warned for the third time.

229 (BERLIN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj TA Crilly RA Signals**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) AJ Crawford**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

It has been a very busy two months in SHQ, with Sqn Ops contingency planning, revising the plan, confirming it, then revising it again before it is finally cancelled, and the next plan only minutes behind it needing action yesterday. The MT survived the ECI and actually did quite well, much to everyone's relief. The MT SNCO, **Sgt** 'Peggy' **Lamont** is now back part-time to help out. Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Stevo' **Stevens** on his recent promotion.

We welcome **Cpl Jo Morrey** (recently transferred from the RMP) into the Clerks Office. Funnily enough now all soldiers when told to come along to do document checks, arrive not only on time but with legal representation! But after only two weeks in the Sqn, **Jo** has moved across to LAD and we now welcome **LCpl** 'Patch' **Pachniuk** in her place. We also welcome **Sig Johnson** to the team and note that a stay of execution is granted to **LCpl Bedford**, seconded to 229 from the GRS. Finally we congratulate SHQ's very own Mohammed Ali, **Sig Horsley** on winning his bout with conviction in the Inter-Regt Boxing Competition..

BRANDENBURG TROOP – *Notes by Sigs Holbourn and Kerswell*

Tp Comd	Vacant
Tp Sgts	**Sgt J Wood**
	Sgt A Delaney

With the silly season now over and everyone having gained a few pounds around the waist, and having lost a few from their wallet, the fun and games have started again with 'operation on and off the bus'. Being all TALON trained, we are currently the most important and untouchable people in the Regt. When any trawl comes in, B Tp are exempt, being too important. We wonder why are we all still here. One det is going down to Mannheim for an interoperability exercise in the near future, but other than that, we are deploying with DSF, 2 Sig Regt, 1 Div or not deploying at all, apart from in support of ARRC.

The Tp received some good as well as bad news. The bad news was the departure of the Tp OC **Lt Petey Wettenhall**, on promotion as Ops Offr to 7th Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. We wish him luck as he heads further north looking for colder climes. We also said farewell to the newly re-promoted **LCpl Pope**, leaving one of the dets short of a Tech - anyone for a TALON course? The good news was the promotion of **LCpl Jules Dolan** and the selection for promotion of **Sigs Neil Holbourn** and **Robbie Kerswell**. Well done lads.

Brandenburg Tp were extremely proud during the recent Inter-Regt Boxing Competition as **Cpl Robinson** won his fight. The fight ended with a little too much confidence which almost saw him hit the deck after a lucky sucker punch. Also in the Sports dept we had **Cpl Jules Dolan** represent the Regt in Ski(v)ing.

So 'Bravo' Troop are looking forward to a new year of random exercises and uncertain deployments, with rapidly diminishing numbers. But we look forward to the new Tp OC arriving at the beginning of March, hoping that he/she is taller than 5 foot nothing!

CHARLOTTENBURG TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt AT Limb**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt SE Littlefield**

So, the festive season was coming up and, with that, endless nights of Tp functions, Sqn functions, Regtl functions... The list goes on. The Tp function started well, but we noticed the lack of a DJ, who had failed to turn up! Fortunately, being a multi-talented Tp, and were able to draft in our very own **Sig Scotty Mawer** and his decks. This meant that, for once, we had some decent new music at a function. However, I'm not sure the restaurant staff appreciated it! The rest of the night went well, there was a raffle and **Scotty** soon warmed up the dance floor.

The Sqn decided to go more up-market this year, going to a posh hotel in Roermond for its Christmas Function. The night was excellent. Everyone arrived looking very smart, the food was excellent and the musical entertainment was good enough to get everyone dancing. A photographer was there all night to take formal photographs, so a couple of Tp ones were done. **Sig Gibson** thought he would provide some dancing comedy and **Sig Smith** had to make some apologies to the Staff when she stumbled through a glass coffee table! All in all it was a fitting way to end an excellent year in the Sqn on a high. Who knows what lies ahead for next year?!

The Tp welcomes **Cpl Hulbert**, posted from 16 Sig Regt, and **Sigs Gee** and **Whitehead** fresh from RSS Blandford. The Tp also wishes **Cpl Al Cheetham** all the best in his new posting at 3 (UK) Div and likewise to **Cpl Dave Booth** all the way over at SHQ Tp.

WILMERSDORF TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt BRN Robson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Curry**

We welcome **Sgt Steve Davies,** who has recently joined us from 1 ADSR. Moving swiftly on to the Sqn function, another memorable night. The evening was more special for **LCpl John Stephenson** and **Sig Dave Tuck** as they received their promotion. A fantastic night had by all with entertainment from a live band and not forgetting a few more drinks. Congratulations to **LCpl Nat Davies** on receiving his medal for operations in Sierra Leone and a belated welcome to **Sig Daz Pickersgill**.

The station held its annual cadre course and two representatives from the Tp took part in this intense gruelling two-week course. **Sigs John Bolam** and **Dave Tuck** put in outstanding efforts and spent the first week freshening up on their military skills. Not only were the soldiers deprived of sleep but they were also physically tested with immense amounts of PT sessions. On returning to camp the troops had one more ordeal to attend - dinner in the Sgts Mess with a few beers, and at long last it was over.

231 SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Fallows**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Read**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

The last few months have been exceptionally busy with the ARRCADE series of exs. This has certainly been a test for Sqn Ops, who still maintain that we did OK, despite what everyone else says! The YofS, **WO2 Brown** honed his ability to converse with senior officers, fought with a barbed wire fence and demonstrated that he should have a 'How's my driving?' sticker attached to his behind at all times! Meanwhile the FofS, **SSgt Cleminson**, showed us all how much of a pleasure he is before 0900, whilst the OC, **Maj Fallows**, displayed a patience never seen before despite waking daily to a mere Tsunami of water flowing from the roof above him. Obviously the 2IC was not without fault, but as the editor of *The WIRE* noticed, she felt it appropriate to leave out some of the more embarrassing details. We finish by welcoming **SSgt Eric Head** and his family from 14 Sig Regt to joins us as SQMS. Sadly, **SSgt Tony May** moves on to pastures new, but not far. We also bid a fond farewell to **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Topps**, who leaves us on promotion to 31 Sig Regt.

QUEBEC TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt T Cooper**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt I Conlan**

Notes by Cpl Cave

It has been a busy time for Quebec Troop, providing line and technical support to the Sqn on EX ARRCADE FALCON. The ex proved to be a steep learning curve for all, as the ARRC's main build moved into its field role for the first time. Mistakes were made, lessons were learned and **Cpl Ed McNeil**'s soldering skills were seriously put to the test. **Sgt Mark Ward** was put through his paces as the Tp's only senior tech, with the deployment this month of **Sgt Nicky Francis** and **Sgt Hugh Wakeham** on their respective operational tours. We also found ourselves having to manage without the PABX skills of **Cpl Phil Whitehead**. Overall the exercise was a success and everyone looked forward to putting what they had learned into action on ARRCADE FUSION.

We have a few new faces in the Tp. TM Tp kindly donated **LCpls Jimmy Foley** and **Mike Veitogavi**. Welcome also to **LCpls Kieran Sharp** and **Becky Burnell** and to **Sig Hoy**. We also have the new MT Sgt, **Sgt Chris Orr**, following the departure of **Sgt Mickey Yendall**, who is now settling into his new mess at Hohne whilst getting used to his new title of SSgt.

Finally, we have had a change in Tp Comd. **Lt Harry Cairns** has handed over her reigns following her deployment to the Falkland Islands. Her replacement, **2Lt Cooper**, who joined us from Sandhurst, has already firmly established himself as Tp leader.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj H Jenkins**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M Browitt**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

The Sqn are glad to welcome back their long lost OC, who has finally returned from possibly the longest skiing trip ever. His first few days back at work were hard because no one knew who he was. But now he is fully settled in, it has meant that the 2IC has been able to get away for some well earned leave. The Sqn has enjoyed a fairly quiet period over Christmas with nothing much happening aside from several parties. Everyone returned after the break fully rested and hit the ground continuing with preparations for a possible deployment. Despite everyone's hard work, it proved to be unnecessary in the end. The Sqn has now back into normal work routine with a composite tp being formed from across the Sqn to deploy on EX LION SUN later in the year.

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt AS Youngman**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt G McGuire**

December and January must have been the busiest couple of months that we have had in a while. Even so Papa Tp still found time to welcome new folk and celebrate the end of the year. We would like to thank **Cpl Andy Martin** for organising an excellent Sqn Christmas function - shame about the band. Also thanks to **Cpl Barnett** for organising a really good afternoon at the indoor go-karting hall. Good luck to **Cpl** 'Kiwi' **Scarcliff** on completing 6 months of hell and should now be enjoying an interesting new posting. Papa Tp are also very proud of **Cpl Andy Martin**, **Cpl**

Hall, **Cpl Barnett** and **Sig Mulholland**, who all received Corps colours for representing the RSigs at tug of war for two years. We also say 'What are you doing ?' to **LCpl McCreadie**, who has decided not to join the Regt's first football team, saying that the second team are more of a good laugh. And finally, a big congratulations to **LCpl Andy Heney** and his wife **Lisa**, who have just had **Faith**, their new baby girl.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt J Wilson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt A Taylor**

Delta Tp have had a quiet time on the exercise front, but have been quite busy socially over the Christmas period. As well as the usual round of Christmas do's Delta have said hello and goodbye to a grand total of six people. **Sig Paddy Morrison** has left for the big smoke and 238 Sig Sqn, whilst **Sig Kate Connelly** has left for mega bucks in AF North. **Sig** 'JD' **Dennistoun** meanwhile has gone the whole hog and left for civvy street. We wish them all the very best for the future. Meanwhile the posting lottery has delivered **Sigs Davies** and 'KP' **Kirkpatrick**.

TAC TROOP

Tp SSgt	**SSgt R Atherton**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt A Smith**

The Tp is currently in an uncertain period, what with deployment possibilities and everyone busy trying to fit in leave and beat the annual end of year ITD flap. The recent Board of Officers was fun and highlighted a few areas in need of attention prior to the spring exercise period. With a bit of luck we will still have some manpower left when it comes to present the Tp on RSIT in June.

Congratulations to **LCpl Alex McMurray** on his selection for promotion to Cpl. Let's hope its not too long before they find a place for you. A fond farewell to **Sig Mark Wright** - all the way to 16 Sig Regt. With the impending sandpit tours on the horizon, we have a few temporary departures with **Cpl Bartlett**, **LCpl McMurray**, **LCpl Thomas** and **Sig Brown**. Good luck and send us a postcard! New arrivals are **Cpl Roger Manns**, **LCpl Dave Carter** from ATR Lichfield, **LCpl Andy Hodge** from 3 Div, **Sig Cairns** from 16 Sig Regt and **Sig Jo John**, fresh from RSS. Welcome to you all and may you work out what is going on sometime before your tour is over.

10 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col SA Leigh**

The Regt has had an exceptionally busy last few months completing it's metamorphosis from ACISG to 10 Sig Regt whilst committing assets in support of OPS TELIC, FRESCO and PROJECT CASEY. Its transformation complete, with an official GSO published, 10 Sig Regt continues to provide global ICS support to Land operations, and offers opportunities to the majority of RSigs trades for an exciting and rewarding posting. The current geographic Regtl Orbat is as follows:

RHQ, 600 Sig Tp, Lima Tp, Corsham
238 Sig Sqn, London
241 Sig Sqn, Donnington
242 Sig Sqn, Edinburgh
243 Sig Sqn, Wilton
251 Sig Sqn, Aldershot

REGIMENTALHEADQUARTERS

Sitting below the CO is the Operations Group led by **Maj Tim Langford**, then 5 key depts as follows:

Applications Support, a recently set up team, located in Wilton and led by **Mr Guy Hagg** which provide a single focus for all in-service application support for Land Comd.

Installations & Support, led by **Mr Bill Logan**, are primarily responsible for CIS Engineering. This includes installation and CIDA issues, building and installing servers, network management and testing and integration of new hardware and software.

Service Management, led by **Mr John Carling**, who are responsible for the Service Support and Delivery of LAND ICS. This is in the process of transformation to conform to ITIL Best Practice guidelines.

Comms Planning Office, led by **Maj Bruce Wyllie**, the CPO is responsible for the provision of specialist cabling infrastructure for Land and Joint Operations around the spectrum of conflict. In addition the office also provides non operational assistance.

Personnel & Training, led by **Miss Paula Jones**, is responsible for the personnel management of approximately 600 civilian staff and for the training of all staff within the Regt.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

The Implementation Team, based at Corsham, is part of I&S Dept and is managed by **Mr Dave Brown**. It contains 2 military personnel, **WO2 (Supvr IS) Jon Heaton** and **Cpl Auz Gambles** and 3 civilians, including **Mr Trevor Taylor** (late RSigs). The Team's primary role is to extend and upgrade the ISIS and LCSS(R) WANs, whilst additionally dealing with the inevitable fast balls that arise, e.g. Op FRESCO – please build and test 70 newly developed laptops, plan and implement a 'train the trainers course' and …err.. Could it be done in the next 72 hours.

Demand for LCSS(R) connectivity has grown immensely in recent months so the Team has been busy completing installations in Germany, Brunei, and throughout UK. Currently the Team is preparing to deploy to BATUS to connect another 300 users to LCSS(R). Outside work, **Cpl Gambles** will soon be participating in a trans-Atlantic sailing leg from Boston, USA, back to Gosport. In preparation he has been spotted acclimatising for this venture by walking on an apparently moving surface whilst throwing up at the same time – usually around Corsham in the early hours of the morning!

COMMUNICATION PLANNING OFFICE

Since the demise of the Airfield Communication Planning Office (ACPO), this Office has seen the birth as the Communication Planning Office (CPO). Some of you more perceptive people out there will probably have realised that all we have done is simply removed the 'Airfield' from the old title. This is in direct response to the fact that the MOD has closed all the airfields in Germany. But be that as it may, our core business has not fundamentally changed. We are still primed and ready to deploy to all four corners of the globe. If given the opportunity we will plan any task, small or large. To us, 'size does not matter'.

The team consists of the Boss (the silver fox), **Mark** (the medal hunter), **Dave** (the Slave), **Slim Tim** and last but not least **Julie**, who actually does all the work in the office.

LIMA TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO2 Mark Bullivant**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Tim Rigby**

Once again, Lima Tp has had an extremely period, with members deploying to operational theatres all over the world: Afghanistan, Oman, Falklands, Gibraltar, and Brunei, as well as the usual deployments to Bosnia and Kosovo. The Tp currently has a seven-man team deployed on OP TELIC, with almost all the rest of the Tp packing in preparation to deploy.

During the year, despite being extremely busy, time was still found for Tp adventurous training expeditions to Wales and a Mountaineering Proficiency course in the Lake District. Both these expeditions were a most welcome break from operations for the Tp and were thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The Year has also seen a major influx of new personalities to the Tp with the result that after nearly two years, we are now almost fully established. Congratulations are also in order for **SSgt John Whitty** and **Sig Haley Palmer** for providing the two newest members of the Tp.

CORPS WATER POLO

10 Signal Regt contributed **Maj Tim Langford**, **WO2 (Supvr IS) Jon Heaton**, **SSgt (FofS) Nige Kenyon** and **SSgt Rab Marshall** to the RSigs water polo squad last November. With a good-sized squad, we were able to field 2 strong teams, with the B team reaching the semi-finals and the A team going on to play the REME in the final and comfortably winning, 5-1. This is now the third year in succession that we have won the Army Inter-Corps Water Polo Championships.

The Regt sadly has to report the loss of **SSgt Tommy Burns** from 238 Sig Sqn after a long illness. Our thoughts go out to his widow, **Carol** and his family.

Congratulations to: **WO2 (Supvr IS) Jon Heaton** on his recent selection for a commission; **SSgt John Whitty** and his wife, **Fiona** on the birth of their baby daughter, **Jemimah**; **Sig Hayley Palmer** on the birth of her baby daughter **Nevaeh**; and **SSgt Tim Rigby**, who married **Louise** in December.

242 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj P Stephenson**
YoS	**SSgt (YoS) S Milne**

ARMY HOCKEY IN BARBADOS - *by WSgt Ambury*

On Monday 19 August 2002, after a very early start and long wait at the airport, the tour eventually got started in the traditional way, with the Army Men's and Ladies' teams drinking the flight dry. Then it was on to a rickety old bus to be transported to the Rainbow Reef Hotel, where we went straight into the pool and sea (some of us were still fully clothed!). 'Hello Barbados, ALFS (Army Ladies Festival Side) have landed and are ready to play hard and party!'

The second day was more of an acclimatisation day, with a light training session and an evening training match, which we unfortunately lost, 2-0. So we went back to the hotel and drowned our sorrows until the early hours of the morning.

The next couple of days were basically chilled out, with light training sessions in preparation for the tournament and then entertainment was organised for us by our tour reps. We all participated fully and thoroughly enjoyed this. One day that did particularly stand out to me was the day we all hired little 'Tuk-Tuk' cars, (no windows, doors or roof!). Four cars, with 15 girls in convoy around the whole Island (what a sight!). However, an excellent day was had by all, and we then went on that evening to win our second warm-up match against the Raiders, 4-0. Our training strategy was obviously working.

On Sunday the 25 August 2002 the festival began, and in true tradition we all joined in the Bajan Festivities whilst watching some of the Bajan Culture in the opening ceremony. Monday arrived all too soon and everyone was praying for rain and cloud because it was so hot and there was no air. Thankfully, our prayers were answered in time for our match against Empire Club, and we went on to beat them 1-0, (a good start to the tournament!). We also won our next match, against Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force by 1-0. Then we played the All Stars (on grass) and beat them by a resounding 5-0. Our last match in the group against LOB (Life of Barbados) was the crucial match. We had to win or draw to go through to the semi-finals (a draw would put us through on goal difference), so they were very keen to win, especially as they were the Bajan favourites. We played well in the first half and were winning 2-0, then a lack of concentration towards the end of the first half and they were equal. The second half was hard fought by all, but in the end, we qualified for the semi-finals with a score of 2-2. The Men's team also qualified for the semi-finals, so in true fashion, we all went out and celebrated. Friday 30 August was semi-final day. So, we had flown all the way to Barbados, and for what? To end up playing, of all teams, the RAF in the semi-final! But at least we both had the same problem with the heat (we were playing at 1400 hrs, the hottest part of the day) so inevitably both teams suffered some casualties (though not too serious). It was a hard-fought match with a full time result of 1-1, meaning we then had to play an extra 15 mins both ways. But, after extra time, there was no change to the score, so we had to go to penalty flicks. And after a good performance, we were just pipped at the post, losing by just 4-5. Disheartened, but certainly proud of all of our efforts and achievements throughout the tour, we held our heads high and went out that night and celebrated.

But the best was saved for the last, the 'TIAMI' cruise day. We spent 5 hrs cruising around the Caribbean on a Catamaran, being served endless amounts of food and drink and generally being pampered. And we wouldn't be true squaddies if we didn't do a little panic tanning as well! We then went out that night for a final team dinner where the awards were handed out and the thank-yous were said to the organisers. A great finish to a great tour. I would personally like to thank all of the organisations, which supported and sponsored me and helped to make this tour possible.

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj R James**
SSM	**WO2 P Brown**

5 DIVISION MINOR UNITS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS 3 - 5 FEBRUARY 2003 - *by Sig Beasley, T Troop*

A dream of ferrets the day before the minor unit's basketball tournament might suggest, according to sources, 'the encountering of a deep and sly enemy'. Welcome ITC Wales – basketball playing Gurkhas! What they lacked in height they made up for in speed, determination and tactics, the latter questionable in the fair play league.

With a squad of ten players available, **Capt Al Patterson, WO2 AJ Matless, YofS Johns, Cpl Miller** and **Cpl Way** produced a display, which totalled 60 points. With such a commanding lead, it was the turn for the ad-libbers to arrive and emulate their performance. Although, in comparison, the total court time between all five of us added up to a squaddie's bank balance at the end of the month, we managed to score four points and hold on for the win. Final score 64 – 48. (And 1 – 0 against the 'ferrets').

After a rest for the five main players, the bigger squad of ATR Lichfield stepped up to try and put a dampener on celebrations in the final. Wearing a red kit did not lead 243 Sig Sqn into thinking their opposition was dangerous. We took eight points before Lichfield scored. The persistence of **FofS Matless**, along with the speed and skill of **Cpl Miller** and **Cpl Way** would never see ATR closing the gap. The influence of **Capt Patterson** and **YofS Johns** allowed for swift attacks, which were not always met by the referee's decision (of which there were many!). With the team Captain being satisfied with the position, our OC, **Maj Janes**, **Cpl Clark, LCpl Brown** and I were resurrected again to enjoy the game on court for a 39 – 29 win. Divisional Minor Unit Champions for the second consecutive year.

Our thanks go to Larkhill Garrison and all staff who helped to organise the event.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Wally Drain**
Sqn SSgt	**SSgt R Owen**

RACE THE SCROLL

The Sqn's participation in this fund raising exercise in aid of Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, was the Aldershot to Colchester leg. **Sgt Webb** organised the route into six legs. The team met at the barracks at 0530 to clear any last minute problems, and at 0600 **Sgt Webb** jumped on to his trusted mountain bike to start of down the hill and on to the Basingstoke Canal towpath. The rest of the team travelled in transport to the first checkpoint, where the team received a phone call from **Sgt Webb**. After a brief discussion it transpired that he was already at

checkpoint 2. So it was agreed that **Sgt Webb** would push on to checkpoint 3, Hampton Court Palace, and the team would meet him there. After a brew, some jokes and quick warm up, **Sgt Webb** carried on, and after cycling for four hours forty minutes, he arrived at Chelsea Barracks. After dismounting from his trusty mountain bike and walking like John Wayne, he went for a well-earned shower. The rest of team changed and started to get ready for the run across London. They started off steadily, accosting all passers by with a rattling of the buckets. After coming level with the London Eye, the team noticed a large number of policeman in the area. **SSgt Owen** enquired from helpful PC what was going happening, and the PC replied that there was a demonstration and the centre of London was going to be closed to all traffic. So a decision was made to get onto the transport to get to the Leg 6 start, the Sqn's det in Colchester. It took the transport 3 hours to get out of London and on to the M25. At the Sqn's det, the team met up with the OC and jogged the last leg to 216 Sig Sqn lines. A tired team was met by the OC and RSM of 216 Sig Sqn bearing glasses of very welcome port.

SSgt Owen receiving the scroll from the 3 Div & Signal Sqn team

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON TAME THE WILD WEST

In October 2002 an eight-man civilian team from 251 Sig Sqn deployed to the Canadian prairies to re-cable the BATUS HQ in readiness for the delivery of LCSS(R) in Spring 2003. The intrepid team arrived to outside temperatures of -20? and a covering of snow. They were warned it could only get worse. The high plains of Western Alberta have some of the flattest terrain in the country. In fact the team were told by the locals that it was the only place in Canada that you could watch your dog run away from home for three days...

The task in hand was to replace the existing Cat 3 and Cat 5 infrastructure with new Cat 5e cable that would come up to UK CIDA and Canadian TBITS standards. The new system would also accommodate future expansion. With a time-line of seven weeks to complete the work, the team came in three days ahead of schedule. During that time, they laid sixty and a half thousand feet of cable, eight hundred feet of cable tray (installed in the most cramped conditions) and made seven thousand and forty individual terminations. The system was then successfully tested, commissioned and technically transferred to the Canadian Sigs Tp for them to maintain. **Peter Hickman**, the Sqn Engineering Manager led the project team, the other members being **Bob Fearn**, **Chris Cannings**, **Mark Hare**, **Martin Deveraux**, **Sam Wright**, **Dave Morris** and from 241 Sig Sqn, **Terry Dorland**.

RSA (ALDERSHOT BRANCH) GAMES NIGHT

WO1 (RSM) Kev Smith of 261 Sig Sqn, invited Officers and SNCO's of the Sqn and the local branch of the RSA to the Sgts Mess for a games night. The night allowed some friendly rivalry between the two Sig Sqns and the RSA members. The Sqn put in two teams and the games consisted of Giant Jenga, Darts, Giant Connect 4, Nails and Draughts. At the end of the evening there was a tie for first place between a team from each of the Sig Sqns, to find the winner of the night a left hand nearest the bull darts competition ensued. 251 Sig Sqn were victorious and the winning team consisted of **Sgt Pete Nealis**, **Sgt Andy Dobson**, **Sgt Nicky Coombes** and **Sgt Richie Bryan**. Just for the record, RSM 251 Sig Sqn – 2; 261 Sig Sqn - 0 (Orienteering & Games night). The Sqn would like to thank 261 Sig Sqn and the RSA Aldershot Branch for a very enjoyable evening.

XVI 16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col CJ Thackray**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Fisher**

NEWS FROM THE HEAD SHED

The Regt has gone through a period of much disruption. In October we had prepared ourselves for OP FRESCO, only to be taken out of the loop with suggestions of 'bigger fish to fry'. Shortly before Christmas the Regt received a Warning Order to prepare for possible operations in the Gulf. The result of this entailed a great deal of work by the Ops teams, the cancellation of a great deal of leave and a complete change of direction in planning and priorities. An early start after Christmas with the planners and enablers hastily putting together training programmes and the like, came to nowt, and it was back off the bus again. This is where we stand currently, but watch this space.

SPORT

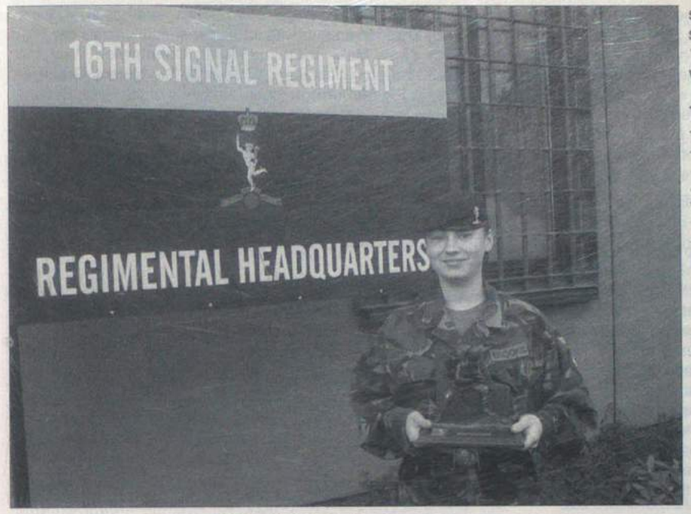
There have been several sporting events of late, including an excellent boxing night against 7 Sig Regt. The event was hosted by ourselves and a special mention must go to the RAO, **Maj Kev Stainburn** and his team for putting together a splendid package in the finest traditions of amateur boxing. The Ladies' X-Country Team covered themselves in glory by winning the BA(G) Championships and repeated that by claiming Ladies' title at this year's RSigs Champs in January. We wish them well when they travel to UK to compete in the Army Champs in February.

CHRISTMAS HONOURS

The Regt took the opportunity in December to announce the winners of the Turnbull Trophy (Sportsman of the Year) and the Lord Trophy (Contributor of the Year). The Turnbull Trophy was awarded to the Provost Sgt, **Paul Taylor** who, when not hounding miscreants around the camp, is a leading light in golf, orienteering and soccer. The Lord Trophy was awarded to **SSgt Ali Watkins**. This Awarded is given to the individual who contributes most to Regtl life. There were a number of strong contenders, but **Staff Watkins**' overall performance at work, running the Regtl soccer team and, in particular, organising children's football made him a worthy winner. Many congratulations to **Sig Natalie Waller**, who has just returned from the Army Judo Champs at Aldershot brandishing two medals. She was runner-up in both the Open and her age category and was subsequently selected for the Combined Services Team. Well done.

CADRE COURSE.

This year's Cadre Course was another joint affair, involving 7 and 16 Regts and 280 and 252 Sig Sqns. The course fluctuated between Javelin Barracks and Haltern training area. In fact, wherever the weather was most detrimental, then that was the place they would be. We are delighted to report that we had 2 students in the top 3 (**Sigs Halley** and **Brooks**). Indeed **Sig** (now **LCpl**) **Brooks** was the top student and deservedly promoted for her efforts. Well done to her.



Top Student LCpl Brooks

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Guy Richards**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Lee Crossing**

Sqn HQ has had a pretty uneventful period, getting prepared to go and see Saddam personally, and then being told we won't be. Whilst all this was going on, we have welcomed into our little band of brothers, **Pte Mitchell**, AGC, who has joined us from a far away sunny island (looking at the snow and ice, I bet she wished she stayed where she was) and **Steven** our new civilian clerk, who is also wondering what he has joined.

TRAINING WING

RTWO **WO2 Mick Angove**

Farewell to **SSgt Dean McKenzie** and his family, who have finally left the Trg Wing after 3 years. All the best to you and your family on your posting to 34 Sig Regt.

It has been business as usual for the Regtl Trg Team, with the usual round of ITD's punctuated by the odd Cadre Course. Early in November the Regt deployed on EX ARRCADE FALCON, a two week build up leading up to the big one EX ARRCADE FUSION. During the ex's the Trg Team settled into its new role in the G2/NBC cell and grafted like you wouldn't believe for the duration, putting all its vast NBC experience into practice. This was in turn followed by the Elmpt Station Cadre Course for 50 of its Junior soldiers with two weeks of military training including 4 days on Haltern training area. **Cpl Karl Stenning** led the way, instructing and overseeing proceedings, acting as Sec Comd and putting them through their paces.

REGIMENTAL MT

MTWO **W02 Gaz Greaves**
MT Sgts **Sgt Joe Pritchard / Sgt Nigel Fraser**

Greetings to Cpl **Barker**, who has had his wings clipped for a while, and has had to get back to the sharp end of the stick. Also **Sig Mick Stoker,** who has joined us from Blandford. Good luck lads; you'll need it! We say a fond farewell and good luck to **LCpl Andy Hawkes**, who's jetted off to the Falkland Islands. Two of our finely honed and up coming JNCO's, **Sig Halley** and **Sig McCann** proved what tremendous hard work and dedication could do, when they participated in the Regtl Cadre Course. Well done lads. You have done us proud!

Christmas leave had everyone on tenter hooks, wondering if we were going to get called back early. Early January had MT working all hours God sends to get everything ready. Servicing Bay working their fingers to the bone, (through their barrier cream and latex gloves) managed to service half the Regt's vehicles in 5 days, a feat we never want to try again. All the lads were making shopping lists: Gucci tinted ski goggles, solar showers, an excuse to buy new Bergen, factor 10 sun cream or in my case coveralls and a welders helmet; only to be told to stand down.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd **WO1 (FofS) Hamilton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Tony Black**

Although December was a quiet month for work, it was extremely busy, with Christmas and going away parties. Firstly we said farewell to **SSgt Lloyd Bath** after four years' hard work in the Tp (molding us all in to better soldiers). We welcome **LCpls Ben Fowler**, **Ash Farrington** and **LCpl Ann Harvey** from Blandford and **SSgt Tony Black** from 7 Sig Regt. We hope they will enjoy their time here. Just before the Christmas break the Tp's festive party was held in the *Wall & Willow*. It was a Casino Night with Chinese meal, kindly organised by **Sgt Gaz Ward**, with help from **Cpls Graz Bourke**, **Simmo Simpkins** and **LCpl Polly Parker-Pollard**. Just before the holidays though the Regt was put on standby for a possible deployment to the Gulf, which gave everyone something to think about while at home. The first week back after the break was hectic, with everyone in the Tp being dispersed to the Sqns in support of the trunk nodes and other ancillaries. Then the Regt was given the notice to stand down and everyone returned to the Tp. There are a few who will be deploying in support of other Regts and we wish them luck.

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Ashley Hayden**
SSM **WO2 Den Yates**

It has been a hectic and changeable period for the Sqn, with our main focus on preparing for possible operations. Morale was high with the majority of personnel stood by to take on operational roles. It was disappointing to be stood down, but the tempo of daily life soon picked us up as we carried on with our familiar task of providing support to the ARRC. The Sqn is currently in shock, as for the first time in over a year it has a full complement in SHQ without anyone disappearing on Ops (Shame, I hear some say) However this is about to change as **WO2(YofS) Mick Kilburn** leaves us shortly for the rainier climate of 39 Bde. All the best in your new post

CIS TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Dick Rutherford**

Although CIS Troop is some 70 personnel strong, we are somewhat dispersed into 3 three secs, Deployable Sec in Javelin Barracks, Static Sec at Javelin House, and the G6 ISM Helpdesk Team, within JHQ confines. For the Deployable Sec it has been a very busy period, having completed a successful, but demanding EX ARRCADE FUSION prior to Christmas. It was a period of great pressure for the Tp prior to deployment as the Network IARRCIS and the ELC computers were replaced with new laptop tough books. Unfortunately these arrived with faulty network cards and incorrect software. Predictably, the Tp produced the goods and the deployment went ahead as scheduled. Special thanks go to TM Tp namely **Cpl Sam Samuels** and co for carrying out the modifications required.

As with the arrival of any new and unfamiliar equipment, it was a testing time for all involved throughout the ex period, but we are happy to report that it was a great success. Static Sec kept their end up and have been heavily involved in staff training and pre-deployment tasking carried out at Javelin House. In spite of a depletion of manpower on courses and postings, the training staff worked their usual magic to ensure that all went well. The G6 ISM Helpdesk have recently had a radical change of personnel, but full credit must go out to them for being able to provide the staff with the same high standard of support that they have become accustomed to both in and out of camp.

Congratulations to **Cpls Record** and **Ross** on their recent promotions. We also welcome back **LCpl Epton** after his 2-month holiday in Bosnia (but before this went to press, he was off again). We also welcome all the new App Ops and DBAs who have recently joined the Tp from Blandford. No doubt we'll squeeze their names into these columns in the near future. The new arrivals have rallied around to submit something of their own experiences during this period of turbulence to provide evidence of their integration into the team and the Tp. Here is their story.

DAY 1 IN THE APP OP HOUSE - THE LADS GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Put 30 people of different ranks and different cap badges together in the same place and what do you do with them? You send them camping with computers, that's what you do! So RSigs trawled the British Army for some self-motivated IT professionals and they found *us*. After 12 weeks of training at RSS, Blandford and a few rounds of golf, we all turned up at 16 Sig Regt ready to take whatever was thrown at us. And they did not disappoint. They threw 410 laptops, several servers and a few bits of software (with the odd glitch added, thank you EDS) all to be put together to enable a couple of hundred Staff Officers from the ARRC to fight a digitized battle - EX ARRCADE FUSION. Sounds like a stroll in the park? Wrong! I suppose for most of us, with the exception of the odd 2 or 3 who have worked with ARRC before, the whole concept was alien.

The main aim for us was to ensure that GP3, a Battlefield Management tool, was up and running constantly, thus ensuring that the ARRC could go about their business. Guaranteeing that the multi-national officers could use the system to its full capabilities and potential was, for the most part, testing. Working hand in hand with CIS Tp of which we are now part, came easily and everybody got on with both the job in hand and each other. Back in camp and sitting around waiting for the final nod to say that all the kit was back in and accounted for, everyone's mind was turning to the couple of weeks leave that lay ahead. One question still remains; who will award **John Hadjicostas** his Jubilee medal?

Unfortunately when new faces arrive, old faces inevitably leave. So the Tp must say a fond farewell to some of our better-known brethren. From G6 Helpdesk, **Sgt Jacqueline Pollock** off to Sarajevo on a six month tour. From Deployable Sec, we bid farewell to **Sgts Geoff Sigston** and **Paul Musson**; and from Javelin House, **WO2 (IS Supr) Mick Johnson.** We wish you all the very best of luck for the future for both you and your families.

MAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Jane Squires**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Lee Balmforth**

MAN Tp have had a busy time since returning from Christmas leave. A lot of on the bus, off the bus in preparation for possible operational deployments meant a hectic two weeks preparing to transform the MAN into a Trunk Node. The Tp grafted solidly for the entire time, and it was with a little disappointment and regret that we were eventually stood down. Thanks must go to all the attached personnel from within the Sqn who helped to form Trunk Node 014 (that never quite was). From 'possible' deployments the Tp moved on to an 'actual' ex, this time EX ARDENT SUPPORT. It all started like any normal ex, late deployment from the packet line up, etc! After following the route card for the whole 4.5Km to the location, we were soon setting up the all familiar 'HAS 11' (that's a kind of hangar to the rest of you). The main build had been done on the previous Thursday and Friday so it was just a case of powering up the relevant vehicles and tying up any loose ends before the Staff deployed mid-day Tuesday. Just how many loose ends can there be? Answer – tons.

Sig Slater is on his way to Radex Tp, Blandford. All the very best to you and **Paula** for your forthcoming wedding. Also farewell to **Sig Jamie Buyers**. He's off to start a year's worth of courses before hooking up with his new EOD unit. Happy swotting! Farewells also to newly promoted **LCpls Wood, Donaghy** and **Webber**. Congratulations and good luck! **Sig Richie Hale** also left us to go to 2 Sig Regt. New arrivals include **SSgt Barney Balmforth** and his soon to be wife **Bev** (good luck for your wedding night) and a baby girl called **Sarah**, who has arrived for **Sig Andy Duncan** and his wife **Julia**. Other new arrivals are **Sig Hill**, **Sigs Kirsty McDermott** and **Wendy Cunnington**. Welcome, sign here, you're on exercise! Thanks go to **Sig Mickey Grainger** for showing **Sig McDermott** the ins and outs of the Regt. Recent promotions include **Cpls Connie Turner**, **Chris Knights** and **Stevie Carroll**, and **LCpls Andy Winters** and **Michelle Spotswood**. Congratulations one and all!

Last but not least, we would like to ask a favour of anyone at 20 Bde who may be reading this. When **Cpl Stevie Carroll** gets to you in the next three weeks, could someone please remind him that updating a Switch requires more than just topping up the kettle!

H TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Emily Greenwood**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Macphee**

H Tp has been busy with both work and sporting commitments. November saw the fight of the year as 16 Sig Regt took on fellow Elmpt occupants, 7 Sig Regt, at a boxing tournament. 3 H Tp members represented the Regt. **Sig Jimmy Young** had a superb bout and won on points. **Sig** 'Windy' **Miller** was stopped in the 3rd round after a severe bloody nose came into play. **Sig Andy Kingan** went into the ring charged up like Scarface and produced a knockout in the 1st round! A big well done, to them all.

Deployments and jobs around the world are coming in thick and fast, with jobs in Bosnia, Kosovo, Ascension Islands and the Falkland Islands already filled. **Lt Greenwood, SSgt Macphee** and **Sgt Doick** are up to their eyeballs with administration to sort everything out for future ex's and deployments. A big welcome to the new arrivals to the Tp, **Sgt Doick**, **Sgt Walsh**, **Cpl Davey**, **LCpl Rayner**, **Sigs Whitaker**, **Mud** and **McCririe-Hallman.** We hope they enjoy the H Tp life as much as we do. Farewell to **LCpls Bri Gault**, **Phil Lake** and **Sig Ross Humble** who have been posted to new units around the world. Streamers and party poppers for **Sigs Joughin** and **Kederski** who came off the last promotion board and are eager to wear their rank slides! Good luck to **Ski** when he leaves soon to go to 15 Sig Regt.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Graham Dorrington**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Greenwood**

Firstly we would say hello to our new Tp SSgt, **SSgt Greenwood**, whilst bidding a fond farewell to **SSgt Des Holroyd**, who goes to 1 (UK) ADSR. We hope the sand doesn't rub too much! Posted out to Javelin Barracks Trg Wing is **Sgt Mick Makin**. We hope that time spent away on driving courses proves useful! In to replace **Mick** as MT Sgt is **Sgt Keemo Fraser**. We hope you enjoy your stay with Supt Tp.

Along with Christmas came the possibility of a New Year deployment to areas sandy and with it, a lot of regulation 'on the bus, off the bus'. However the Tp persevered, and when the order was eventually given to stand down, we were rewarded with EX ARDENT SUPPORT. As always, the Tp worked hard on it, and special thanks must go to the entire Line Sec (with attached techs) for ensuring that the Tp OC resembled more of a snowman at ENDEX. The ringleaders have been spotted and revenge will be swift! Finally, an urgent request. Has anyone seen **LCpl Dave Mark**. Apparently he was last seen in the *Wall and Willow* for his promotion drinks. Stop skiving and get back to work!

Footnote

As I mentioned in my Editorial, I visited this Regt in February whilst they were in the middle of an ex. I was truly amazed at how, despite their having to gear up for possible deployment in the Gulf, having had to deploy personnel back to UK for OP FRESCO, with the usual comings and goings of personnel on posting, and with numbers already tight, they still cracked on with a will. They even managed to find the time and people for a little sport.

Bernard Redshaw
Editor

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**Lt Col I Hooper**
RSM	**W01 (RSM) D Rook**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

By the time this article is printed, talk about deploying to the Gulf may be old hat. At the moment, however, it is the focus of all our attention. The Ops Officer, **Maj Granville Yeomans,** has already been to Qatar and come back with stories of bad local food and insects while the Regtl Yeoman, **W01 (YofS) Mel McCorry** has deployed to Kuwait on his second operational tour within the year. The CO was next into theatre and he will be followed by the Ops Officer and **W01 (FofS) Paul Lewis** when the main body deploys. The Tech Adjt, **Capt Sid Sideras,** has packed his Bergen and is ready to go. Watch this space in the next addition to see if he went.

Finally, Congratulations to **W01 (YofS) Mel McCorry and W01 (FofS) Paul Lewis MBE** on passing LECB!

The Provost Sgt Mulligan's brave face was bound to win him one of Sgt Barnes' 'I'm a brave soldier' stickers

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SJ Morgan**
SSM	**W02 (SSM) AA Chapman**

The New Year has seen the arrival of the new Sqn 21C, **Capt Tony Barry**, who has moved across the valley to join us from JS Corsham. **Capt Alan Balsdon** has relinquished the 21C post but remains MTO until May when he will become OM (Tech).

With the Sqn only just returned to full efficiency following Christmas Leave, the news of the Regt's commitment to the build up of forces in the Gulf, OP TELIC was announced. The various elements of the Sqn have excelled in meeting all requirements, usual and unusual, in order to provide the necessary support to the Regt's deployment.

The staff of the Sqn Office, initially led by **Cpl Paul Robinson**, AGC (SPS), have fought their way through the avalanche of personal documentation required to ensure that all our personnel are able to deploy in good order. The Sqn has unfortunately lost the services of **Cpl Robinson**, but we welcome back **LCpl Alex Cross** to take control of the office and also offer her our congratulations on her recent marriage - which attracted national press coverage!

MT

MTO	**Capt A Balsdon**
MTWO	**W02 (MTWO) B Rigby**

Congratulations to **SSgt** 'Midge' **Midgely** on his recent promotion to take up the post of MT SSgt. The Tp also welcomes back **Sgt Andy Paling** and **Cpl Kit Knight** on completion of their detachments to the Falkland Islands.

The drive to prepare for the deployment to the Gulf brought a whirlwind of activity for all staff of the MT and it is thanks to their dedication and professionalism that the servicing commitments for all vehicles and generators due to deploy were successfully met. When the orders were given to prepare to load the Regt's vehicles for the sea journey, the MTWO and her team carried out recces for the move to the port for embarkation, produced the movement order and controlled the move itself with all convoys reaching their destination in good order. All in a day's work and completed with the high level of efficiency that has come to be expected from the MT team.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SR Mannings**
SSM	**W02 O'Neil**

The Sqn returned back to work once again to move to high readiness. Thus the first part of the year has been dominated by preparations for this role. This, together with possible hotter climates looming in the very near future, has meant that the Sqn will remain very busy for the next few months.

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt K Hannaford**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt A Dutton**

December is always a full month on the social calendar. Charlie Tp had its Christmas night out to the Rocky Horror Picture Show and the Bowling Alley at Longwell Green. It was a month of many fancy dress events, which also included the Sqn party. Sadly the Tp must say farewell to **Sigs Gillard**, **Withers** and **O'Brien**. But a big hello goes to **Sig Harvey** and congratulations to **Cpl Smith** and wife **Debbie** on the recent birth of their son, **Nathan**.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt P Wright**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Pope**

A good Tp Christmas night out was had by all thanks to **Sigs Collins** and **Berry**. A small feast of 15 courses was had by all. After the lengthy leave period, some long evenings and early starts enabled us to bring our vehicles up to scratch. We have had to say a temporary goodbye to one of our MAPPS Nodes and crew, as they have been detached to 2 Sig Regt for teaching purposes. Big hellos go to **LCpl Levin**, from 2 Sig Regt and **LCpl Washer**, from 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt.

ICE SPORTS SKELETON BOBSLEIGH – *by Sig J Cartwright*

Travelling at speed, head first with your face about 2 inches off the ice is a fairly accurate description of the sport of skeleton bobsleigh. The sled is not unlike a tea tray with runners and handles. You run with it for about 20-30 metres then jump on, keeping your head low and feet together.

In October 02 I went to Lillehammer, Norway, to attend an Army ice camp, which consisted of bobsleigh, luge and skeleton events. We slid for 5 days starting at different points on the track and managing to reach speeds between 60-70 mph. This was then followed by a six-week training camp in Canada with the Great Britain development squad. During this time I was able to compete in two Americas Cups. From there it was on to Igls, Austria for the Army Novices Competition. I entered in a mixed competition and came 3rd overall. After Christmas leave it was out to Altenberg, Germany for the British Championships. Many of the athletes who enter the British Championships are service

personnel. Thus the Inter-Services Competition takes place at this event. Overall, I achieved 4th place and won the Inter-Services Ladies' event. This meant that I was successful enough to qualify to represent Great Britain and go to the World Championships in the Under 23 category.

GOLF TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt C Jardine**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt P Beattie**

The past couple of months have been an extremely full period for all at G Tp. We have grown considerably in size as we have doubled our number of vehicles and will gain a lot of new arrivals. This has caused a few problems for the stores personnel, with **Cpl Hector Heathcote** getting greyer each day.

The Tp had some successes in the Regtl Boxing tournament in December. Det commanders are now a bit wary of their crewmen who have finally returned to work after weeks of hard training for the tournament. A few improvements have been noticed in those who had free nose-jobs done in the ring.

November was also a good month for promotions. Congratulations to **LCpls Smith** and **Price**, and to **Sig Jeffers**, **LCpl Underwood**, and **LCpl Taylor** who have been selected for promotion.

The Tp welcomes **Sgt Nolan** from 30 Sig Regt, **Sgt Adams** from 4 Armd Bde, **Cpl Salmon**, from 216 Sig Sqn, and **Sig Jeffers** from 30 Sig Regt. We say a fond farewell to **Cpl Margie**, who is about to deliver and leave the Army. We also send best wishes to **Sig Hopkins**, who is currently away on maternity leave.

January was packed full of Sqn and Regtl Trg Directives and PACEX's. Currently, 220 Sig Sqn are preparing to take over High Readiness from 244 Sig Sqn. So many Tp members have had their initial Anthrax vaccinations (Dead arms all round).

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Steven France**
SSM	**SSM Carl Budding**

Good luck to those from the Sqn now attached to the OP TELIC Sqn. We are looking forward to much swinging of lamps when you get back to the UK. **Sgt Brooksbank** can look forward finding his office installed with his own sandbags ready to be 'pulled up' at a moments notice. We welcome **Sgt Pay** to the Sqn as our new Ops Sgt.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt C Hill**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Cain**

Alpha Tp sends congratulations to newly promoted **Sgt Tommy Woodall** and **Sgt** 'Scouse' **Alston**. Also goodbye to those who have left the Army to pursue a new career in civvy street, namely, **Sig** 'Bez' **Bateman**, and **Sig** 'Ste' **Albury**. Good luck lads!

INTER SQUADRON BOXING - *by Sig Ogden*

8 weeks of training for one night. Is it really worth it? Well just ask anyone who stepped into the boxing ring on 4 December 2002 for the Inter-Sqn Boxing night. 8 weeks of training started with basic skills under the guidance of **Sgt Bishop** and **Sig Whitely** from Alpha Tp and **Sig Parsons** from Bravo Tp. This involved learning footwork, various jabs, hooks and defensive techniques. Our personal fitness was built up with 5 weeks of early morning runs and circuit training. The regime became more intensive as the weeks passed by and, with the introduction of sparring, our skills and fitness quickly improved. The team was then introduced to Broad Plain Boys Club, a boxing club that trains amateurs, where our skills were honed and the sparring sessions became more and more intense.

After weeks of blood, sweat and more sweat, the fight night was upon us. At the end of an emotional night for all concerned, with exciting boxing and excellent displays of skill, guts and heart, 244 Sig Sqn came out on top. Victories from the Sqn came from **LCpl Meikle, LCpl Walker**, **Sig Tipping**, **Sig Burrows**, **Sig Albury**, **Sig Whitely** and **Sig Parish**, who also gained the award of Best Boxer. It takes a lot of courage to step into the ring, so whether you won or lost on the night you all did yourself and the Sqn proud.

LCpl Meikle and Sig Cryle giving it their all

THE YEAR SO FAR – *by 2Lt A Chomse*

As a Gap Year Commissioned Officer, I arrived at 21 Sig Regt (AS) in November 02, having completed the Gap Year Course at Sandhurst and a Gap Year Tp Comds Course at Blandford. After the initial kit issue, documentation and interviews I spent most of the first month familiarising myself with the Regt.

I spent two days with TM Tp, hosted by **W01(FofS) Lewis MBE** and a week with the Regt swimming and waterpolo team, watching them fly to victory at the Corps swimming Championships. This was followed by EX DRAGONS SHOT at Brawdy and Castlemartin in Wales. December brought a host of functions: the Sqn Party, a Tp Function, the Mess Ball and the Officers to Sergeants' Mess. A few days before the latter I was informed that as Junior Subaltern I would have to march the officers down. Having only done about 10 hours of drill in my life, I decided I needed some help. **SSM Budding** quickly came to my rescue, lending me his pace stick and forage cap, typing me up a list of drill commands to learn and allowing me to practise with a troop in the hangar! Come the New Year I transferred from Hotel Tp to become OC Alpha Tp. In January I attended an LPC course at RAF Odiham, where I was able to have my first flight in a Chinook. This was immediately followed by EX TYROLEAN DRAGON, an alpine skiing exercise in Austria. So far the experience I have gained from this year has been invaluable and I hope to continue in the same vein during the rest of my year at Colerne.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt L A Fish**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Andy Gill**

Welcomes are extended to the new arrivals into the troop: **Cpl Rutherford**, **Sig Harris**, **Sig Bowden**, **Sig Taylor** and **Sgt Daz Margie**, and we say a sad farewell to **Cpl Anne Smith**, **Sig Elsby**. We'll miss you both! Lots!!

EX DRAGONS SHOT - *By Sig Elsby*

It was late November when 244 Sig Sqn, blessed with unseasonably mild weather, were off to Brawdy on EX DRAGON SHOT, a field firing/adv trg exercise. With a 3½ hour journey and no toilet break (thanks bus driver!!) we arrived in location and took over the accommodation as fast as we could to get to the bar and chill out. On Monday morning we were split into two groups, one going to the ranges for the field firing, organised and run by **SSgt Si Donnelly** and the other group left in the capable hands of **Lt White, Sgt Margie and Sgt Craig Brooksbank** for the adventure training phase.

The field firing group were welcomed to Castle Martin ranges by the DS, led by **SSM Budding and SSgt** Taylor, and were promptly ragged on a 'shakedown' run, followed by the warm-up firing on the conventional range. We then moved onto the more complex ranges, including an ISBR, CQB, Pairs Fire and Manoeuvre and a particularly scary night ambush. After an unusually comfortable night in a rickety barn, we cracked on with the second phase, which included a section in defence i.e. firing hundreds of rounds at random people and dodgy looking Land Rovers whilst wearing 3-Romeo! All in all, the whole package and the staff were brilliant, purely for the fact that everyone actually enjoyed their time up to their ears in mud and rifle oil!

The adventure training group arrived back at Brawdy full of tales to tell and lies to exaggerate. The good feeling was short-lived when we saw the weather descend and the thought that we might actually have to put effort in to the kayaking, walking and cycling that was in store for us!

On Day 1 we were split into the relevant groups and I was lucky enough to get the kayaking group with **Sgt Brooksbank.** We recce'd the route and decide that the gentle, undulating river had quickly transformed into raging rapids! Undeterred, we cracked on, to discover that kayaking isn't as easy as we all thought! I ended up capsized and climbing a tree to survive, while the remainder were swept downstream! Luckily (some say unfortunately) we all survived and spent the rest of the day recovering the lost kayaks and looking for our trainers!

Day 2 found us walking the Pembrokeshire Coastal Line with **Lt White**. Apart from the weather (yet again good old Wales), this was much better than we expected, and when the rain was not hitting your eyeballs there were some fantastic sights. The harbour town of Solva provided welcome relief from the rain as we got down to a strenuous game of Jenga and a pint (of Coke) before finishing the day's walk. The whole week was a lot better than expected and (almost) everyone really enjoyed themselves. Some of us were just glad to be alive!!!

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd	**2 Lt Z K White**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt C Brooksbank**

After a particularly frantic Christmas and New Year period, Hotel Tp has yet again seen the majority of its members prepare to deploy to sunnier climes. The festive season was busy in more ways than one for some members of the Tp. Congratulations to **LCpl** and **Sig Nicholson** on the birth of their first baby girl, **Ellie** and to **LCpl Sherwin** and his wife **Chrissy** for their second baby girl, **Atlanta**. Perhaps more exercises in March this year are in order to halt the Christmas baby boom!

Congratulations to newly promoted **LCpl Phil Butler**, and goodbye to **Sgt Dave Halbert**, who left us on promotion to NI. **Sgt Halbert** will be greatly missed by all in the Tp and Sqn. We wish you the best of luck for the future. Also goodbye to **LCpl Phillips**, who also left us on promotion to the world of EOD. A warm welcome is extended to the Delta Tp AS Ops who have joined us from 220 Sig Sqn. Headed up by **Sgt Lees** and **Sgt Thisby**, we trust that you will enjoy being a part of the Tp and Sqn.

43 (WX) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj Andrew Fletcher**
SSM	**WO2 John Glanville**

EXERCISE TYROLEAN DRAGON AND DRAGON SLIDE - *by SSgt Fluck*

It was a bitterly cold Friday afternoon on 10 Jan 2003, with a very light snow falling, when the 36 members of 21 Sig Regt (AS) embarked by coach on EXs TYROLEAN DRAGON and DRAGON SLIDE.

These joint exercises were planned to take Regular and Territorial Army personnel to Austria for an intensive 6 days skiing. After a tiring drive to Austria we arrived in the small village of Hochfilzen and we were relieved to see the slopes were white and ready for our first forays.

On the first day we were placed into our ski groups after a 'ski off' and the exercises proper began. It soon became apparent that there was a vast difference in skiing ability and that the slopes were not ideal. However, everyone was determined to make the most of this skiing opportunity for the next week.

Tuesday saw more progress on the ski slopes with everybody now aiming not only for the Basic Ski Proficiency (Alpine) but the new British Association of Snowsports Instructors civilian awards. Progress was so quick that the novice group had to be halved to enable everyone to maximise their newfound abilities. The advanced group under the guidance of **SSgt Andy Gill** and the intermediate groups under the watchful gaze of **SSgt Karl Hayter** and **Sgt Chris Alston** decided to try pastures new and found the slopes at Fieberbrunn much more challenging.

Wednesday saw the long awaited snow arrive, but was there were rumours of a larger fall to follow. The new snow did help the worn slopes and it made landings softer for some exped members, but there was still not enough for the top 3 groups, so it was planned to use the Kitzbuhler Alps further to test their skills. The novice groups had found the basis for a Regtl race team in **Sigs Grant**, **Horan**, **Jesson** and **Bates** who showed no fear despite warnings from their instructor...

The basic skiing groups first day on the slopes

Thursday saw the first assessment day, and the advanced group all achieved Level 6 in the BASI award scheme. The intermediate groups thoroughly enjoyed the larger, more difficult slopes of the Kitzbuhler and the better snow. The novice groups decided to slow things down by practising for both awards and **SSgt Phil Fluck's** group then proceeded to try some synchronised skiing led by **Cpl Jan Teague** and **Sig Nat Curtis**.

Friday, our last day, arrived. Everyone was tired but were looking forward to the Slalom and final assessments. As there was such a difference in skiing ability it was decided to hold a race for the novice skiers and another for the more advanced. One of the first racers down was our OIC, **Capt Alec Masson**, who proceeded to help everyone else by falling at the fifth gate, but he still managed to finish the course.

Our congratulations go to **Cpl** 'Dusty' **Miller** and **SSgt Andy Gill** for being the fastest males and **Cpl Jan Teague** and **Sig Emma Brook** for taking the award for the females. A special mention goes to **Lt Jo King** and **Pte Kate Brown**, who both received the 2IC's award for best fall and funniest hat. As the exercises finished, our first line medical staff of **Cpl Heidi Sutton** and **Pte Kate Brown** thankfully did not have to be used for anything more serious than coughs and colds. A huge thanks must be extended to the owner of the Chalet, **Christa Dullinger** for all her help and I can safely say that everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves on these very successful deployments.

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **LtCol PF Vingoe**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) M Nuttall**

RHQ life rumbles on, only at a more hectic pace these days. The Regt had two successes off the recent WO2 to WO1 promotion board. Congratulations go to **WO2 (ISM) Tipple** of 258 Sig Sqn and **WO2 (SSM) Greenwood** of 256 Sig Sqn, who have been selected for promotion. Shortly on the cards is the departure of the Regt's football crazed ginger Adjutant, **Capt Niall Stokoe**. As one who had colluded and 'fitted-up' many officers during his tenure, for the sake of the CO's champagne fines at leaving lunches, below is a photo of the Adjutant exhausted after a 2 pints of bitter shandy on a week night.

The Adjt - Fatherhood is a demanding business

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JS Adams**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Greenwood**

Alpha Tp have returned recently having been deployed in Camp Doha in Kuwait. Arriving in October to provide a JOCS team to support the staff officers of SBLA (Senior British Land Advisors), the Tp is glad to be back in the UK, but for how long is anyone's guess.

Bravo Tp and SHQ 256 Sig Sqn deployed to support the UK EXCON of EX INTERNAL LOOK at the tail end of 2002. This was a high level Staff ex, and marked the beginning of a very busy period for the Regt. Once again Bravo Tp found themselves working out of a four-star hotel stateside. **Cpls Wiggins** and **Taylor** seem to have perfected the art of wooing Yankee girls! The few glitches that occurred were put down to the magnetic field surrounding **Lt** 'EMF' **Pritchard**, who could drop comms for the HQ without touching anything. Inversely **Cpl** 'Stan' **Standley** found, by accident, that Boots, Combat High could attenuate a signal.

Charlie Tp were able to squeeze in a week adventurous training in Capel Curig shortly after their return from Christmas leave. Although some of the Tp were recalled to Bramcote for a sandy desert op far from here, the majority enjoyed an arduous week of training coping with the always favourable Welsh weather. Rock-climbing, mountain-biking and hill-walking were among the activities. If you ever get offered a lift by **Sig Nukutabu** (who had never ridden a bike before that week) don't accept. Countless lorry drivers and civilian ramblers were scared that day as he came to grips with the steering and braking facilities of the two-wheeled contraption. There was, of course, a chance on the last night to enjoy a few pints of real ale in Llandudno, which **LCpl Ware** seemed to enjoy even more than the rest of us.

Cpl Wiggins reflects on another excellent hearts and minds exercise with American ladies

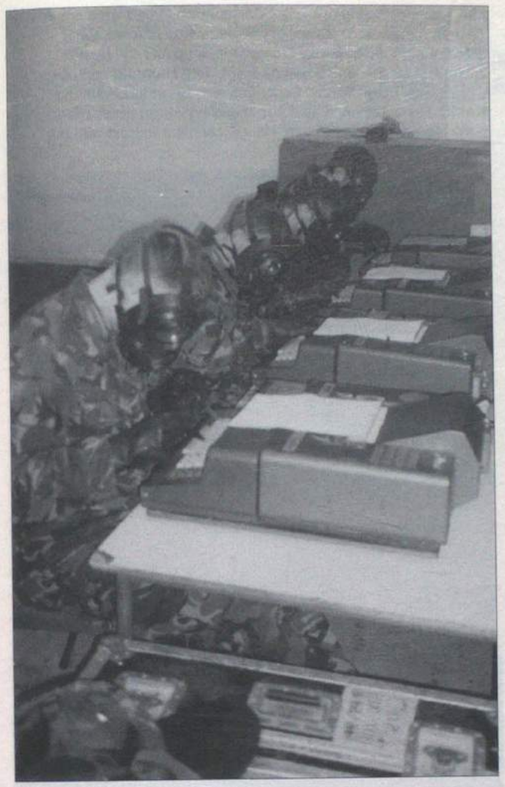
258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Donovan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) K Tucker**

GOOD OLD BLIGHTY

The Christmas and New Year break saw, for the first time in over 30 months, the Sqn with nearly all its personnel in UK. With exception of **Sgt Coates** and **LCpl Dawson**, who are deployed to The Falkland and Ascension Islands respectively, the Sqn personnel were either on post tour leave, pre tour leave or annual entitlement. It didn't last long. By the first week back at Bramcote, VSC 501s and a raft of personnel covering all trades were warned off, deploying to sunnier climes or getting off the bus once more. February through to July are expected to be quiet within the Sqn lines – which will give the Sqn clerks plenty of time to get amongst their admin.

In good 30 Sig Regt tradition, the Sqn has ensured that time on ops has been used constructively. With maximum leave encouraged around sacred exercise weeks, the Sqn has deployed, practising in role and honing trade skills. Foxtrot Tp conducted a successful DCN Anchor HF exercise to Cyprus and LWRN, training on EX FROSTY BEAR in readiness for their JTFHQ role. **SSgt Phil Render** and **Lt Caroline Staples** visited Kenya, and apparently conducted a recce in preparation for EX CYGNET GOLD, which has since been postponed. The crescendo before Christmas was a Sqn activity day organised by **2Lt Nathan Streetley**, who has arrived from RMAS. Apparently putting his rifle in a 'really safe' place after drill practice, he forgot where it was.



Foxtrot Troop practising their NBC environment typing skills

250 QUEENS GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Moir**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Tol**

The majority of the Sqn has been deployed in the Gulf since October. With various respites for the deployed personnel, not least a little chunk of Christmas leave, the Sqn has once more begun to ramp up the number of its soldiers deployed in support of the various ex's and ops in the Middle East. Luckily with the OC back in the UK for the first two weeks of January, the Sqn was able to officially welcome the CO into his new role as Comd QG Sigs. The venue was the Himali Club, on camp, and involved the **CO** and **Mrs Vingoe** being garlanded and welcomed by the Sqn OC, 2IC and SSM. After a short reply from the CO in Nepali, which

The CO as the new Comd QGS and Mrs Vingoe receive garlands from 250 QG Sig Sqn

everyone understood, it was time for a wonderful dinner prepared by **Sgt Nandakala** with a few drinks and several cultural dances performed by the Bramcote Natch Pariwar. The Sqn warmly welcomes the new Comd QG Sigs and wish him every success. Jai QG Signals!

ARMY

31 (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col Paul Wenlock TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Paterson**

31 REGT WINTER SPORTS TEAM AT KITZSTEINHORN

- by WO2 (FofS) Gaz Pearson and SSgt Shaun Fardy

The team departed from RHQ on 29 November, picking up **Sig Still** (the token snowboarder) at Dover, where **WO2 (FofS) Gaz Pearson** used his considerable charm to get us on an early ferry. On the ferry, we were able to pick up last minute essentials, including a very small selection of alcohol, barely enough to last us the coming six weeks. Once on the wrong side of the channel, we took it in turns to drive through the night, arriving at Club Kitzsteinhorn mid afternoon the next day.

First impressions were of a surprisingly comfortable hostel. All images of the Lake District-style YHA's were pleasantly surpassed. After everyone got some well-deserved rest for a few hours, we were then able to go and visit the local attraction, *Crazy Daisy's*. After a few rounds of drinks and the odd game of Nails, we all felt suitably refreshed from the journey. It just goes to show, you can lead a horse to water, but that's worth two in the bush.

The team hit the slopes the very next day! We soon found our skiing (and boarding) legs, and got in a day's practice before the training started on the Monday. The first week for training saw the intermediate-skilled people working on their general techniques with a little bit of race practice, and the advanced ones concentrating more heavily on slalom practice. The weather during this week was a little poor, with visibility being very bad at times, but with some good fresh snow.

The evenings were packed with activities, such as a volleyball competition, in which the team impressed everyone with their good sportsmanship by allowing another team to knock them out in the first round. (You should never really put all your eggs in one kettle of fish). Local cuisine was sampled, DVD's were watched (including an attempt to break the world record for watching one episode of *The Office*) and I believe alcohol was also involved at one or two points (*Don't you mean 'pints'? - Ed*) during the week.

The key social event during the first week was undoubtedly on the Thursday evening, when most people went into Zell am See to experience *Krampus* night. For the uninitiated, it is a parade of demons who descend from the mountains and beat the evil spirits out of the women before St Nicholas arrives. So the streets are full of these demons wandering around, carrying various types of whips, preying on all available women and children. Believe me, you don't get in their way - at least not for the second time!

Unfortunately, **Capt Debs Speakman** left on the Saturday, so the rest of the team celebrated by having a night out at *Crazy Daisy's* in her honour, and most went to Salzburg on the Sunday. Those who, for various reasons, weren't able to attend, got to see what they'd missed later on, thanks to **Lt Lee McEvoy's** digital camera.

Reports were that Salzburg is very Christmassy, but none of the 17 pictures of the lighted bridge seemed to convey this very well.

The second week on the slopes was nearly all racing. The seeding for the skiing events had been decided on the Friday, and the snowboarding seeding was completed on the Monday. Visibility was excellent the second week, with the sun shining almost everywhere, except at the precise location of the skiing races. This affectionately came to be known as *Ice Station Zebra*, and managed an impressive -13 degrees on the Monday.

By Thursday the races were all over, and with some good results for the Regt. The presentations were held in the Baum Bar, with numerous trophies given to skiers and boarders. We beat all other contenders for the TA team trophy, and overall, the skiing team came 6th out of 20 teams. Our mystery guest skier, 'Snowplough', received two awards, one of which was Best Junior. The only other individual prize was awarded to **LCpl Ali Kelly**, who won the wooden spoon for happiest skier, despite being towards the lower end of the seeding list. The top skier from our team was **Lt Lee McEvoy**, who came 21st overall.

L-R Capt Alan Walton (QMV), SSgt Shaun Fardy, LCpl Ali Kelly, 'Snowplough', W02 (FofS) Gaz Pearson, Sig Tim Still, Sig Darren Dunne, SSgt Dave Alleyne, Lt Lee McEvoy

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Major Steven Ong**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Watson**

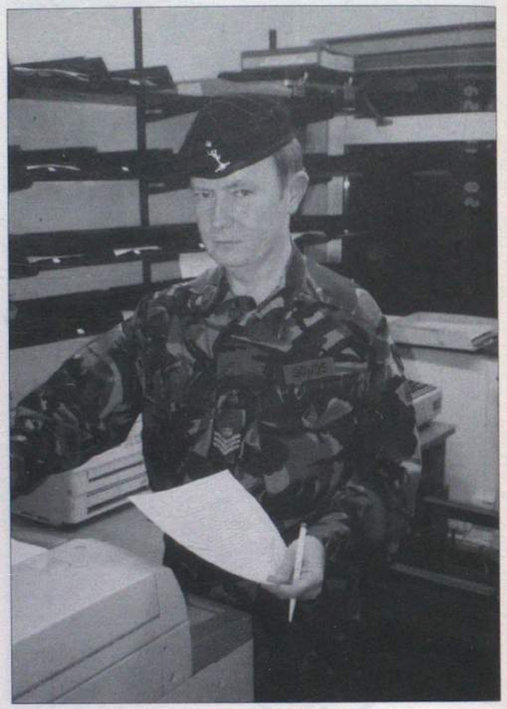
There have been quite a few management changes since the last update. The Squadron 2IC, **Capt Liz Fitzpatrick** has moved to RHQ to become Ops Offr. This was the end of **Capt Fitzpatrick's** second tour with the Sqn and she will be sorely missed. **Capt Debbie Speakman** has moved from commanding K Tp to RHQ to become the Regtl Recruiting and PR Offr. **Capt Speakman** joined 41 Sqn from East Midlands OTC as a 2Lt in 1997. During her time with the Sqn, she has served as 2IC N Tp, OC Sqn Recruiting and OC K Tp. During camp 2001, **Capt Speakman** led a combined Regtl tp to Cyprus. **Capt Speakman** has been a thorough supporter of the PLK, and served on PLK committee for several terms of office. The Sqn and especially K Troop, wish her all the best in her new role. Her replacement is **Lt Lee McEvoy**, formerly of 83 Sig Sqn. We wish him a warm welcome. **WO2 Rob Watson** has handed over the SSM role to **WOII Lol Evans**. **WOII Watson** is not leaving the Sqn, but taking command of the Sqn Recruiting and Recruit Trg Team. **LCpl Phil Davy** has started P Coy, and we wish him every success.

The Regt started the New Year with a concentration weekend. Members of the Sqn took part as instructors and students in a variety of disciplines, including Trade Training, Pre-Corporal's Course Cadre, Basic Signals Skills and Range Management.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Sarah Streete**
SSM	**WO2 Martin Cooper**

SSgt Bob Shevels (our AGC Sqn Clerk) was finally promoted after years of 'acting up'. **LCpl Carys Jones** takes on a det in 859 Tp after a successful series of overseas attachments. On a different note, **SSgt Micky Dowds** steps up into the post of acting PSI for the time being as **SSgt** 'Taff' **Hamblin** completes a CIS course. **LCpl** 'Scotty' **Scott** has also re-badged with the RAMC. His experience as a nurse in civvy-street made the change particularly appealing to him. He will continue to train with the Sqn.



Acting PSI SSgt Dowds exchanges an FFR for a photocopier, as he steps into the shoes of SSgt Hamblin

LCpl Scott sporting his new RAMC look

TOTAL CONCEPT WEEKEND, 11-12 JANUARY

This was the first of its kind within the Regt and one of five to be conducted during the next training year. Soldiers from the Regt descended onto Pirbright Ranges to participate (according to their qualifications) in one of a number of trg programmes on offer and run concurrently over the weekend. A BSS course, Trade training, NCO training and Officer training were all undertaken. Soldiers appreciated the opportunity to focus on their own level of training

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35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col C R Owen**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM J T Cauldwell**

THE CHOSEN FEW

The series of announcements in Parliament did not come as much of a surprise, and 35 Sig Regt are no strangers to supporting the Regular Army. We have supplied soldiers in support of operations in Bosnia, Kosovo and elsewhere for a number of years, and will make a significant contribution to 98 (BALKANS) Sig Sqn. Although some of us now face the uncertainty of compulsory mobilisation, those who have been warned or nominated have embraced it as a tremendous challenge. Sharing their new experience with others who have been mobilised will counterbalance the anxiety of separation from friends and loved ones. The effect on some has been quite profound. **SSgt Steve Whitty** of 95 Sqn brought his marriage forward from August to marry **Amanda** on 22 February. His children are more than happy with this arrangement. Daughters **Emma** & **Lauren** were bridesmaids and sons, **Ryan & Daniel** ushers. Elsewhere in the Regt, **Cpl Simon Bloom** decided it was time tie the knot before he is deployed, and married **Christine** on 15 February. In the same Sqn, **Sgt Wendy Geddes** who recently married **WO2 Naveed Muhammed** in a Muslim ceremony rescheduled her registry wedding planned for the Easter weekend.

Sgt Wendy Geddes and LCpl Katie Mulligan almost ready for action

Cpl Billy Dawes honing his radio skills

On a happier note, **Sgt Ray Blanchette** and **LCpl Katie Mulligan**, who have been an item for some years have found themselves both nominated, although they will serve in different units. Meanwhile in HQ Sqn, **WO2 (RQMS) Steve Cherry**, a regular soldier prepares to be separated from his wife, **SSgt Chris Cherry**, a serving TA soldier who has been nominated. In 58 Sqn, **Sgt John Heeson** will also be separated from his wife, **Sgt Jill Heeson**, while **Sgt Andrew Elson** is about to say farewell to his sister, **LCpl Joy Guildford**, who is serving in the same Sqn. Others who have already received their call-up letters include **SSgts Steve Colledge** and **Colin Richards**, **Cpls Glen Bagnall** and **Billy Dawes**, **LCpls Gareth Kinsey**, **Dean Madden**, **Marriane Meek**, **Brian Reid** and **Sig Russ Clarke**. In total thirty-three members of the Regt are to be mobilised and we know they will be well looked after by the Regular units they are joining, which include 1 ADSR, 3 ADSR, 2 Sig Regt, 216 Sig Sqn and 207 Sig Sqn.

TRAIN AND RETAIN

Apart from mobilisation, life in a busy TA unit does go on. With OP FRESCO on the back boiler and OP TELIC taking centre stage, training seems to have taken on a new dimension, with greater emphasis been placed on essential trade skills. Our trade training camp at Newcastle-under-Lyme and Swynerrton Training area during 8 – 16 February was therefore perfectly timed. It coincided with a potential recruit-training week also at Swynerrton, involving

sixteen potential recruits who have joined the TA at a particularly interesting time. The week was perfectly planned by the Regtl YofS, **WO2 Steve Hillier** and his specialist training team, which included the MTWO, FofS and a clutch of PSI's and other trade and military training instructor's. Their efforts concentrated on basic core skills, including operator training for all trade groups, tech training, electrician training as well as essential driver training to reduce our shortfall of C+E and B+E drivers and to qualify all attendees to Class 3 or 2.

Lt Lawrence after the CO dropped his bombshell

FROM DRILL HALL TO LONG HAUL

When the CO declared an interest in recruiting from UOTCs and the need to brief them on what the Regt can offer, **Lt Janet Lawrence** tried desperately hard to follow **Lt Paul Rodenhurst's** lead and keep a low profile. Unfortunately it didn't work and **Janet** was tasked with putting together a PowerPoint brief of life in the Regt and particularly how it affected her own life.

Unbeknown to the CO, **Janet** avoids the camera like the plague and it almost became a crusade to find photographs of herself that she could use for this important briefing. However, with some useful guidance from the Adjt and the Trg Maj, it finally came together the night before the presentation. But **Janet** was naturally quite apprehensive and intimidated over facing an audience of over forty somewhat discerning UOTC cadets – a fearsome prospect. Happily she gave an excellent presentation and even though many of her audience had already committed themselves to the Regular Army, her presentation showed that a good option remained open with the TA.

MOVEMENTS

A particularly sad farewell is extended to **Cpl Jim Mackintosh**, who leaves the Army after 22 years service. We wish **Jim** every success in his civilian career and hope he re-joins the Regt as a TA soldier. We have also said farewell to **SSgt Geordie Ord** on his posting to Germany and said a temporary farewell to **SSgt (FofS) Mick Fawcett**, who is deploying to the Gulf and wish him a speedy and safe return. Our new arrivals include **SSgt Spats Brodie** to 95 Sqn, **SSgt Dickie Hodkins** to the LAD and **SSgt Dean Mackenzie**, who joins 58 Sqn. We wish our new arrivals and their families a happy and rewarding tour with 35 Sig Regt.

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC	**Maj DC Gaul**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) KJ Simmons**

SQUADRON CHRISTMAS FUNCTION

After long weeks of discussion, the entertainments committee, **Cpls Erin Bridger** and **Shaz McCreaddie** decided to hold the Christmas function in *The Waterside*. Everyone entered into the Christmas spirit by dressing up as Santa and his little helpers, which obviously added to the success of the party. *X-Factor* supplied the music for the evening and everyone took full advantage of the dance floor. Our thanks go to the Bde and Sig Sqn Wives Club, who arranged the raffle. Once again **SSgt Steve Mayell** managed to get in on the action by winning second prize. Without the hard work and enthusiasm of the committee the party would never have happened, so a big thanks there.

Santa's Little Helpers

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt RN Wilson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Mayell**

After getting through 'silly season' in one piece, it's back to work and activity in the Tp continues to be hectic. We have had a large turnover of people and would like officially to welcome **Cpl**

Varley, from 259 Sig Sqn, **LCpl McLoughlin**, from 30 Sig Regt, **LCpl Pope**, from 7 Sig Regt and **Sig Young**, from RSS. May you all have an excellent tour with us.

MT SECTION

MTWO	**WO2 A Stronach RLC**
MT Sgt	**Sgt S Williams RLC**

We say goodbye to **Sig** 'Del' **D'Lasselle**, who left us to further his life Civ Div; to **Pte John Birkmyre** who is off to 7 Regt RLC. We wish them all the best in the future. We also like welcome **Pte Chris Morgan** and his wife **Angela**, who have recently arrived from 9 Sup Regt RLC, and **Pte** 'Taff' **Wiltshire** and his wife **Amy**, who have come from 2 CS Regt RLC. We welcome you to the fold and hope that you enjoy yourselves while you are here.

MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION - *by LCpl Bishop*

The March and shoot competition this year took part at Magilligan Training Centre, with a large number of teams arriving from all over the Province to compete for the coveted prize. We owe a lot to the support and admin staff who had prepared the area the day before. Unknown to us, a gale during the night had half demolished their previous day's hard work. They found tents strewn along the ranges, which meant all hands to the pump to restore things before the teams arrived to book in.

The competition consisted of different activities from clay pigeon shooting, falling plate, military quiz, first aid, and (worst of all) an 8 mile run with full kit. At least we had the luxury of starting first, which meant we got it over and done with early. Everyone involved with the 218 Sig Sqn team coped really well throughout the day and enjoyed it…I think?

It was a well run and enjoyable day with every team putting in really fast times on the run, and competing well on the different stands. Once everyone had finished, it was time for the presentation and 218 Sig Sqn had gained a respectable fourth place, missing out on retaining the trophy we did so well to win the year before. It just means that we'll have to work harder to get it back next year.

8 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (218) save the day on the first aid stand

RQMS DEPARTMENT

RQMS	**WO2 D Inman**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt C McCabe RLC**

The Dept has had a busy few months. Since the end of summer a lot of manpower has been away on different ex's and courses, we have also had some happy as well as sad occasions. We say a sorrowful goodbye to **LCpl Andy Smith** and his family, who have gone to Bicester to run around the sites. **LCpl** 'Stu' **Eason** went away to Thatcham on a map-reading course and he is still trying to work out how to fold a map correctly and how to find his way to the kettle to make the brews. We say congratulations to the same **LCpl Eason** and his wife on the birth of their daughter, **Ruby Pauline**. We also like to say get well soon to the RQMS, **WO2 D Inman**, who has just come out of hospital after an operation.

ELMPT STATION

JAVELIN BARRACKS

OUR FIRST YEAR

It's about a year now since the Army's takeover of the former RAF Brüggen, now re-named Elmpt Station, and it seems like a good opportunity to introduce the place to those not familiar with it. This we do for two reasons. Firstly, like most people, we like to talk about ourselves. Secondly, as Javelin Barracks houses 16 Sig Regt, 7 Sig Regt and 280 Sig Sqn (in all, a total of around 1300 RSigs personnel), there's a good chance that at some stage a high percentage of Corps personnel will serve here. If you're an AS Op, or an Installation Tech, for example, we hold about 25% of all the Corps jobs in these trades.

Elmpt Station consists of Javelin Barracks, plus a mar-ried quarter community in Wildenrath, and another, smaller one in Bracht. Javelin Barracks is a sizeable piece of German real estate about 20km east of Moenchengladbach and a couple of cable lays from the Dutch border. Geographically, the Barracks is well situated. The main gate is literally at the end of an autobahn, which gives easy access to a number of German cities, including Düsseldorf (30Mins), and Cologne (45Mins). In the opposite direction some 20 minutes away is the Dutch town of Roermond. Roermond is generally accepted as the water sports capital of Northern Europe and many soldiers and their dependants take advantage of the excellent facilities the town offers. Of the four major RAF bases that existed in Germany (Gütersloh, Wildenrath and Laarbruch being the other three) Brüggen was generally accepted as the 'jewel in the crown' and was the last of the four bases to close. Subsequently, the RAF spent a great deal of time, effort and money developing the Station's facilities. The site offers a great deal in terms of working and living accommodation and off-duty activities; all of which, of course, we've inherited.

Not everything is as good as we'd like, though. Between the RAF running down, and the Army arriving, some of the buildings and amenities fell into disrepair. Part of this year's effort has been spent in redressing that and fine-tuning the accommodation needs to meet the new occupants' requirements. That said, there can't be too many barracks boasting their own 18 hole golf course, an outdoor swimming pool (and another one in the quarters patch at Wildenrath), a 6 lane bowling alley, a fishing lake, gliding club etc etc... you get the picture.

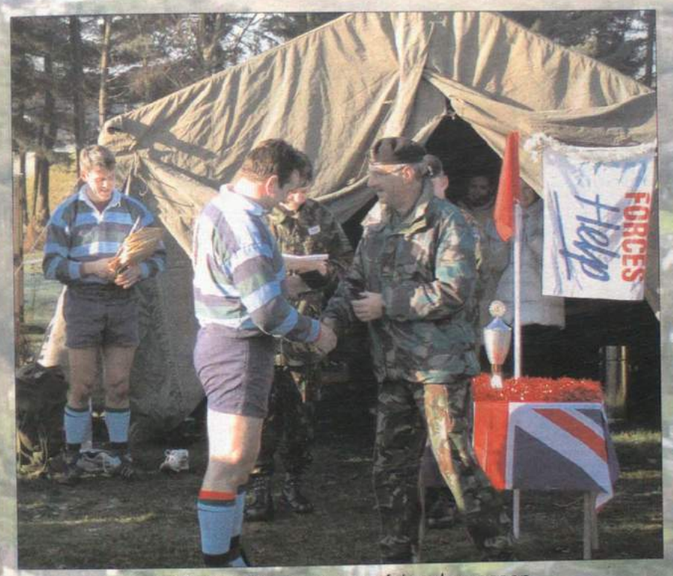
The advantages of having three R Sigs units under the same roof are many. The social life in the messes and the clubs is excellent. The added advantages of sharing expertise and resources have proved invaluable. Cadre courses, upgrading and pre-career courses have been tremendously successful and have involved students and DS from all three units. Similarly, a plethora of sporting events has attracted great competitive interest as well as joint teams going off to represent the Station. The Station PRI Superstore is a joint venture shared by all, and one of many facilities financially embraced by all to serve the community.

With three independent Sig units together, there is a good opportunity for inter-unit postings. The advantages here, particularly for married personnel, are manifold. To be posted to a new unit without having to move house and change schools is a real plus. With the large NATO HQ 20 minutes up the road in JHQ, there are plenty of job opportunities for wives and dependants. Accordingly, extended tours in the same area enable them to establish themselves and develop their own careers. Similarly, for the children, there's an excellent array of schools covering all age groups. The benefits of keeping children in stable education are self-evident. Already we are seeing a number of soldiers completing tours in one unit and moving on to a co-located one.

Much has happened over the last year and many improvements have taken place. Complacency, however, is not a word in the Station's vocabulary and we're constantly working towards our aim...to be the best community in the British Army.

Many field exercises can be run within the boundaries of Javelin Barracks

Lady Warrior. Wives of Elmpt Station try their hand at soldiering



7 Sig Regt had a successful rugby season

Christmas dinner in the Javelin junior ranks mess

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO — **Lt Col S C R Malik TD**
RSM — **WO1 (RSM) S P J White**

The *Officers, Warrant Officers and Senior Non-Commissioned Officers of the Regiment dine at Woolwich Mess courtesy of the Royal Artillery*

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

RHQ and the permanent staff of the Regt have continued to be kept busy. OP FRESCO has taken over most, if not all the TACs. We are now preparing and despatching equipment to OP TELIC, with some of the Regt's personnel being nominated for deployment. The Regt has also had its EC and LS inspections, which have kept the QM on his toes. A very successful Regtl weekend, concentrating on Trade skills and Officer/SNCO training, was conducted in January and was very well received by all who attended. The Officers still talk about the sword drill.

68 (INNS OF COURT & CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC — **Maj Jonathan Manley TD**
SSM — **WO2 Terry Gardiner**

It has been an extremely sad start to 2003 for the Sqn, with the deaths of both the Honorary Colonel, **Col The Earl of Limerick KBE DL**, and of **Col GD Thompson CBE MC TD DL**, a past Honorary Colonel.

Lord Limerick (then as **Viscount Glentworth**) joined the City of London Yeomanry (Roughriders), one of the predecessors of the current Sqn, in the late 1950s, hanging up his spurs for the first time in the early 1960s. With an extremely diverse and involved civilian career, **Lord Limerick** was then appointed Honorary Colonel of the Inns of Court and City Yeomanry, which includes 68 (IC & CY) Sig Sqn in March 1993. Throughout his time as Honorary Colonel, he maintained an extremely keen and active interest in everything with which the Sqn has been involved and closely followed the progress of the soldiers in the Sqn. To this end, he donated the Limerick Cup awarded every year to the best new recruit. Most recently, he had been very involved with the Lord Mayor's Procession, various Remembrance Services and the granting of the Freedom for the London Borough of Waltham Forest to the Sqn in April 2002. In addition to being Sqn (and Band) Honorary Colonel, **Lord Limerick** had also spent a number of years in the mid 1990s as Honorary Colonel of 71 (Y) Sig Regt.

Less than a fortnight after the sad news of **Lord Limerick's** death, we were informed that **Col Digby Thompson** had also passed away. After wartime service with the 12th Lancers, **Col Digby** joined the Inns of Court Regiment (The Devil's Own), later becoming CO and presiding over its amalgamation with the City of London Yeomanry. He was then appointed Honorary Colonel for the period from 1977 to 1989, when he was always keen to see the Yeomanry traditions and style retained, whilst at the same time ensuring that the Sqn achieved its best efficiency in its new RSigs role.

Both **Col Thompson** and **Lord Limerick** devoted an immense amount of time and enthusiasm to 68 (IC&CY) Sig Sqn, Band, Cadets, OCA and other affiliations, and will be sadly missed. The memorial service for **Col Digby Thompson** was at 6pm at Lincoln's Inn Chapel on Wednesday, 26 February. That for **Col Lord Limerick** was at 12pm at St Margaret's, Westminster on Tuesday 1 April.

On a less serious note, 10 January saw the annual all ranks dinner of 68 (IC&CY) Sig Sqn, together with the awards and presentations for success in training over the past year. The winners were: the William Whine Award (best overall contributor) - **LCpl Adam Tear**; the Fern Award (best trade training) – **LCpl Justin Brahma**; the Cartwright Award (best field-craft skills) – **Sig** (now LCpl) **Conrad Paton**; and the Limerick Cup (best recruit) – **Sig Claire Hughes**.

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON - CHELMSFORD AND HARLOW

OC — **Maj Michael Wood**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Jim Swain**

The Sqn has been through another very busy period over the last few months with the Christmas weekend, Regtl Training and continuing Recruit Induction Weekends.

CHRISTMAS WEEKEND

This was our best-supported weekend of the year with not only serving members of the Sqn but past members gathering for the evening festivities. The main event of the weekend was to say farewell to the OC, **Maj Craig Tallents**, who left us in January to join the staff of HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde. During the weekend the OC saw for the last time his soldiers compete in an inter-tp patrol competition, which was won by 881 Sig Tp, based at Harlow.

REGIMENTAL TRAINING

A trg weekend was held in January 03 with the Regt coming together at Napier Barracks, part of the Cinque Ports Training Area. The weekend consisted of trade training and a sports competition with mess functions on the Saturday evening. It was a resounding success with a very high attendance from the Sqn.

RECRUIT INDUCTION WEEKENDS

The Sqn had three recruits attending the Regtl Induction weekends in January and February 2003. Recruiting is going well and we already have four recruits for the Induction training that commences in April 2003.

FINALLY

All ranks would like to say farewell to **Maj Craig Tallents** who has commanded the Sqn for the last three years. He and **Kay** will be sadly missed. We welcome **Maj Michael Wood** as the new OC. He has been promoted from his position as Sqn 2IC.

The Sqn also welcomes **LCpl Kelly Cloughton** back from a two-year tour on FTRS.

Members of the Sqn during the inter-tp patrol competition

265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC — **Maj Penny Wood**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) Stephen Shelley**

CHRISTMAS WEEKEND

The Sqn Christmas weekend is devoted to two simple objectives: To ensure as many outstanding bounty ITDs are undertaken to ensure maximum opportunity for Sqn members to receive their certificate of efficiency; and to have a Sqn Christmas dinner, courtesy of the waitering skills of the officers.

December 2002 was no exception. It was an exceptional weekend, thanks to **WO2 (SSM) Steve Shelley's** organisation and the superb catering skills of **Cpl Christie** (in turn, thanks to 70 EY Sig Sqn) who had agreed to cook for the 45 or so punters expecting the usual Chrimbo slap up.

Whilst the Saturday afternoon passed in a blur of ITD Power point, one session certainly stuck in the mind, especially now, as friends and colleagues prepare for what could be an uncertain time in the Middle East. Former Sqn OC, **Maj David Hannam**, joined us in the afternoon to give us an overview of the various Sqn Associations.

By way of introduction, to new and old members alike, he explained that with the amalgamations of the Volunteer Reserves over the decades, the title 265 (Kent and County of London Yeomanry) Sig Sqn (Sharpshooters) has many and varied

constituent parts. Today the Kent Yeomanry and the County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) are the only Yeomanry heritage with 3 full Sqns in the TA still carrying their title. This is unique and means that we have a number of Associations linking to us, including the RSA Brighton Branch, via our 884 Signal Tp.

David is Chairman of The Sharpshooters Yeomanry Association, which was formed during WWII to act as the liaison and welfare organisation for the family and repatriated Sharpshooters. Back in those days the Sharpshooters were Armoured regts, comprising the 3 CLY (Sharpshooters) and 4 CLY (Sharpshooters) of the famed 7th Armd Div (The Desert Rats).

Today the Association has formed two Branches linked to the drill halls at Croydon and Bexleyheath/Brighton to provide the link to the current day Sharpshooter Sqns. The Association purpose is: 'to promote the efficiency of the Army by: (a.) maintaining contact between past and present members of the Regt, fostering mutual friendship between them and providing for social gatherings for them; and (b.) fostering esprit de corps, comradeship and the welfare of the Regt and preserving its traditions...' Our local Association Branch is the KCLY Association (Sharpshooters) and is chaired by a character by the name of **Capt Tony Jewell**. The Branch also acts as a liaison with the WWII veterans from The Kent Yeomanry Association.

To illustrate the spirit of the Sharpshooter Family, **David** provided a very impressive presentation involving slides, maps and video. He recounted the early days in WWII of the Sharpshooter Regts and the run up to and the first action in the Western Desert as part of OP CRUSADER on 19 November 1941 at Bir El Gubi. Young men, far from home, but well trained and with a collective purpose went into battle against the Ariete and Afrika Korps. It was a stirring account of bravery, good luck, bad luck and sadness as several Sharpshooters lost their lives. The video of **Roy Cawston** (at the time a 21 year old wireless operator in a Crusader tank in the thick of the assault) recounting his feelings and memories provided a moving highlight to the talk. The Association Annual Dinner, to which all serving Sharpshooters are invited to attend, is held on the nearest Friday to 19 November and is called the El Gubi Dinner in remembrance.

It was a humbling experience to meet with these veterans and hear their first-hand accounts, usually delivered in a non-melodramatic, self-deprecating way. It is refreshing to see that their aims remain somewhat similar to those of the younger soldiers attending the Christmas weekend - to enjoy the event and each other's company as much as possible.

CANADIAN FORCES SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS

CANADIAN FORCES SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS

- By Maj PJ Watt R SIGNALS, UK Exchange Officer (EO)

The Canadian Forces School of Communications and Electronics (CFSCE) is responsible for training all officers and Non Commissioned Members (NCMs) of the Communications and Electronics Branch in leadership, communications and electronics skills. Although Tri-Service in its composition, the School is primarily responsible for training to meet the needs of the Army and the Air Force and comprises 3 main training Sqns responsible for the delivery of training, as well as a separate Support and Standards Sqn.

MCpl Pitre shows Col Ewbank how to work the TCCCS eqpt. Majs Benson, Howes and Watt look on

The R Sigs EO post at CFSCE has been in existence since the 1970s and has, for the majority of that time, been responsible for NCM operator training. At present, the EO commands B Sqn, with responsibility for all recruit and career training (LCpl to WO2) for the Signal Operator, Line Maintainer and Comms Research trades. In addition, the Sqn is responsible for conducting a number of occupational specific courses, Tri-Service SIGINT and Army EW, for the Comms Research trades.

As always, CFSCE is pleased to welcome visiting military staff from the Commonwealth and, in particular, from the UK. In December 02 we were pleased to host a visit by the Comd RSS, **Col JK Ewbank**, as part of his visit to Canadian Forces (CF). He was accompanied by **Maj Guy Benson**, OC RSG, and **Maj Jeff Howes** Royal Canadian Signals, OC 1 Sqn, 11 Sig Regt. During his visit, **Col Ewbank** was able to gain a greater understanding of the CF's Tactical Command and Control Communications System (TCCCS), both in the field and within the training environment. Having already fielded their digital CNR, the CF are in the process of acceptance trials for the associated digital Wide Area System and **Col Ewbank** was able to glean many important lessons which will assist with the introduction of training for BOWMAN.

The School remains focused on the delivery of communications and electronics training and is constantly updating itself to reflect the new training as a result of digitization within the CF. However, as we progress into 2003, CFSCE will become the focus for hosting the celebrations to mark a hundred years of Canadian military communications and electronics. These celebrations are due to take place at the end of August 03 in Kingston, Ontario and any previous UK EOs from CFSCE or the old 1 CDHSR would be made most welcome.

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whilst sharing in certain resources, such as staff, messing and accommodation. The success of the venture ensured that it would remain a common fixture in annual trg programmes to come.

OPERATION FRESCO – ROYAL NAVY

As OP FRESCO takes a firm hold on the nation, 56 Sig Sqn (V) is doing their bit. FFRs in the garages have shuffled over to make room for two sparkling Green Goddesses (GGs). The RN has moved into the mess and has settled into the routine of periodic call-outs and endless cups of coffee. This was an excellent opportunity to test our power supply. The 100w fuses into the main building have had trouble providing enough spark for the 60W cooker and the extra heating and lighting in demand. After four blackouts in one night, CAT Power (who is supporting OP FRESCO) came to the rescue with an extra gene. The SSM has been able to brew up again on TA nights!

The Sqn 'New Garages' as a fire station providing cover for the Eastbourne & district area

SQUADRON RECRUIT TRAINING

As part of a new Regtl Recruit Trg Scheme, ten recruits commenced their trg package on 28 January 03. The new scheme differs from the old trickle system where they will move through the training cycle collectively after an RHQ Foundation Trg Weekend in London. The recruits have an option to complete a two-week concurrent training package or a series of five weekends. The qualities of team-building will be inculcated into the soldiers from the very outset.

83 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj James Gagen RASigs**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Cahill**

Along with other Sqns, 83 deployed to Pirbright ATR on 11-12 January, for the Regt's Total Concept Trg Weekend. Generally the weekend was well received by all but unfortunately failed to generate any suitably funny anecdotes.

REGIMENTAL SHOOTING TEAM

The Sqn is supplying a number of potential snipers for the Regtl Shooting Team training being run by the QM, **Maj Krishna Gurung**. For once, the competition is quite fierce, as the quality of training has generated a strong interest. The top tips from the Sqn for a place in the team are **WO2 Matt Cahill, Sgt Stuart Farquharson-Roberts, LCpl Rich Leyland** and **LCpl Gareth Burgess**. However **Sig Andre Ransaran** waited until the last 20 rds of the day to pull out his top score of the day to pile the pressure on the old school mafia.

We welcome our new Sqn OC, **Maj James Gagen**, RASigs and **Lt Nelson Reynolds** from 38 Sig Regt (V). Congratulations to **Sig Johnson** on passing the first stage of her recruit training at Crowborough Camp. Farewell to the 14 pigeons that used to live in the Garages courtesy of **Sgt Si Butler.**

94 (BY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Hugh Robertson**
SSM	**WO2 Pete Watson**

SQUADRON APWT

An APWT and ITD weekend was held on the Ash Range complex over the weekend 25-26 January 2003. The APWT was fired on the ETR range and run by **Capt Steve Hudson**. It was a bright day with a light wind blowing up the range. **Lt Neville MacMillan**, of 886 Tp and **Sergeant Colin Deane**, of 908 Tp, achieved the highest scores. The night shoot phase proved interesting to all, although the scores achieved appeared to suggest that most were firing BLNV (Beyond Limit of Night Visibility). Or were they firing blanks?

The following morning a CFT was carried out round the area of Pirbright Camp. **LCpl Al Grey** of 908 Tp, assisted by **Cpl Nicholas**, put us through the test, along with some interesting drill movements. 94 Sig Sqn are providing four key personnel for 98 Sig Sq, a composite TA Sqn that is shortly to be sent to the Balkans. The 2IC, **Capt John Kendall**, who works in the IT industry, and **Sgt Andy Green** (Military Training Team) works as an IT networking consultant. **Sgt Mark Downer** and **LCpl Jon Botting** both of 885 Tp based in Reading, work respectively in marketing and as a civil engineer. Their last trg weekend was at Swynnerton with a final training weekend in the Welsh borders practising basic military skills. They are preparing for an eight-and-a-half month mobilisation including six months service based in the Balkans. The main difference between the role of 98 (BALKANS) Sig Sqn (V) from that of it's predecessor, 97 (BRITFOR) Sig Sqn (V) is that its role is now pan-Balkan. The Sqn comprises BRITFOR Tp, based on the Banja Luka Metal Factory (BLMF); Kosovo Tp, based at Pristina; and a multi-national Tp, which includes volunteers from Canada and the Netherlands, and also based at BLMF.

On his posting to 98 Sig Sqn, **Capt John Kendall** has just handed over the role of 2IC to **Capt Vince Connolly**, who has in turn relinquished command of 908 Tp in Windsor.

32 (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Cammy Payn**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Norma Sproul**

The Sqn's training year got off to an early start with the trg weekend over 11/12 January. The high attendance ensured that the busy trg programme of MT, SHEF and Comms training was enjoyed by most of the Sqn. The last event on the Saturday saw the Sqn bid a happy 60th Birthday to **SSgt Marylin Niblock**. Well done **Marylin**. Here's to many more.

On Sunday, a wet and drizzly Mugdock Country Park played host to the Sqn Orienteering competition. Despite the inclement conditions, another good turnout allowed a highly competitive event to be run. In the end, the dynamic team of **Sgt Jackie Sliman, SSgt McLean** and **Sgt John Flook** (who required a little motivation) ran out clear winners. Keeping up the Sigs end were the second placed 'techno team' of **Capt Jack Dempsey** and **Sig Chris Lawson**.

With Redford Barracks occupied by OP FRESCO, it was off to Cultybraggan for RTW 9 over the weekend of 17/19 January. HQ Sqn participated in the mix of trade and ITD trg and also contributed heavily to the Offrs' and Sgts' Mess Burns Supper. QM **Capt Graham Reith** delivered his now legendary 'Address to the Haggis'. The ground shook and the air thundered as he

delivered the immortal lines to the doomed Haggis. Once again the roof, and a couple of nearby guests were lucky to escape injury from the great scything of the cutlass that the QM swung in support of the great Bard's utterances. Amongst others chipping in were **SSgt Marylin Niblock**, with the outstanding 'Lassies' Reply', **Capt John Lynch**, with his moving 'The Immortal Memory' and **Capt Phil Donegan**, with some very saucy Burns prose. In summary, a great evening complimented by the enormous spiritual influence of the Padre and White & McKay.

Outwith trg, the Sqn has been coping well with the presence of the Regular Army fire fighters. The Sqn and Regt are continually indebted to the Permanent Staff in Jardine Street, who ensure that the day to day business and OP FRESCO continue uninterrupted. Indeed, the Sqn has contributed to the op with the voluntary services of **Cpl Brannigan**, **LCpl McCartney** and **LCpl Buntine**, who were assisting the FRTs at Edinburgh and York.

The Sqn Offrs' Mess social life has been kick-started into life with a couple of events. A curry supper at the end of January was quickly followed by a trip, organised by the great 'bon viveur', Regt 2IC **Maj Roddy Sutherland**, to Tennant's Caledonian Brewery in Glasgow. The Sqn Offrs and various guests looked longingly at the 1800 cans per minute, flowing along the production line. After such titillation, the only recourse was to deploy to the free bar at the end of the trip.

Just after Christmas, the Sqn was pleased to welcome **Cpl Plunkett** from Northern Ireland. **Cpl Plunkett** brings considerable experience from service with 2 Sqn and 40 Sig Regt, and will no doubt be a great asset to the Sqn. The sqn also recently welcomed the services of **Sgt Lambie** in his role as NRPS. With his 22 years of prior service and previous work with ABRO, the Sqn stands to gain a great deal from his wealth of knowledge.

Congratulations to **LCpl Dorrian** who recently who recently completed her Class II cse and also to **Pte Burns**, who passed her basic Clerks cse. After gaining an excellent grade in her Mil Law, she is now looking for a supporting role in the BBC series *Red Cap*.

2003 will be a challenging year for the Sqn, with a requirement to work around the rebuild of the garages, which is due to commence in April. More immediately the Sqn is casting its eye to the supporting role that it will be playing in CORPSAAM.

33 (LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col DW Somerville MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) S Day**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

EXERCISE NORTHERN MANCUNIAN EAGLET

On a cold January morning, a team of intrepid explorers set off from the sanctity of Liverpool to face the harsh brutality of the French Alps. This adventure training exercise was born at the last minute, due to the otherwise engaged 1 (UK) Armd Div. The main thanks go to **SSgt Sam Faulds**, who brought a whole new meaning to fashion police in his complete Asda ensemble. Very proud he was too, to let everyone know that his entire ski clothing for the holiday cost as much as a decent pair of jeans. It was, however, his decisive organisation that allowed the trip to proceed.

The location for the trip was Les Contamines, which sits in the shadow of Mont Blanc, about 30km from Chamonix, the principal town in the region. The accommodation was perfectly placed at the base of the main gondola up into the ski area. The first night, the temperature dropped so low that we managed to persuade even **Cpl Dave Neal** to break into a trot.

The first day on the slopes brought deep blue skies and empty pistes, along with a revelation from **Capt Karl Jeeves** and **SSgt Sam Faulds** that it had been a decade since either of them had strapped planks of wood to their feet and attempted to travel from the top to a bottom of a hill in control. 'In Control' is not exactly the words I would use to describe the first morning of skiing, as French school children scattered in fear of their lives. Very soon, however, after a few very spectacular falls, all the members of the group began to find their ski legs.

The best fall of the week must go to **Cpl Dave Neal**, who left his skis behind as he nose-planted into the side of the mountain. My only regret is that we didn't catch it on camera. Meanwhile **Capt Karl Jeeves** was continually face-planting as he refused to admit that he was simply not up to it on a snowboard. Of course he did manage to 'nail' all sorts of jumps, curiously always when no one else was around. Funny, that!

In the bars in the evening, we studiously reflected on the highs and the lows of the preceding day's skiing, whilst looking forward to the triumphs of the next day. On many occasions, the beers arrived with bravery pills added. Suddenly the following day was filled with dares and bets on just how high **Cpl Neal** would jump, or, that **SSgt Sam Faulds** would indeed attempt snow boarding. **Cpl Neal,** to his credit, kept one of the brave pills in his system as he volunteered to try snowboarding on the fourth morning.

Borrowing the Adjt's board, he strapped the tray onto his feet and began a careful descent of the first slope. 2 hours later, having travelled a total of 250 metres, lost 3 pints of sweat, invented new swear words and irreversibly changed the colour of his ski jacket to white, he admitted defeat and reverted to skis. Still, this was nearer to success than the trip organiser, who promised such great things as another brave pill dropped, plink, plink, fizz into his pint!

The trip itself was a resounding success, particularly given the extremely short amount of time to organise everything. The location is perfect for military expeditions. All the participants vow not to let it be another decade before skiing again.

59 (CITY OF LIVERPOOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj J Miller**
SSM **W02 (SSM) P Williams**

PRESENTATION

SSgt Halewood with the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside

The Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside Certificate of Meritorious Service was recently presented to **SSgt Denise Halewood**. In addition to her contribution to the TA in general and the Sqn in particular, the award also recognised the immense amount of work for charity carried out by **SSgt Halewood**.

TA FOOTBALL CHALLENGE CUP

The Sqn continues to excel at soccer and has once again reached the final of the NW Area TA Cup. In particular, we congratulate **Sig Paul Goulard** on representing the TA at national level.

Sgt Tommy Hankin committing yet another foul

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj D Titheridge**
SSM **W02 (SSM) I Coburn**

EXERCISE NORMANDY QUEST, 26-29 NOVEMBER 2002

EX NORMANDY QUEST was a tour to the battlefields of Normandy and a detailed and amusing report, by **Capt Chris Hopkins** of 80 Sqn, appeared in last month's *WIRE*. However, as pictures of the tour were not available at the time and the only camera taken belonged to 42 Sqn, a picture of interest is included in this Sqn's latest offerings.

Colonel Elton Davis laying a wreath on the grave of Pte Kenneth Roy Ainsworth killed in action whilst serving with the 5 Bn, The East Lancs Regt, predecessors of 59(City of Liverpool) Sig Sqn

GREENHILL TROPHY 2002

The Greenhill Trophy is awarded annually by Dep Comd 11 Sig Bde to the subaltern whom he considers has produced the best allround performance by a young officer in the Bde. In 2002, it was awarded to **2Lt Danny Fenwick** of 42 Sig Sqn (V) and it was a first for the Sqn and the Regt. The trophy was inaugurated by the first Dep Comd, **Col Greenhill** in 1988.

PROMOTIONS

During his visit, **Col Davenport** kindly consented to do the honours following the recent Regt promotion board and promoted the following Sqn members: **Sgt Dave Kerr** to SSgt (SQMS); **Sgt Timothy Mountfield** to SSgt; **Sgt Kevin Westall** to SSgt; **Cpl Alwyn Murray** to Sgt; and **Cpl Kenny Bryan** to Sgt. The Colonel and the CO joined the remainder of the Sqn in the bar to take advantage of the promotion drinks and the excellent curry prepared by our resident gourmet chef, **Cpl Pete Marchant**, late of CVHQ.

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

December brought the usual round of social events and mess functions with the Sqn allranks Christmas ball on the 14 December proving to be most successful. However, perhaps the most enjoyable event, organised by **Sgt Duncan Anderson**, was the children's party and trip to the Pantomime to watch *Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs*. Star of both events was **LCpl Stu Green**, who 'volunteered' to act as Father Christmas and, judging by his figure, had obviously been training for the role throughout the year.

DINING OUT

In January the Sqn SNCOs gathered at the local Police Social Club at Hough End in Moss Side to dine out **Sgt Lesley Ward**. **Lesley** has been our head chef for many years. She joined the Sqn in 1988 originally to train as an op, RSigs and then, because she couldn't stand the food, transferred to the RLC to retrain in cookery to try to do something about it! **Lesley** has enjoyed her time at Norman Road and has reason to be grateful to the Sqn. It was through joining the TA that she met her husband, **Graham**, even though she eventually had to call him Sir when he became the SSM!

80 (CHESHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj S Mason**
SSM **W02 (SSM) Eddowes**

The Sqn has recently said a sad farewell to OC, **Maj Dave Titheridge** to 42 Sqn, **SSM Frank Hale** to HQ and **Capt Ken Sirr**, also to 42. We wish them all good luck in their new posts. The going away function, organised by **SSM Jim Eddowes** and **Capt Chris Hopkins** was a great night, made more interesting by **Capt Bob Banner** and **SSgt Mick Barton's** attempts to do speeches in a public place against a very loud and keen singing entertainer. We also welcome **2Lt Barker** and **Lt Geordie Bartlett** to the team.

The Sqn has been extremely busy in its first four weeks of 2003 with RSIT, PRE and 98 (BALKANS) Sig Sqn to name a few. The regular team, led by **SSgt Langley** and ably supported by **SSgt Richards**, **Sgt Booth** and **Cpl King** continue to work against the clock, and manpower challenges. A new recruiting drive has been initiated by acting OC, **Capt (TOT) Phil McGiveron** and **SSM W02 Jim Eddowes**. Capt Chris Hopkins and **SSgt (SQMS)** 'Sammy' **Collister** have also found time to introduce the rigours of TA life to our latest work experience brothers **Craig** and **Callum Wright**, both of whom have now joined the Sqn.

Finally we should mention a few of our 'core team' who always assist during times of stress and keep 80 Sqn on the road, namely **SSgt Murphy**; **Sgts Patton**, **Bland**, **Dace** and **Bermingham**; **LCpls Cross** and **Hutchinson**; and **Sigs Dowling** and **Webster**. More recently joining the growing throng we welcome **Sig McNally**.

98 (BALKANS) SIG SQN

Trg continues for our five Bosnia volunteers, **Sgt Bland**, **LCpl Pete Hutchinson**, **Sigs Angie Dowling** and **Jimmy Walker** and **Pte Dave Jones**. To date three weekend trg events have been successfully negotiated by the team, preparing them for the mobilisation phase at Chilwell and subsequent operations in theatre. The trg has been a mixture of basic soldiering skills combined with off-road driving. Another useful tip for the tour has been the map coordinates for them in the TAOR cheap pirate CD shop. The team are all looking forward to the new experience of going to work every day only 50 metres from their beds, catching breakfast en route. Seriously, we look forward to the challenge of providing much-needed and reliable communications to people relying on the service for operational reasons.

34 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col Garry Hearn**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Newton**

It is with deep sadness that the Regt must announce the recent tragic death of the CO, **Lt Col Ian Hall TD** whilst on holiday with his family in Florida. The thoughts of all officers and soldiers are with his wife, **Anne-Marie** and their 2 young boys, **Jamie** and **Edward**. On 11 February a memorial service for **Lt Col Hall** was held at Carlton Bks, Leeds, the home of 49 Sig Sqn. Located close to the offices of Halifax Bank of Scotland where **Ian** worked, this enabled many of his work colleagues to be among the 120 people who attended. The service was brought to a close with a lament played by a lone piper - a fitting tribute to our late CO. An obituary has been included in this edition of *The WIRE*.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Chris Jones TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Neal Dixon**

LAD

OC **Capt Ray Simpson**
AQMS **WO2 Andy Kingston**

One of TA REME's events of the year is EX NORTHERN BLUEBELL, held at Warcop usually in early summer. This is a competition event that takes place over a full weekend and covers military, trade and general knowledge skills and culminates with an assault course plus march and shoot competition. The competition is taken very seriously by the LAD and all participants, so training began in earnest in March 2002 for the June competition.

I think I speak for all participants, to say that it was a challenging weekend and although we did not win any prizes the team put 100% effort into it and enjoyed taking part. We look forward to the next one.

Leading up to the main event of the year (EX ARRCADE FALCON 02) in October, various other minor exercises took place taking us to various locations in the North East. One that was enjoyed by all who attended was the Sqn adventure-training weekend in the Lake District at Keswick. Many thanks to the organisers **SSgt Ian Cairnes** and **Sgt Bob Silk** and all the supporting staff. We, the LAD, hope to host a similar event in return.

Sgt Raeburn conducting Foden repair

As mentioned earlier, EX ARRCADE FALCON was the main event of the year and the LAD was able to provide full support to the Regt and the Sqns for the whole fortnight. On the whole this was a successful exercise from the LAD's perspective and gave us a chance to show that we can play an active part in making sure the Regt can deploy when required and stay mobile.

Congratulations to recently promoted **Sgt Andy Raeburn** and **LCpl Andy Findlay**. Good luck to **Sgt Bob Tracey** who has left the TA and also our SPSI, **SSgt Rob Deakin** who leaves on promotion to WO2. We welcome his replacement, **SSgt Danny McMillan** who I'm sure will carry on the good work. The last word goes to our OC, **Capt Ray Simpson**, who after 30 years in uniform and six years as OC LAD for 34 Sig Regt, is due to leave the TA in the spring. Every member of the LAD wishes him the very best of luck.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Major Mark Finch**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Carr**

All quiet on the Yorkshire front in Leeds for the time being with the exception of the odd departure. This month the Sqn has said farewell to **SSgt 'Nobby' Clark**, **SSgt Mark Wilford, Sgt Judy Adcock** and **Sgt 'Ginge' Davey** and his wife, **LCpl Becky Lodge.** All is not lost, as we have gained **Sgt Steve Arnold**, so a very warm welcome to him and his wife **Ann**. Another important welcome to the Sqn is to our youngest member, **Caitlin Waldron**, the newborn daughter of **Cpl Andy Waldron** and his wife **Mel**. Congratulations to **SSgt Middlemiss** on passing his map reading course. He will now be able to find KFC and MacDonald's much easier.

Sgt Eastwood and **LCpl Barrett**, the Sqn's newly appointed driving instructors, will be holding regular seminars and practical sessions in the art of reversing RR installations. A commendation in driver training also goes to **Sig Claire Norton**, who was the first to bog in a Land Rover during driver training while completing the cross country phase with 98 (BALKANS) Sig Sqn. Sqn members are warned to be extremely vigilant around **Sig James Thompson**, who will be looking very closely for incriminating photos, the more dubious the better, for the Sqn photo board. You have been warned!

745 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Keith Holdstock**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Mark Carrick**

Since Annual Camp things have been moving at a brisk pace at the Access Tp. The local Green Goddesses (GG's) had arrived in readiness for the first of the proposed strikes by the Fire Brigade. Fortunately the impact of the strikes on the Tp was minimal.

The Tp Chef, **Sgt Stuart Key** (more war stories) returned to the fold after 4 months service in foreign climes i.e. Afghanistan. Congratulations to **Sgt Andy Oxley** on promotion and a welcome to **Cpl Trudy Bedford**, the ex Sqn clerk, now RR.

In November at the Remembrance Sunday parade in Hull, the Tp had an excellent turnout with 26 soldiers on parade, supported by many family and friends. After the parade **WO2 Alan James** rallied the Hull branch of the RSA and past members of the Tp back to the barracks for a hot buffet lunch.

Because of the firemen's strike, the Regtl Christmas party became a Sqn party at Strensall, followed by a visit to a Chinese 'Disco' Restaurant in York. Sqn members were well entertained by **Sig Sparky Gowen** and his passion for all things old! December was the month to be jolly and sad, starting with **Sgt Rob Godfrey**, who went down on one knee at the winter ball and proposed marriage to his better half **Anne,** (Well done fella). A very warm welcome to **SSgt Terry Shiels** our new SPSI all the way from Toon land. A sad farewell was said to the old SPSI, **SSgt Mark Wilford**, who leaves us for 2 Sig Regt. **Wilf** has done a sterling job at 745 Tp over the last 3 years and will be sadly missed by all. Thanks for all your hard work, **Wilf** and remember this when you're hoovering up 'Access All Areas'.

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Capt Jez Bailey**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Les Middleton**

PROMOTIONS

Following the OC's Conference, on a weekend when she was on call (and so could only ring the bell), **Maj Graham Jennings** the new Regt 2IC promoted **2Lt Jo Barr**. The rest of the Mess succeeded in celebrating her promotion while the new **Lt Jo Barr** nursed her mobile phone, ever ready to return to work at a moment's notice.

SQUADRON TRAINING - ADMIN CHECK

The first weekend back from the Christmas and New Year break was a shock to the system, but we started the year with a check and adjust of all our docs and kit. It was a trying time for **SSgt Jeff Martin** and **Sgt Steph Gibson**, but they met the task with total professionalism. Many of us had not realised now much green kit we possessed, but thankfully most of us did have all the kit on our 1157's. Sunday's training, thanks to **Sgt** 'Fletch' **Fletcher**, was driver training, convoy drills and map reading. Great to be back in the seat again!

RECRUITS WEEKEND 3

On a cold and wind swept Sunday morning **Capt Jez Bailey**, accompanied by **Maj Graham Jennings**, visited the Regt Recruit Training Team to meet the 4 recruits, **Sigs Raman Sinah, Phillip Burek** and **Brian Hudson** and **Pte Amy Hunter**. Cold the morning might have been for us, having emerged from the TAC, but for the recruits on Catterick Training Area it had been a cold and character-building night. We met up with them following their night in a harbour area conducting recces, and a morning CFT. Looking suitably invigorated by these experiences, they had weapon cleaning to look forward before they could crawl into the comfort and warmth of their own beds later that day. As **Capt Jez Bailey** said, 'They will remember this weekend for the rest of their TA careers'. But the recruits may have different memories in mind! Next stop weekend 4, and their pass-off parade.

DEBDON MILLENNIUM FUNCTION

The inaccurately named Millennium Function, organised by 742 Tp was held at Debdon Gardens TAC. With the usual style and pose that only 742 Tp can muster, the night got off to a fine start. The guests from Darlington were delivered by the steady driving of **Cpl Matt Graham**. **Cpl Graham** made many circuits of Debdon that weekend, one of which was for **Sig Vanessa Rolls** who managed to become detached from her front door key, but only discovered this on returning to Darlington. Our thanks to **Sgt** 'Cliffy' **Readshaw**, **Cpl Ruth Grainger**, and **Sig Jackie Courtney** for organising the event, and **Lt Jo Barr** as host, for a fine and sophisticated function.

RECRUITS PASS-OFF PARADE

Following Weekend 3 (see above) our brave and eager recruits, **Sigs Raman Sinah, Phillip Burek** and **Brian Hudson** and **Pte Amy Hunter**, were rewarded for all their efforts. The Regtl Recruits Pass-off Parade held at Darlington TAC, was taken by Regt 2IC, **Maj Graham Jennings** with the Course Officer **2Lt Helen Baxter** (90 Sqn) presenting the recruits. The parade gave the recruits the opportunity to show off their skills to their guests. It was a sight to swell the chest of those who attended.

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Richard Lenton**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ian Ward**

War was recently declared on the outskirts of Selby. 741 (Access) Tp challenged 704 (TN) Tp to a fight to the bitter end. The chosen weapon was the semi-automatic paintball gun and a few hundred rounds of luminous paint.

From the start, the rivalry was fierce. Having donned all the protective kit and coloured ribbons to indicate the teams, the first flaw was spotted. The whole Sqn was on one team with the exception of everyone's favourite target, **Cpl Kev Pountain**. It was generally agreed that we'd all prefer just to shoot **Cpl Pountain** down like a dog where he stood, but there would be no sport in that.

A hasty re-arrangement of the team ribbons, and we were off for the first game. Thirty seconds later **Capt Simon Smith** returned to the safe enclosure, followed shortly afterwards by the SSM, **WO2 Ian Ward**, who had been heard muttering 'It didn't work in 1916, it won't work now…' as they stood up and walked towards the enemy. **Sgt Dave Ross** made a valiant attempt to defend his team base, hiding behind a fence for most of the day, specialising in head shots, and claiming that he was actually a special forces sniper in his day job. **LCpl Peter Metcalfe** was tasked with carrying the Access Tp WMD, a missile which looked suspiciously like a sawn off drain pipe full of mud. Dodging gracefully from tree to tree, he tried to hide his ample self behind a small twig, and went down in a hail of emulsion. **LCpl Paul Liddle** then took up the challenge and appeared to try to dig his way into the enemy camp, as he dived face first into the dirt. And so it continued. All thought of actually trying to win the games was forgotten as personal duels took place around the forest. The only respite from being covered in paint and bruises (a hit from 5 feet really hurts!) was the click as your opponent ran out of paintballs.

The last game of the day saw **2Lt Helen Baxter** and **SSgt Barry Hunter** plotting. The organisers called for anyone with a birthday or similar, and they seized their chance. Backed by the rest of the Sqn, they offered the 2IC, **Capt Simon Smith** as a sacrifice, to be dressed in a luminous vest as a target. Despite offering proof that his birthday was 6 months away and a pint to anyone who would volunteer in his place, there was no escape, and he was massacred in a hail of friendly fire.

The whole day was a great success, and if you believe all the war stories afterwards, both Tps achieved a complete victory for no losses, and the VCs are in the post.

Because of ammunition shortages, members of 90 Sig Sqn practise for their APWT at the paintball range

36 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col PN Willmott TD**
RSM **W01 (RSM) WJ Morrow**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The Regt approached the Christmas stand down with many a sore head, but with a great sense of achievement after a very productive year and demanding Annual Camp.

The Adjt, **Capt Rob Francis** and the acting Regt FofS, **SSgt Terry McIntyre** volunteered for an exercise over the New Year (EX CARIBBEAN ENDEAVOUR) can't understand why!! But they both came back with an excellent tan and taste for Spiced Rum.

The Sgts' Mess bid farewell to the CO, **Lt Col Brown**, with an exceptional dinner night, followed by some mess games. The Regt YofS was the Connect Four Champion, the RSM proved that he didn't have the skill for Jenga and **SSgt D'urso** couldn't be trusted with the hammer in the nails competition.

Lt Col Brown as he departs the Regiment for the last time

The Regt wishes **Lt Col Brown** all the best for the future in his new post and welcomes **Lt Col Willmott** from 2 Sig Bde as our new CO. The Sgts' Mess looks forward to another excellent night when we dine him in. Finally a fond farewell to our Chief Clerk, **WO2 Nick Marlowe**, who leaves us on commission to take up the appointment of RAO at 31 Sig Regt (V).

All change at the top Lt Col Brown hands over the reigns to Lt Col Willmott

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON - ILFORD

OC **Maj Pete Minshall**
Acting SSM **SSgt Graham Carroll**

The Regt has now settled back into the normal routine after annual camp and the Christmas break. Festivities were enjoyed by members of the Sgts' Mess at their Christmas function held at the RA Garrison Sgts' Mess in Woolwich, a spectacular location for any event. We are now in possession of two new Sqn members, PSAO **WO1** (soon to be Capt) **Mark Anderson** from 34 Sig Regt (V) and SPSI **SSgt Gaz Topps** from 7 Sig Regt in Elmpt. A warm welcome is extended to both of you. The OC Sqn has decided not to hang up his spurs just yet and will remain with the Regt until April 2004.

The main focus of the Sqn for the remainder of this trg year is to support the Regt's deployment on EX's MAJESTIC RAGE and EASTERN FRONT. Entries for the Lanyard and Mountjoy Trophies will be led by our intrepid PSI, **Sgt Leigh 'Griff' Griffiths.**

On a sporting front, two members of the Sqn have embarked on EX DRAGONSLIDE ONE in Austria, organised by 39 (Skinners) Sig Regt (V). Early reports of newfound skiing prowess by **Cpl Claire Burrows** and **Sig Clare Hill** were tempered by a certain amount of apres-ski. Also involved in HQ Sqn ski club were **Capt Geoff Woodcock** and the PSI LAD, **SSgt Paul Gibney**. Both deployed to Germany with 14 Sig Regt on EX WHITE HORSE DRAGON, and a good time was had by all. All in all a good start to the year with numerous exercise weekends and the annual deployment exercise still to come.

44 (CINQUE PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Major Bob Davis**

For those of you who remember that far back, in the last edition of *The WIRE*, we promised to update you on how the Sqn faired on EX SOUTH COAST CRUSADE. The ex commenced with the departure of the advance party, SPSI, **Sgt Price** and **Sgt Bullivant** (guest chef!) to 63 Sig Sqn in Portsmouth. This venue had been chosen because we had to vacate our own TAC's due to OP FRESCO commitments, and the SPSI had planned to conduct a Sea-Survival weekend with the assistance of the Royal Navy. Sadly however, because it was so close to Christmas (and being a weekend) that trg had to be cancelled, and an alternate activity found. Since the accommodation and logistics had been secured, it was decided that the Sqn would use 63 Sig Sqn as a base, but carry out the 'alternate activity' elsewhere. Enter **LCpl Bland**.

After much frantic searching of the Internet, much telephoning and 'waiting for things to arrive in the post', **LCpl Bland** finally managed to book a day's training at 4th Dimension, a team-building and outdoor pursuits centre in East Grinstead, Surrey.

The main party arrived at 4th Dimension early on Saturday morning, and were immediately met by the sight of telegraph poles, ropes, pulleys and safety harnesses…'It's all very safe you know'. The Sqn was split into teams of roughly (very roughly in some cases!) 8 people, and the activities commenced.

In short, the events consisted of climbing to the top of a telegraph pole, standing (in groups of 4!) on a platform no bigger than a tea-tray, hurling yourself into free-space in a vain (and often desperate!) attempt to catch a trapeze, and then sliding down a death-slide attempting to hit a target placed below as you passed above it at roughly 150 Mph! This description, though, does the days training very little justice. The activities were designed to test self-confidence, team spirit and sheer guts and determination – and they did! All those who took part discovered much about themselves and their fellow Sqn members.

A vote of thanks must be given to **LCpl Bland** for organising the day, and to **Maj Baker**, for leading from the front???

After a hectic day, a tired and ashen-faced Sqn retired to Portsmouth, where a festive Christmas Dinner had been prepared by our 'guest Chefs' **Sgt Bullivant, Sgt Sharp**, **Cpl Timmis** and **LCpl Lambert** (courtesy of 'the old boy network' and 7 Air Assault Bn, REME). The Officers and SNCOs served the 'low-life' and **Capt Rowson** entertained the men with a startling (but very funny!) illusion, during which he spontaneously combusted in front of his startled audience. Come on lads, who modified the party popper…**LCpl Robinson**! The evening continued, as expected into the early hours, and a very tired but happy Sqn eventually retired to bed.

After a brisk run/walk/moan on Sunday morning and a game of football 'to shake off the cobwebs', the Sqn left Portsmouth and returned to Essex, surprisingly intact…. with the exception of a small blister on **Capt Rowson's** thumb.

On behalf of the OC and all ranks, a very big thank you to the OC, SSM, RQMS and Caretaker at 63 Sig Sqn for allowing us to use their facilities and for all their assistance given to us during the weekend.

Finally, the 'Hello' and 'Goodbye' bit… Firstly, a fond farewell **Maj Mark Baker**, off to sunnier climates (Corsham). We wish him and his family all the very best for the future, and thank them for their support and contribution to 44 Sig Sqn during the last 3 years. A warm welcome is extended to **Maj Robert Davis**, the incoming Sqn OC, and to **Capt Adrian Marshall**, the new 2IC. All these leaders and nobody to lead? We wish them the very best of luck in their new appointments, and look forward to supporting them in the future.

As this article goes to press, 44 Sig Sqn is preparing for EX COLD SNAP. More on that in the next issue.

45 (ESSEX) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Capt Mark MacKenzie-Bell**
SSM **WO2 Louise Walker**

The Sqn has had a lull in the battle lately. With the cancellation of RSIT, we have now moved on to more eventful tasks. The Sqn party was a success and it was a great time for OC Sqn (departing on promotion) to say farewell to the troops with his deep pockets. All toasted his future health and success. Many old faces appeared to dance the night away.

Congratulations to **Sigs Plant** and **Freebody** on completion of their Recruits course. We welcome back **Cpl Putman** from Bosnia and a very rewarding tour. We also welcome the new OC to the Sqn. His many tasks as OC, 2IC and Ops Officer should keep him busy. We say farewell to **Capt Mike Evans** and **SSgt Thorn** who are going on retirement as well as **Capt Marshal,** who is off to 44 Sig Sqn.

54 (EAST ANGLIA) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Dennis Prince**

EXERCISE CARIBBEAN ENDEAVOUR

Early on the morning of 30 December 02, **SSgt Terry McIntyre** and **Capt Robin Francis** departed Gatwick airport with 11 other intrepid sailors destined for English Harbour, Antigua, to begin a two week Joint Services Expedition. We were to spend the next couple of weeks on *HMSTC Discoverer*, a Challenge 67 yacht from the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre at GOSPORT. With a crew of 14 (Skipper, Mate and three watches of 4) *Discoverer* is one of several such yachts bought by JSASTC to replace vessels from the ageing Nicholson 55 fleet for just this sorts of expedition. At 67 ft and designed to race the wrong way around the world, they are very sturdy and surprisingly roomy boats. Each member of the crew has their own berth (no hotbunking) and the galley is big enough to sit most of the off watches at the same time. All in all, a pretty comfortable deal.

We were met by our skipper at Antigua airport and took a fairly hot taxi ride across the island to English Harbour, where we were to be based for the next few days. The crew comprised a mixture of all three services with an Army Skipper, an RAF Mate, one Naval doctor and a fairly even spread of Army and RAF in the remainder of the crew. We spent the next couple of days undertaking boat familiarisation and safety briefs, before loading up supplies and heading south to Rodney Bay, St Lucia. The first day at sea was pretty rough, a surprise to most, and 9 out of 14 of the crew (including the Mate) spend a good deal of time feeding the fish. 226 miles and 25 hours later we arrived at Rodney Bay Marina, having averaged a respectable 9 knots. Rodney Bay is a popular tourist destination and is surrounded by the usual Caribbean All-inclusive Resorts including the compulsory Sandals. The rest of the day was spent in and around the Marina getting our dhobi done and planning the next day, which we had off. That night we went to a Jump-Up in town, basically a street party that happens every Friday night – all good Caribbean stuff with lots of dodgy food and beer stalls with Reggae blaring out of speakers set up in the middle of the road. **SSgt Terry McIntyre** was unable to keep up the pace and was forced to retire early after supper.

The crew of Ex CARIBBEAN ENDEAVOUR Leg 7 – Antigua. Capt Rob Francis at the wheel and SSgt Terry McIntyre the big bloke standing second from right

The next day was spent in and around Rodney Bay. **Capt Rob Francis** decided to spend the morning scuba diving, whilst the rest of the crew generally based themselves round the beach for a day of relaxation. We slipped anchor at about 20.00 that night and sailed on to Bequia (pronounced *Beck–way*) which is just south of St Martin and part of the Grenadines. The day there was spent touring the island and generally catching up after a long night sailing. What a top island – undoubtedly the most chilled out island in the whole Caribbean – great place! We sailed on south from there to the Tobago Cays. Not to be confused with the small island just north of Trinidad, the Tobago Cays are a group of really small islands in the Grenadines where the water is that turquoise colour in the holiday brochures and palm trees line bright white beaches. Another great place, it is only really accessible to yachts (we were one of 32 that I counted). We anchored off one beach, which we had to ourselves and spent a day snorkelling the unspoilt reefs, which were teaming with sea-life. The islands are served by some very competitive 'beach boys' who tout T-shirts and souvenirs in their dodgy looking boats based out of Union Island 5 miles to the south. They do, however, have a saving grace in that they will, for a fee, put on a beach BBQ for you including their speciality, massive lobsters. Quite an experience was had by all – beach BBQ, lobsters, palm trees and sunsets in the Caribbean – another top place! The next morning we set off on the long sail back to Antigua. Until then, the wind had been kind to us and apart from the occasional strong gust, we'd had consistently good winds (20-30 knots). These continued, but as we sailed in the lee of the islands on the way north, we fell into their wind shadows and found ourselves occasionally having to motor to get through. We did manage to get the spinnaker up for a brief time (quite an experience on a boat that size) and took a dip in the sea (it's an eerie feeling to be swimming in 1km deep water!). 320 miles later we returned to Antigua, this time to Jolly Harbour in the West, sailing into the Marina at 23.00. After that we had some time off before beginning the big clean. Anyone who has sailed on JSASTC

yachts will know what this entails. Big boats take a lot of cleaning.

Although the expedition was in an exotic place and we visited some incredible islands, it should not be mistaken for a holiday. When at sea, the sailing was challenging and tiring. Everything on a 67ft yacht is very similar to a 35ft in shape and location – just a lot bigger. Simple tasks such as reefing and changing sails require the involvement of all of the watch and are were often undertaken on a dark foredeck pitching in a surprisingly large swell – pretty hard graft at times. In all, we sailed nearly 700 miles with 44 night hours. The value of undertaking such expeditions cannot be underestimated and I urge people to bid for places on these trips. Places are available for all skill levels and the benefits of mixing in an all ranks tri-service crew whether it is in the Caribbean or the Baltic are immense. For details of similar such expeditions, check out www.jsastc.org.

THE SILVER ELEPHANT - *by Major Peter Minshall, OC HQ*

I have been asked to comment and explain on the matter concerning the Regtl Officers Mess purchase of a very large Silver Elephant. The story goes back over two years, in fact to the first quarter of 2000, when the Officers Mess agreed that it would be a good idea to purchase a piece of silver to commemorate the Millennium celebrations. After many discussions and more Mess meetings (remember this is a TA Regt, so they were few and far between), we finally agreed on the sum that we should spend on the purchase of this piece of silver.

We then had to agree on what sort of item we should select or even have made. After a few more lively Mess meetings, we still had not agreed the theme or on an item that we should purchase. Easy, you would think but, oh no, it was not. I have never seen such animation in the Mess as this subject brought out in people. As usual, too many people had their own ideas on what we should purchase, but after many discussions it was finally agreed that a few of us should go to the silver vaults in London to get some ideas. The only problem was that by now, we were into the second half of 2001. We then had to agree who would go and when. Eventually it was agreed that the CO, **Lt Col William Brown**, the then 2IC, **Major Dave Watson** and I would go to the silver vaults and choose a piece. After a couple of hours we were beginning to think that the trip was going to be a waste of time. We had found nothing that we thought was appropriate or eye catching until, at the last moment on the way out, we saw this rather large and expensive figure of a Silver Elephant. He was, we were told, an African Elephant and in a charging stance.

We agreed that this should be considered as a possible choice. **Col William** thought maybe we should investigate having a piece made, and we looked into that. Eventually, because the amount of time that it had taken so far (by now it was almost 22 months) it was decided to go for the Elephant. We were able to purchase the Elephant locally and at a much lower price than we had seen. Eventually, in October 2002, we took delivery of the magnificent piece.

The plinth has solid silver plaques on all sides. The front has the Regtl title and a Jimmy engraved upon it. However, it is now not in celebration of the Millennium, but to commemorate the Royal Visit of our Colonel-in-Chief, **The Princess Royal**. The rear plaque has the cap badges of all the different Corps that make up our Regt and the two end plaques show the shields of the four different Sqns that form the Regt.

Maj Peter Minshall hands over the elephant to the Regimental 2IC, Maj Paul Fredericks

Now a lot of people have asked 'Why an Elephant?' We had to think long and hard on this one. I felt that maybe we should hold another Mess meeting to come up with the answers but three reasons came readily to mind:

1. The time it took to decide on the amount to be spent, what to choose, and eventually to receive the piece was about equal to the time an elephant takes to give birth - 22 months we are told.

2. Our main role is to provide TRUNK Communication.

3. Last but not least, they say an elephant never forgets.

I, for one, will never forget the endless Mess meetings, some of which were very lively, and certainly gave me a better perspective on some of my fellow officers. The Elephant was used for the first time at a Ladies Dinner night held in the RA Officers' Mess at Woolwich. He certainly stood out amongst all the other fine pieces on display that night.

ARMY

37 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col R G Mather**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) A Keen**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Riley**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) P Hall**

In December the Sqn said farewell to the REME PSI, **SSgt** 'Scotty' **Clay**, who leaves us on posting to HQ 8 Tpt Regt RLC. On his last drill night with the Sqn, **SSgt Clay** took part in the 'Turkey Shoot' annual shooting competition - and strangely enough, he won the prize of a frozen Christmas turkey, which was presented by **Maj John Riley**, OC HQ Sqn. **SSgt Clay** wanted to know if this was his farewell present and did he need to get it engraved. We later said farewell in the Sgts Mess Bar, where he received a presentation from the Sqn. We would like to thank him for his humour and commitment during his time with the Sqn and wish him well in his next post.

Maj John Riley, OC HQ Sqn (left) presents SSgt Clay with his prize of a frozen turkey

EXERCISE SANTA'S GROTTO

Over the weekend of 14 December 2002, **Capt Dave Senter**, OC LAD, organised an ex on Bramcote Trg Area, which involved a variety of leadership and command tasks, and in keeping with the time of year, these all had a festive theme. The aim of the tasks was to enhance team-building and motivation skills. One particular stand organised by **Sgt Glen Draper**, also required a degree of physical stamina as it involved individuals being strapped into a harness which was then attached to an elastic rope. The aim was to deposit a parcel as far as possible from the start line - easier said than done. Part of the Safety brief was to keep low and not to stand up when the rope had reached a certain limit. However **Sig Swinnerton** didn't seem to understand why, but soon got the answer when he decide to stand up and was then seen flying through the air. To great applause, he was awarded extra points for artistic flair. **LCpl Lora Facey** then attempted the challenge, and after much encouragement reached a respectable distance but was heard to ask why didn't we just send the parcel by post! **Cpl Steve Martin** (a PTI) then attempted the challenge but was most embarrassed when he failed to reach the distance marker achieved by the OC Sqn. **Cpl Martin** said he lost his grip when he had to take his comb out because his hair was out of place.

LCpl Lora Facey puts in a good effort under the watchful eye of Sgt Glen Draper whilst Cpl Lee Carroll) offers encouragement

53 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj A Giles**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) N Neill**

ROUND THE BEND

'This weekend has been organised by the two Officer Cadets. If you have any questions see them.' SSM exits. A nervous silence fills the drill hall. 'Right.... Err... Exercise begins.'

With the level of enthusiasm expected by a group of people not in the pub at 8pm on a Friday night, driver training began. Nervous Offrs and SNCOs cringed as the junior ranks carried out tactical night marshalling of Land Rovers a little too close to comfort to their shiny cars, remembering all too late that 'all vehicles are left at owners risk'. But the palpitations of the on-lookers were soon eased by the skills of the drivers and marshals. With the waggle of red torch light and the occasional over revved engine, the remainder of the evening continued without incident. Our thanks to the panel beaters next door. He still hasn't noticed. Then to the bar for inter-team challenges and a pub quiz, for which all of the questions seem to have come from 1999 only! After much wrestling with brainteasers the CO's team emerged triumphant. No surprises there then!

As the sun rose over Cardiff's rooftops, people in green with sore heads had been up for what felt like hours. The driver training continued along side the basic sig skills, designed more to test the instructors than to teach the students. **LCpl Stuart Gayther** addressed his audience with a zeal and fervour that only a man of his calibre can when talking about the finer points of petrol generators.

Sunday morning was greeted with a number of sick notes from Matron for the senior ranks in order to avoid the PT. The remaining Ron Hill-clad members of the Sqn left the confines of the TAC and ventured out into Cardiff. All except **Capt Mick Turnbull**, who sadly zigged when he should have zagged, and has not been seen since. As we ran through the light drizzle, wondering where the 2IC was, the dazzling level of personal fitness shone through as we keeled over at the end. All was soon forgotten as breakfast was served and the recently burned calories were replenished. Post RSIT maintenance was then the order of the day. However, due to the prior application of bulging brown envelopes, there wasn't much in the way of maintenance to do. All that was left to say was a thanks from the OCdts for making their exercise at least look like it worked as planned. Then the mass exodus ensued as 30 cars tried to leave the TAC at once.

RALLYING THE TROOPS IN 53

A perfect sport for the TA. Skills such as map reading, time keeping, scrounging, logistics and constant shifting of heavy objects are all tested, often over long days and nights in all conditions. Although two people get all the glory, the sport is a real team effort. The crew is essential to the outcome, and trust is vital when the communications between car and crew are limited. Ingenuity is often the key to completing a test, while the constant supply of coffee and bacon butties is essential and has been noted as a contributory factor to success on many events.

The rally team is made up of current and old members of the TA, along with a couple of civil servants and a Navy officer part-timing. We currently run two cars, a Rover 216 that has been used for a few years and the all-new Alfa Romeo 33 to take us up A level. The glamorous job of driving goes to **Dave Barbara** (53 Sig Sqn) and **Duncan Cox** (ex RA) and vital co-driving is left to **Steve Champion** (RMCS). Behind us is a group of all-weather stalwart mechanics including the hairy twins, **Gareth** (RN) and **John** (Supercat), **Dave John** (53 Sig Sqn), **Nicki Woolmore** (RMCS) and (when the weather's better) ex RAF tech **Nick Carter** (now 53 Sig Sqn).

The all-new Alfa Romeo 33

Recent events include the Oxford Bullnose, Smeatharpe Stages, and Carpet Bagger Rally, where results have varied from second in Class to DNF (did not finish). Our next outing will be at Caerwent – an old ammunition storage facility often used by the TA – which should give us an advantage.

Most recently, a test day in South Wales (where the real difficulty was lighting the burner to cook the bacon) was attended by OCdts **Dave Barbara** and **Dave John** with a positive outcome. Early planned tests, with differing compound tyres, degenerated into a tyre-squealing exercise on poor quality road variants, when it was discovered that sliding the car through corners was more interesting than just going quickly. Technically named 'hanging it out', there is no real advantage in this method – its just more fun. That's what it's all about.

How does the TA fit in with rallying? As Tony Mason once said, 'Rallying is like war. If you don't have enough money, you lose.'

93 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj Marcus Cosgrove**
SSM **WO2 Heather Kenny**

Snowboarding **SSgt Cindy Meller** has recently returned from the RSigs Championships in Zell Am Zee, Austria, after winning the female championship for the second year running. What makes the achievement even more impressive is that her training consisted of just a fortnight's holiday and five days' practice before the competition itself. **Cindy** obviously enjoyed the increased size of the female field, saying 'I won the event last year but this time around it was so much better because I was competing against a lot more female snow boarders'. But she has no plans to go professional just yet, because she started snowboarding only four years ago during adventure training with the TA. And, as if this was not enough success, her promotion to SSgt came through during the competition. **Cindy** is already looking forward to making it a hat trick when she returns next year, provided that she does not train too hard.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj PH Fowler-Smith**
SSM **WO2(SSM) JR Krikorian**

EXERCISE COLD COMFORT

96 Sig Sqn (V) ended the year with its annual trip to the seaside for EX COLD COMFORT, which included an interesting but strenuous Orienteering exercise in the Weymouth area. The normal annual Sqn Dinner was set up and served by the Offrs and SNCOs to a very appreciative audience of JNCOs and Soldiers. This was followed by a variety of mess games, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The following morning was rude awakening time when we saw an early start with a 30-minute PT session on the beach, followed by a run along the sand, then a further 30 minutes of football. A very successful weekend, which was well attended and an enjoyable close to the 2002 exercise calendar.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V) OFFICERS MESS ENTERTAIN THE LORD MAYOR

The Offrs Mess held its inaugural dinner on Thursday 19 December in very pleasant surroundings in the Mercers' Room, St Mary's Guildhall. The venue was part of the Gatehouse to the City of Coventry during the 14th Century, later used as the Mercers' Meeting Room, as a residence, a courtroom and as a chapel.

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress were the principal guests, and everyone enjoyed good food, good wine and good company. After the dinner The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress gave a guided tour of the City Council Chambers, providing an extremely interesting insight to the history of the City of Coventry.

WO2 (SSM) KRIKORIAN JOINS THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

The South Atlantic Medal Association 1982 (SAMA82) was formed in 1997 by **Surg Cdr Rick Jolly OBE** (Ex RN) and **Denzil Connick** (Ex 3 Para), primarily to look after the welfare of all those personnel who were awarded the South Atlantic Medal. The Association now has a membership of 2000. To mark the 20th Anniversary, it was decided by **Rick** and **Denzil**, to lead a pilgrimage for approximately 215 members during the period of Remembrance Sunday 2002.

After 15 months of planning, the Pilgrimage finally became a reality at 1100hrs Wednesday, 6 November, when an Air 2000 757 departed from London Gatwick for the long haul south, via Banjul (Gambia) and Rio de Janiero (Brazil). We had been given a VIP send-off by **Baroness Margaret Thatcher**, **Sir Rex Hunt** (Governor 1982), **Maj Gen Julian Thompson CB OBE** (Comd OP CORPORATE), **Jim Davidson**, (who had raised a large amount of funds) and members of Falkland House, London.

At 0430hrs local the following day the weary Pilgrims arrived at Mount Pleasant Airport (MPA) and were welcomed personally by Comd BFFI. A hearty breakfast was provided in the Offrs Mess before the 90-minute coach journey to the Falkland Island Defence Force HQ in Port Stanley, where we were welcomed by the Governor, **Donald Lamont** and other FI Councillors. This was followed by an introduction to our hosts who, after an appeal to 'Give a Vet a Bed' had provided accommodation for the pilgrims in their homes. My hosts were a lovely couple, **Adam** and **Jenny Cockwell** (of Davis Street) and their crazy border collie, **Luca**. After a welcoming shower and change it was time to chill out for the remainder of the morning. During the afternoon, **Adam** and **Jenny** gave me a tour of Stanley, and I was amazed at the improvements, new constructions and the size of the town compared with the dark days of 1982.

The programme commenced on Friday with a visit to Bluff Cove, Fitzroy and a service at San Carlos British Military Cemetery. This was attended by the Governor and Comd BFFI. An excellent lunch was provided by the residents of the settlement and we returned to Stanley via Port San Carlos and Estancia House - this being the approximate route of the tab by 3 Para.

At 1000 on Sunday we paraded at the 1982 War Memorial in Stanley, along with the usual VIP's. But also in attendance was **HRH Prince Andrew** (a fellow veteran). It was a very moving ceremony to our fallen comrades, and I paid special homage to the 19 members of SAS (18 of whom perished on the Sea King) and the 4 RSigs JNCO's of my tp (G Tp): **Cpl Rab Burns**, **LCpl Paul Lightfoot**, **Cpl Mick McHugh** and **Cpl Steve Sykes**. I laid a personal wreath, and also a wreath from OC and all Ranks of 96 Sig Sqn (V).

The afternoon was spent touring the battlefields of Mount Longdon and Tumbledown, where many personal accounts of heroic actions and fierce fighting to take the features were recalled by the fellow SAMA members.

On Sunday morning, following an alcoholic haze from a party at the FIDF the previous evening, we assembled at the Cathedral for the main Remembrance Service, again with **HRH Prince Andrew**. This was followed by a march to the Cenotaph where the Service of Remembrance and laying of British Legion wreaths took place. The Pilgrims then made their way to the 1982 Memorial Wood, where in 1992 a total of 255 trees (one for each of the fallen) were planted, each bearing a name of a person who died during OP CORPORATE. Here we had time to reflect and remember, and the opportunity to lay small wooden crosses.

Another FIDF reception followed and later that afternoon my excellent hosts showed me the penguins at Gypsy Cove and we returned for a quiet evening.

With only 2 days of the pilgrimage to go, I was very fortunate to be allocated a seat aboard a FIGAS Islander aircraft to view the outstanding wildlife reserve of Sealion Island (40 mins flying south of Stanley). After laying wreaths at the memorial to those who died on *HMS Sheffield*, we were given a guided tour of the Island, with lots of opportunities to photograph the vast numbers of birds, penguins and seals.

The last day was spent in Port Stanley relaxing, purchasing last-minute souvenirs and taking refreshment in *The Globe*. A farewell reception was held at the Governor's residence that evening.

Wednesday morning saw all of us at the FIDF HQ, where farewell speeches were given and we had an opportunity to say goodbye to the wonderful Falkland Islanders we had met. Their warmth, generosity and affection for each and every one of us will always be remembered. Although tinged with sadness, I personally found the visit very rewarding, and it gave me time to remember the comrades who did not return with us in 1982. It gave the opportunity to see the quality of life of the Islands, and to confirm that the lives lost were not in vain. It also gave the Islanders the opportunity, after 20 years, to express their gratitude to us for liberating them. I hope, one day, that I will return.

LCPL MULLINS JOINS ITDU IN CANADA FOR THE LMG TRIAL

You may not be aware that currently trials are being held on the H&K MG43 and FN Minimi for the role of Light Machine Gun (LMG). The most recent trial took place in January, where **LCpl Rob Mullins** joined ITDU at Valdercote Garrison, about 40mins drive from Quebec. This location was chosen due to its extremely cold weather conditions. **LCpl Mullins** tells his story:

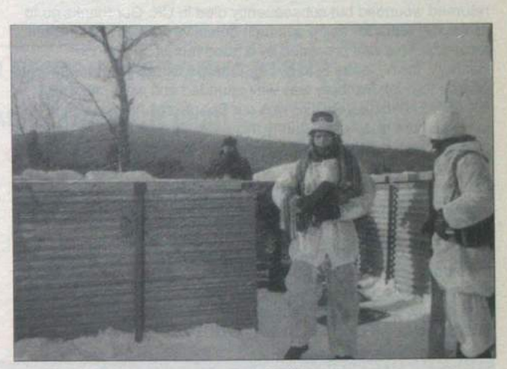
The trial was split into three parts, weapon training, reliability assessment and user issues. After initial training, the teams were given 5 H&K MGs and 5 FN Minimis. Each weapon fired in excess of 13,000 rounds from a variety of firing positions. The firing regime not only tested the weapons but the team themselves, who had to endure long days in temperatures of -35° C.

The weapons were tested in operationally realistic conditions including skiing, skijoving, snowmobiles and helicopters. I can't help but think that some of these trials could have made great TV comedy. The section attack saw us wearing snowshoes the size of coffee tables trying to climb uphill and being buried in snow by the downdraft of a Canadian Army Helicopter that hovered 10 feet above us for 10 minutes. Another test was when we were trying to stay on our skis while in a chain of 5 and being pulled along by a snowmobile. It's safe to say that we spent more time face down in the snow or bushes than we did on our feet. During the tests the wind-chill experienced by the weapons and the firers reached an uncomfortable -90° C.

The last element of the trial included a separate assessment of the new SA80 Carbine (its suggested role is a personal weapon for RAC crews) and the 40mm under-slung Grenade Launcher (fitted to an SA80). Both weapons proved themselves to be surprisingly accurate. The Carbine is at present fitted with SUSAT, which seems excessive for a weapon with a 3-inch barrel. But this will most likely have a red dot sight when brought into service. As for the UGL, in the hands of an experienced firer, it is possible to engage a very small target at 250m.

It is thought that a profile of the infantry section of the future may consist of 2 x LMGs, 2 x UGLs, 2 x LSWs and SA80 for Section IC, thereby dramatically increasing the firepower.

In total 200,000 rounds and 750 x 40mm grenades were fired during the trial. I would like to thank those involved in letting me be a part of the trial and the 'Vikings' of 1 Royal Anglian for helping to make it one memorable task.



LCpl Rob Mullins

39 (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col P R Towers**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) F E Roberts**

November saw the Regt deploy on its inaugural Regtl Development Trg Weekend. This long-awaited weekend was well attended, and saw the soldiers and JNCOs, SNCOs and Officers and WOs split into groups for continuation training. To mark this auspicious occasion, the Senior Volunteer Warrant Officer (**WO1 Ray Phillips**) had been tasked to organise an appropriate all ranks function for the Saturday night. He did so with style and imagination. Themed as cowboys and Indians, everyone was invited to make some form of effort for fancy dress, and most did...this was complimented by a hired bucking bronco and some disco groovy tunes.

As a means to improve bonding across the ranks and institutions within the Regt, it is traditional for a Permanent Staff Christmas Dinner to be attended by all regular, non-regular and civilian staff. This year it was successfully organised by two of our civilian staff, **Jo Hunt** and **Kim Church**. The catering was done 'in house' by **SSgt Jarvis Cleaver** and **LCpl Anderson**; a superb meal being provided and all leaving the table with bursting bellies! Following the meal, some imaginative and entertaining party games were attempted by all.

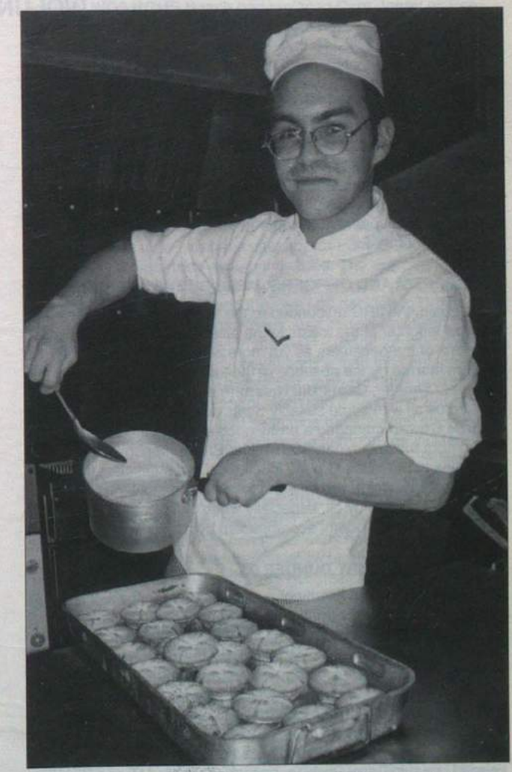
Finally, January, the Regt was told that its long awaited TA Centre re-build project (10 years overdue) was likely to be delayed because RFCA had been unable to locate a suitable site.

5 (QUEENS OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Rich Belbin**
SSM **WO2 Robbie Hall**

Firstly a warm welcome to **Capt Dai Jones** who rejoins us from 31 Sig Regt (V). It's great to have you back as our NCRS guru and we are sure you won't miss the nightmare of the Southbound M40 into London on a Tuesday night! Well done also to **LCpl Steve Bennett** for the award of the SPSIs trophy for best performance this year.

Four of our potential officers, **LCpl Rob Fuller**, **Sig Matt Jones**, **Sig Jeremy Siatter** and **OCdt Mike Curtis-Rouse** have all passed their MTQ2 exam at Sennybridge. Congratulations to you



Eager for glory, LCpl Anderson shows off his mince pies and creamy custard sauce

all. Now Sandhurst beckons and hopefully soon some squeaky clean officer's pips! Our thanks go to Oxford University OTC for their support.

Remembrance Weekend saw several members of the Sqn, led by **Sgt Mark Taylor**, visit and pay their respects at a number of WW1 QOOH graves in the local area. These are of QOOH soldiers who returned wounded but subsequently died in UK. Our thanks go to caretaker, **Mark** for doing so much detective work to identify their locations. This was preceded by a good recruiting effort in Banbury Town Centre lead by **Sgt Sharon Scutt**. On Sunday the parade through Banbury was well attended and went smoothly! EX ARMENTIERES RIDGE was our Bounty catch up weekend that saw yet more qualify for Bounty this year. Otmoor Ranges were cold and wet, but thanks go to the SPSIs for organising a good training weekend. We finished with a huge Christmas Dinner, provided **by SSgt J-C**, served to the soldiers by the Officers and Seniors. Thanks **J-C**! Even **Sgt Shields** had difficulty eating any more!

Despite the potential disruption with our support of OP FRESCO, the latter part of 2002 has been good for the Sqn. The year ended with a very successful Christmas party and a guest appearance from our most flamboyant recruit, **Alvin Printwhistle**, AKA Elvis. Thanks go to the Churchill Club committee for all their hard work in getting the event off the ground, especially to **SSgt Chris Minchella**, **Sgt Dave Randall** and **Cpl Claire Goodwin**.

5 (QOOH) Sig Sqn (V) stepping out in style In Banbury Town Centre for the Remembrance Parade

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj ML Drake**
SSM **WO2 L Thornton Granville**

Yet again, the Sqn has leapt into the New Year. In only two months, we've sent some able bodied souls on a harsh and demanding Adventure Training Exercise skiing in France, managed to turn the Junior Ranks Club into a Ye Olde Cottage for our Burns Supper, and got everyone out into the cold for a delightful Comms Ex.

SERGEANTS' AND OFFICERS' MESS BURNS SUPPER

Once again, the JRC resounded to the sounds of **Rabbie Burns**, hoots of laughter at the toasts to the lassies and the laddies, and the chink of the decanters as yet more whisky was poured. Though marred by the absence of the 2IC and his usual rendition of *Tam O'Shanter*, **Capts Bill Naismith** and **Bob Davidson** regaled us all with some suitably Scots poems, while **SSgt George Cowan** managed a pretty good effort on the bagpipes stolen from the duty piper. **SSgt Willie Smith** managed to sum up the ladies of the mess to a tee in his *Ode to the Lassies*, while **SSgt Cowan's** mum was on hand to make the reply. All in all, a good time was had by all, especially when **Sgt Jimmy Fox** decided to sing his poem, accompanied by a few jigs!

EXERCISE MERCURY DUNDEE 03

The week after all the hilarity of our Burns Supper, it was time to get out into the field for the first of the years comms ex's. With snow still lying on the ground on Drill Night, the idea of a cold weather contingency plan was raised, but was quickly struck down by the Ops Offr as being 'soft'. Fortunately, by the weekend, the weather had improved somewhat, and the dets set off for such far flung, exotic locations as Elgin, Aberdeen and Barry Buddon. A mere couple of hours later the first fun of the weekend began when Det 1 managed to get their Bedford bogged down in Barry Buddon, ensuring that the MT and REME support elements had a valuable and full trg weekend working to heave it out the mud. Aside from that, the exercise went off without a hitch, with certain EDs (**LCpl Gary Bertie**) refusing to relinquish their grip on the handsets, never being off the net, while OC Comms Tp managed to commit a few *faux pas* over the airwaves, resulting in an expensive round back at the TAC on Sunday afternoon, much to the delight of the rest of the bar. Can't beat it!

EXERCISE PIPEDOWN

EX PIPEDOWN was 2 (CofD) Sig Sqn's skiing exercise and took place in Les Contamines in the French Alps over the period 10-19 January 03. The party consisted of 8 Sqn members. 3 had never skied before, 4 were intermediates and the eighth was the instructor, **Cpl MacIntosh**, whose patience and teaching skills would be pushed to the limit over the 7 days. The 24 hour journey in a minibus filled to the roof with hired ski equipment was the not the most comfortable method of travel, but this did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of the group. What did test it though was the cross channel ferry from Dover to Calais. **Sig Howard** topped off his car-sickness with a bout of sea-sickness and by the end of the journey his face had been through the full spectrum of colour changes. Once bedded down in our beautiful accommodation, it was time to get down to the serious business on the piste. The beginners toddled off to the nursery slopes, while the so-called intermediates took the cable car to the top of the beautiful Montjoie, only to discover that for some of them, it had been a very long time since they had skied, and maybe a gentler slope was required. This only came to light after some very big wipe-outs. By the middle of the week, all the group were nursing sore legs and a few sore heads, due to the hospitality of the local village hostelries. Beginners had all removed their L-plates and had moved up to the blue runs. That is, all except **Cpl Jane Carmichael**, who had been unfortunate to be on the receiving end of a very bad blow to the head from another novice skier who lost control and crashed into her and **Cpl Rod Hamilton**, whose skies were stolen from the outside the hilltop cafe. Quite why anybody would want to steal an old pair of skis hired from RM Condor is beyond me. After 7 days constant skiing and enjoying the nightlife, all members of the party were ready to go home. The only bad point being the thought of the full day's journey in a mini bus that now contained a sizeable chunk of a Calais hypermarket's stock, as well as ski equipment and souvenirs. The aims of the exercise had been fulfilled, and everyone had either learned to ski competently or pushed themselves to the limit on a challenging black run. Or in **W02 (YofS) Darren Goodenough** and **Sgt Billy Morris**' case, after some bravado and peer group pressure, pushed themselves just a little bit too far and were lucky to come out alive. The whole thing went so well that the Sqn is now going to enter a team into the Scottish skiing championships, and will have trouble picking the team from such a strong band of contenders.

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Major Alan Blackwell**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A C E Burdge**

Since the last edition of *The WIRE* the Sqn has enjoyed the run up to Christmas with various events laid on for the families and soldiers. Among these were Children's parties, the Sqn Christmas function and the Offrs and SNCOs versus ORs rugby match – final score 43-5 to the Officers and SNCOs!

The start of 2003 has brought with it an AV Driver and Commanders' course and range days that have included pistol shoots, zeroing our SA80 A2s and firing GPMGs. The Sqn Cpls' Mess has been started again and an inaugural dinner night was held on 17 January. The OC and QM had the privilege to be the guests of honour.

At the end of January the Sqn deployed on EX FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET IV around Sennelager Training Area in order to refresh the Sqn in the high levels of performance we achieved last year. It was an excellent opportunity to introduce new members of the Sqn – notably **Capt Ben Davenport**, the new Ops Officer – to the high standards we continue to produce.

EIGHT MONTHS IN THE SENIOR SIGNAL SQUADRON - *by Sig Christie*

Eight months ago I arrived here at 'The Senior Signal Squadron' fresh-faced, full of enthusiasm and eager to learn, and it wasn't long before I was back in the classroom on my AV Comds course learning how to be an 'armoured warrior'. **Cpl** 'Tris' **Dunbar** and **LCpl Lee Armitage** infused us with their knowledge and experience. The course included theory, maintenance, command experience and an excellent track bash in the middle of a lake.

Maj Blackwell presenting Sig Williams with the Best Soldier Award

The Sqn has also completed a whole range of training exercises, EX FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET IV, which brought the new lads up to speed. The last of these exercises was conducted in Hohne, and by the end of it, having moved around it so much, every member of the Sqn knew the training area like the back of their hand. The Sqn is now much faster and more fluent when it comes to setting up a Bde HQ in the field. October saw the Sqn on a week-long Battlecamp in what felt like sub-zero temperatures (thank God we didn't have our sleeping bags!). Some of the week was excellent, including night movement and the lessons on patrolling. Prizes were awarded at the end for Best Section, which went to **Cpl** 'Titch' **Meakin's** section and **Sig** 'Sloth' **Williams** picked up the trophy for Best Soldier. All in all it has been a busy few months.

EX FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET IV - AN ECHELON PERSPECTIVE - *by Cpl Gaz Harris*

The move up to Hohne went to plan and all vehicles and personnel arrived in one piece. The Sqn spent its first night in a concentration area, where we met up with **Cpl Roy Lister** who had been collecting a 1fl tonne Trailer from Celle. (Well we can't help it if there are four trailers planned for the exercise but the unit only holds three).

The next morning we deployed out to our first location as Echelon. **WO2 RQMS Beech** had replaced **Capt Jones** as Ech Comd, as the QM had to undergo an operation on his damaged hand. All was well until the day the Staff were due to arrive and it was noticed that there was no tents for them to sleep in. Morale was not affected and we managed as best we could under the circumstances. The next task was to do a rolling replen for Step Up and Main. This term rolling replen was used loosely as the QM's Dept were issuing all the A2 weapons that had been collected from Dulman the day before.

We actually stayed in one place for eight hours, but it was not long before Echelon had to overcome its next problem. The RSM had to return to Sennelager and **WO2 RQMS Beech** was to go to Main to replace him. This left a vacancy for Echelon Commander, which Big Chief **Scotney** quite rightly filled. The exercise progressed and the rolling replens were starting to get better. This was short lived as the OC and the Ops Offr decided to kidnap **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Harris** as he challenged them. This however pleased **Cpl Harris**, as he was now taken to the Main location for interrogation over steak and chips, a much better choice than the container meal he was due to have. This left **Sgt John Hoskins** with a dilemma. Had his roaming patrol fallen into a ditch and was he injured? After a short period of searching the area and checking the vehicle cabs, the decision was made to report the incident to Main and ask to withdraw into their location. The decision was denied (the term friendly forces was used quite loosely) and the replen was then crashed out to their ERV. This pleased most of the lads because they had been sat there for 14 hours. The replen team finally made it back to Ech in the early hours of the morning where **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Harris** was tucked up nicely in his sleeping bag. The Moral of this story is 'stay alert, get steak and chips and an early night!'

A REME CRAFTSMAN IN SUPPORT OF AN ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS IN THE FIELD - *by Cfn Hooper*

A day in the life of Tp can be quite interesting. It can go from a lazy day wondering where the next job is coming from, to rear idlers falling off and pack lifts. All this and the impending moves that take place every day or so makes sure life is never dull. There are usually ten 430 series variants to look after in a Bde HQ Main, which reduces when the Tp becomes Step Up. A few soft skinned vehicles also require the attention of the two man REME support team.

When the call comes from the Tp Cdr it is once again time to tear down and move location. This is quite a complicated task with all ranks mucking in. It is the responsibility of diamond three, (the support elements) to tear down the cookhouse tentage and also the tentage used in the complex. Only then can we even think about de-caming the 434.

The Land Rovers and Bedfords move first, closely followed by the Armour. When we arrive into the next location it is essentially the opposite of the tear down, until the time when the Sigs have communications and are ready to receive the Bde Staff. Only then can we think about food and another night of peaceful sleep. Oh! Did I forget to mention the guards!

VISIT TO 1 LIGHT INFANTRY'S WARRIOR LIVE FIRING RANGE *- by Sgt Little*

Whilst on EX FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET IV in Hohne, it was decided to give the tps a little break. As 1 LI were just down the road running through their live firing tests on their Warriors, we went, with **Lt Hannah Stoy** to pay them a visit. We were first introduced to the Warrior itself, getting a walk through the various armaments that it carried - the 7.62mm chain gun and 30mm rarden cannon. Then we were shown how the crew work together to locate and hit the target. Noting the lack of space, we were also shown the troop loading compartment in the rear

After everyone had seen over the vehicle it was time to see it in action. The marshal set the Warrior team off and it flew into action destroying various bunkers and targets around the range area with a good show of tracer rounds to go with it.

The trip finished off with a burger and drink from the snack tent. This went down well before we were brought back to reality and sent back out in our own 43s to carry on the exercise.

ROYAL SIGNALS JUNIOR COMMANDERS COURSE *- by Cpl Cowley*

Returning to Blandford for another course is not unusual for most of us, but the RSJCC is different from the majority of courses held there. It's best to go on this with the attitude to pass first time as it's not exactly the course you want to do twice!!

The course is four weeks long with 10 days in Sennybridge thrown in for free. Each week has its own theme, ranging from leadership to the final week of the field exercise.

As you might expect for a career course like this, it's demanding both physically and mentally. All PT sessions are part of the Section Competition, so personal and section pride is at stake here. Although PT seems to get progressively harder, the biggest hurdle for a minority of people is the CFT held on Day 1. If you don't meet this basic standard, you don't start the course.

The most enjoyable week for me was the live field-firing package during Week 3 at Sennybridge. Again, like most things on this course, it is done in sections and you begin to trust your section. It also helps for the final week of the exercise, where all you have been taught during the previous 3 weeks comes together. Again, as you would expect, this was hard but enjoyable (at times), especially when it rained only once during the whole time!

The final week comes soon enough, and after Farm 3, Sennybridge, those portacabins on Blandford Square seem like paradise. The finale of the week is the end of course dinner night in the Corps WOs' & Sgts' Mess, where the presentations for Top Section and Top Student are given. You are also treated to an informal introduction into the mess, with all the usual goings on that you might expect!!

On the whole I enjoyed the course and gave it my best, because I believe this course is worthwhile and should be treated with respect. If the future plans to see it changed again go ahead, people will surely miss this beneficial experience.

EXERCISE FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET IV 11 – 22 NOVEMBER 2002 *- by Sig Sweeney*

We departed Talbot Barracks, Sennelager en route for Hohne training area on the freezing morning of 11 November 02. I had been tasked with driving the cooks' truck for Bravo Tp and was also responsible for the laying of line at Bravo Tp's locations.

The exercise started rather slowly (which is never a bad thing) but on the second day it was move, move, move, set up tear down, set up tear down, which always goes down well with the lads! In our location we had one ED, **Sig Glynn Pearson** and one Lineman which made the work rate for the two of us pretty hard going. Thankfully we had no big dramas. The OC had set a time limit of 45 mins in which all comms would be in and the complex would be ready to receive staff officers. However the first move took quite a bit longer than this because many of the operators had just come from Blandford and this was their first ex. But after a couple of moves and a bit of motivation we were reaching the 45-minute target.

The first week of the ex seemed to go pretty well and flew by. But the second week felt like a year, the favourite word of the week being GAS! GAS! GAS! The first time it was called, it was a blow to morale, as everyone was in the breakfast queue. At the same time, it was a blessing in disguise because it kept us just that little bit warmer during the day and night. All in all EX FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET IV was an exercise where every member of the Sqn learned something relating to his or her job. My lesson being 'never lay a phone to the chefs because they never turned it off LB and they went through all my batteries like the Sqn bar goes through vodka!'

FOOTBALL UPDATE *- by Sig Huxter*

Since joining the Sqn in July, I have realised that there are plenty of opportunities to play sport, so I quickly started going to football practice run by **Sgt Al Lee** and **Sig Donnie McGregor**. The team was started in October 2002 and usually has two training sessions a week. These follow a set pattern, in which **Sig McGregor** takes a warm up for around fifteen minutes followed a few technical exercises on control, passing, shooting, movement and set pieces and ending each session with a game. **Sig McGregor** also has help from older members of the team, such as **Cpl Martin Campion**, **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Millings** and **Cpl** 'Titch' **Meakin**, who help to encourage the younger members.

The team's first match was played at Barker Barracks against 3 Bn REME, and ended in an entertaining 3-3 draw. The next match was against 207 Sig Sqn in the Quarter-final of the Signals Cup. The match was played in Hohne and the Sqn won 3-2 with **Sig** 'Gabbs' **Gabbidon** getting 'man of the match' and also becoming kitman!

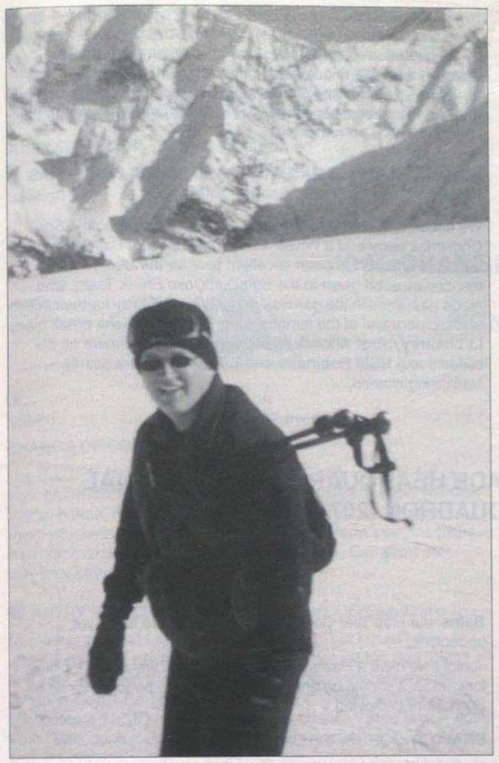
The last match we played was against 280 Sig Sqn in Elmpt, and gave us an easy 3-1 win. Admittedly 280 Sig Sqn assisted us by scoring two own goals. The future for the football team looks good.

EXERCISE J'AIME CHAUFFEUR *- by Cpl Porter*

After nearly three weeks' Christmas leave, we were looking forward to settling back down to everyday life in the unit. Fortunately for 10 members of the Sqn, out of the blue, we were given an opportunity to spend our second week back skiing in the French Alps in the resort of Les Contamines.

Led by **2Lt Jack Sharples** and **SSgt Tom Gibbins**, we had only 2 days notice of our departure, but thanks to help from the MT's **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Harris** and **LCpl** 'Charlie' **Brown** we achieved it, even if the transport proved to be somewhat unreliable. For the majority of the team, the main administration points were to blagg as much ski equipment from anywhere they could to make the trip as cheap as possible. Departing Sennelager, we collected **2Lt Sharples** from one of his favourite night-time haunts and arrived 12 hours later in Les Contamines.

Since we had varying levels of ability, the plan was to meet up on one of our final days and play follow my leader around the slopes. So the onus on non-skiers was to learn as fast as possible, either by taking lessons or kamikaze-ing it down the slopes. Whatever their level of experience was, throughout the week everyone spent some time sitting on the snow, some obviously a lot more than others. The most notable improvement came from **Sig** 'Dicko' **Dickinson**, who without lessons and after walking down several slopes on his first day in despair, was able, with absolute confidence, to ski on any red or blue slope – and, most importantly, to look the part.



Sig Brookes on the slopes

Sig Kev Beavis was definitely one of the biggest characters during the week, showing great ability to speak his native Geordie in a broken French accent. However his late night cooking skills didn't prove anywhere near so successful!

After a week of fresh mountain air, lots of skiing, some very sociable drinking, and in certain cases copious eating, I would like to say that we were all tired and wanted to come back to work. But this was not the case. Given the choice, we would still be there now! Our thanks go to **Sig Raku-Evans** for bringing back some very interesting souvenirs to remind us of our second week of 2003.

GOODBYE 200 SIGNAL SQUADRON *- by LCpl Walker*

Having had an extremely fun time at 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (200), I am now about to say goodbye and head to my new posting in Afnorth, Holland. One of the best memories of my time with the Sqn was playing rugby all over the world. This all started with a trip to York for seven days where we beat Pocklington, but had to settle for only winning the third half against 2 Sig Regt.

Our next time on the field took us to Holland in the Afnorth 10's (a good chance for me to recce my new posting!). We went in to this tournament to have a good time, a few beers and try to get through to the semi-finals of the Plate competition. After some fantastic rugby and plenty of alcohol related pain prevention, by some miracle we made it through to the final of the Cup! Unfortunately it was against the BA(G) Rugby squad, and even with the crowd firmly behind us we lost.

On return from our winter tour of Kosovo in May 2002, we headed out on the Sqn rugby tour to Barbados. It was a fantastic 10 days of sun, sea, sand and surf, and a good thrashing on the field by the three local teams we played (all of whom had exactly the same players, which didn't help our chances of winning!). Despite the rugby, a good time was had by all, and it would be nice to go on the next planned trip to Hawaii in 2004. I hope new arrival, **Sig** 'Shrew' **Harmer** makes the most of his time at the unit, as the chance to get around Germany is definitely with Bravo Tp, 200 Sig Sqn. Congratulations go to **Cpl** 'Tris' **Dunbar** on receiving his QVCS for all his hard work in charge of Syscon in Kosovo.

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Major SJ Vickery**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Watson**

At the end of January the Sqn said a very sad farewell to the much-loved **RSM (WO1)** 'Ged' **Robinson**. **RSM Robinson** has been an extremely popular member of the Sqn and will be missed by all, especially the ladies' football team whom he coached. We wish him and his family all the best and look forward to his farewell party on our return from the Gulf. **RSM (WO1) Dave Watson** has been hauled away from Blandford where he was a tp comd in 11 Sig Regt to take up the vacant post. However he is settling in very well and has already been spotted larging it (or was that largering it?) at the local nightclub. Despite this (or was it because of this) frivolous side, **RSM Watson** has been selected for a commission. Congratulations - fantastic news.

November saw the Ops Offr, **Capt Paul Randell** leave us for JCSC, from where he is posted to 15 Sig Regt in NI. We wish him well. **Capt Randell's** farewell dinner was made all the more special with **Lt Simon Limbrey's** Elvis impression. Welcome to **Capt Kevin Barker**, the new Ops Offr and his wife **Wendy**, who have arrived from 16 Sig Regt.

Welcome back also to **Sig Stevenson** and **LCpl Potts**, who have returned from the Falkland Islands and congratulations to **Cpl Dickinson** on the birth of her daughter, **Morgan**. In addition since our operational role has been announced, we have been flooded with new faces. A big welcome to you and your families.

The Sqn cut short Christmas leave and returned just after New Year in order to get the vehicles in order for future operations. The whole Sqn is being sent out to Kuwait to head up the Div Support Group (DSG) for OP TELIC. A hectic time ensued with everyone working extremely hard to get the vehicles into shape. A number of vehicles were sent across to 7 Armd Bde and Sig Sqn (207) in Hohne in mid January. More importantly thirty-five members of the Sqn, including the Oscar Tp hierarchy are now attached to 207, under the command of **Maj Chris Ward**. Those members of the Sqn have all vowed to remain loyal to the black desert rat, only temporarily changing its colour!

Our Sqn vehicles have now been loaded and they are on the way to the Gulf, encountering some awesome electrical storms en route. Since the vehicles have left, we have been conducting pre-deployment trg and receiving the mandatory OPTAG briefs. We are now raring to go, and even as this is being written, the Sqn has started to roll out of Osnabruck. Expect some sand dune surfing photos in the next update.

NORTHERN IRELAND CIVPOP TRAINING

For six weeks at the end of last year, the Sqn moved to the UK to act as CIVPOP for the RGBW and KRH NI trg package. This entails acting out characters in a specially adapted village to simulate situations in which the trg units will have to patrol in the Province. As the first ever non-infantry unit to have this tasking, it was an honour to undertake (and an excuse to have a good scrap!) All eyes were on us, and in the Sqn's usual 'we'll take any thing on' manner, we rose to the challenge and gave them it all.

Based at Lyde, Folkestone and Stanta in Norfolk, we played the local population down to a tee, dressed as an assortment of characters, from drunken unemployed tramps to postmen, priests and tarts. The Sqn got stuck in providing realistic urban and rural communities in peacetime and more volatile riot scenes, earning the praise of both the KRH and RGBW. The OC was on fine form. In his true style, **Major Steve Vickery** aka 'urban warrior' led the charge from the front. But he may have been a little too energetic and as a result, landed himself with a corker of a black eye by the end of the first day. Unfortunately more injuries were to follow, notably **Cpl Rees** and his collarbone. Happily all have now recovered. In between all this rioting the Sqn could be found in the *Starry Plough Inn* - all in the name of acting out their characters, of course. In free time there were quizzes, games of football and trips to the local cinema.

204 SIGNAL SQUADRON SKI TEAM TRAINING

Lt Simon Limbrey, **Cpl Dickinson**, **Cpl Cripps**, **LCpl Roderick**, **Sig** (now LCpl) **Whitham** and **Sig Thomas** all went out to Zell am See in Austria for the Corps Snow Sport Camp. The team spent two weeks training in the Zell am See resort, which includes the Kitzeinhorn Glacier, with a 3024m peak. A cracking time was had by all, but unfortunately, due to operational commitments, the team were unable to compete in the Corps Championships. But all improved their skiing dramatically, and look forward to getting back on the slopes, especially **Sig Thomas**, who was new to the sport but took it up with ease.

SQUADRON CHRISTMAS PARTY AND WIVES' CHRISTMAS PARTY

We decided to celebrate Christmas in style holding both a Sqn Christmas party and a Wives' Christmas function. Both were great events to finish off another excellent year for the Sqn. A special mention must be given to the Sqn Diet Coke Break Team, who made headlines in the garrison magazine, *Gateway* for their scarily realistic portrayal of the famous advert. The Diet Coke break men, **Lt Limbrey**, **SSgt Allcock** all provided much merriment as the builders and **RSM Robinson** and **SSgt Hoyle** were scarily convincing women.

7th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC	**Maj Chris Ford**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Martin Walsh**

OCs PERSPECTIVE – *by Capt Stu Whittley*

Since our return from a well-deserved Christmas leave, the pace of life in the Desert Rats has been frenetic. Stores, vehicles and most importantly personnel have been flowing into the Sqn as we move onto our War Fighting Establishment. The Sqn has welcomed personnel from 4 ABSS, 12 MBSS and a host of other Units including the TA. We are now also the proud owners of a Defence Pl in the shape of **Lt Stu Dick** and his men from 1 DWR. We are now 200+ strong and that's before we consider our Bde Staff. The planning and preparation we undertook before entering the High Readiness Year has been invaluable and has allowed us to consider the finer detail of the upcoming deployment.

The reaction of everyone, including the wives and girlfriends, to the increased workload and long hours has been fantastic. It is encouraging to see the high level of professionalism being applied to the task in hand alongside the inevitable squaddie banter. The next few months will be a revelation for us all, but whatever may or may not happen the Desert Rats are ready. **General Tommy Franks** has put it simply, 'No matter what the circumstances, we win.'

ALPHA TROOP - *by Sig Beckett*

Tp Comd	**2Lt Aileen Grant**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Steve Walton**

It has been a hectic time for Alpha Tp as we have been getting ready to deploy to Kuwait. Firstly all the vehicles had to be prepared before they were shipped out on 23 January. This required all sorts of mods, including getting new cages fitted and generator moulds - all of which obviously conforms to H & S Regs! The kit then had to be checked and packed in less than a week. Since then we have had lots of trg, including mine awareness, NBC, first aid, range training and a full day of OPTAG. Things must be getting serious as we even sent guys off to the ranges to use GPMGs! It has been a very exciting time, although there has been some apprehension. But when all is said and done, we believe we are ready for what (potentially) lies ahead.

Welcome back to **Sig Smith**, who has returned like a bad penny and also to **Cpl Lane**, who has joined us from 14 Sig Regt. **Lt Grant** has returned from her very short Tp Comds course and we are pleased to have her back. We say a fond farewell to **2Lt Anna Bates**, our Gap Year Commission, whose future is, as yet, undecided.

Tonight we have a Hawaiian Sqn party, which we are all looking forward to. It should be one last opportunity to be together as a Sqn before deploying.

BRAVO TROOP - *by Sig Cairney*

Tp Comd	**Lt Si Lord**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Cox**

As Bravo Tp prepares to load the vehicles tomorrow (30 January) we are very relaxed as everything is ready because of all the hard work and long hours that we have put in over the previous weeks. We are happy, and know that our side of the upcoming deployment will be a success. As there are many of us who have just arrived at the Unit, we are all looking forward this unique opportunity, as it will be unlike anything that most of us have ever experienced before. We have done a lot of pre-deployment preparation such as GPMG training, setting up in the field, NBC and lessons like convoy drills and mine awareness.

We welcome **Sigs Forrester** and **Timmis** as well as all those that have arrived from 4 Bde, and we hope that they enjoy their time here. I am very much looking forward to the Sqn being together again in a few months time, when we have finished.

CHARLIE TROOP - *by Lt Cadywould*

Tp Comd	**Lt Steve Cadywould**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Aide Sims**

Charlie Tp was formed in the previous Gulf conflict to release pressure from the HQ troops under a war-fighting establishment. The Tp itself contains all of the vehicles outside of the HQ complex, their roles varying from personal vehicles (designed to transport the staff from main to alternate headquarters) to the Bde Comd's Tac HQ. Charlie Tp also has all the remote detachments, such as rebro stations

The Tp took two weeks to form, and it has been hectic. The vehicles required equipment faults repairing and the wksps needed spares to carry out the maintenance. Therefore the speed at which Charlie Tp could form was dependent upon the speed of the supply chain. After numerous lists and running from Tp office to Sqn HQ, the equipment and spares started to arrive and the dets were brought back up to establishment. One of the main tasks involved in the formation of a new Tp is paperwork, and Charlie Tp was no exception. New shipments of manning and equipment would arrive and all existing paperwork would have to be updated not only at Tp level but Ops level as well, keeping the Sqn hierarchy busy. As the expansion comes to an end, it seems the time has flown by, and the men and women of Charlie Tp are in good spirits. And they look nervously forward to the opportunity that, no matter how daunting, they know they can't miss.

SUPPORT TROOP - *by Sgt Williamson*

Tp Comd	**Capt John Fradley**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mick Yendell**

Support Tp have recently returned from a well-earned Christmas leave and are now back in camp preparing for a possible deployment to warmer climates!

As can be expected, all departments within Support Tp are currently working in an extremely busy environment, with working hours going way beyond normal knock-off times. As well as preparing vehicles, stores and numerous other activities and tasks the Tp are still managing to fit in ITDs and PT.

19 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC	**Maj G W Wilson**
RSM	**W01(RSM) S A Gorton**

CHANGE OF COMMAND

The Sqn bids farewell to **Lt Col David Robson,** who has left to work as an MA for the Chief of Defence Logistics in Bath. We wish **David**, **Ktima**, **Phillip** and **Emma** all the best for the future. A warm welcome is extended to **Major Greg Wilson** who has taken over command of the Sqn and his family, **Jane**, **Cameron** and very new arrival **Laura**.

INFANTRY ATTACHMENT -*by 2Lt Chatman, OC(Des) Bravo Tp*

I am not sure what I said when I first arrived, but I must have upset somebody, because no sooner had I joined the Sqn, then I was sent off to join the Infantry. For four days I was attached to Corunna Coy, 1 Bn The Queens Lancashire Regiment, whilst they conducted a TESEX. This was to be my chance to see how things were really done, outside of the scripted skirmishing at Sandhurst.

Salisbury plain looked wonderful with its newly developed lakes (very large puddles) and the chilling wind would ensure that we were all alert. We started of with a simulated road move, followed by an NBC attack and eight hours in full 4 Romeo. With this out the way the real fun began. Imber Village was our first target, and it was duly captured by a dawn assault. The tables soon turned and we were defending against a very cunning Royal Green Jackets offensive. However the best was saved until last - Copehill Down didn't quite know what had hit it. The Coys forced their way from house to house, with a fine mixture of firepower initiative and good fortune. I was enjoying my chance to be a rifleman, breaking into and clearing rooms in a mass of automatic fire, throwing grenades and screaming. Seven hours later we were all shattered, if not AWES 'dead', but the village had been liberated and the Bde Comd was impressed by the Bn's effort. The infantry life was fun but I've now got to get to grips with my new role as a Tp Comd in a Bde HQ Sig Sqn, during a very busy period.

SQUADRON G3 UPDATE - *by Capt S Lumley, Ops Offr*

The culmination of the Bde's training year was EX IRON ANVIL 02 in BATUS, the biggest and most heavily funded ex held on the Canadian Prairie by British Forces to date. The ex has been heralded as a dramatic advance in formationlevel trg from all areas of the Bde. Notably, it was the first time that the Ptarmigan area system and the Army Tactical Computer System (ATacCS) have bear used in BATUS both exceeding expectations.

During the build-up phase, the Sqn managed to run a successful tenday special to arm trg package involving refining of all Sqn procedures, from obstacle crossing and tactical crosscountry driving, to experimenting with hasty armd HQ used in maintaining Bde command and control in a rapid advance.

All this culminated in EX PANTHER'S TOTALISE and EX IRON HAMMER, the final assessments for the Battle Gps and the Bde respectively. Both were hugely successful. For the Sqn, it was among the most beneficial and comprehensive trg undertaken yet.

Within a few days of returning to the UK, the Bde HQ was stood up as the Joint Force HQ 2 (JFHQ2), a formation which deals with Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) of British Nationals worldwide. This commitment has heavily involved the Sqn which was tasked (in conjunction with 258 Sig Sqn and 246 Pioneer Sqn) to prepare the JFHQ2 infrastructure for potential deployment anywhere in the world within a 48 hour period.

SQUADRON NEWS - *by SSgt M Wilson, Alpha Tp*

The pace of life has had no let ups since the Sqn's return form BATUS. After a very successful FTX the Sqn's main effort has been returning vehs and eqpt back to the required standard to take on our high readiness role. With the task completed, the race to Christmas was on and a well-earned rest in sight.

The Sqn then took on the JFHQ 2 commitment. Taking on this role was no mean feat. The QM and his merry band had their work cut out for them gathering together the plethora of stores and personnel, whilst putting it all together into an efficient machine for the required task. Despite the task in hand, in true Spt Tp style, they made best of a bad situation and transformed themselves into JFHQ 2.

Before the Sqn stood down for the festive season, the Christmas Ball extravaganza took place. There were moans and groans from the cheap seats when it was declared that tuxedos and cocktail dresses were to be the attire for the evening. With an 'One In All In' attitude, the majority of the Sqn showed solidarity and team spirit, to present ultimately the smartest turnout in Sqn history.

The venue for the evening was the Junior Ranks Club at Wathgill Camp. It was transformed into a 5-star venue using the world's supply of silver foil, Sellotape and tinsel, which **LCpl Anderson**, our *Changing Rooms* wannabe star, applied with expertise. The remainder of the Committee worked wonders with the decorations and ensured that the tables were dressed with silver, fit for a Royal Banquet. **SSgt Wilson** and **Sgt Allen** would like to thank Alpha Tp Committee members, 3 (CS) Medical Regt Chefs and all those who helped and supported them to make the evening a resounding success.

After Christmas leave the Sqn returned refreshed and ready for the battles that the New Year had in store for us. Straight away both A & B Tps were deployed in support of the QLR TESEX. Much preparation took place to ensure that the deployment went well and the ex ran smoothly.

No sooner had A & B Tps returned from one ex, than they deployed yet again on another, this time on EX PANTHERS LINK. The concept was a VHF RRB exercise over the East Yorkshire area. Initially the ex got off to a slow start, due to a few crossed wires. However, after a few well-placed rockets, the ex proceeded and was very successful, proving a very good shake-out for the less experienced members of the Tps. **Cpl Stevenson** was left with signs of PTSD after several of the events had caused him trauma. **Cpl Lyon's** re-enactment of *The Wizard of Oz* caused a stir when his detachment was nearly blown away in the gales. **LCpl Eden** and **Sig Williams** must be commended for their best efforts to resist movement by getting locked into a campsite and

Bravo Tp Comd looking for his HQ

being unable to move until the next morning (Golden Blanket Awarded). With Comms tested and the MEL exhausted, it was back to camp for tea and biscuits and, all in all, a very enjoyable ex was had by everyone, especially the newer members of the Sqn.

Now that the first couple of months are behind the Sqn, the way ahead still seems very busy. With a full forecast of events to keep us on our toes, it is certain that we will remain at a very high standard of readiness, retaining and honing our skills learned in BATUS in preparation for what the remainder of the year has install for us.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt W Taylor**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt M Wilson**

During this time there has been a steady turn around of personalities who have departed us on posting. First mention goes to **Cpl** (now Sgt) 'Simmo' **Simpson**, who went to FMVT, Blandford. Next was **Cpl** (now Sgt) **Al *Clark***, who was posted to 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207). Then **LCpl Danny Watson** opted to hang up his RSigs beret and transfer to AGC. We wish all those who have departed and their family's best wishes for the future.

On the arrival side we have had quiet an influx. Firstly **LCpl Danny Watson**, who must hold the world record for fast transfers. He has just joined us again from the AGC after a 4-week transfer. What can we say, other than get the beers in! Next we welcome from the factory, **Sigs Eldridge**, **Bostoek** and **Smith**. We hope you enjoy your time in the Tp. Finally we would like to welcome **Lt Taylor** back from his Tp Comds Cse. You can tear up those L-plate signs now.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt G Darke**
TP SSgt	**SSgt Taf Williams**

Bravo Tp welcome our new arrivals, **2Lt Chatman**, who takes over comd of the Tp in August upon completion of his Troopies' Cse; **LCpl Grimes** and, straight from RSS, **Sigs Escott** and **Stone**. The Tp bids a sad farewell to **LCpl Martyn Harper**, who leaves us for a new career in Civvy Street. We wish him all the best for his future.

249 SIGNAL SQUADRON
(ALLIED COMMAND EUROPE MOBILE FORCE (LAND))

OC	**Maj AG Hill**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) SG Dewar**

9 January 2003 was a day that the Sqn and a good percentage of the Corps hoped would never come. Ever since the official news was received in April 2002 confirming that because of changes in the NATO force structure, 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)) was to disband in early 2003, most of us prayed that some reprieve would be given. Unfortunately, no such stay of execution was forthcoming and so 249 Sig Sqn disappeared from the Corps Orbat at the start of the year.

To ensure that the Sqn finished its current life in a correct and fitting manner, the OC, **Maj Alan Hill** and SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Shean Dewar** devised a cunning plan, involving drill, service dress, drill, bayonets, swords and some more drill...Oh, and a pennant. The task of forging the remaining members of the Sqn into some sort of drill-compliant unit fell to **SSgt Dean Wilson**, who could often be seen mumbling to himself and sprinkling holy water on the parade square after a particularly bad drill practice (of which there were a few). Slowly the troops made the painful transition from trekking with skis and tabbing with bergens to marching in a formed body in a semi-uniformed manner - and even starting to look pretty good at it! However, getting the OC to realise that slow march is not in fact done at warp factor 6 took somewhat longer.

SOinC(A) inspects the parade

Practice for the disbandment parade, combined with the draw down of the Sqn took up the majority of the lead up to Christmas period, with all depts returning stores and throwing out strange items that had been lying around the Sqn lines for a number of years. **Sgt Paul Binns** had to be rescued from the skip a number of times during this hectic period.

Post Christmas, with the parade just around the corner, and a good percentage of the Sqn deployed on operations and others being posted early to their new units, numbers became a problem. It came close to the point where there were more guests than people marching. Things became so dire that there was a rumour that **SSgt (YofS) Mark Holden** had been seen practising drill moves and dusting off his No2 dress in the silent hours...

Come the day of the parade, everything came together nicely, with the SSM carrying off a very good parade - and we are sure no-one really noticed the OC's 'deliberate' mistakes! The salute was taken by the SOinC(A) **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC**, and accompanying him on the inspection was Comd UK Element AMF (L) **Brig CMG Elcomb OBE** (late LI). Both were ably hosted for the day by the QM, **Capt Chris Laycock**.

A surprising turn came about when the spectators started clapping during the march-off, more than a few felt a lump in the throat and a tear in the eye whilst marching out of the compound gates for the last time. Around 100 veterans of 249 Sqn came to watch the marching and drink some beer afterwards. A special mention must go out to the 18 veterans of 249 in its FARELF days, who had seen service during the '60s and '70s in the Far East! Thank you to **Graham Jolly** for pulling your guys together and for the rendition of 'Happy Squadron' which entertained all present. Now, it is all over bar the MFO. The OC has departed to a cushy desk job in Northwood, the 2IC to 102 Log Bde Sig Sqn in Germany, and others have departed to places too numerous to mention. Best wishes go to all wherever you go. May you live long...(and prosper!).

At the end of 26 years, 249 Sig Sqn is now no more. All that remains to say is to those Sqn members who are even now deployed on ops in far-off places, the remainder of us did not and have not forgotten about your being part of the Sqn in the final days of its current guise in AMF(L). To you and the Corps as a whole: keep the standards, keep the pride and keep looking forward to when 249 will, phoenix-like, rise once more.

DEFENCE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES AGENCY (GERMANY)
252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj G Pickersgill**
SSM	**W02 (SSM) DW Stewart**

STRATEGIC AND TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT

The Agency had a very successful Christmas party on 5 December at Kernwasser Wunderland. This location is a reconditioned redundant power station in Kalkar, (no jokes about Springfield please!) and the whole site has been tastefully converted into a hotel cum function venue. Many thanks to all those personnel involved in the execution of the combined Agency function, in particular to **Mrs Christine Dedman, Mrs Faye Laing, Sgt Phil Harries (RAF)** and last but by no means least, **SSgt Phil Stroudley**, (our man with the plan).

The last 12 months have proved to be a very busy time for the Sqn in terms of evolution, and even as we move into 2003, things promise to continue with more of the same. The Sqn has received a raft of new personalities posted in since our last submission, many leading up to and immediately following the Christmas stand down. The Sqn OC and all ranks extend a warm welcome to all new arrivals and wish them, their spouses and families a successful tour not only with the Agency and Sqn but also in their individual business areas of work.

ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT

Welcome to **Cpl Sandie Glover** AGC, who joins us on local detachment from 16 Sig Regt to take up the post of Sqn Military Clerk in our registry. This is a welcome return for **Cpl Glover**. In a previous life she had worked as a Tele Op Data in the Sqn in JHQ Commcen. Welcome back. We hope you enjoy your short time with us.

Farewell to **LCpl Mark Dunleavy** AGC, who leaves us en-route to Worthy Down Support Unit, having recently successfully passed his JQC (where he was placed in the top third of those students attending). This course is the AGC equivalent of our RSigs Junior Commanders Course. **LCpl Dunleavy** leaves us with the firm focus on becoming trained-up by his new unit in preparation for his career aspiration to become a phase one training instructor at ATR Winchester. The Sqn OC and all ranks wish you the very best of luck in your chosen career path, and your on focus for the future.

OPERATIONS MESSAGING JHQ

MODERN APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR NOMINATION, SIG JORDAN - *by 2IC, Capt Eric Udell*

In mid October I received a letter from TQ Training Management Services Ltd (who provide modern apprenticeship programmes for the Corps) to say that one of our soldiers, **Sig Tanya Jordan** (currently employed in Commcen JHQ) had been nominated by her assessor for an award for the outstanding quality of work she submitted for her NVQ. There are over 1800 Modern Apprenticeship programmes in Telecomms Sec, and all individuals participating are eligible for the award selection process. So it is a considerable achievement to have won through to the final stages of the competition.

The final awards were announced at a ceremony conducted on 21 October 2002 at a venue in Donnington, Newbury. Unfortunately, because of short notice, **Sig Jordan** was unable to go, so a member of the RSS NVQ assessor team attended to represent her. We are delighted to report that **Sig Jordan** was awarded the Bronze Level prize. Her trophy, a fine piece of engraved crystal, was presented by **Mr Peter Halstead** on a recent visit to JHQ. The Sqn OC and all ranks offer their congratulations on this outstanding achievement.

OPERATIONS SYSTEMS CONTROL POINT (RHEINDAHLEN)

COMPLETION OF MODERN APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME SIG GROS

We are pleased to report that **Sig Melanie Gros** has been awarded her Apprenticeship Certificate on the successful completion of her Modern Apprenticeship Scheme. **Sig Gros** was presented with her certificate and citation by **Mr Peter Halstead** during his recent visit to JHQ. In addition to this good news, **Sig Gros** was promoted to LCpl on 14 November 2002. The Sqn OC and all ranks offer their congratulations on her fine achievement.

ENGINEERING SUPPORT MAINTENANCE - *by SSgt Dave Turner*

The Dept recently said sad farewells to **Cpls Gav Ruckledge**, **Adam Dixon**, **Dave Milner** and **Cpl Ricky Lambert**, who depart for RSS to attend their T1 upgrading courses. Good luck to you all. **Cpl Al Berry** goes to the All Arms Skill at Arms course in Brecon, a necessary qualification prior to his posting to ATR Lichfield. We wish you the very best of luck with the training. **LCpl Liza Parsons** has returned to Blandford to attend her Class 1 upgrading course, after which she goes to 3 Div, Bulford. Enjoy your time with 11 Sig Regt. Finally we congratulate **Cpl Dave Reath** on his promotion to Sgt.

To say farewell to our departing personalities, the Dept organised a go-karting fun day. The format comprised two races per individual, followed by the sampling of local delicacies and

sufficient beverage to finish off the occasion nicely. Our winning participant, **Cpl Wayne Addison** was probably the only one who was actually trying.

ENGINEERING SUPPORT MAINTENANCE PTARMINET

We are pleased to report the promotion on 14 November 2002 of **Sig Jennings**, who received his LCpl tape from the OC. **Sig Jennings** had been on the Station Cadre course run by the Trg Wing Elmpt Station and we eagerly await the results.

DINING OUT OF W02 (YofS) HARTSHORNE & SGT CHURCHWARD, 10 JANUARY 2003

The Offrs WOs & SNCOs of the Sqn recently said farewell in the traditional manner to 2 members of the Sqn on completion of 22 years' colour service, **W02 (YofS) Stew Hartshorne** & **Sgt Bob Churchward**. To mark the occasion, a formal Regimental Dinner Night was held to dine them out. The occasion was made even more special in that it served to reinforce the bonds of brotherhood fostered so strongly throughout the Corps by enabling both serving and former members of the Sqn and the Corps in general to come together and celebrate the career achievements of our guests. Through painstaking information-gathering exercises (dirt), short stories, long tales and the obligatory poetic licence, their stories were presented. The Sqn OC and all ranks wish **Stew & Aaltje Hartshorne** all the very best success for the future following their final 6 month in JSSU Digby and likewise wish **Bob, Debbie Churchward & family** all the very best success for their future following their final 6 months in 38 Sig Regt (V) Sheffield.

ELMPT STATION JNCO LEADERSHIP CADRE COURSE 2002

The Sqn was offered 7 places on the Elmpt Station Cadre Course held from in November/December 2002 and based in and around the area of Elmpt Station. The following individuals attended: **Sig** (now LCpl) **Jay Jennings**, **Sig Carl Houston**, **Sig Lewis Furnival** and **Sig Nathan Waring**.

Here is a student's perspective by **Sig Lewis Furnival**:-

The course started on 24 November with a good oldfashioned BCFT just to give us little taster of the good things to come, and a gentle introduction to hill 60, which we would get to know very well by the end of the course. During the first week we attended EX ICE BREAKER, which consisted of ITD's, military tactics, skills and equipment, and a briefing on the Code of Conduct by that nice man **Capt Chris Hymas.**

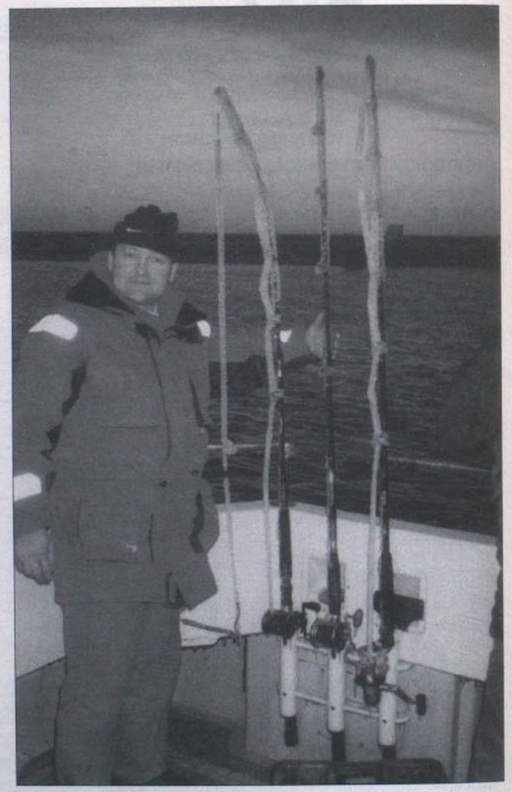
The physical aspect throughout the course was an experience we would not forget - running in webbing, with stretchers, medicine balls, sandbags, logs, ammo boxes and occasionally with LSW's, as we paid our regular visit to hill 60. Unfortunately, at this stage we lost **Sig Nathan Waring** with an ankle injury that would see him RTU'd. We extend our sincere thanks to **Cpl Andy Hill** for the quality character building PT he administered. The second week was exercise week and started on the Sunday with EX SHAKEOUT, the first of 4 days honing military tactics, pairs fire and manoeuvre, not to mention the inevitable SOP kit checks. By 0300hrs the next morning we moved into EX FIRSTSTEP on Haltern training area. We hit the ground running at 0600hrs when our vehicles were ambushed by the enemy. We won the firefight, but all our vehicles had been destroyed, so we had to move to our harbour loc on foot. During the harbour occupation, we launched recce patrols and established OP's before moving the whole platoon, under the direction of **Lt Youngman** and **Sgt Angus,** into lying up positions. There was then a snap ambush.

The final day of the exercise was an open invitation to Sqn OC's to visit the exercise area for a full English breakfast in the field before observing the final platoon attack. This gave them an indication of what their respective soldiers had learned over the past few weeks. After the attack we had just started weapon cleaning, when out of the blue (as if by magic) a coach load of PTI's arrived to take us on a section cross-country competition. Perhaps this was a little thank you from the staff for all our hard work? As soon as we had recovered our breath (and colour for some), we headed back to Elmpt Station.

The highlight of the Course was the pass off parade, conducted on a bitterly cold December Monday morning on Elmpt Station. The spectators were treated to a spectacle of drill and squad control, which was impressive to say the least, especially when considering the limited amount of time we had for preparation (just that weekend). **W02 (SSM) Mitchell** and **Lt Youngman** occasionally treated us to morale-boosting bouts of joke telling to ease the drill stress.

The course culminated in a formal Regimental Dinner in the WOs & Sgts Mess, Javelin Barracks. This was attended by all students, instructional staff, the CO's & RSM's of 7 & 16 Sig Regts, and the OC's & SSM's of 280 & DCSA(G) 252 Sig Sqns. This setting provided an opportune moment to announce the final positions and make the presentations. The Sqn OC and all ranks offer their congratulations to all those who took part and, in particular, the following unit awards: **Sig Lewis Furnival** (Best overall endeavor), **LCpl Jay Jennings** (2nd placed student) and **Sig Carl Houston** (Member of winning section). The Sqn's thanks go to **Capt Chris Hymas** and his instructional staff for their effort and for providing places on this course. We look forward to our continued ties (Corps-related bonding) with Elmpt Station.

RHINE GARRISON SEA ANGLING CHAMPIONSHIPS 8 JANUARY 2003 - *by Sgt Taff O'Connor*



Sgt Taff O'Connor shows just how cold it was

With severe weather conditions at the beginning of December, the Rhine Garrison Sea Angling Championships took place on 8 January 2003 in Stellendam near Rotterdam. Two members of the Sqn, Garrison Club members, braved sub-zero weather conditions with temperatures down to minus 28 degrees. **Sgt Taff O'Connor** and **Sgt Ian Overal** must have been a bottle short of a ten-pack even to contemplate going outside in temperatures so low, let alone 30 miles out into the North Sea on a charter boat. Both did well on the day, with numerous fish to weigh at the end, regardless of certain unscrupulous persons using natural ground baiting tactics to gain advantage (with little success, apart from a sore stomach). **Sgt Ian Overal** won first prize after being taught some top tricks previously by the fourth-placed **Sgt Taff O'Connor**. Again as with other angling competitions, a good day was had by all and both Sqn members will now go forward to fish in the BA (G) Sea Fishing Championships during the coming summer.

INFORMATION ASSURANCE (TEMPEST SERVICES) - *by SSgt Pete Taylor*

This being our first submission to *The WIRE*, it seems an ideal opportunity to introduce the current Information Assurance (Tempest Services) IA(TS) team, formerly known as Electronic Security Team (EST) 252 Sig Sqn. For the first time since July 2000, we now have our full compliment of team members - yes all five on strength and on the case. **W02 (FofS) Gaz Clapham** took over this much sought after post in May 2002, and following a brief settling in period has, in addition to picking up where his predecessor left off, taken the team forward in leaps and bounds. **SSgt Pete Taylor** joined the team from afar (well, the other end of the building actually!) in September 2002, taking over the role of section staffy, and has also settled in well. **Sgt Andy Humphriss** is the Tempest 'guru' and in many respects the 'Daddy' of the team (by age alone!) He has served with the team since 1999 and has seen many changes. Having spent so long with the Germany-based team, he is hoping to carry his wealth of experience across to join the UK team later this year. **Sgt Eddie Edwards** was taken on strength from a tour of the Falklands in June. What with R&R, leave and attending qualifying courses, he eventually showed up on campus in October. His role in the team was to take ownership of, sort out and back load as much of the redundant stores as possible. Aladdin's cave is slowly becoming vacant storage space (stores are for storing). **Cpl Des Hill** was taken on strength in November, but was sent direct from his T1 to complete his basic on-site Tempest Testers course. At the time of writing, he is completing the transmitter course in UK. Being the 'sprog' of the team and currently the only JNCO, he has been identified to fulfill many tasks in the department, as well as anything else that rolls downwards. UNLUCKY!

With a busy calendar already in place for 2003, the whole team faces the prospect of plenty of inspections, related tasks, challenges, maybe the odd social function and whatever else is thrown our way, and we look forward to it all.

RECRUITING NOTICE - COMCEN SHIFT COMMANDERS

The Sqn is constantly looking to fill a number of Comcen Shift Commander's posts (Cpl & LCpl AS Op). It is desirable that applicants for these posts have a background in Data Telegraphy (or are keen to learn) and would be prepared to work in a static Comcen environment for a tour of approx 2 years (MCM Div to advise on tour length). Locations vary from Comcens Gütersloh, Herford, Hohne, Paderborn, Osnabruck and RHQ. Applicants for any of these posts can check the current availability by contacting the Sqn 2IC on Rheindahlen Mil 3226. They should then register their interest in a specific post by completing and submitting a RSigs Posting Preference Proforma direct to MCM Division for consideration, having first consulted with their own chain of command.

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj MJ Fensom**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) KRJ Smith**

The tail end of 2002 and beginning of 2003 have proved interesting for the Sqn, and have thrown up a number of exciting opportunities. In December 2002 seven members of the Sqn deployed to Zell-Am-See in Austria to participate in the RSigs Winter Sports Camp, more of which follows. In addition, we have supported RMA Sandhurst on exercise, visited London Television Studios, and conducted pre-deployment training for Bde HQ, various Bde Units, and ourselves. As this is being written, last minute preparations are being done for a most challenging and interesting Battlecamp on Dartmoor.

On the sporting front, the Sqn competed in the 4 Div Basketball Championships, the football team have continued to brush aside all who cross their path, and the development of the Sqn's fledgling rugby team is progressing well. Anyone want a game?

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 6 - ROYAL SIGNALS WINTER SPORTS CAMP - *by Capt Jamie Noble.*

On 31 November 2002 seven members of 261 Sig Sqn embarked on the long drive from Aldershot to Zell-Am-See in Austria to take part in the Snowboarding phase of the Corps Winter Sports Camp. **Capt Jamie Noble**, **WO2 (FofS) Sue King**, **Cpl Sue Taylor**, **LCpl Brian Chambers**, **and Sigs Moore**, **Bleach** and **Higgins** (all Snowboarding virgins) made up the team. When the 18hr journey was finally over, the team caught up on some well deserved sleep before making the most of an admin day and setting out to explore the local area. Sundays in Austria are like setting foot on the set of a Zombie B movie. There is no one to be seen, and when you do eventually encounter some locals (in our case, in the local pizzeria) they stare at you as if they are wondering how good your flesh will taste. Hopefully they grow more accustomed to outsiders as the ski season progresses.

On our arrival back in the hostel, snowboards and boots were issued, briefings given, and money changed hands in preparation for the training to come. A Dutch company, Ripstar Snowboarding, provided all the instructors, and the quality of the training given was outstanding. What then followed was 5 days of intensive training, with lessons starting at 0900hrs and generally finishing at about 1530-1600hrs. For those who haven't experienced snowboarding, it is a shock to the muscles. After 3 days, with every conceivable muscle aching and screaming for mercy, the team were beginning to wonder if they would make it through to race week. However, as our technique improved, the pain subsided and gave way to pure exhilaration and excitement. Unfortunately the end of week 1 ended on a sour note as **Cpl Sue Taylor** fell during her last run of the day and broke her wrist. Thankfully the Austrian health service is far more efficient than our own, and treatment was completed within a couple of hours.

After 5 days training, a well-deserved weekend off saw the team head for Garmisch to make the most of the American PX and complete last minute Christmas shopping. Unfortunately for **LCpl Brian Chambers**, the Taco Bell was conspicuous by its absence.

Race week saw the team compete in the Seeding, Slalom and Giant Slalom races. Some excellent times were achieved, the most notable being **Sig Moore**, who achieved 2nd place in all of the novice races. However, everybody competed extremely well, and showed just how much they had progressed during the previous week's training.

The last day on the slopes consisted of the Dual Slalom head-to-head fun race, and the King of the Hill, followed by some free time, most of which was spent on the snowboard park trying to look cool on the jumps. Needless to say, a little pain was felt during the initial attempts, with some efforts looking more like the outtakes from the TV series *Jackass*. Once again **Sig Moore** excelled himself with almost suicidal tendencies when presented with an opportunity to launch himself into the air. **LCpl Brian Chambers** was jubilant when he was caught on film doing a 180° Grind to Fakie (or something like that), and everybody laughed with sympathy when **Capt Jamie Noble** crashed and burned on

the grind bar, managing to establish simultaneous contact between his nose, ribs, and shoulders and a big lump of hard icy snow.

It was with heavy hearts that the team finally made their way back to Aldershot on 13 December. The RSigs Winter Sports Camp is an outstanding opportunity for members of the Corps to be introduced to the snow sports arena, and the mix of training and racing give the camp a real edge. Winter sports are physically demanding and call for courage and self-discipline, but they are also fantastic fun. I would encourage anybody who is even slightly curious to ensure that they volunteer for this year's camp.

We won't smile until you take off that hat!

4 DIVISION BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Over the period 27 - 31 January, the Sqn entered a male and female team for the 4 Div Basketball Championships. Following a week of training under the guidance of **WO2 (FofS) Sue King**, the teams set out to improve on last year's results, which saw the Sqn lose by the narrowest of margins. The male team managed to secure a respectable 4th place overall, whilst the ladies showed the way by coming 3rd overall and securing passage through to the Army finals.

BALDRICK VISITS THE BLACKADDER SQUADRON

'I've got a cunning plan, Sir,' said the RSM. 'So cunning you could put a tail on it and call it a weasel?' enquired the OC. 3 months later the plan came to fruition. As everyone knows, 101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn wear the Blackadder flash. Taken from the hit TV show, the badge was created for the unit during the 1991 Gulf War. (See story below) So it seemed appropriate that corporate image demanded a visit from one of the best soldiers ever to have taken the King's Shilling.

On Tuesday 4 February that soldier, **Pte Baldrick** (AKA **Tony Robinson**) arrived at Buller Barracks, Aldershot to inspect the Sqn and join it for some fun. He was met on arrival by OC, **Maj Matt Fensom** and RSM, **WO1 Kevin Smith**, and was then taken to meet the Sqn hierarchy. After a swift change into his normal attire (kindly supplied by Angels, the props company who supplied the original *Blackadder* series) he was whisked down to Prince Consort Library, where the rest of the Sqn eagerly awaited the Inspecting Private. Numerous photos were taken, including a full Sqn photo (see rear cover) and the one we see below.

Moving back to Buller Barracks, **Pte Baldrick** then mingled with all the Sqn in the families' centre, where he was presented with a Sqn Plaque and T-shirt (which he promises to wear on *Time Team* – Watch out for it!). 1200hrs arrived and it was time to bid farewell to **Pte Baldrick**. In the background Baldrick's favourite song was played: 'Boom Boom Boom, Boom Boom Boom, Boom Boom Boom Boom, Boom Boom Boom.'

The RSM hands over to Pte Baldrick under the watchful eye of the OC

THE HISTORY OF THE BLACKADDER PATCH

During the Gulf War, **Brig Martin White** (RLC) was given command of the recently-formed Force Maintenance Area (FMA). One of his concerns was to give the unit a sense of identity and cohesion. By chance, in a letter from his daughter, she said 'I hope you have a cunning plan'. This immediately brought to mind the *Blackadder* TV series. And so transit camps in the Sea Port of Entry/Embarkation in Jubail were soon to be named after characters from the series - Baldrick Lines, Blackadder Camp, Melchett Lines and Camp Bob, to name but a few. There was therefore a natural progression to a formation insignia using the Blackadder motif, so one was designed by a member of HQ FMA staff.

After the Gulf War, Combat Service Support Group (CSSG (UK) was formed, largely from the LSG of UK Mobile Force. It adopted the Blackadder motif as its formation insignia in a formal ceremony in Aldershot on 9 January 1997. On the change CSSG (UK)'s name to 101 Log Bde, the insignia passed to that Formation and to its Sig Sqn, 261.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

The Sqn says goodbye and good luck to the following people: **Sig** 'Brams' **Bramald**, off to 16 Sig Regt; **Sgt Jacko**, **Cpl Barry, Cpl Dylan Davies** and **Sig Austin**, who are all off to civvy street; **Cpl Thomas**, off to 7 Sig Regt; **LCpl Miles** off to 228 Sig Sqn; **Cpl Roberts** off to 30 Sig Regt; and **LCpl Twissel**, off to ATFC Arborfield.

We say hello to **LCpl Mountjoy**, **Cpl Hunter**, **Sgt Grady**, **LCpl Flitter**, and **Sigs Huish, Hirst, Bastable and Walker.** A warm welcome to you all.

ARMY

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj Mark Everill RLC**
SSM

The formation of the youngest Sqn in the Corps continues, despite the deployment of the Bde on OP TELIC. Whilst 262 Sig Sqn is not formally tasked, we will still be well-represented in theatre by providing a significant number of individual augmentees to 214 Sig Sqn. We are providing primarily RS Ops, giving the majority of our new arrivals from 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)) the chance to swap snow for sand and deploy to the desert.

The remaining 20 or so soldiers in Germany will be turning their attention to the continued build-up of the Sqn. It is intended that we move into our new Sqn lines in mid-February (or once we persuade the GTO to leave their cushy offices for a draughty hangar!). At that point, we will escape the shackles of the HQ and start operating as an independent Sqn. After that, we look forward to the arrival of the new OC, RSM and FofS. Sorry lads, the holiday's nearly over……!

280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Russell Edwards**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dixon**

O&M TEAM - *by Cpl Hallsworth*

The team comprising **Sgt Meeds**, **Cpls Moore**, **Hallsworth** and **Chacksfield** and **LCpl Allen** set off, fresh-faced on the morning of 1 August, ready to begin our tour in Banja Luka. We were picked up from Sarajevo by the team we were taking over from and journeyed to Banja Luka - our home for the next 4 months. The first week was hectic, with a tight hand over/take over. It was a week of cramming in as much as we could before the old team left us. Our job here was to provide computer access for staff officers, to maintain the equipment and to provide on-hand help for any problems that may occur. We also provided a daily Video Telecomms Conference (VTC) for Comd Multi-National Division South West and COM SFDR.

We soon settled in BLMF and began to take part in many sporting activities. We kept our fitness up by doing circuit training 3 times a week and we also entered a Superstars competition, where **LCpl Allen** and **LCpl Hallsworth** were in the winning female team and **Cpl Moore** in the runners-up. **LCpl Chacksfield** took part in a 32km tab and came an overall 8th place, much to his disappointment!

Cpl Marie Moore being presented the Modern Apprenticeship Silver Award for Telecomms by Brig Farquhar MBE

On the 26 November **Cpl Marie Moore** was presented the Modern Apprenticeship Silver Award for Telecomms by **Brig Farquhar MBE**, COM MND SW. The National award was judged on the standard of course material and on regular assessments carried out by the NVQ assessors of her performance in the work environment during the two-year course runs. **Cpl Moore** also celebrated her 21st birthday in October and **LCpl Chacksfield** turned 24 on the 1December. Needless to say, that because of the enforced two-can rule, celebrations were very low key.

Congratulations go to **LCpl Louise Hallsworth**, who got an early Christmas present in our last week here. She was promoted to full Cpl by **Maj Gen Pearson** DCOM SFOR (OPS). It's not every day you can say that you got promoted by a general! Congratulations also go to **LCpl Chacksfield**, who gained his second stripe. So **Cpls Hallsworth** and **Chacksfield** generously got the two cans in! Overall our tour has been an experience for all of us with **LCpl Allen** getting her 3rd NATO medal with everyone else getting their 1st! As our tour cones to an end it's time for the next crew to depart Javelin Barracks for a few months for life in Bosnia just in time for the snow and temperatures of minus 12! Good luck lads. We hope you enjoy your tour as much as we have.

EXERCISE LIGHT SHIP

EX LIGHT SHIP was a five week deployment to Civitavecchia in Italy to provide CIS support to the Italian High Readiness Force NATO validation process. The Sqn involvement began on 15 November with a road move through Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Italy. We had overnight stops in Baumholder and Stetten in Germany, and Milan in Italy before finally arriving in the exercise area on 21 November. This included a partial rotation of personnel and equipment that had already been on an exercise in Germany for the previous 4 weeks, and meeting up with crews and vehicles from the ACE CIS Contingency Assets Pool (ACCAP) Bn, who joined us direct from an exercise in Poland.

EX LIGHT SHIP contained many challenges, ranging from overcoming the language barrier between our crews and the Italians, adapting our procedures to work with new and unique equipment, and learning to live on a diet of nothing but pasta and cappuccino for a month. Thanks to the hospitality of the Italians and the hard work of the DCM and ACCAP Bn crews, all major problems were overcome and the ex was a success, resulting in a 100% achievement of NATO level 1 comms criteria for the Italian Corps HQ. Another highlight of the exercise was **Cpl Sunnae Lake** receiving her promotion to Sgt from the Deputy Comd of the Italian Rapid Reaction Corps, British **Maj Gen The Honourable SHRH Monro CBE**, shown in the photograph below.

At the end of the ex, the road move back to Elmpt began in rapidly deteriorating weather conditions. The trip home took four days, and included a crossing of the Alps in picturesque but alarming snowy conditions. All assets were recovered to Elmpt by 16 December, ready to turn around the vehicles in preparation for a well-deserved Christmas break. 280 (UK) Sig Sqn are now looking forward to a busy series of exercises in the first quarter of

2003, aiming to consolidate the experiences of last year and to prepare to receive new equipment.

Cpl Sunnae Lake receiving her promotion to Sgt from Maj Gen The Honourable S H R H Monro CBE

EX MERCURCY GLACIER 6

The team comprised **Cpl R Turnbull** (Team Captain), **LCpl W Turner** and **Sig A Fewster**. The ex was conducted over four weeks, the first being technique trg, the second slalom trg, third GS training and finally the race week. Our team could attend for only the final two weeks, giving only one week for training before the competition on the last week. In the seeding GS race on the Friday prior to the competition, **Cpl Turnbull** finished in seventh place followed by **Sig Fewster** in seventeenth and **LCpl Turner** in position thirtysix, out of a total of eighty-six racers.

The Individual GS was the first race to be run, and the results were: **Cpl Turnbull**, 10; **Sig Fewster**, 34 and **LCpl Turner**, 68. **LCpl Turner** fell, but retrieved his skis and carried on with the race. This course of action led to him receiving a large number of seed points, which directly effected his starting position for the Team GS.

The Team GS results were: **Cpl Turnbull**, 7; **Sig Fewster**, 24 and **LCpl Turner**, disqualified after the first run. Because we had only three racers, the disqualification of **LCpl Turner** (after missing a gate) meant the whole team was disqualified. On receiving his bib no (69) plus 10% seed point, he was in a poor position for the start of the next race. **Sig Fewster** had a good run finishing seven places in front of her seed number.

The individual Slalom results were: **Cpl Turnbull**, 12; **LCpl Turner**, 42 and **Sig Fewster**, 47. Slalom training was conducted on the second week of the ex, which the team did not attend. This was reflected in the finish positions for the race. However, **LCpl Turner** did regain some of his confidence with a better result.

The team Slalom results were: **Cpl Turnbull**, 9; **Sig Fewster**, 37 and **LCpl Turner**, 40. After the experience of the previous day's race, the whole team performed better, achieving an overall Team position of third in the minor units and tenth out of a total of twentytwo teams.

The final Seed positions were: **Cpl Turnbull**, 10; **Sig Fewster**, 31 and **LCpl Turner**, 72.

Because we were disqualified in the Team GS, no overall Team position can be given. Having missed the first two weeks, the team was competing at a disadvantage. There was also the added pressure of being a racer short of a full team. However, the exercise did bring on the abilities of the soldiers and gave them vital experience of racing for future competition.

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

OC	**Maj M Billingham**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) D Scott**

Another hectic period for the Sqn, with the SC course getting cold and wet, the operators getting busier and the TA regarding all unsolicited mail from the MOD as their chance to win a free 6-month holiday to the Middle East. All the normal activities have been maintained and a good time was had by all over the various Christmas functions. The Burns Dinner went down well, with the English also being asked to dress up in skirts for the occasion and even given the chance to butcher some Burns' poetry. The dinner also gave us the opportunity to welcome **Sgts Gray, Hill, Litchfield, Roberts, Shrewsbury** and **MacGillivray** to the Mess.

EXERCISE SHORT LYNX 01/03 - *by LCpl Burton*

EX SHORT LYNX 01/03 was a weekend ex aimed at giving both Regular and TA personnel continuation training on the Sqn's new communications system (LOCK).

Preparation (carried out on the Tuesday night prior to the weekend) included packing two Main Base Stations (MBS) and two Field Communications Detachments (FCD), testing all communications equipment and rushing **LCpl Karen Clark** to Milton Keynes' A&E Dept after she fell out of one of the aforementioned FCDs!

Friday night saw some final preparation before an early morning deployment. The two MBS vehicles deployed to Bicester gliding school, one of the FCDs deployed to Yardley Chase training area and the other to Abingdon. Everybody pulled together and worked hard for newly promoted Det Comd, **Sgt Pete Lichfield**, so the MBS was set up in record time.

It wasn't long before both FCDs were in and working, with the rate of traffic increasing as the day progressed. The volume of traffic suggested that things were far too comfortable for the field dets, so Comms Ops initiated a move for both FCDs. Both dets took it in their stride and in just two hours they both were back in and sending twice as much traffic as before. All trade groups worked hard throughout the night to maintain communications and sustain the volume of traffic.

Sunday morning's sunrise brought with it a visit from the clean, well-pressed and well-fed Foreman and Yeoman of Signals. **Sgt Mark Gott** gave the Yeoman and Foreman a guided tour of the MBS complex before ENDEX was called at 1000hrs. A quick tear-down, recovery and turn-around meant we were all back at Bletchley in time for tea, medals, biscuits, war stories etc...

EXERCISE WANDERING LYNX 16 - 17 JANUARY – *by LCpl Everett*

DS	**Sgt Fawcett**	
	Cpl Wooley	
	Cpl Marshall	
Students	**Sgt Walsh**	**LCpl McPhie**
	Cpl Burrows	**LCpl Mason**
	Cpl Green	**LCpl Reeve**
	Cpl Evans	**Sig Green**
	LCpl Everett	**Sig Matthews**

EX WANDERING LYNX was a 2-day navex conducted in the Peak District to practise the nav lessons learned during the current SC course. It began with the students parading at the TA centre at some ungodly hour on the morning of the 16 January. After a less than dramatic drive north, (less for **LCpl Chris Reeve**, who had a blow-out on one of his supposedly new tyres!) we arrived at Edale railway station and almost cried at the sheer magnitude of some of the supposed hills! Having broken into our two groups we set about the day's tasks.

Our group under the 'careful' supervision of **Cpl Gaz Wooley** began our epic voyage in to the unknown by attempting to reach the summit of Nether Moor, which eventually we did, having first scaled several morale-shattering false horizons. We'll be forgiven for not commenting on the breath-taking views, but all we collectively remember is pain and the strange aromas that the countryside lays claim to... Having each taken turns in navigating with the map and by descriptions of our destination from other members of the group, we were eventually to be led by our very own potential pathfinder, **Chris Reeve**. (we had managed to defy Naysmiths Rule to make a 1km trek across open flat ground, and went grudgingly on for around half an hour). **Chris** proceeded to lead us through a bog, when, being of sound mind and body, **LCpl Kenny Everett** suggested that the route might be somewhat 'iffy'. However **Cpl Ian Evans** reliably informed him 'Just run across, you'll be laughing'.

Having sunk up to his waist in the process, everyone except **Kenny** was laughing. Team spirit kicked in though when **Gaz** decided a mere 'minion trainee' wasn't worth uncoiling his rope for, so a human chain was formed to pull **Kenny** out. The day's frivolities ended with everyone returning to the interesting-smelling farm/campsite.

The objectives for the ex achieved, everyone gratefully descended on the local licensed establishment, for some decent food and a pint. **Cpl Dave Marshall** even defied Scottish ethos and plunged his ever so short arms into his amazingly deep pockets and bought a promotion round. But seriously, congratulations on the promotion **Dave**!

EXERCISE STRIKING LYNX 31 JANUARY - 2 FEBRUARY - *by LCpl Everett*

DS	**SSgt Churchwood**	
	Sgt Cleworth	
	Sgt Fawcett	
	Cpl Marshall	
Students	**Sgt Walsh**	**LCpl Reeve**
	Cpl Burrows	**Sig Green**
	Cpl Green	**Sig Matthews**
	LCpl Everett	

EX STRIKING LYNX was a three-day Mil Skills training package for the current SC course and was held at Yardley Chase. The ex was run as a training package and as a chance for the DS to see the students away from the comfy confines of the classroom, and out in the field when tired and cold and hungry... It began on the morning of Friday the 31 January, with the students waking up in Bicester to see it had been snowing nicely throughout the night. (great start!) Having arrived at the TAC, we moved out to Yardley Chase (thankfully it wasn't snowing there - it was just freezing).

The first task of the day, (having arrived at probably the only training area in Britain where digging is allowed) was to dig our shell scrapes. After much effort and two broken shovels, we managed to shift enough clay and mud to make reasonably deep shell scrapes, which would have been slightly more impressive if they weren't filling with water. But having spent the last 10 weeks licking keyboards, it was an interesting change. After lunch the real lessons began with **Sgt Cleworth** instructing us in the art of fire team manoeuvres and the types of patrols etc, all of which involved getting very cold and muddy. That night we carried out nav exercises in pairs and eventually collapsed into our sleeping bags (outside of the reservoir-esque shell scrapes) to settle into night routine (stagging on!) Unfortunately for **LCpl Kenny Everett** and **Sig Shane Matthews**, their stag managed to clash with the arrival of the snow. A couple of gibbering hours later, they were lucky enough to be on stag again when the snow stopped and the monsoon began.

The morning of day 2 was taken up with section attacks and lessons in flanking. Fortunately, enough snow was still on the ground to make getting on your belt buckles a real treat! However you can never underestimate the power of adrenaline and team spirit, as everyone gave their all. Lots of smoke and blank rounds later, the lessons were starting to sink in (with the help of a lot of shouting and instruction by **SSgt Churchwood** and **Sgt Cleworth**). There was still time for pathfinder, **LCpl Chris Reeve** to shine again by getting everyone's feet wet leading them up a water-filled gully for the assault (cheers pal, 6 more people you can strike off your friends list). After lunch more lessons were given in drills, tactics and ambushes. That evening, after **Sgt Fawcett** had instructed us in orders extraction and model building, we were expected to come up with a set of orders for a CTR that evening. However, the CTRs carried out that evening did not exactly go to plan, as we were all spotted. But the lessons had been learned. Later that evening **Sgt Cleworth** demonstrated the correct way to give orders without even needing to refer to notes or headings. These orders were for a linear ambush we were to carry out at a sparrow-fart the next morning. Having been briefed, we gratefully headed back to our harbour area for another round of loveable stags and violent shivering...

Day 3 began with the jubilant feeling that, being the last day, the pain would soon end. So at 05.20 we set off for our ambush. To the unfamiliar eye such as mine, the ambush seemed to go quite well, with everyone knowing and carrying out their role perfectly. Arriving back at the harbour area, we had a quick wash and breakfast, followed by a brief NBC phase, before moving out for some more patrolling. This led us into more section attacks and winning the firefight before advancing to contact. This was by far the most interesting phase, as it demonstrated the natural leaders, such as **Sgt Vinnie Walsh**. Everyone came through well though and gave 100% when called to do so (the raggings round brick hill finally paying off). When ENDEX was finally called, everyone hurt and was covered in scars, but no one could say they hadn't enjoyed themselves and learned loads. For the Sigs and LCpls this was especially so, as it gave a valuable insight into what's required to reach the next step of the ladder. But I'm sure no one will mind getting back to licking those keyboards for a few weeks.

CYPRUS COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (CCU)

AKROTIRI SECTION CYPRUS COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

OC	**Maj Matt Hanson**
USM	**WO2(SSM) Dave Smith**

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROJECTS

EPISKOPI – *By Lt Fi Watson*

On a sunny winter's day (well - it is Cyprus!), the Margarita Liaissidou Children's Home was visited by Santa Claus and his elf (ably played by **Cpl Ben McFaul** and **LCpl Andy Cooper**). Presents and sweets were distributed to all of the children. CCU's ongoing involvement with the Home is much appreciated. The Home cares for mentally and physically handicapped children of all ages and was founded in 1990 by **Ismene Liaissidou-Saul** in memory of her daughter.

DHEKELIA – *By LCpl Daw*

The Section have been testing their DIY skills during the refurbishment of the Xylophaghou local kindergarten school as part of their Community Relations Project. This involved the majority of the Section at some time during the hot summer, but in particular, **LCpls Rokovada, Wilson and King**, who donned coveralls, climbed ladders and generally got covered in as much paint as possible. After two months continuous hard work, the building and playground was transformed and the Section were

rewarded with a lunch as well as a song and dance show from the pupils of the School.

SSgt (FofS) Lingard presenting a Dhekelia Section Plaque to the Muktar of the Xylophaghou Community School

CCU CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

The amalgamation of 259 Sig Sqn and 12 SU RAF has really had an effect on the sporting front. In previous years, both Units had taken part in the Cyprus Services Cross-Country League with little or no success. But having both the manpower and talent of a Combined Services team, things changed for the 2002 season.

Throughout the season, both 'A' and 'B' teams put in consistently good performances, with some established competitors, some stars of the future, and some 'fat-lads out for a jog to make up the numbers'. Of the 105 males of all Units who took part in the 6-race season, only 2 managed to evade work and injury to complete all of them. They were both members of CCU, **Cpl Dougie Malcolm RAF** (established runner, tri-athlete, orienteerer) and **Sgt Kev Joyce** (fat-lad).

After the final race, hosted by JSSU (AN), came the prize giving. Normally this holds no interest for either 12 SU or 259 Sig Sqn, but this year was different. Overall, we took the majority of the awards:

1st Team	CCU 'A'.
1st 'B'Team	CCU 'B'.
2nd overall	**SSgt Chris Brown** RSigs
3rd overall	**Cpl Dougie Malcolm** RAF
5th overall	**WO2** 'Gaz' **Smith** RSigs
1st Junior	**Cpl Steve Hudson** RSigs
1st Veteran	**WO2** 'Gaz' **Smith** RSigs

On the whole, it was a fitting way for me to 'retire' as OIC Cross-Country, and a great boost to the Unit. We now look forward to the Road Race season, under the new Team Captain, **LCpl Carl Orme**.

AKROTIRI SECTION – *by Cpl Berry*

OC	**Capt Ben Psaila**
SSgt	**SSgt Danny Cain**

Christmas is always the time when people dress up and drink vast amounts to enable everyone to get into the spirit of the season. The Airfield Det function was no different. We had the biggest Santa Claus in NATO, copious amounts of punch and more prizes then the Generation Game - even down to the Cuddly Toy. With two raffles and a disco going on throughout the evening, everyone seemed to start the holiday season as they meant to carry on.

Then came the Unit Christmas Function held at the St Raphael Hotel in Limassol. This was a very ambitious affair, as it was the first time since the completion of the merger that we have had a Unit party. With **LCpl Lewis** winning £180 on the raffle, and various other prizes going to other members on the Sec, it turned out to be a worthwhile exhibition. The evening was topped off with singing from **Nick Fellgate** and a disco later on in the evening.

In order to bring in the New Year in style, a fancy dress/ karaoke party was organised. During the course of the evening we had a rendition of *Summer Nights* sung by **SSgt (FofS) Draper** and **SSgt Neil Cain**, as well as *We are Family* by a school girl and a juicy French maid. There was also table football, which built up the rivalry between the Liverpool and Everton fans in the Tp.

DHEKELIA SECTION – *by LCpl Daw*

OC	**Capt Dean Richardson**
SSgt	**SSgt Watts**

The last few months have been a very busy period for the Sec completing major project work at both the new Aghia Nikolaous Fire Station and Medical/Dental Centre. Once we completed our community relationship project, we set our sights on renovating our own Bitsa Bar, which has been an ongoing issue for a while. This was conducted under the supervision of **Cpl Smith**, who worked tirelessly at sitting down and telling other people what to do, and **SSgt Watts**, who decided to pick the most outlandish colours possible for the walls. Eventually the Bar was finished in time for an inaugural BBQ and the presentation of the Unit hockey trophy (to Dhekelia Section!).

Not content on painting and rebuilding, **Cpl Dorwood** decided he needed more practice at drilling and proceeded to unscrew all the old 259 Sig Sqn signs and replace them with the new colourful CCU signs.

The Sec has also been kept busy on the sporting front with the final event of the Dhekelia Garrison Minor Units Competition. This turned out to be Cross-Country and since it was almost a foregone conclusion that we had already won the overall trophy, we thought we had better turn up out of politeness. As it happened we stormed home and walked away with the overall trophy. Well done to **Cpl Molden** for finishing the race and being selected to receive the trophy from the Garrison Comd.

With Christmas fast approaching, the Sec were all looking forward to a couple of nights out. This started off with the Christmas bash at a local Russian-run hotel arranged by our hosts **Cpl Matt Williams** and **LCpl Becky Joyce.** Everyone turned up in their best bib and tucker except for the seniors, who apparently missed the memo saying it was formal. More was to come the following night, when we had a Games Night, arranged by **Cpls Molden** and **Hadley** in our newly redecorated bar.

We welcome back **Sig DK Davies** and **LCpl** 'Vinny' **Vinten** from their excursions in the Falklands. Also a surprise return from **Cpl Lane**. It seems that the stress of his latest course in Blandford has made him lose all his flowing hair. A warm welcome goes to **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Jordan**, who has been transferred down from Akrotiri to fill a post in our new Planning Cell. Farewell then to **Sgt Cecil**. We wish you all the best. There must be something in the water, because **SSgt Mick Lingard**, **LCpl Piers Daw** and **LCpl Jim Wright** all are proud feathers of baby girls. Congratulations to everyone. We welcome the new arrivals to Dhekelia Sec.

QM DEPARTMENT

QM	**Capt Dave Stachini**
SQMS	**SSgt Paul Jordan**

When CCU sprang into life, the department found itself running at a million mph. The signs all had to be changed, the stores for the amalgamation parade had to be demanded, and then the Annual Battle (Trg) Camp had to be organised (involving the majority of the Dept in one way or an other, whether instructing or doing re-sup). As usual the Dept's role in the Camp went without a hitch. Well done to everyone for all their hard work. Not long after the Camp, when all the loan stores had been returned, we were once again demanding stores for the 12 SU Walkdown. Immediately after that, there was the first ever Christmas Light up of a Dodge. The MT has re-thought the transport requisitions to help the new Unit gain transport at the drop of a hat. **Sgt Ruff** and his loyal side-kick **Cpl Lee Alderson** do this job with the greatest of ease and have brought together the two tpt sections well.

Members of the Dept also have a variety of secondary duties. **Sgt Karl Duncan**, the Rugby Club Bar Manager, will be losing his partner in crime, **Sgt Sean Hyland**, the former Rugby Club Property Member. He will be helping out with the Jimmy Ross Club (the Unit's new joint bar) in future. Also well done to **Sgt Kev Joyce**, OIC athletics, cross-country and road running on all his successes during the year.

We would like to welcome the new QM, **Capt Dave Stachini**, and we hope he enjoys his tour here. (He has actually been here 8 months, but wire notes haven't been done in a while). We also say a warm welcome to the new SQMS, **SSgt Paul Jordan** and his family. We hope you enjoy your stay in Cyprus. A belated farewell and congratulations on your promotion goes to **WO2 Wayne Hamlett**. We hope you, **Stephanie** and baby **Zoe** enjoy your time in Wales. Secondly we say goodbye to **Sgt Sean Hyland's** store companion, **Mr Chris Chrysanthou**, who is retiring after 32 years loyal service to the forces in the SBA. The whole Dept wish **Chris** and his family a happy retirement.

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT SIERRA LEONE

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY ADVISORY AND TRAINING TEAM (SIERRA LEONE)

CO	**Lt Col Matt Helm**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) T Comyns**

The RSigs presence remains in Sierra Leone under the guise of the International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT) with 7 personnel occupying posts in the Republic Sierra Leone's Armed Forces (RSLAF) as part of the Joint Communications Unit.

The Ops Team continues to plan (allegedly) and conduct deployments of JCU personnel down to Coy level in support of continuing ops to stabilise Sierra Leone and guard the rather porous borders. The YofS, **WO1 George Hume**, tries to persuade operators not to change frequencies just because they prefer another one. The FoS, **W02 Paul Hubble**, tries to magic bits of new equipment from nowhere, and get broken kit repaired somewhere. Luckily, the US Govt. has been most generous recently, and 3(UK) Div have been helping with repairs to some of our donated UK eqpt (surprisingly surplus Clansman kit is not any more reliable when shipped without tech support, spares or test equipment to equatorial Africa). To aid them, **SSgt Ian Thorburn** assists with all training matters, and is delighted to be back where he can show off his Morse skills, while **SSgt Dave Alderson** offers advice to the fledgling TM Tp while moonlighting as plumber, electrician, typing tutor and internet café proprietor. Overseeing it all the CO, **Lt Col Matt Helm**, and RSM, **WO1 Tim Comyns**, preside over a sigs regt of a previous age.

Also out in Sierra Leone are **Col Paul Oldfield**, who keeps himself busy at the MOD and supervises the keenly contested RSigs West African 'grudge match' Golf League, and **Lt Col Richard Wilson**, who is busy developing some advanced variant of BOWMAN for the RSLAF up at MOD level, while we at JCU eagerly await the opportunity of actually implementing some of the technological marvels he proposes buying! Between naps, **Major Harry Ross** helps run the J6 Office in the joint HQ. Recent departures include **Maj Mervyn Johnston** and **SSgt Trev Austin,** while we await the imminent arrival of **Maj Jonathon Turner**, who will replace **Lt Col Helm** after 2 years in Sierra Leone.

G6 DIVISION HQ ARRC

REUNION MARKS THE CLOSURE OF THE AIRFIELD COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING OFFICE

The closure of the last RAF Airfield in Germany (RAF Brüggen) was completed in January 2002 and hence signalled the end of the role for the Airfield Communications Planning Office (ACPO) based in Rheindahlen. To mark the occasion, a reunion dinner was held in Rheindahlen on Friday 29 November 2002, allowing past members to meet and recall the good old days. But most important of all it was an excellent opportunity to say a final thank you to the long serving civilian staff. In particular, 21 years ago, **Mrs Michelle Matthew**, just barely out of her teens, started as the first ACPO clerk and progressed to running the drawing office. She leaves as a fully qualified draughtsperson and has taken up a similar post in UKSC (G) G4. **Mrs Lyn Fadzilah** was a new clerk almost 10 years ago and replaced **Michelle**, who then became the office draughtsperson. **Lyn** has also moved to a new post in UKSC (G) in G4.

ACPO began in 1981 from within 21 Sig Regt (AF) and was responsible for the co-ordination and planning of all the Signals works services on the overseas RAF main fighter airfields. These included the RAF bases at Brüggen, Wildenrath, Gütersloh, Geilenkirchen and Laarbruch in Germany. We also covered RAF Decimomannu in Sardinia, RAF Ascension Island and later RAF Falkland Islands (Mount Pleasant Airfield).

Beyond this traditional role, the real expertise and worth of ACPO grew during OP RESOLUTE in Bosnia in 1996, when they were tasked to cable and wire up the telecomms requirements in Split and for HQ ARRC in Sarajevo. The recognition that ACPO did deliver a telecomms cable and wiring solution in peace support operations, as well as for largescale field exercises became an essential asset to HQ LAND. This became even more apparent with the contribution ACPO made to HQ 1 Sig Bde and HQ ARRC during OP JOINT GUARDIAN in Kosovo. Project planning, resourcing equipment, materials and manpower, from the beginning (concept stage) to the final provision, ready-for-use by HQ staff, and the capability of reacting to changing priorities and time-frames were ACPOs greatest achievements. Working with reduced project time-frames (compared with the traditional elongated Signal Works Service processes) became the key factor when ACPO was tasked to deliver the cable network solution for the commercialisation of the Balkans in support of 11 Sig Bde.

Reunion of OC ACPOs
Front row (L-R) Capt (TOT) (Ret'd) Roy Lund, Mrs Lyn Fadzilah, Mrs Michelle Matthew, Maj (TOT) (Ret'd) Cliff Webb, Maj (TOT) (Ret'd) Tony McMullen
Back row (L-R) Maj (TOT) John Oakes, Maj (TOT) Jim Leggate - The last OC ACPO, Maj (TOT) 'Noddy' Baugh

Surprisingly, even today in the Balkans, wiring and cable projects continue endlessly in response to the reconfiguration of HQs and relocation of units. The role and requirement for an infrastructure project office has been accepted by the communicators in the Corps as a reactive deployable function, and continues with the Communications Project Office, which has been formed in 10 Sig Regt based in Corsham. (WEF 1 April 02)

Behind the ACPO office were the heroes of the telecomms cable networks, the telecomms and installation techs, whose skills with traditional copper and fibre cables and with the installation of conduit and ducting work, realised the ACPO plans. During peak periods, as many as 130 of these inst techs and telemechs (with their technical language of Cat 3, Cat 5 RJ connectors and structural wiring to JSP 480) were employed directly by ACPO.

In all, the ACPO office at any time consisted of only the OC (TOT), two telemech project planners and the two civilian staff, and drew on the skill set of insttechs directly from Brüggen Tps or from across RSigs. In fact ACPO began to get the reputation of being the travel office and employment bureau for the inst techs.

The reunion dinner encouraged all the past members to meet and close another door in the history of change. During the dinner, past OCs gave an account of their time and achievements during their tenure in ACPO, and this information has been recorded in a final ACPO Newsletter alongside past photographs from over the many years.

As a matter of record and to jog a few memories, the roll call of ACPO OCs is as follows:

1981-83	**Capt (TOT) Roy Lund**
1983-86	**Maj (TOT) Cliff Webb**
1986-88	**Maj (TOT) Tony McMullen**
1988-91	**Maj (TOT) Brian Billsberry MBE**
1991-93	**Capt (TOT) Russ Davey**
1993-95	**Capt (TOT) Paul Gaffney**
1995-98	**Maj (TOT) John Oakes**
1998-2001	**Maj (TOT) Noel Baugh MBE**
2001-02	**Maj (TOT) Jim Leggate**

The following spent their tour with ACPO as FofS's.

W02 (FofS) Dave Bowers
W02 (FofS) Joe Aquilina
W02 (FofS) Colin Turner
W02 (FofS) Bruce Wyllie (Now Maj (TOT) OC CPO Corsham)
W02 (FofS) Dave Stewart
W02 (FofS) Russ Lifton
W02 (FofS) Paul Sweeney
SSgt (FofS) Pete Dowdall
W02 (FofS) Guy Lewendon

Telemech Planners:

W02 Mark Bullivant.
SSgt Mick Reid
SSgt Brian Parkhill
SSgt Steve Hilton
SSgt Kev East
SSgt Jim Beecham
SSgt Graham Hillhouse
SSgt Dave Campbell
SSgt John Davis
SSgt Steve Dobson
SSgt Steve Gerrish
SSgt Andy Elliot
SSgt Pete Atkinson
SSgt Steve Brealey MBE
SSgt Adrian 'Jonah' **Jones**
SSgt Sean 'Taff' **Bryant**
SSgt Len Chapman
SSgt Mark Sherwood
SSgt Dave Laverie
SSgt 'Bing' **Crosby**
SSgt Billy Lilburn

Draughtspersons:

Sig Jake Jacobs
Mrs Michelle Matthew

Clerks:

Mrs Lyn Fadzilah
Mrs Donna Worrall
Mrs Lisa Coltman

NEWS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH

2 SQUADRON ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SIGNALS

OC **Maj Karyn Te Moana**
RSM **WO1 Nigel Shields**

EXERCISE HERMES RANGER – *By Cpl Blair Fairbairn and LCpl Renee Nattrass*

EX HERMES RANGER was a minor tactics exercise held 18 - 30 November 2002 by 2 Sig Sqn out at Santoft Forest in the Manawatu area. The ex was used to establish and develop det level contact drills and initiative. Three personnel from the Ohakea RNZAF Comms Flight also joined the exercise.

In-camp preparation was conducted at Linton Camp starting on 18 November. Patrol comds received individual orders and then supervised the battle preparation of their respective patrols, which comprised five to six people. This included stores requisitions, weapons and ammunition demands, patrol techniques, individual field gear preparation, briefs, infiltration routes and cache locations.

All personnel were allocated duties in their respective patrol groups. Each sec was given tasks throughout the exercise with the emphasis on completing the task with the limitations of time, rations and having an enemy party, greater in size than they were, against them.

Tasks included tactical moves by day and night while on foot, conducting OPs, patrolling by day and night, clearing patrols on foot and mounted, immediate reaction force (IRF) for EXCON and local static security of the EXCON /HQ area.

An escape and evasion exercise was conducted over two days and one night. The hunter force initiated an ambush by Scott's Ferry and all personnel, with just their webbing and rifle, were given a grid reference (checkpoint) they needed to get to before getting their next orders. There were a total of 10 checkpoints covering a straight-line distance of around 30km from Scott's Ferry to the camping ground in Koitiata. The enemy party, who comprised personnel from Signals Platoon, 1st Battalion Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (1RNZIR) captured several people. This phase of the exercise was designed to test mental strength and initiative. The final (and for some the most daunting) phase of the exercise involved a unit battle efficiency test (BET). This was a 30km pack march conducted in patrol groups and finishing at Scott's Ferry. The majority of personnel completed this gruelling challenge within the allocated time of 10 hours. Luckily the weather was predominately overcast which provided a little more comfort to all involved.

As patrol comds, the biggest lesson we learned was not to take anything for granted. Although we submitted our demands on time and ordered enough stores for the duration of the exercise, there was always something that we had missed. For example, one patrol comd ordered 1500 rounds for his C-9 but no links so the gun was useless to him. Another ordered an AN/PRC 77 set but never wrote 'complete to CES' so he received his radio with no antenna, battery or handset.

When we arrived at Santoft forest we still hadn't been issued our 24hr ration packs so we sent our 2IC's away to inquire about some. **Cpl Fitzgerald** quickly clutched them up and ten minutes later they arrived back with a cardboard box and a sack. Inside was a live chook, a cabbage and some potatoes. With a blunt pocket knife and a dozen hexamine tablets we did our best to enjoy our meal that night. After proving to the DS that we had finished the chook they then decided to issue us with our ration packs. It turned out we didn't need them so quickly because on day three we were still eating cabbage!

A chook about to meet its end in the noble cause of feeding the patrol

All in all the exercise was run extremely professionally by the exercise coordinator, **Cpl James Fitzgerald**, the 2 Sig Sqn Trg NCO, with each phase of the ex executed as planned. Personnel gained much knowledge and experience and many personal goals were achieved.

TWO SIDES OF THE COIN - 2 SIG SQN LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN THE RUAHINES RANGES – *by Sig Kylie Jenkins*

It all started at 0800hrs on the 11 February 03, when six groups consisting of male and female service personnel piled on to the Unimogs, ready to start the challenge of tramping through the Ruahine Ranges. As we arrived at our drop-off point, there was a look of amazement on people's faces as they caught their first glimpse of the mountains and how high they were.

Our group put their packs on and we were away, although everyone in the group seemed a bit unsure of what to expect. We came to our first posted sign after an hour into the tramp. The sign read 'Tauapo River, three hours' so the morale of our sec picked up as we were all aware the sign was made for civilian personnel. Being soldiers, we assumed we would be able to negotiate the track in two hours. When we reached the top of the trig station we had two choices to take. One was walking along the ridgeline following the track; the other was to walk down into a re-entrant and along a stream. We chose option number two, which we found out later was not the easiest choice.

After a three-hour tramp down a steep hill that involved threading and weaving ourselves through the close native bush, we finally arrived to something that resembled a stream. We trekked about thirty minutes and came to our first obstacle, a waterfall, a waterfall that was too high to jump down. Our only option was to find another way above and around the waterfall. By the time we had done this, it was getting dark and became time to set up our overnight location. We managed only about 2 hours sleep in a very uncomfortable environment.

On day two, packs were on at 0830hrs and the sec was ready to press on. We made our way back down to the stream only to

The patrol and its Unimogs

embark on another waterfall escapade. By this point we were experts in the scaling of waterfalls. Our instincts told us to climb around the waterfall rather than risk people slipping down the cliff side.

After a few more obstacles (which included chest height river crossings, sliding on our posteriors down the rocky cliff side because they were too steep to walk down, and a three hour uphill trek that involved an hour on hands and knees, and sometimes stomachs, due to the sheer gradient of the hill) we reached the summit. Here we found we were now 'back on track'. We tramped another hour when the roof of a hut came into sight. This had a huge positive effect on the morale of the sec, because we knew that the poor conditions we slept in the previous night were not going to be experienced this night.

That night at the hut we were made aware that a member of another sec was carrying an injury and was unable to continue with the tramp. This meant our sec was to carry an extra three packs. After a 2-hour tramp downhill we arrived at what was to be our final destination. The remainder of the group arrived a couple of hours later we then dispersed to the local Returned Serviceman's Association (RSA) for a few social activities.

In closing, a fun time was had by all, our sec was glad that, even though faced with adversity on many occasions, we never lost our way, or anybody. On the whole, situations such as these are something to learn from for future reference in how to take the best actual route. The sec would like to thank our DS for stepping in and taking over when they did. Without this affirmative action we would not be the soldiers experienced in, climbing, sliding, crawling and wading that we are today.

A WALK WITH A FALL - 2 SIG SQN'S LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN THE RUAHINE RANGES - *by Sig Jase Watson*

It was a beautiful summer morning, typical of the Manawatu Region. The air was fresh and not a cloud could be seen in the sky. At 0800 hours on 11 February 03 with all the pre-exercise checks done earlier that morning, we all piled on the trucks ready for the practical phase of leadership training. It was quite a distance away in most people's minds. For most, all they could think about was lunchtime and all the good it would bring.

All six secs arrived at their own drop-off points and each went its own separate way. Some we would see on our journey and others not until the end of the walk, with a million and one stories to tell.

We were one of the lucky secs. We didn't have to cross rivers up to chest height, and we didn't have to bash our way through the heavy native bush on the side of the mountain range.

On the first day we had a reasonably good track to walk on, but at times the track became over-grown or non-existent. Overall it was a relatively good first day for the sec, and as always morale was very high. As we saw the first day's end in sight - a hut, we all breathed a sigh of happiness. Some civilian trampers had already occupied the hut, therefore we moved around and made our bed spaces for the night amongst the small clearing that surrounded the one room abode. With the mountain ranges surrounding us, the sight was beautiful. We had compulsory tasks we were supposed to achieve, but decided to leave them for the second night, as they seemed too hard after such a long day's walking. However these never eventuated, for tomorrow would bring an unforeseen task that took priority.

Day two brought an uphill climb. Again morale was high as always. The morning was crisp with slight dew and the feeling of another hot day to come. We had a climb of over 700mtrs through nice native primary growth until we hit the top of the mountain range, where only tussock survived in an ever-changing climate. We stopped for lunch with the other sec. They had a person with an injured knee therefore their pace had dropped off slightly. After lunch we said our good-byes and let the other sec go on ahead. We were approaching the next hut in good time, when one of our personnel fell into a hole and tore part of her Achilles tendon. Right there and then the decision was made to get help in the form of a helicopter. The person was then carried to a suitable spot for the helicopter to land. However, the helicopter was not to be, so, in the heat of the day, we made a stretcher out of steel rods that we found, a hootchie (army shelter), bungee and some other materials that we had on us. After a few hours of hard slog, with help from another sec, the RSM, and a lot of stops, we made it to the hut. The night was spent preparing a more suitable improvised stretcher out of an old camping stretcher with a few personal touches.

After a hot feed and a good night's sleep day three began. The morning brought with it a beautiful sunrise. For the next few hours it was our job to get us and our injured mate off the ranges and down to EXCON's location. Some of the other secs took off early with our packs, and other people had come from the bottom to help with the carrying of the casualty. It was only about 2 to 3 kms to the end, but it was a very rugged track to the bottom. After a few hours of hard slog, at times slipping and sliding we arrived at the bottom. Here we were treated with lunch and cool water. Our injured mate was evacuated to the Linton Camp Medical Treatment Centre. The rest of us waited for another couple of hours for the trucks, and once they arrived we all piled on once again, which ended our tramp through the beautiful scenery.

For non-Antipodean readers, the exercise areas described in these stories, the Ruahine Ranges, are about 170 kms north-east of Wellington; 'tramping' is the Kiwi equivalent of tabbing; and if you don't know what a chook is, you had better book on EX LONGLOOK to find out – Bernard Redshaw, Editor

SPORT

CRICKET

ROYAL SIGNALS CRICKET CLUB (RSCC) SUMMER 2002

After coming third, in what turned out a to be close finish in the end of the 2001 Famous Grouse Merit Corps Cricket Competition, the focus for the RSCC was on winning it in 2002. This was not going to be easy, as both opening bowlers were deployed, **Lt Alex Senneck** to Sierra Leone and **Sgt Hillary Glean** to the Falkland Islands.

The first match of the season was against the Chairman's Select XI. The Chairman of RSCC, **Lt Col Roddy Nicholson**, this year managed to recruit a couple of Army players into his side, namely the Army skipper, **SSgt Nick Palmer** and **Sgt Steve Hole** (REME). The Chairman opened the batting with the Secretary, **Capt (Retd) Dave Kenyon**. Between them the openers put on 41 runs (The Chairman scoring 35 of them) before **Capt (Retd) Dave Kenyon** was brilliantly stumped by **LCpl Keith Ford** off the bowling of **SSgt Smuj Smith**. Despite being dropped a few times, the Chairman went on to score 38. After the good start, the Chairman's side struggled and could only score 148 all out. Without a strong bowling attack, defending a score of 148 was difficult and in the end resulted in the Chairman's side be beaten by 5 wickets. Both sides thoroughly enjoyed this match with cricket being the real winner at the end of the day.

The match against the AGC on 5 Jun 02, saw two of our Army players **LCpls Ford** and **Houghton** score an impressive 84 and 66 respectively to steer the score to 255 for 8 off our 50 overs. With the dark clouds looming nearby, the AGC were struggling at 86 for 5, with the damage being done by **Cpl Johnson**. As it started to rain, the skipper, **WO1 Paul Gardner**, came on and did a few Skeg O'Dare impressions to push the overs bowled quickly onto 25. As the heavens opened it was called a day and victory went to the RSCC for their higher run rate.

The following day saw the Royal Marines visit Blandford for a friendly 40-over match. The RSCC scored 209 for 3 after our allotted overs with that man **Houghton** scoring a century (109). Along the way he was assisted by the skipper, **WO1 Paul Gardner**, who was looking good at 81 not out. The Marines were doing well until a double bowling change from the skipper brought on **Maj Stu Boyne** and **SSgt Smuj Smith**. The Marines ended up in all sorts of trouble and were all out for 168, with **SSgt Smuj Smith** taking 4 for 28.

On 11 July 02 the AMS CC arrived at Blandford and after winning the toss, wanted to make a game of it by putting the RSCC into bat. 338 runs later, including a splendid 137 from **LCpl Keith Ford**, saw the innings close after our allotted overs. The AMS were then promptly dismissed for 116, with **Cpl Steve Fox** taking 3 for 22.

The RLC CC arrived on 22 July 02 also hoping to make a game of it, only to find **Lt Alex Senneck** standing poised ready for action, complete with a brew and no suntan, having just returned from Sierra Leone. Unfortunately, the RLC lost the toss and were put into bat. From the off they were struggling, finding it very hard to get the ball off the square. After 43 overs the RLC were all out for 143 with **Lt Alex Senneck** taking 4 for 11, welcome back, **Alex**. The match was finished off quickly thanks to **LCpl Stu Houghton** scoring a rapid 66 to help the RSCC onto a score of 144 for 2 after 26 overs.

The next day the team travelled to Arborfield for the match against the REME. Once again, the skipper won the toss and put the opposition into bat. 39 overs later the REME were dispatched back to the pavilion scoring 129 all out, thanks to excellent bowling spells from **Sig Martin Cull** (4 for 23) and **Lt Alex Senneck** 3 for 39. With **Lt Alex Senneck** scoring an unbeaten 67, the RSCC once again wasted no time in scoring the required runs for victory.

In what turned out to be the last match of the season (thanks mainly to the rain) the RA paid a visit to Blandford. Having been put into bat, the RSCC scored 221 all out after 49 overs with **LCpl Keith Ford** scoring a splendid 74 along the way. The RA also found it difficult to get the ball off the square and ended up all out for 98 after 40 overs, with **Cpl Lee Dyson** finishing the innings off and taking 4 for 25, along with a nice set of furry white rabbit ears. After all of the points were added up, at the end of the season, the RSCC became winners of the Famous Grouse Merit Trophy for the second time in three years.

After an excellent season for the club, winning the Famous Grouse Merit Trophy and remaining unbeaten for the season, we are all now looking forward to the forthcoming tour to South Africa in November. On a different note, at the end of the season we also said farewell to the club's secretary, **Capt (Retd) Dave Kenyan**. A big thank you for all of the hard work you put in over the years.

SSgt Smuj Smith, Secretary, RSCC, receives the Famous Grouse Merit Trophy from Maj Gen Lythe, Director, Army Sports Control Board

ROYAL SIGNALS CRICKET CLUB RESULTS SUMMER 2002

RSCC vs AGC CC at Blandford on 5 June 02

RSCC 255 for 8 after 50 overs	AGC CC 86 for 5 after 25 overs
Ford 84	**Eldridge** 39
Houghton 66	**Johnson** 4 for 10

Match abandoned (rain). RSCC won on higher run rate.

RSCC vs RM CC at Blandford on 6 June 02

RSCC 209 for 3 after 40 overs	RM CC 168 all out after 37 overs
Houghton 109	**Crofts** 56
Gardner 81	**Smith** 4 for 28

RSCC won by 41 runs

RSCC vs AMS CC at Blandford on 11 July 02

RSCC 338 for 5 after 50 overs	AMS CC 116 all out after 40 overs
Ford 137	**Fox** 62
Winfield 65	**Fox** 3 for 22

RSCC won by 222 runs

RSCC vs RLC CC at Blandford on 22 July 02

RLC 143, all out after 43 overs	RSCC 144 for 2 after 26 overs
Roberts 57	**Houghton** 66
Senneck 40	**Senneck** 4 for 11

RSCC won by 8 wickets

REME CC vs RSCC at Arborfield on 23 July 02

REME CC 129, all out after 39 overs	RSCC 132 for 3 after 25 overs
Heardman 45,	**Senneck** 67
Cull 4 for 23	**Senneck** 3 for 32

RSCC won by 7 wickets

RSCC vs RA CC at Blandford on 25 July 02

RSGC 221 all out after 49 overs — RA CC 98 all out after 40 overs
Ford 74 — **Dyson** 4 for 25
Cull 59 — **Pierce** 3 for 39
RSCC won by 123 runs.

Matches Cancelled

RSCC vs RE CC (cancelled rain) – result draw
RSCC vs RAC CC (conceded by RAC) – result RSCC win
Infantry vs RSCC (cancelled) – result draw

RSCC BATTING AND BOWLING STATISTICS SUMMER 2002

RSCC Bowling - 2002

Name	Overs	Runs	Maidens	Wickets
HUDSON	42	152	7	5
JOHNSON	10	31	1	4
FOX	15	59	1	2
SMITH	6.3	28	0	4
GARDNER	37	143	4	4
BOYNE	8	21	1	2
THUBRON	21	58	6	1
BINDER	22.4	57	5	4
CULL	33.5	67	11	7
DYSON	9.3	25	2	4

RSCC Batting 2002

Name	Innings	Runs	50	100	Not Out
GARDNER	5	127	1	0	2
WINFIELD	3	78	1	0	0
FORD	5	318	2	1	1
CULL	4	112	1	0	1
HOUGHTON	5	253	2	1	1
FOX	3	94	1	0	0
SULLIVAN	3	53	0	0	1
SENNECK	2	107	1	0	1
ATHERTON	1	5	0	0	0
WHITEHEAD	1	2	0	0	0
BINDER	1	1	0	0	0
DYSON	1	0	0	0	0
CASSWELL	2	6	0	0	1
KELLY	1	15	0	0	0
HUDSON	1	0	0	0	1
BOYNE	1	10	0	0	1
SMITH	1	11	0	0	0
JOHNSON	2	5	0	0	1

ROYAL SIGNALS CRICKET CLUB
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TOUR 2002

With another successful cricket season behind us, having won The Famous Grouse Merit Corps Trophy, The Royal Signals Cricket Club (RSCC) went on tour to the Republic of South Africa (RSA) from 10 24 November 02. This tour replaced the Australia 2001 tour, which had to be cancelled. The tour was split into in two parts, Week 1 in Pretoria and Week 2 in Cape Town. A touring party of 15, consisting of 14 players and 1 umpire were taken.

Prior to departure, pre-tour nets were held at Blandford Camp, enabling the squad to catch up on any gossip from one another and swing a few lamps. It also allowed us to realise that skipper, **WO I Paul Gardner** may be losing his sight, claiming he could not see the ball in the background after getting bowled first ball in the first nets session. The glasses have been ordered skip, honest!.

The squad flew out from Heathrow on 10 November 02 arriving in Johannesburg (Jo'burg) the following day. On arrival we were met by our host, **Lt Col JP Smith**, OC RSA School of Signals. After a short road move from Jo'burg to Centurion (a suburb of Pretoria) we arrived, very tired and weary, at the Centurion Lake Hotel, the squad base for Week 1. The hotel had a cricket theme to it, which included a bar called 'Stumps' and a restaurant called 'Lords'. The bedrooms were all en-suite and each had a unique cricket theme, which on closer inspection related to pictures of the local wildlife (ducks!!) on the walls. After a short rest, the squad enjoyed a nets session at the Super Sports Cricket Ground indoor cricket school (Test Match ground). This had been arranged by the RSA Signals. This was followed by an after nets 'Meet and Greet' function at the RSA Military Officers Club, allowing the squad to meet several key personalities in the RSA military and also our hosts.

On Day 2 we were taken on a tour of Pretoria (The Jacaranda City) by **Lynn Fordred**, the General's PA. Sites visited included the Union Buildings (Parliament), the RSA equivalent of Sandhurst and the SAFI (NAAFI). At a local market, **LCpl Scott Wallace** decided to purchase a South African pace stick, apparently for use later in his career. This was followed by a visit to the Menlyn Mall, the largest shopping mall in the Southern Hemisphere.

Day 3, Wednesday 13 November RSCC played its first match against Sinoville CC (a local civilian side) at Sinoville. The temperature was in excess of 36 degrees, and after winning the toss, Sinoville elected to bat. This proved to be a match-winning decision as they put on 362 for 5 for their 50 overs. However, **Sig Martin Cull** did manage to collect an international scalp, that of **Nester Bosman** (the RSA Indoor Capt) for 0. RSCC experienced a superior bowling attack and were struggling from the off. Having tried to hold out for as long as possible, we were eventually all out for 111 after 44 overs. However RSCC did win the after-match entertainment thanks to **Sgt H Glean**.

The following day, Thursday 14 November, RSCC travelled to the Wonderboom Military Base, where we played the RSA Signals for The Jimmy Cup in a temperature of 42 degrees. RSCC was captained by **LCpl Keith Ford**, as **WO1 Gardner** was still on the injured list. RSA Signals won the toss and elected to bat. They scored 275 all out after 49 overs, with **LCpl Joe Binder** putting in a fine bowling performance of 3 for 30 off 10 overs and **Cpl Lee Dyson** eventually finding out how to use the facilities. Fine batting performances of 84 from **LCpl Keith Ford** and 92 from **Sig Paul Atherton** eventually led to an RSCC victory after an exciting last ball finish.

Day 5 of the tour saw the squad visit the Super Sport Cricket Ground for a second time. This time we were spectators in the 2nd Test Match between South Africa and Sri Lanka. A most enjoyable day out, and if the opening batsman for Sri Lanka had been out first ball it would have been better, although the Tour Manager **SSgt Smuj Smith** might have been asked to leave the ground for severe Duck Call abuse!!

On Day 6, Saturday 16 November, RSCC played the Pretoria Defence CC at the Pretoria Military Sports Club. **WOI Paul Gardner** won the toss and put the opposition in to bat. Pretoria Defence CC scored 173 all off 38 ovens, with **LCpl Scott Wallace** taking 4 for 32. RSCC won the match with 4 wickets intact, thanks to solid batting from **Sig Martin Cull** and **Sig Danny Rees**, both scoring 42.

After an internal flight from Jo'burg to Cape Town, the squad arrived at our base for Week 2, The City Lodge, on The Victoria and Albert Waterfront. Table Mountain is very close to Cape Town, so on Day 8 we all made the climb, albeit by cable car, to the summit. The view at the top can only be described as amazing. Afterwards some players carried on walking, led by **Maj Chris Whitehead** (who also had a map but didn't use it), visiting Signal Hill and of course a nearby beach.

On Day 9, Tuesday 19 November, our fourth match was played against Claremont CC at Constantine Sport Club. Winning the toss, RSCC put Claremont CC into bat. After 39 overs, Claremont were all out for 183. At 96 for 4, things were looking pretty good for RSCC, but following a serious batting collapse, we were all out for 108. The squad had the next 2 days off. This was planned to let the players go off and experience the sights of Cape Town on their own. Activities included tandem free-fall parachuting (**Cpl Lee Dyson** actually did jump), a 1 day safari to a local game park, haggling at the market, a helicopter tour and sailing. Arrangements were also made for the squad to watch Western Province vs Eastern Province in a day/night cricket match from the Members Pavilion.

The last cricket match of the tour was played on Friday 22 November against Groote Drakenstein CC (GDCC), at the Groote Drakenstein Games Club. The ground was set in the countryside amongst vineyards and against the backdrop of a number of mountain ranges. In what turned out to be a very social 40 over match, RSCC were told that the visiting side always bats first, so we did. Yet another good innings from **Sig Paul Atherton** (89 not out) saw RSCC reach 185 for 4 off 40 overs. After a light salad snack, GDCC could only make 130 for 8 off their 40 overs. The main damage was caused by **LCpl Scott Wallace** taking 3 for 5 off 4 overs. After the match, **Cpl Karl Casswell** announced that he was retiring from Corps Cricket. A big TFC to you and also a thank you for all of the hard work put in over the years.

On the day before leaving, the squad spent the day relaxing and souvenir hunting. In the evening, the end of tour dinner was held at the exquisite seafood restaurant Baia.

Then, on 24 November the squad departed Cape Town and flew via Jo'burg to London Heathrow, where we arrived safe and well 15 hrs later.

This was a well balanced tour, which allowed the squad to experience cricket played in a completely different environment. The standard of opposition was varied and in some cases a lot higher than ours, which will be of benefit to us all and we should learn from it. We were able to see the more focussed attitude of the RSA in Pretoria whilst the more relaxed and tourist attitude was found in Cape Town. With that said, wherever we played and regardless of our opposition, we were welcomed with open arms and hosted very well, both on and off the pitch. At the end of the day, from this there is only one winner, and that is cricket.

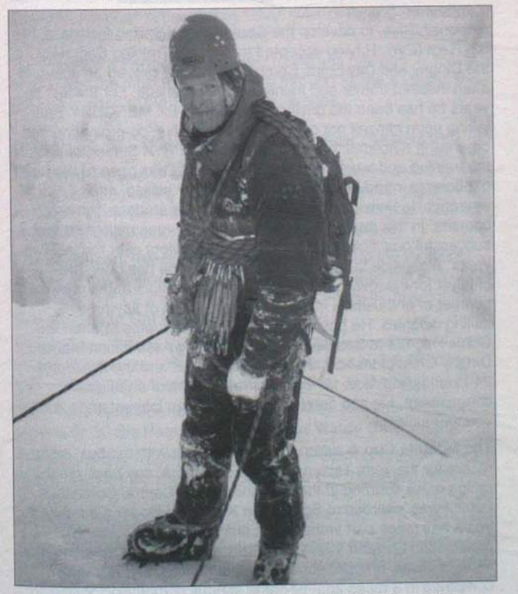
The tour was planned with cricket in mind, not just on the pitch but off the pitch as well. The success of the tour though was not just down to the admin and planning. The players also played a key role, both on and off the pitch. By adopting the right attitude throughout the tour, all players contributed to its success making it a pleasure to be part of and organise. Without doubt, the efforts of the RSA Military and in particular the efforts of **Lt Col J P Smith** and **WO1 E F Kahn** made the tour work, and we thank them. RSCC would also like to thank the following sponsors: The Army Sports Lottery, The Royal Signals Games Club, dataworkforce and Meggitt Defence Systems Ltd.

ARMY MOUNTAINEERING ASSOCIATION NEW YEAR MEET

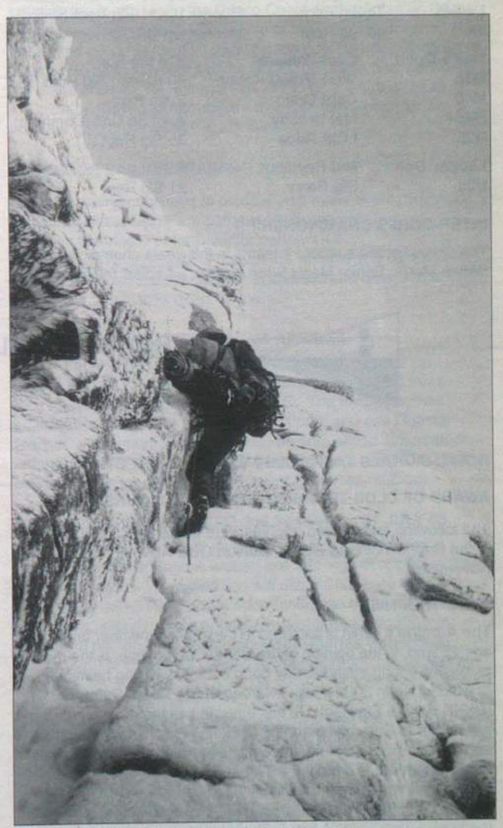
- by Maj Tarquin Shipley

Whilst most people were recovering from the excesses of Christmas, four RSigs members of the AMA were heading for the frozen wastelands of the Scottish Highlands to attend the Association's New Year Meet. **Maj Tarquin Shipley** (RSS), **Capt Paul Randell** (4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn), **Capt Cath Stephens** (280 Sig Sqn) **and Lt Katie Hanniford** (21 Sig Regt (AS)) were all looking for some good climbing and traditional Scottish hospitality during the week. The Meet, organised by **Sgt John Belsham**, 17CTT, was based in the well known Norwegian Lodge, at the base of the Cairngorms, and was well attended by thirty AMA members of all Arms and Services (Regular and TA).

Capt Cath Stephens was introduced to Scottish winter climbing from fair weather alpine climbing. This involved her climbing some nice routes (she did keep asking for harder climbing). After the first day's climbing, she borrowed a decent sized rucksack before departing to the shops to get 'some decent gloves'. Whilst **Capt Paul Randell's** self preservation skills were in good order, he kept finding the easy climbing and spent a lot of time mumbling under his breath about micronavigation and quality mountain days for his JSMEL(W) assessment (good luck mate!). **Lt Katie Hanniford**



Maj Tarquin Shipley just glad to be out of the classroom



Capt Cath Stephens enjoying Ewan Buttress Grade III

did some sterling trail breaking through thigh deep snow, whilst the rest of us (older and wiser) stumbled behind her muttering about 'ladies first' and 'beauty before age'. For me, the 1hr+ walk into the cliffs seemed to get longer every day and my bag seemed to get heavier. After much ribbing (constantly being called 'Retro Man') I might even spend some money on some new climbing equipment! I am already looking forward to next year's meet.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Army Mountaineering Association then check out www.theama.org.uk.

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS ORIENTEERING

After many years in the chair, **Maj Nick Bateson** has handed over the reigns of Secretary and Team Manager to **Maj Terry Crosby**. His first move was immediately to realign the annual Corps Championships to take place a few weeks before the Inter-Corps Championships to ensure a good picking ground for teams. The following is a summary of those results:

ROYAL SIGNALS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2002 (6/7 Nov)

This annual 2-day event was based on Blandford and despite operations, attracted the biggest attendance for many years. Individually, **Capt John Williams** broke the 10 year dominance of **Bateson** and **Sharpe** and whilst **Maj Mel Raynor** continued her reign as the leading lady, there are good signs of talent developing.

The category results are:

Major Units	11 Sig Regt/RSS	Runner Up	14 Sig Regt
Minor Units	251 Sig Sqn	Runner Up	Joint Sp Unit Corsham
Ladies	14 Sig Regt	Runner Up	11 Sig Regt/RSS
TA	40 Sig Regt	Runner Up	35 Sig Regt

Men's Open	**Capt Williams**	216 Sig Sqn
M35	**WO1 (RSM) Keane**	40 (Ulster) Sig Regt (V)
M40	**Capt Craig**	2 Sig Regt
M45+	**Maj Crosby**	Joint Sp Unit (Corsham)
U25	**LCpl Price**	35 Sig Regt (V)
Ladies' Open	**Maj Rayner**	RSS
U25	**Sig Berry**	21 Sig Regt

INTER-CORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Corps fielded a record 4 teams in this years championships: a Senior Men's, Senior Men's Short course, a Ladies' team and an Under 25 team (5 of the 6 team members were female).

Senior Men (Long): Williams/Hanby/Ranson/Emmerson/Keane - 8th
Despite coming 8th in what is an extremely strong category, the team did well to stay in touch and there were some encouraging performances from the younger members. Both **WO1 (RSM) Jed Keane** and **LCpl** (now Cpl) **Jamie Ransom** were selected for the Army Development team.

Ladies: Raynor/Matheson/Rouse/Walker - 2nd
The remaining news is one of unexpected success. The Ladies' team proved that they are a match for the leading team by coming from 4th place overnight to 2nd overall with an excellent day performance. **Maj Mel Rayner** and **SSgt Paula Matheson** were selected for the Army team.

Senior Men (Short): Crosby/Pope/Holcombe/Ebanks - 1st
The Senior Men's team set the pace from the start, led overnight and extended their lead in the day event to win the inaugural Inter-Corps Short Course event.

U25's: Fortune/Thorton/Connerlly/Robson/Price/Cross - 2nd
The Under 25's were also a great success, when you consider 5 of the 6 members were female, competing against all-male opposition. The REME were hot favorites and did not disappoint. Sandhurst were the only other team to beat a strong R Sigs team, many of whom may well make the senior teams next year.

Army Individual Success. Individually both **W01(RSM) Jed Keane** (M35) and **W02 Lou Walker** (W35) came second in the respective classes, **Lou Walker** for the 2nd year in succession.

French Training Camp 03. The Corps squad is planning a training camp based on the French 5-day event in July 03.

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB (OFFSHORE SECTION)

AWARD OF CLUB TROPHIES & CORPS COLOURS

The following awards and trophies were presented by the Admiral of the R Sigs YC, **Brig Cedric Burton OBE ADC**, at the AGM in November:

CLUB TROPHIES

The Admiral's Bowl is awarded to the serving member under the age 25 who, in the opinion of the Central Committee, is the most promising young offshore, day boat, or dinghy racing helmsman or windsurfer. In 2002 it was awarded to **Sig Adam Palmer** of 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt. He has emerged as the most promising newcomer to Corps Windsurfing in 2002. He is highly motivated and keen to build on experience gained prior to enlisting. He has raced longboard in the novice fleet and won the Army Novice Championships at Portland in July 02 in strong wind conditions. He has competed in Inter-Corps events, as both novice and team member, with creditable results and is busy equipping himself to transport his equipment to meetings. **Sig Palmer's** previous experience in sailing short slalom boards is of particular significance now that Course Race boards have become short and wide.

The Bolitho Prize is awarded to the member making the greatest contribution during the year to further object of the Club, i.e. to encourage sailing among all ranks of the Corps. In 2002 it was awarded to **WO1 (YofS) Taff Owens** who has been the driving force behind dinghy sailing in the Corps for the last few years. He has worked tirelessly, despite his considerable Regtl responsibilities, to develop the Corps Dinghy Sailing Centre at 14 Sig Regt (EW). Having accepted the post of Training Secretary for the Dinghy and Day boats Committee, he has proved an able and often inspired trainer and training event organiser. For the last two years he has been the driving force behind EX MERCURY SAIL, taking upon himself not only the administrative, co-ordinating and organising functions, but also as a qualified RYA Senior Instructor, the training and teaching responsibilities. He has been at the heart of efforts to introduce junior ranks to Dinghy sailing, often approaching units direct to acquire volunteer students for the courses. In this regard, he has been directly responsible for the successful qualification of 30 new dinghy sailors over the last two years. Alongside this personal contribution, he has been the catalyst for the involvement of other Corps sailors and a growing number of enthusiasts in the developing class of asymmetric sailing dinghies. He has led and encouraged teams to enter the Corps Regatta at Seaview, the Army Sailing Association Individual Dinghy Championships, the Welsh Nationals and the Southport 24-Hour sailing race. He epitomises the spirit of enthusiasm, commitment, fun and determination that is an inspiration to many younger sailors.

The Meiktila Cup is awarded to the member with the best racing record for the year. This may apply to offshore, day boat, dinghy racing or windsurfing at the discretion of the Central Committee. In 2002 it was awarded to **Sgt Martin Kendall**, who for a number of years has taken part in the Corps entry to the Army Sailing Association Regatta, with limited success. This year, entering the Victoria Class, and skippering the boat himself, **Sgt Kendall** competed in 8 races against some serious competition, including the Army Team helmsman. Conditions were varied and all weathers were encountered, from flat calm to Force 6, where **Sgt Kendall** came into his own. The results of the series were close but a bold tactical decision in the overnight race, where he decided to go North of the IOW contrary to the rest of the fleet, allowed **Sgt Kendall** to claim first prize for the whole series.

The Dick Good Trophy is awarded to the member who has engendered within the Corps sailing community, those attributes epitomised by the late **Dick Good**. These include a sense of adventure, enjoyment and involvement and mix of all ranks, in order to encourage new sailors and hence promote the welfare and spirit of the Club.

In 2002 it was awarded to **Lt Col Andy Bristow**. He skippered the 18 berth, 72 foot yacht *John Laing* throughout most of the 20,000 mile expedition from Portsmouth the Antarctica and return. The aim was to explore the Danco Coast by ski and sail in order to record historical, wildlife and geographical information. This involved crossing some of the world's roughest and most remote oceans in order to deploy a land party to explore the glaciers and mountains of part of the Antarctic Peninsular. The expedition involved 70 all ranks from a number of different cap badges, but predominantly R Sigs.

The Shaw Cup is awarded to the member most actively encouraging, by participation, organisation or training, the sport of dinghy racing within the Corps. In 2002 it was awarded to **Cpl Stu Southan** who is one of the Corps' leading racing dinghy helms. He has specialised in asymmetric dinghies, particularly the RS200. He has made a major contribution to Corps dinghy sailing over the last year and led the Corps team in the Inter-Corps Dinghy Team Racing Championships. He was the lead instructor for the advanced sailing course during the Corps sailing week (EX MERCURY SAIL) where he instructed both the spinnaker and performance sailing standards. He completed in the Corps Seaview Regatta, winning the Robinson Salver for best junior rank helm and the Inter-Unit Team Trophy for 11 Sig Regt. He was one of the helms in the Corps wining team at the Triangular Regatta and competed at the ASA Seaview Regatta. **Cpl Southan** has been closely involved in developing training strategies to develop asymmetric sailing skills amongst the Corp's sailors and when these are put in place in 2003, he will feature as one of the key instructors.

The Ship's Bell is awarded to the member making the most significant contribution to administration of offshore sailing in the club. In 2002 it was awarded to **Maj** (now Lt Col) **Richard Quinlan**, who has subsequently taken over as Rear Commodore (Offshore) from **Lt Col Adam Ewell**.

The Admiral's Pennant is awarded to the unit that has contributed the most to Corps sailing throughout the season. This will be awarded at the SOinC(A)'s conference.

OFFSHORE SECTION SAIL TRAINING WEEK (GERMANY)

The Mermaid Cup is awarded annually to the winning yacht's crew of the longest leg of the Baltic Offshore Regatta, organised by the RSYC in Germany. In 2002 it was the yacht *Petrel*, crewed by ACCAP Bn, skippered by **Lt Col Keith Whitehead**.

The Dickinson Telescope is awarded annually to the winning skipper of the Baltic Offshore Regatta, organised by the RSYC in Germany. In 2002 it was the yacht *Petrel*, crewed by ACCAP Bn, skippered by **Lt Col Keith Whitehead**

The Cannon Cito is awarded annually to the second yacht's crew overall of the Baltic Offshore Regatta organised by the RSYC in Germany. In 2002 it was the yacht crewed by 38 Sig Regt (V).

The Homeward Bound Trophy was won by the yacht *Widgeon*, crewed by 30 Sig Regt, skippered by **Sgt Windy Gale**.

The Don Shaw Trophy is awarded as the Spirit of the Event Award and was won by the yacht *Skua*, crewed by 7 Sig Regt.

SEAVIEW REGATTA

The Robinson Salver is awarded annually to the Winning Soldier Helmsman at the Royal Signals Regatta, Seaview or elsewhere at the discretion of the Central Committee. In 2002 it was awarded to **Cpl Stu Southan**.

CORPS COLOURS

In 2002 the Club nominated 3 members for Corps Colours, **Cpl Nick Scullion**, **Sgt Windy Gale** and **Lt Col Andy Bristow**. **Cpl Scullion** has represented the Corps and Army at every level throughout the year. He competed in the Corps Dinghy Regatta, coming third in the Advanced Class. He crewed in the Corps Seaview Regatta. He crewed in the Glover Cup in the winning Corps team and was a member of the winning Corps boat in the ASA Regatta. He represented the Corps in the Gold Cup and was a member of the Army Team in the Conningham Cup Inter-Service Team Racing. In the J24 class, **Cpl Scullion** has competed in two regattas on board *Hitchhiker* finishing second in the Southern Areas and first in the Autumn Cup. Additionally he was a member of the Army Team at the Dinghy Inter-Services at Farmoor. **Sgt Windy Gale** and **Lt Col Andy Bristow** both represented the Corps throughout the year in the Offshore sailing section. **Sgt Gale** has become the backbone of the Club in the UK, working up to take over from **Sgt Martin Kendall** when he leaves the Army in 2003. Additionally he took an important part in the British Army's Antarctic Expedition. **Lt Col Andy Bristow** led this from 9 Aug 2001 to 16 May 2002. He skippered the 72-foot ketch *John Laing* for 6 of the 7 legs and **Sgt Gale** was Mate for the first and most critically the fourth leg to the Danco Coast on the Antarctic Coast. These two sailors went across some of the roughest oceans in the World and certainly needed courage and cool heads, setting a fine example to other members of the crew. The Corps also provided the entire crew for the first two legs to Rio de Janeiro and five of the crew on the leg to Antarctica - a unique experience for all involved (see previous *WIRE* articles).

OFFSHORE SAILING TRAINING 2003

Offshore sailing continues to prosper with many events planned for 2003. Listed below are some of the key events that are currently planned. For further information, visit http://www.rsignalsyc.info. Through the website you can register your name, qualifications and email address and details of future events will be emailed direct to you.

UK SAIL TRAINING WEEK 25 – 30 APRIL 03

This expedition has been combined with the Tp Comds sail training course. There is availability for skippers to use three Victoria 34 yachts provided by JSASTC. The minimum crew qualifications per yacht are one Day Skipper and one Coastal Skipper, the remaining five crew can be unqualified. Interested Skippers should contact **Capt Charles Roberts** on 94371 2260 or civil email charles.roberts@orange.net (preferred method).

EXERCISE ST PETERSBURG 300 28 APRIL – 01 JULY 03

As the name implies this is an expedition to St Petersburg, Russian Federation, and is broken into four legs of approximately two weeks each. The expedition will use a Challenge 67 yacht provided by JSASTC. Further information can be found either at http://www.rsignalsyc.info or http://www.st-petersburg300.info. Interested persons should contact **Capt Charles Roberts** on 94371 2260 or civil email charles.roberts@orange.net (preferred method).

EXERCISE MERCURIAL DIAMOND/DRAGON 12 – 22 JULY 03

This is a Sail Training Week to introduce novices to sailing, conducted in Denmark. The exercise uses yachts provided by the British Kiel Yacht Club. Up to eight yachts have been provided for the event, each crewed by a maximum of six personnel. The minimum qualifications requirement is one Coastal Skipper and one Competent Crew per yacht. Interested persons should contact **Maj R Appleton**, Tel 01952 672880 or Mil 94480 2880.

TALL SHIPS 2003 04 JULY – 07 SEPTEMBER 03

A massive event with great sailing and even better parties. This year the race will be visiting Poland, Finland, Latvia and Germany as well as deliveries to and from UK. More information can be found at http://www.rsignalsyc.info. Interested persons should contact **Capt Charles Roberts** on 94371 2260 or civil email charles.roberts@orange.net (preferred method).

UK AUTUMN SAIL TRAINING WEEK 13 – 20 OCTOBER 03
Six Victoria 34s have been booked through JSASTC, with the aim of conducting Competent Crew, for complete beginners and Day Skipper courses. Interested persons should contact **Capt Charles Roberts** on 94371 2260 or civil email charles.roberts@orange.net (preferred method).

These are just some of the events being organised by Royal Signals personnel in 2003. There are many other expeditions and courses available, details of these can either be found at http://rsignalsyc.info or at the Joint Service Adventurous Sail Training Centre website http://www.jsastc.org.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: MajGen A H Boyle CB

Vice Chairman: Brig N F Wood Area1; 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 F Carter MBE
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick

Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C Conlan
Membership: Mr P J Cuckow

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.

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 MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

Branch News **Jim Neil** has succeeded **Dennis Wilson** as Secretary of the **Hartlepool Branch**. **Jim** can be contacted on 0191-5182445. Our grateful thanks goes to **Dennis** for his 8 years in office, and it is good to see that he is staying on as Treasurer.

Association Website The RSA's Internet website received 793 'hits' (or visits) during November and 975 during December 02. The 'join page', which can be used to apply for Life Membership, received 109 hits in November and 149 in December. 109 visits were made to the 'Last Post' page in November and 216 in December.

E-mail Life Members of the Assn with an e-mail address are invited to send it to Assn HQ so that we can update our records. The e-mail address is:- rsa@rsignals.net **MajGen Tony Boyle CB**, Chairman of the RSA, has written a paper 'RSA – A plan for Change', which will be discussed at the AGM. The Paper foresees the time when most of our members will receive information about the Corps and Assn by electronic means. Please note that rsa@rsignals.net is for the Membership Secretary about RSA matters only. All other matters should go to rhq@rsignals.net which is in the Central Registry (Orderly Room for the old and bold).

Annual Reunion If you wish to attend the Reunion at Blandford over the weekend 28/29 June 03 and have not yet applied for, or received instructions, please contact RSA HQ.

Corps Carol Service A date for your diary - this year's Corps Carol Service will be held at St Stephen with John Church, Westminster on Monday 15 December.

New Members A warm welcome is extended to the following recently enrolled Life Members:

Rank & Name	*Branch*	*Service*
LCpl Pat Bamford	Dorset	1978-88
SSgt Anne McKenzie-Hughes	Edinburgh	1972-96
Maj Brian Shankland	Edinburgh	1989-date
Sig Bill Miller		1939-46
LCpl Derek Suter	Rotherham	1958-67
Sgt Douglas Godley	Rotherham	1940-48
Cpl Gerald Gillott	Rotherham	1965-80
Sig Ian Stewart	N Ireland	1974-78
Sgt Iain Bannigan		1974-96
WO1 Ray Neal		1980-02
WO2 Conrad Mackenzie		1974-02
Sig Frank Buttifant	RH Chelsea	1940-46
Capt Keith Austin	Guernsey	1960-77
LCpl Stephen Berry		1988-96
LCpl Ian Newson		1952-55
Sgt Ken Bertram		1966-80
Sig John Allan		1990-96
LCpl Douglas Seawright		1989-96
Sgt Paul Archibald		1974-96
LCpl Ray Donno	AFSR Assn	1952-54
Lt Col Ian MacDonald	Aldershot	1946-77
Cpl Bert Steddy	AFSR Assn	1943-47
Cpl Sarah Howard		1991-01
Sgt R W Rowlands		1980-89
SSgt Rick Cooper		1972-95
Sig Stephen Docherty		1991-96
Sig Ian Cheeseman		1971-76
Sig James Clifford		1992-96
SSgt Bob Buckingham		1978-02
WO2 Kev Shelmerdine		1979-02
Cpl Chris McLaughlin		1988-00
WO2 Archie Hambling	Edinburgh	1964-86
Cpl Andrew Brash	Edinburgh	1976-86
Sig Thomas Craig		1990-94
LCpl George Watson		1983-90
Sig Phil Marshall		1960-69
SSgt Danny Daniel		1972-94
WO1 Steve Mitchell		1977-00
Sig Chris Burke		1990-96
Sig John Gargan		1991-96
Sig Steven Gilbert		1989-96
Sig Andy Godfrey		1987-96
Cpl K M Cotton		1980-89
Cpl David Bell		1987-96
Cpl Paul Dowd		1988-96
LCpl Darren Evans		1986-96
Sig Julian Hinds		1991-96
Sig William Smurthwaite		1988-97
Lt Victoria Wedgwood-Jones	Leeds	2000-date
Cpl Paul Stewart		1984-95
Sig Terry Hall		1986-95
Sig Peter Calderwood		1956-62
Cpl David Haworth		1982-96
Cpl Cass Britton		1976-96
SSgt Dave Churchward		1982-date
LCpl Dave Hunter		1991-03
Sig David Rowlings		1969-77
Cpl Jimmy Newark		1978-93
Sgt John Wood	254 OBA/AOHA	1948-63
Sgt Alistair Thomson		1971-85
LCpl Benson Fairclough	Preston/Blackburn	1947-49
LCpl David Mercer	AFSR Assn	1943-47
Sig Daniel Scull		1991-02
Sgt Jim Hutchinson		1958-66
Sig Jim McGregor	Glasgow	1954-56
Sig Tom Mullis	East London	1957-60
LCpl RJ Gilchrist	Edinburgh	1977-84
Sgt Ian Green	Edinburgh	1942-47
Maj John Pearson	Derby	1999-date
Cpl David Sykes	Berwick	1956-68
Lt John Izat	Berwick	1951-57
Sig Derrick Jones		1990-96
SSgt Colin Horner		1974-96
Sig Stephen Debnam		1990-00
LCpl Steven Cottee		1979-86
Cpl Pete Waite	Reading	1959-63
LCpl Si Knight		1996-02
Fof S Eric Leaper	Aldershot	1940-45
LCpl David Springham	Aldershot	1947-49
Sgt Kenneth Wood	Aldershot	1944-55
Maj Eric Mervyn-Smith	Aldershot	1934-55
Maj Mike Rowbory	Aldershot	1965-85
Lt Col David Mullineaux	Aldershot	1958-85
Sgt Jim McPhail	Colchester	1950-64
LCpl Andrew Ford	Edinburgh	1963-69
LCpl Alistair Smith	Edinburgh	1963-66
WO1 John McGrath	Edinburgh	1955-83
WO2 Sean Sutton		1972-01
Sgt David Walker		1967-89
Lt Col Chris Spencer		1966-02
Sgt Colin Weir		1973-95
Sig Clive Spiller		1990-95
Sig Mark Pearce		1987-95
Sgt Barrie Hind	West London	1941-46
Sig Bill Fowler	West London	1950-52
Cpl George Gray	AFSR Assn	1947-49
Sig Glyn Rogers	AFSR Assn	1957-59
Cpl Tony Oakes		1987-95
Sig Bill Pearson	AFSR Assn	1958-64
Sgt Christopher Endean	Aldershot	1963-78
WO2 Robert Dunseith		1980-02
Sig Stephen Alexander		1983-91
Sgt Paul Morris		1946-49
Cpl Michael Preston		1986-99
SSgt Steve Milne		1987-date
LCpl Garry Avery		1991-95
Sig Roy Cains	AFSR Assn	1945-48
Sig Digger Arculus	AFSR Assn	1945-48
Sgt Peter Farmer		1952-55

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Mrs J Knight**

Shortly before Christmas we lunched at St Omer Barracks, a meal immaculately served by students who were just completing their course in mess management. This was a great way to introduce the festive season, an occasion on which we were joined by serving members of the local Sqns. Their presence was organised by **RSM Kev Smith**, who is on our Branch Committee. The food was excellent and the presentation impeccable. The young men and girls, bar-tenders, waiters and wine waiters for the day, did a fine job, and they and the cooks are to be congratulated. They should make a great contribution to the units they have joined.

Our February gathering was one to be remembered. We were the guests of Buller Barracks WOs & Sgts Mess where **Kev Smith** hosted a Games Night attended by **Maj Matt Fensom** commanding 261 Squadron and WOs and Sgts of other Sqns in the area. Of note on this occasion was an informative talk by **Maj (Retd) Bernard Redshaw**, Editor of *The WIRE*, who was visiting the Branch and was the house guest of our Chairman, **Brig Noel Moss** and **Edelgard**. An excellent curry supper was served in the interval, before and after which, serving and retired Corps were locked in conflict as they knocked spots off each other with nail bashing, tower building and such innocuous and less energetic manoeuvres as darts. It can be said that the retired Corps managed to hold their own. The victors were rewarded with champagne. It was a great 'fun evening' and we hope they will invite us again.

CARDIFF BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Eric E Powell**
Secretary **Mr W (Billy) Davies**

Winter hibernation is strictly for the animals as far as the Cardiff Branch is concerned. October saw a coachload of members pay a most enjoyable visit to the Army Museum at Chelsea. Then in November, following the Planting of Crosses in St John's Churchyard in the morning, twenty or more members were present at the Wales Festival of Remembrance, now held annually in St. David's Hall. As usual, the party enjoyed poll position, seating-wise, and no surprise, since our Secretary, **Billy Davies,** is also a principal officer of the local Royal British Legion!

The (short) monthly meeting in November was chosen as the Annual Draw night. This is a very enjoyable evening and, with Christmas not far off, the consumption of mince pies did much to enhance the occasion. As our Entertainments Officer, **Carol Richards,** dispenses tickets for the draw throughout the year it is no wonder that the prizes are of firstclass quality.

Members and guests filled the seats at our (somewhat curtailed) December meeting to enjoy the superb post-meeting buffet provided by the BBC Social Club Chef. This having been consumed, we were handsomely entertained to a fascinating musical programme given by the Cardiff Amateur Flute Ensemble and Friends. Our own Treasurer, **Daphne Powell**, was the Accompanist.

After all this activity, members were rested during January to allow a leisurely AGM to be convened. No surprises here, however, as the officers were elected en bloc with the exception of **Ron**

MajGen Tony Boyle CB and Eric Powell

Griffiths, elected to the Vice Presidency post vacated due to the death of **Ken Bladen.**

Of course no winter programme is complete until the Annual Dinner has taken place. Once again this year's venue was the United Services Mess, and our principal guest was the Chairman of the RSA, **MajGen Tony Boyle CB**, who was accompanied by his wife, **Ann**.

In his own inimitable style, **Tony** responded to the Toast, 'The Royal Corps', and was presented by the President, **Jimmy Lister**, with a miniature miner's lamp as a memento of the evening.

In spite of a most hairy journey back home over the snowcovered Brecon Beacons, we were happily thankful to learn that our principal guest and his wife made a safe landfall at I a.m. Not only that, but they had thoroughly enjoyed themselves!

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman	**Mrs J Barrett**
Secretary	**MajGen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

The Branch opened its New Year's social calendar by holding its AGM on 12 January at the Marine Hotel, Tankerton. 57 members attended.

We also had the pleasure of entertaining two very welcome guests in the persons of **Maj (Retd) Bernard Redshaw**, of Kiwi origin and the new Editor of *The Wire*, and **Mr Chris Deadman**, who came from Eastbourne in his capacity as South East Area Representative of the Association.

John Ballantyne opened the meeting as the outgoing Chairman, went through the formalities and after **Mr Ted Drake** had presented his masterly Treasurer's Report, he then gave his Annual Report listing the many functions which the Committee had organised through the year and said many nice things about Committee Members who had given him assistance during his two year reign as Chairman. He then stood down to tumultuous applause in appreciation of his outstanding term. The election and re-election of the Committee saw **Mrs Jo Barrett** take the Chair and **Mr Brian Calladine**, the Branch Standard Bearer, become a member.

Maj (Retd) Bernard Redshaw entertained us by telling us of his plans and aspirations for future editions of the Corps magazine. Clearly his ideas are of the 'new broom' variety and we look forward to his next edition.

Good food and conversation followed, during which **Mrs Marion de Rose** held a raffle, extracting some £78 from the pockets of the unwary in the way of profit. **Chris Deadman** was entertained at table by **Donald Crisp**, who enlightened him on how smoothly a well run Branch manages to provide a function for members EVERY MONTH, and by **Roger Stone** on his other side, who illustrated how best to devour soup whilst not immersing one's beard in the bowl.

It is with deepest regret and sadness that we have to report the death of **Mr Jim Hehir** who passed away on 13 December having battled against leukemia for some time. Several members joined his widow, **Shirley**, and many family mourners at his cremation.

Elizabeth Woodrow is now fully mobile again after knee surgery and **Roy Andrews** anxiously awaits final clearance after chemotherapy. **Maj Chas Hughes** is still venting his frustration at the NHS and Maidstone Hospital for not calling him forward for treatment and **Mrs Marie Crisp** awaits with apprehension her first attendance at February's Committee Meeting as a Co-opted Member.

EXMOUTH BRANCH

Chairman	**Mr J Goodman**
Secretary	**Mrs O Irving**

On 18 February 2003 the Exmouth Branch Standard was dedicated in the presence of The Master of Signals, **MajGen Ian Sprackling OBE**. The service of dedication was led by **Rev Robin Laird**, retired Army Chaplain and Hon Chaplain to **Her Majesty the Queen**.

The Standard Bearer was **Miss Sally Reggler**, and **Mr Frank Goodman**, Standard Bearer for Torbay Branch supported her. Escorts to the Standard were **Mr John Goodman**, Chairman of Exmouth Branch and **Mr Bob Coole.**

The service of dedication was well supported by the Branch members. It was a moving ceremony, but one which was enjoyed by all those present.

Following the dedication ceremony the Exmouth Branch held its 2nd AGM. The election of Branch Officers took place and the Committee is as follows:

Mr John Goodman	Chairman
Mr William (Bill) **Irving**	Treasurer
Mrs Olive Irving	Honorary Secretary
Miss Sally Reggler	Standard Bearer.

The Standard Dedication Ceremony

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman	**Mr J M Keegan**
Secretary	**Miss I Muir**

Things have not been normal lately, due to the fire fighters dispute affecting the usual Branch monthly meetings at Jardine Street. The Christmas draw was held on l0 December 2002, not the usual Branch meeting night. The letter informing the members of the meeting, sent out in November, gave the date but, with the matter in flux with the fire fighters strikes, it was not possible to determine if the meeting was on or off, so the attendance was therefore down. Some members not present thought it would be the normal monthly date, and missed the event. The buffet was provided by **Mrs Cathie Keegan** the Branch Chairman's wife and **Mrs Annice McWaters** the Branch Treasurers wife.

The Burns Supper held on 18 January 2003 was arranged by the Branch Committee, with **Bill McNamara**, acting as compere, and **Bill Taylor** attending to the cooks, liquor supplies and crockery etc. 86 members, guests, family and friends attended, including the Branch President, **LtCol Alastair Petrie CStJ TD JP** and **Mrs Norah Petrie**. The programme/menu was printed in booklet form, with a colourful frontispiece and the words of songs written by the Bard on the inside pages. There was a choice of menu of haggis, or steak pie for those who weren't keen on haggis. The refreshments included whisky, red and white wine, and soft drinks.

The excellent meal was prepared by Chefs, **Cpl John Hutton** and **ex-Cpl Jimmy Malley** of 221 Tpt Unit, Pohnadie, Glasgow. **Angela Kennedy**, **Norma McWaters**, **Eric McWaters Jnr** and **Jim Cook**, all members of the **McWaters Clan** (**Eric McWaters Snr** is Branch Treasurer), acted as waiters/waitresses. After a welcome, the grace was said by Branch President, **Col Petrie**. The haggis was piped in on a silver platter, accompanied by a traditional Scots air played on the pipes by **Pipe Major Bill Cleezy** and **ex-Cpl Piper Joe Westwater**, to hand clapping in time to the music by the assembled company. The Pipers then accepted the usual tot of whisky in a quaich, from **Col Petrie** before piping the haggis out of the room. They also performed some airs on the pipes later in the programme. As the person nominated to address the haggis did not appear, it fell to the compere for the evening, **Bill McNamara**, to take on the task, and he handled it with great gusto, (having first to retrieve a knife from the kitchen) to cut into the Chieftain o' the Puddin' Race.

Guest **Peter McGuire** rendered the *Immortal Memory to the Bard*, while the verses of *Tam O' Shanter* were performed in excellent style by **Drew Dickson**. **Miller Frondigoun** gave the *Toast tae the Lasses*. Later **Miller** with his guitar entertained with songs and community singing. The response to the *Toast tae the Lassies*, was given by **Wendy McNab**, wife of **John McNab**, one of the Branch stalwarts. **Wendy** was in fine form, while **John** (all six feet plus of him) was sliding down in his chair. The members and guests showed their appreciation of her speech with very loud applause.

Bill McNamara filled in a spot with a rendition of *O Willie Brew'd a peck of Malt*, with all the actions of a man who is drunk, an excellent acting performance during the verse. As no one volunteered to fill another spot, this scribe, whilst still sober, read a version of an item penned by **Roy Little** of Glasgow, called *The Call Centre*. This was a theme on the aggro many of us have suffered, when we have to phone a company and have to listen to the spiel, before we get a real person to answer our queries, (i.e. Press Button 1, Press Button 2 etc) **Drew Dickson** reappeared to give a superb rendition of *Holy Willie's Prayer*, dressed for the occasion in a night gown, night cap with a lighted candle in a candle holder. Not easy to remember every word of a fairly long item by heart, whilst prancing up and down among the audience. This was received with thunderous applause from all present. **Peter McGuire** was persuaded to give his version of a drunk driver, which he wrote himself in the style of Burns, entitled *Tam the Banter*. It was very amusing and well received and applauded by the company

An appreciation of the evening was given by **Col Petrie**, who asked those present to applaud the fine efforts of the chefs who prepared the meal, and those members of the **McWaters Clan**, whose service as waiters and waitresses was excellent. They were lined up to receive the deserved applause, from the Branch members and the guests. As a memento of the evening, and a thank you for their efforts, the Col also presented a gift of silver quaich to each of the main performers. The evening concluded with the Branch Chairman, **Joe Keegan**, giving a vote of thanks to the performers and the Branch members and friends for attending, wishing everyone a safe journey home. With that the company sang *Auld Lang Syne* before leaving at a very late hour. A great time was had by all. The Branch Committee, together with **Bill Taylor** and **Bill McNamara**, are to be congratulated on the organisation of the event.

With the fire fighters still on strike, and our usual premises not available, the Branch meeting for 21 January was held, by kind permission of the Cameronians, in their club premises in Glasgow. Various issues were discussed, including names of members to attend the next annual reunion at Blandford. The venue of the club was not easy to get to, and car parking close to the club was not available. We hope the fire fighters strikes end soon, so that Branch meetings can be held in familiar surroundings. It was decided that the annual dinner/dance would be held as usual in November 2003 and to replace the one missed last November, a dance only, would be held on 15 March (providing there are no strikes or exigencies).

We have just learned that our intrepid one-armed Branch founder-member, **Bobby Gilchrist**, has volunteered to do the slide of death again in April this year, in aid of Epilepsy Scotland. Readers will remember the article and photo published in *The WIRE* in April 2001 when, aged 76, he successfully completed the slide from 130 feet up. I will report his progress.

MANCHESTER BRANCH

Chairman	**Mr RPM Taylor**
Secretary	**Mr H Ferguson**

In October **Terry Heildren** and **Joe Jennings** attended the Herforder reunion in Dunoon, Scotland for 4 days and naturally took their wives (now steady on lads). The spouses were not happy when the promised cruise turned out to be a 15-minute crossing on the Gourock-Dunoon ferry! On a drive intending to visit the Isle of Bute, **Mary's** navigation proved somewhat inadequate, and a wrong turn took them north. However, a consolation of lunch of venison at a quaint little pub at the side of Loch Eck made up for this.

November saw members of the Branch on the Remembrance Parade at St Peters Square. They encountered the wettest conditions for years, but fortunately it did abate somewhat before the March Past. The Branch dinner dance was held on 7 December at the Lansdowne Hotel in Withington, a venue that did not prove popular with many of the members and guests. One reason was that the place was packed with fans of some football team from the Old Trafford area, so trying to get to the bar was a major problem. Our Guest of Honour was **Peter Cuckow** and his charming wife **Sheila**, whom, at huge expense, we managed to prise from the warm climes of Poole to a chilly Manchester. **Peter** gave a very interesting talk about his work with the Association at Blandford Garrison. He was thanked by Chairman, **Ron Taylor** and presented with a picture of bygone Manchester to commemorate their visit.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman	**Mr J Brown**
Secretary	**S/Sgt (YofS) I Wolfe**

Christmas 2002 saw the Welfare Member once again with his various helpers taking gifts to our incapacitated Members and widows. Those visited have said they appreciate the visit even more than the gift. **John** not only organises this at Christmas, but is very active throughout the year keeping in touch with Members who are ill or in hospital. His work is much appreciated.

Our December meeting was a short one followed by a social evening and a quiz devised by Hon Sec, **Ian Wolfe**, who certainly put our brains to the test.

The January meeting was also a short one. The speaker for the evening was **Councillor Frazer Agnew MLA**, an eminent local historian, who gave a most interesting illustrated talk on The Somme. Such was the interest that Members have asked if he would return in the future to give a further talk.

Next meeting will be our AGM on 19 February. Our Annual formal dinner will be on Good Friday 18 April.

Best wishes go from the Branch to our Branch President, **Maj (Retd) Bill Douglas**, who was in hospital but is now recuperating at home.

A welcome awaits any serving or ex-Signaller at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the third Wednesday of each month.

POOLE BRANCH

Chairman	**Lt Col W 'Jess' Weir**
Secretary	**Lt Col RA 'Bob' Peake BEM**

Since our last report we have had two major committee changes. **Tony Curnow** relinquished his position as Secretary and, with no volunteer forthcoming, **Bob Peake** took over that duty, with **Jess Weir** becoming our new Chairman.

Our monthly meetings continue to go from strength to strength and we are very grateful to the Royal British Legion Branch at Broadstone for their unfailing support. We in turn ensure a good response to their Remembrance Day Parade and Service and our President, **Brig Paddy Evans** takes the salute on the march-past each year.

Our man with the camera, **John Hyde**, has given us another worthy slide show following his and **Sheila's** round the world holiday. His snapshot finger was also kept busy during our 2002 Christmas Dinner, which again proved to be a resounding success – with the draw lasting longer than ever! 47 attended including a few of our friends from the Dorset Branch. We continue to enjoy visits to both Dorset and Bournemouth Branches Dinners and

Luncheons and it is a pleasure to share our own with them, where possible.

Our founder, **Jimmy Logan**, now fully recovered from his heart surgery (yes, old comrades, he did have one!) rarely misses a meeting and it is great to have him and **Eve** with us again. We have had several new members join during 2002; the majority, following the national trend, joining after many years since leaving the Corps/TA. However, it is good to see them and a warm welcome will be extended to all others considering joining, regardless of age, gender or past rank.

Christmas Dinner 2002

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr SL Smith**
Secretary **Mr AAT Dear**

We report the death of one of our older comrades, exSig **Arthur Leslie Pratt**, who served with the Corps from 1939 to 1946. After a long illness, **Arthur** died on 2 February 2003, aged 85.

Immediately after this, on 7 February 2003, another of our old comrades, **Cecil John Callis (John)** died after a long illness, aged 83. **John's** funeral was held at the Southampton Crematorium on 19 February 2003. The Service was attended by family, friends and comrades from the Burma Star and RSA. A Guard of Honour was provided by the two Associations and the RSA Southampton & District Branch Standard was carried by **Sid Smith**, the Branch Chairman. (See Last Post for details).

The Branch Annual Reunion Lunch will take place at the Kings Court, Chandlers Ford, on Sunday 27 April 2003. It is hoped that this year will be as successful as previous years and will be reported in the June Issue of *The WIRE*. Our Guest of Honour will be **Brig Charles Le Gallais CBE** and **Mrs Jackie Le Gallais**. (Providing operational commitments permit).

The letter and document, A PLAN FOR CHANGE, issued by **MajGen Tony Boyle CB**, has been circulated to all Branch Committee Members and a cross section of Branch Members. They have been asked to submit constructive comments and suggestions before or at the Branch AGM in April 2003.

Another year stretches ahead and the Branch Social Calendar is already filling up. Invitations from the Dunkirk Veterans and the Normandy Veterans to their trips and functions are an added bonus.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

It may seem late to be recalling Christmas, but the success of our party must be recorded. The Richmond British Legion had tastefully decorated their Club for the festive season and we greatly appreciated their hospitality on this and many other occasions. We had a happy evening, which included a giant raffle, thanks to the generosity of our Members. As usual, our Ladies Section came up trumps with a delicious buffet supper and a good time was had by all.

Earlier in the year we had suffered the sad loss of **Les Bullock**. He and **Joyce** were regular attenders at Branch meetings for many years past and up to the time of his sudden passing. We are glad that **Joyce** remains one of us as an Associate Member and is with us on every social occasion. We were also sad to learn of the death of **Charles Goodsir**, who was a very active Member of the Branch until some years ago when he moved to the Midlands.

WINCHESTER BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Margaret Gillings**
Secretary **Mr Garry Gillings**

As we have not featured recently in *The WIRE*, this is to let you know that we are still in existence! As with all branches, we are suffering from the fact that our members are growing a little older and this has led to some enforced changes. The Branch President, **Maj Gen John Sturge**, has handed over to **Lt Col Gerry Corden**. The Chairman is **Mrs Margaret Gillings** and her husband **Garry** acts as the Secretary. **Mrs Kathleen Percival** is active on the welfare side, and she is the Wreath Layer and 'figure head'. Her son **Phil** is the Treasurer and Standard Bearer.

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday evening of each month, in the East Winchester Social Club. Normally over a dozen turn up to discuss any business, but mostly to socialise. The Branch was represented in the Remembrance Parade and Service in Winchester Cathedral. While in London, **Ivor Parker** and **Jack Vincent** (both 8th Army veterans) attended the Festival of Remembrance in the Albert Hall and the Parade in Whitehall on the following morning. Not bad for a couple in their 80s!

Two of our other stalwarts must be mentioned, both of whom retired a couple of years ago from being respectively Chairman and Secretary. **Maj Douglas Gardiner** and his wife **Laura** now live in a very smart nursing and residential home in Winchester. They are well looked after and always pleased to see any old friends. **Maj Colin West-Watson** also lives locally. His wife **Esme** has died but his daughters keep a good eye on him.

The Branch Christmas Dinner was held in a local hotel and was attended by 14 members. It was a super meal and we all enjoyed a very pleasant evening. And so we move in to a new year, one in which we are very keen to recruit new members. So, if you live in the Winchester area, do please get in touch. The Secretary can be contacted on 02380 614 173, email: garry@ggillings.freeserve.co.uk

THE 5TH (LONDON) CORPS SIGNALS OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Denis E Roberts CBE**
Secretary **Sid Prior**

On 19 October 2002 the 5th (London) Corps Signals OCA held its 57th Annual Reunion at the Duke of York's Headquarters Club in Chelsea. The occasion had been announced as the Association's final Reunion and there was a recovery in numbers attending, some members travelling very long distances to be present. Members and their guests totaled 81. It was a happy occasion, but one touched with sadness. At the AGM that followed lunch, because of steadily declining membership, the decision to dissolve the Association as a formal body was approved. Originally over 600, we were now just over 100, and not all are able to attend Reunions. The Secretary, **Sid Prior**, was congratulated on his enhanced display of charts depicting 'Seven Decades of Comradeship' from 1939 to date. This stimulated almost total recall of forgotten events and people in war and at Reunions. As the display revealed, in the beginning there were raw recruits and most of us were single. Now many remaining members were great-grandparents.

The charts have been embodied in a souvenir booklet with **Ernest Lampard's** poems including the final *Auld Lang Syne* reproduced below. The Association was delighted to receive a letter of thanks from **MajGen A H Boyle CB,** commenting on members' 'long and faithful record'. 238 Sig Sqn again provided amplification for the Reunion. On this occasion **John Aked** and his wife **Valerie** were our guests of honour and the Chairman, **Bob Roberts** and members were able to thank **John** personally and the Sqn for the help which they had provided at our Reunions. So this is the Association's final report although after the winding up is completed, the Chairman and Secretary have promised to examine whether an informal annual lunch on a smaller scale might be possible for those who wish to attend.

Should old acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind
Well since September forty-six
Each passing day, I find
Fond memories of comrades
And those we left behind,
Still fill my thoughts and waking hours
With pleasure unconfined.
We moaned, we joked, as soldiers do,
But we learned to pull together,
Through months and years of bitter war
In fair and stormy weather.
We were loyal to our Sovereign,
Took each battle in our stride,
And flew the flag of freedom,
With honest British pride.
Now on our fifty-seventh Reunion,
After sixty-three long years,
Let us all recall the good times
And forget the toil and tears.
So comrades, charge your glasses,
Give me your hand, I'll give you mine,
And together we will drink a toast
TO AULD LANG SYNE.

INDIAN SIGNALS ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

Chairman **Maj (Retd) T W Bewsey OBE**

Like other branches of the RSA, we bring together retired members of the Corps who wish to extend army companionship into the years of their retirement. For the majority of Branches it is a question of serving ex-soldiers in a particular area of the country. But our members are widely spread, so our meetings take the form of an annual lunch in London. Considering the age of our members and it being more than fifty years since the British departure from Bombay, these meetings are still well supported.

The Branch has maintained the wider responsibility of maintaining contact with those in the countries in which we served. The strong relationship with the Indian Signals Corps stems from an invitation in 1986 from **Lt Gen RP Singh** to send representatives to celebrations of the 75th anniversary of the founding of their Corps. We travelled as a party of twentyfive which included eight wives of members. The week-long activities in Jabalpur were brilliantly planned and organised. The outstanding success arose from the total change in the relationships between ourselves and our wives and families of our hosts. In the days of the Raj, and particularly during the war years, the men of both nations formed firm friendships, but we knew nothing of their families.

This success led to a similar visit at the invitation of the SOinC Pakistan, where once again the wives of both nations made firm friendships and the men met with the same easy relationship with our officer hosts that they had known during their service years. It has been difficult to maintain these contacts through recent troubled times.

In 1995 when our Corps celebrated the 75th anniversary of its formation, we were able to entertain a party of sixteen from India and a previous SOinC from Pakistan. As well as attending the military functions, they toured with us in Somerset, Yorkshire and Cumberland before a few days in London, where they attended the Royal Signals guard mounting at Buckingham Palace. The Batras were taken to Edinburgh where our particular friend, **Raj** had marched as part of the Indian contingent in the Victory Parades of 1947. Sadly **Raj** was to die a year or so after this visit, but linkages remain strong and continue through our children and grandchildren. Subsequent SOinC, **LtGen Gokarn** and the present incumbent, **Gen Sehgal**, have enthusiastically supported the liaison.

At the end of October 2002, 50 members and friends met for the AGM and lunch at the Union Jack Club in London. Our total membership is now about 100. Natural wastage is inevitable as the qualification for membership was closed over 50 years ago. Of the 15 deaths reported at the beginning of the meeting, were our founder President, **MajGen RJ Moberley CB OBE** and **Brig EJC Harrison**, former Commandant of STC Mhow. As the soldiers' hymn says, 'Time like an ever-rolling stream continues to bear its sons away.'

Two members were congratulated on the award of the RSA Badge of Honour. The presentation to **Maj Freddie Stewart** was made at his local RSA Branch meeting in Catterick earlier in the year. **John Reaney**, who was accompanied by his son, **Dermot**, was presented with his badge at our meeting.

After the reunion, a remarkable co-incidence occurred at Waterloo Station. A small group of us were checking out the departure board, when a distinguished looking Indian gentleman approached and commented on the tie worn by one of the party. It was a maroon tie bearing the Signals badge of the MCTE (Military College of Telecommunications Engineering), a post-independence development of STC (British) Mhow. The tie was worn by **Peter Bewsey**, son of **Maj Tom Bewsey**, both members of the group invited to the 80th Anniversary Reunion in Jabalpur in 1996.

Also on the trip was **Jane Knight** and as **Tom** rejoined the group, there was mutual recognition of the Indian visitor, who was **Lt Col M Bansal** of the Indian Signals Corps, attending a course at Warminster. **Col Bansal** had been the escorting major to the then Master of Signals, **MajGen Archie Birtwistle CB CBE** and SOinC(A) **Brig Nigel Wood** and their wives during the 1996 Anniversary Reunion in Jabalpur. Had we met up before our lunch, he could have been our guest. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of our Secretary, **Maj Crocker** (who had also been in Jabalpur), there was insufficient time to meet again before **Col Bansal** returned to India.

The annual lunch was a great success, and during the brief AGM members were pleased to agree to increase their donation to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund to £250.

Our latest ambassador, **Lucy Lindner**, the granddaughter of our President, met many of those named on her post-university ' Grand Tour' recently. As a teenager in 1995, she had helped to look after the Indian visitors and was welcomed by them when she visited their countries. She met the new Indian SOinC, who offered to take her in his plane to Mhow (known to many of our members). Sadly this trip was cancelled because of problems with Pakistan.

Journeying on through Cambodia and Vietnam, **Lucy** arrived in Malaysia, where her grandfather had served in 1960 as PASO in their MOD. By chance one of his previous cadets living nearby, provided the name of a recent C-in-C of the Malaysian Armed Forces, **Gen Tan Sri Mohammed Gazali**. Arriving in Kuala Lumpur, she was met by this distinguished officer, who told her that she should call him Uncle Joe. When **Lucy** told him the name of the hotel she would be staying in, he spoke up. 'You are not, your know. You are staying with us'. She was looked after in every possible way, even to the extent of being quartered with the Malaysian Defence Attaché in Singapore before flying back to England.

It is very moving and inspiring to learn of the high regard in which the countries in which we have served hold us. It reflects the strong affection that many of us hold for the friends we have made during our service.

*This last paragraph also points up the warmth that exists in the wider, international Corps family, and reflects the family aspect alluded to by **MajGen Tony Boyle CB** in his Guest Editorial in this issue. Readers will have noticed my moves in recent issues of The WIRE to include contributions from the Commonwealth to nurture this feeling.*

– Bernard Redshaw, Editor

Identify These Two and Gain £20 for Corps Funds

Pictured on a recent holiday in Queensland, these two gentlemen were commissioned together from RMA 50 years ago. They have offered £20 to the Corps Benevolent Fund if anyone can identify both of them. If you can recognise them both, please contact the Editor.

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS PERSON?

Sue Woodard asks if anyone remembers or recognises the person in the photograph. The reverse of the photo has: 'Cousin Freddie 25 years Royal Signals' written on the back and is dated July 1940. **Sue** believes it to be the cousin of her father, **Richard Woodard**. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Sue** at suewoodard@blueyonder.co.uk

MICHAEL FEELY

Does anyone know the present whereabouts of **Michael Feely**? **Laura Keller's** uncle, **Hugh Cordner**, served in the Corps with **Michael** at Catterick and in16 Sig Regt, Krefeld in the 1970s. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Laura** at: laura.keller@shaw.ca as soon as possible.

Email from **Martin Foley**, foley_md@hotmail.com

JOHN MICHAEL FOLEY

I am looking for information regarding my father, **John Michael Foley** who served with the Royal Corps of Signals in WWII and wondered if anyone could help. He was a driver mechanic, his service number was 2372470 and I believe he served with 102 Special Wireless Section, 107 SWS & 3 SW Company.

My father passed away in 1968, but I would like to find out as much information about his time during the War as possible. Ideally I would love to be able to make contact with anybody that served with him, but any information would be gratefully received.

I can be contacted at the above email address or by phone on 01291 621 481.

Many thanks.....

From: **Mr E Rackham**
Newseat Cottage
Inverugie
Peterhead
Aberdeenshire AB24 3DT

Dear Sir

While clearing out my attic I came across this cutting from *The WIRE* with a photo of myself and **Jim Bachelor**. It was taken back in 1958 when I was a boy soldier at Rawlingson Bks, Denbury, Newton Abbot. I lost touch with **Jim** when we went into man service. I would very much like to hear from **Jim,** should anyone know his whereabouts.

Jim and I used to spend most of our weekends on Dartmoor, or hill walking in North Wales. I hope this will be of interest to some of your readers.

Yours.....

Unfortunately, the photo would not reproduce, but the text of the cutting referred to is as follows - Editor

'After a hearty tea drinking session, even the cadre retired to their sleeping bags. Sunday morning dawned in brilliant sunshine, a most welcome change for November.

WO2 Wheatley and Boy Rackham proceeded to take the morning air and went for a short 5 mile walk before breakfast much to the amazement of the remainder.

After breakfast Staff Sergeant White and Sergeant Tatham led a party in search of the post box at Cranmere Pool. Here you collect any letters and then leave your letter for the next hardy visitor. A rolling mist speeded the return to the camp site, where the remainder had struck camp and prepared a late lunch.

The party loaded up and moved off on the last leg back, another 4 miles. Sergeant Taylor, with swinging camera and lantern on his pack, looked like the tinker of old. We all must have looked rather unusual as the local Dartmoor ponies just galloped away and surveyed us from a distance.

All too soon the truck was reached and one more weekend camp was over. Next question was: "When do we go again?" Some boys are never satisfied.'

LCPL A BUSBY

Benson Fairclough is seeking the present whereabouts of his former pal, **LCpl A Busby**. **Mr Busby** joined the Corps early 1947 for his National Service and trained as a Wireless Operator. He served with **Benson** in the Suez Canal Zone and in 3 GHQ Sig Regt, Fayid. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Benson** at 3 Silverdale Avenue, Heysham, Morecambe, Lancs LA3 2JX.

E-mail from **Carl Braganza**, caribraganza@extelmfg.com

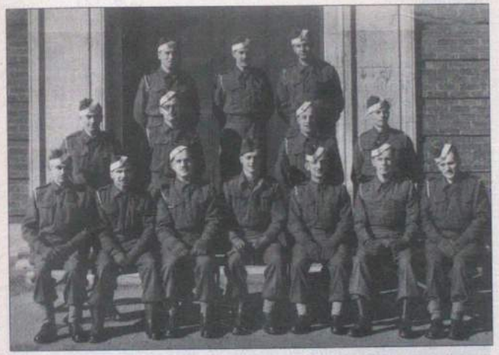
Further to my message in Lost Comms in the February issue of *The WIRE*, another couple of ex Royal Signals buddies I would like to make contact with are a **Ray White** & **Geoff Lawrence**. **Ray**, **Geoff** and I went through basic and tech training together. **Ray** & I served in BAOR in 16 Sig Regt in Krefeld. I don't know where **Geoff** went to. I believe he married a Yorkshire girl named **Sheila**, who came from the Richmond.

Thanks.

SIR DIRK BOGARDE

Does anyone remember serving during WW2 with **2371461 Sig Derek van den Bogaerde**, who would become the actor and writer, **Dirk Bogarde**? If so, his official biographer, **John Coldstream** is keen to hear from you.

Van den Bogaerde enlisted on 8 May 1941 and was posted successively to 1 Depot Bn, 1 Op Trg Bn, and 133 OCT Bn before being commissioned in the Queen's Royal Regt in April 1943. He describes his experiences vividly in his second autobiography, *Snakes and Ladders* (Chatto & Windus 1978), with particular emphasis on Catterick, where his fellow trainees included **Palmer-Green**, **Tilly**, **PW Ogooley** (for whom he wrote love letters to a girl named Kitty), **Worms**, **Derek**, **Grimm** and **Ernie Basset** (with red hair from H Hut).



Van den Bogaerde is pictured here at the right-hand end of the middle row

John Coldstream would be delighted to make contact with any of these people, with anyone who knew them or with anyone who recalls the stage productions of *Rope* and *Judgement Day*, in which the 20-year old **van den Bogaerde** was involved. He can be reached at:

11 Abbey House
1a Abbey Road
London NW8 9BT
Tel: 020 7266 3779
Email: jcoldstream@dial.pipex.com

THOMAS KANE

From: **M Roger Arnoux**
La Gare
01300 Brens
France

Dear Sir

I am writing to your magazine (*The WIRE*) hoping you could help me in my research. I am searching for the address of the regiment the Highlander Argyle and Sutherland because my grandfather was a signal corpsman during WWI and did serve in France.

Since the only Army magazine I have is yours, I am writing to you for information and hoping that you can help me.

My grandfather was a lineman in the post office in Greenock, Scotland (Renfrew). His name was **Thomas Kane** and he was born in June 1884. I found a picture for information. Could you send me any information and I thank you in advance.

Yours.....

My grandfather is on the right-hand side of the picture. Is that the uniform of a linesman?

From: **Ken Johnson**
718 Buena Tierra #179
Oceanside
CA 92057
USA

Dear Sir

I am writing on behalf of my uncle, **Norman Mansell**, who served as a dispatch rider in WWII from 1940 through 1945. He would like to make contact with any of his surviving 'pals' that served in his Division. He is also offering to provide copies of many photographs that were taken during his service in the field, as well as share his experiences with any serviceman that served in his unit or knew him during the War. If you would publish his name and unit in an appropriate section of your publication for any members to contact him it would be greatly appreciated.

Norman Mansell
British Army, D Section
3rd Divisonal Signals
Royal Corps of Signals
Regimental No: 2325440

Many thanks for your assistance in honouring his request.

Ken Johnson, nephew

CORRESPONDENCE

Email from: **Andrew Reid** andrew.reid14@btopenworld.com

HELLES BARRACKS 1979

I was wondering if anyone who reads your magazine knows who the local photographer was at Helles Barracks in 1979? I started my Army career in the TA and had photos taken then, but due to a burglary, they have all been destroyed. I would be grateful if anyone can help me.

Thanks

Andy Reid

From: **MajGen Peter Baldwin CBE**
(Address supplied)

Dear Sir

I see that you are going to mark the 50th Anniversary of the end of The Korean War. I thank you for that, as will all those who participated in that 'forgotten war'.

I enclose one photograph taken in 1950 showing 27 (COMWEL) Bde Signal Centre with **Captain (now Lt Col) Nigel Pidsley** and some of his Sig Tp. The American clothes are due to our having left Hong Kong in a hurry and dressed in jungle green!

The lack of cam nets will appall today's instructors but, with the exception of a reconnaissance Harvard-type aircraft known as 'Bedcheck Charlie', we were lucky not to have an air threat.

I have many anecdotes but the one I like best is when a very serious American officer from the Signal Monitoring Service (Pacific) travelled from his HQ to tell us that our Command Net had committed 6,500 procedural errors in a previous 24 hours. **Nigel**'s comment was 'Is that a record?' We later explained that our Voice Procedure pamphlet was not yet an allied one.

You will see from your archives that I even managed some *WIRE* notes in that period Aug '50 to May '51.

With best wishes

Yours.....

From: **Mr G Munro**
P O Box 1762
Randpark Ridge
2156 RSA
Tel: (011) 4763981
Email: gordonmunro@telkomsa.net

Dear Sir

By way of introduction, I was one of two Rhodesian students on No 22 Royal Signals Subalterns Part II Course in Catterick in 1961/62.

I would be grateful if you would publish this letter as a greeting to all my fellow students who may still be around. I know of the passing to higher service of two of them and there may be others no longer with us.

For the information of my fellow survivors, I returned to Rhodesia and opted for further service in the Rhodesian Army at the breakup of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. I was Director of the Corps from late 1973 to early 1976 before becoming Chairman of the Security Forces Joint Planning Staff and finally Commander Salisbury Area. I retired in March 1978.

The main purpose of this letter is, however, not autobiographical! It is really to inform my fellow survivors and indeed anyone who has an interest in the history of military signalling that I have recently published privately a limited edition (99 copies) of the history of the Rhodesian Corps of Signals from 1964 to 1980. Those who live in or near your neck of the woods may find a copy in the Royal Signals Museum. It is entitled BUSH TELEGRAPH and any inquiries or comments can be addressed to me at either of the above addresses. **Henton Jaaback**, who attended a Q Course in Catterick not long after I was there, was the last Director/Commander and helped me with the record of the last four years of the Rhodesian Corps' existence.

Best wishes to you and your readers,

Yours.....

From: **Mr N D Davies**
44 Rosemary Way
Horndean
Waterlooville
Hants
P08 9DQ
Tel: 023 92598 970
Email: taffy@normeg.fsnet.co.uk

Dear Sir

I want to express my thanks to you for publishing my article *AIR FORMATION SIGNALS* in the February 2003 Issue of *The WIRE*. So far I have had responses from **ExW02 RAMS Jimmy (Jock) Logan** from 10 Air Formation Regt. His e-mails and telephone conversations have unlocked many memories of our service in that Regt. In addition I received an email from my last boss before leaving the Army in 1968. He is **William (Bill) Oates** and was, as a Capt, the Regtl Lines Officer for 21 Air Formation Regt stationed at that time at RAF Laarbruch, Germany. I still have the glowing reference he gave me on leaving, as I set off for a 'new life' in Australia.

Yours.....

From: **MajGen DR Horsfield OBE**
President
The Indian Signals Association of Great Britain
C/o RHQ, Blandford

Dear Sir

The report on the visit to the French School of Signals puts me in mind of a visit I made in 1961 during my time as Chief Instructor at Catterick.

This was at a time when the valve was being supplanted by the transistor. Those amongst the instructors often found real difficulty in adjusting their brains to the new device.

I mentioned this problem to the senior French civilian chief instructor. His reply summed up the problem – 'Moi, je suis tubiste' (Me, I am a valve man).

Yours.....

From: **Fred Common** (Ex R Sigs)
1 Eton Drive
Scunthorpe
North Lincs
DN17 2PL
Tel: 01724 346018

Dear Sir

In October last year, my wife and I visited our son's grave in the British Military Cemetery, Wayne's Keep, Nicosia, Cyprus. As the cemetery is within the buffer zone, access can only be made in a UN vehicle accompanied by a UN forces member.

Located a short distance from the cemetery within the UN zone, is a room of remembrance. The responsibility for the room lies with the British Provost Sgt of UN Sector 2. Currently this is **Sgt Dave Wade RA**. The room has facilities for refreshments, giving visitors to the cemetery a chance to relax and reflect on their visit.

There are photograph albums, containing photos and letters from past visitors. A large number of regimental wall plaques are displayed to remember those who have been laid to rest. In October, there was no Royal Signals plaque, although I am aware of at least one member of the Corps who was laid to rest in the cemetery. He is **Dvr Keith Rushin**, who was a member of 50 Bde HQ and Sig Tp. (1958 59).

I am pleased to say that this has now been rectified. In December a Royal Signals wall plaque was placed in the room of remembrance. The photograph shows **Sgt Dave Wade RA** mounting the plaque.

Yours.....

From: **Mr G T Harper**
68 Station Road
Hatfield
DONCASTER
DN7 6QJ
Tel: 01302 844246

Dear Sir

THE VICTORIA CROSS AND GEORGE CROSS MEMORIAL APPEAL

I was 23912982 **Sgt G T Harper**, Royal Signals, serving the Corps from 1963 until 1977. A member of my family, **Cpl John William Harper**, who served in the Hallamshire Battalion, Yorks and Lancaster Regt in WWII, was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

In 2002 in our village of Hatfield we were successful in raising sufficient funds to erect a memorial to **John** in our cemetery (enclosed is a photograph of myself alongside the memorial).

In view of the above Appeal, I wondered if you would be prepared to publish some of my letter in the next issue of *The WIRE*, along with the Appeal, thereby promoting it further to our association members.

Yours.....

The Appeal was advertised on page 49 of February 2003 edition - Editor

From: **L Barfoot**
45 North Poulner Road
RINGWOOD
Hants BH24 1SW
Tel: 01425 477998

Dear Sir

With reference to **Col Randall's** letter in the December *Wire* concerning pigeons being used for communications, I too experienced such use.

In 1941/42 a pigeon loft was situated near our camp at Billericay in Essex. The pigeon keeper wore a battledress with no insignia, badge or hat. He never joined us in the camp.

It was the responsibility of the RSigs Sec to provide transport to deliver pairs of pigeons to various units at such places as Rayleigh, Shoeburyness, Southend-on-Sea and Canvey Island. The pigeon man always rode in the back of the truck with his birds and insisted on the canvas being tied down tightly so that the birds were in darkness during transit, thereby remaining calm. He loaded and unloaded, the driver not being permitted to handle the cages. The whole exercise was repeated every week, and as far as we were aware, the birds never flew home but were brought home on the return trip. Presumably, the birds would have been used if all other means of communication failed.

At the time of our departure, the incoming unit took over the responsibility of providing transport and we took no further part in the operation.

Yours.....

p.s. Welcome to the RSA to **Albert Godfrey** (October Wire) We served together in 1943/44 in J Section, 45 Div Sigs.

From **Mr B Spencer**
12 Norton Place
Morecambe
Lancs LA3 1PJ

Dear Sir

Since you arrived there has been a marked change in everything to do with the magazine and your assistant has been well chosen by all accounts. May you go from strength to strength!

'A Hundred Years of Canadian Comms & Electronics' by **Maj Jeff Howes**, Royal Canadian Signals intrigued me, for it brought back two incidents whilst I was attached to the Canadian Army with a small Royal Sigs 'Ship Signals' det, just before D Day.

The landing had been postponed, but on 5 June, 3 Landing craft Headquarters sailed down Southampton Water and anchored off the Needles rocks, Isle of Wight in the black-out and no noise was to be made.

The keys of the radio sets were immobilised and we were instructed just to listen on the headphones for any signals or noises whatsoever. They didn't tell us why, but putting two and two together I surmised it was to find out if the enemy had found something out about the landings. After two hours and not a dot or a dash, I was told I could have a break of fresh air on desk. So off I went in pitch-black conditions and inhaled. Then a youngish voice nearby said, 'Have you been on a landing before?' 'Yes' I replied 'On Sicily and Italy as Beach Signaller'. 'What was it like?' 'Not half as bad as I thought it would be'. This was an extreme white lie, which I won't go into. There was a pause then, 'What do you think I should say to my men before they go into action?' This took me by surprise, and in response I thought of something quickly, 'Tell them not to stop for anything when they hit the beach but to get off as quick as they can'. 'Thanks' he said 'I'm going

below'. Little did he realise that as a Beach Signaller I had to make a hollow to put my radio set in and stay put till the end of the action.

On D-Day my section were Ships Signallers on *HMS Ulster Monarch*, which anchored in a position at Arromanches, where the entrance to the Mulberry Harbour was going to be constructed. Half the radio room was for the Navy sparks contacting convoys coming across, and we in the other half got in touch with HQs going ashore. My position given by the Sgt was to find the Canadian HQ. When I switched on, it was like going into a concert hall where hundreds of violinists were tuning up. Eventually the Canadian operator started, ending his message in code. When it was completed, I handed it over to the Sgt to be deciphered, and he disappeared into a small room. After a while the door opened and out came the Sgt with the message in his hand. 'Something wrong?' I enquired. 'Yes, it's come sooner than expected and some Officers in the room don't think it's authentic.' 'I've no means to say if it is or not authentic, but what does it say?' 'It says that the HQ party have got ashore, erected the offices and it's OK for staff, including the Officers, to occupy them. Our Officers are suspicious that the Germans have captured them and forced the operator to send the message. They are wondering what to do next'. I jumped in 'There's only one thing they can do and that's take a bodyguard with them and some Commandos'. He reported back, the door opened and 4 top 'brass hat' Officers came out with baggage and got into the landing craft. The Sgt, looking worried came and told me to hand over the set and come back early next morning. This I did and found him in a much better mood. 'Everything's OK, Spencer. You can be excused duty for the rest of the day but keep out of sight'. All's well that ends well – even though it had been a long previous day.

It's quite a few years when I wrote my war experiences and sent them to the Blandford Museum to be put in the Records Department. Unfortunately there wasn't an archivist at that time and I think 'they' had a spring clearing out, so I'm wondering if it is still there. I have a spare copy if you require it.

Yours.....

From: **Major P D Whittle TD**
8 Broadwater Close
Woodham
Woking
Surrey
GU215TW
Tel: 01932 346549
E-mail: paul.whittle@tinyworld.co.uk

Dear Sir

Memories of Darjeeling?

The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Society is the UK-based support group for the famous narrow-gauge railway, now granted World Heritage status by UNESCO, up to this former hill station of the 'Raj'.

We would be delighted to hear from any retired members of the Corps with memories or photographs of the railway and Darjeeling itself from their war-time service in India, for publication in our Society's journal *The Darjeeling Mail.*

Anyone who remembers the tiny ancient locomotives that still haul trains up over 6,000 feet, will be pleased to hear that Indian Railways is actually now building three more examples and keeping almost exactly to the original design of the 1880s!

Yours.....

From: **Russell Baker**
77 White Knowle Park
Buxton
Derbyshire
SK17 9XA

Dear Sir

I am writing on behalf of my elderly father trying to track down a former school friend he last saw in 1941 whom he believes was then in the 'Defence Electric Light'. His name was **Blyth(e), Fred William. Mr Blythe** would then have been in his early twenties.

I have been totally unable to trace any reference to 'Defence Electric Light' other than a suggestion that it may be connected with the Royal Corps of Signals.

My father is convinced he wore a red(ish) beret. I have been in touch with the Archivist of The Museum of the Royal Corps of Signals who is unable to assist but has suggested I write to you.

I wonder if DEL means anything to you or your readers. I appreciate I am asking a lot but any information would help.

Yours.....

DONATIONS

East Kent Branch RSA	£250.00
Mrs M L Britt	£25.00
Mr R Larby in memory of George Eynon	£10.00
Mr D Pirie	£10.00
Mr E J Hathway	£25.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of Max S Ballard	£10.00
Rotherham Branch RSA	£50.00
Graham Cox	£25.00
42 Sig Regt Officers' Club	£203.00
Frank Corser	£25.00
56 Division OCA	£150.00
Bedford Branch RSA	£10.00
Frank Buttifant	£20.00
Mr J E Stroud	£50.00
Mr K Grange	£10.00
Terry Wickens	£18.10
Mr P B Cairns	£18.00
3 Div Signals Reunion Club in memory of E K Keen	£10.00
Knighton House School	£253.19
Huddersfield Branch RSA	100.00
Manchester Branch RSA	£100.00
Cornwall Branch RSA	£400.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of D Hollingworth	£10.00
Peterborough Branch RSA	£50.00
The estate of Ronald J Pugsley	£250.00
Mr A D Brown	£12.00
Lt Col Coltman	£36.00
Exmouth Branch RSA	£50.00

LAST POST

Acton - Capt J R L	Served 1998/03	Died 22/02/03
Baker - Sig J Baker	Served 1942/44	Died 17/11/02
Blackwood - LLCpl G Blackwood	Served 1943/47	Died 12/02/03
Burns - SSgt T P Burns	Served 1968/91	Died 11/02/03
Burrough - Capt P Burrough	Served WWII	Died Jan '03
Buxton - Maj W R Buxton	Served 1931/45	Died Dec '02
Cadman - SSgt A Cadman	Served 1946/68	Died Dec '02
Callis - Sig C J Callis	Served 1941/46	Died 07/02/03
Choppen - Maj D A E Choppen	Served 1938/74	Died 2000
Dale - Sig G J Dale	Served 1939/46	Died Feb '03
Dearnaley - Sgt T E Dearnaley	Served 1974/92	Died 18/12/02
Ewer - WO1 D A Ewer	Served 1951/75	Died 21/02/03
Eynon - Sgt G E Eynon	Served 1948/55	Died 19/12/02
Flynn - Lt Col M J Flynn	Served 1948/82	Died 31/12/02
Griffiths - Col R	Served ??	Died 08/05/01
Hehir - SSgt J S Hehir	Served 1955/89	Died 13/12/02
Hewitt - LCpl V S Hewitt	Served 1985/94	Died 10/02/03
Higgins - Sgt G P Higgins	Served 1926/55	Died 15/02/03
Hollingworth - Cpl D Hollingworth	Served 1950/55	Died 2002
Kenrick - Capt A Kenrick	Served 1965/72	Died 17/11/02
Kirkpatrick - Sig W H Kirkpatrick	Served 1933/45	Died 11/01/03
Lomas - Maj T Lomas	Served1949/69	Died Mar '99
McAdam - SSgt P F J McAdam	Served 1936/58	Died 13/02/03
Martin - Sig E Martin	Served 1939/46	Died 2001
Nichol - Sgt G Nichol	Served 1953/77	Died 14/01/03
Pettener - Sgt J Pettener	Served 1939/41	Died Feb '03
Pratt - Sig A L Pratt	Served 1939/46	Died 02/02/03
Powell - WO2 A Powell	Served 1934/46	Died 21/12/02
Raynor - WO2 F M Raynor	Served 1930/66	Died 31/01/03
Robinson - Maj N E Robinson	Served 1926/67	Died 20/01/03
Rowe - Sig L W F Rowe	Served 1942/47	Died 12/02/03
Short - LCpl K A Short	Served 1945/48	Died 04/03/03
Spencer - Lt R W Spencer	Served 1939/46	Died 24/01/03
Steel - WO2 A Steel	Served 1943/72	Died 31/01/03
Tasker - WO1 W Tasker	Served 1941/66	Died 13/11/02
Taylor - Sig E Taylor	Served 1942/46	Died 21/02/03
Walsh - Sig R Walsh	Served 1940/46	Died Jan '03
Watson - SSgt W B Watson	Served 1936/59	Died 11/01/03
Weaver - WO2 E Weaver	Served 1936/58	Died 16/01/03
Williams - Sig L H Williams	Served 1943/47	Died 18/01/03
Wilson-Wardle - Cpl A Wilson-Wardle (R Sigs) - Sgt A Wilson-Wardle (RA Sigs)	Served ??	Died 19/01/03

EYNON - Sgt G Eynon (George) died on 20 December 2002, aged 72.

George was born in Bristol and was called up for National Service in 1949. After completing his training as an Operator, Wireless and Line (OWL) he decided to sign on as a regular and then volunteered for service in Korea when British troops were sent there in August of 1950.

He was posted to 27 Inf Bde Sig Tp, arriving there in November of the same year. When 27 Bde was relieved in April 1951, George stayed on in Korea with the 28 Commonwealth Inf Bde Sig Tp, where he rose to the rank of Cpl, being in charge of one of the Signal Office shifts. He eventually returned to the UK in late 1952 having done, against policy, two Korean winters with a front line unit. The Korean winters being so severe, it was deemed that no-one should do more than one!

Back in the UK, **George** was posted to York and was involved in a severe motor cycle accident. Although he eventually recovered from his injuries he was given such a low medical category that he decided to leave the Army in 1954.

Moving to Cornwall he joined BT as an engineer and become involved with the local Air Training Corps into which he was commissioned, becoming a Flt Lt (all ATC Officers are RAF reserve Officers).

After retirement, **George** lived in Bodmin and although his health suffered in later years, he attended the RSA Reunions at Blandford, revisited Korea and then on to New Zealand with the British Korean Veterans, Association.

His funeral at the Bodmin Crematorium was attended by 6 former members of 28 Bde Sig Tp (K Troop), RAFA members, Devon & Cornwall BKVA and an Honour Guard of ATC, plus family and numerous friends.

George was survived by his sister, three children, six grandchildren and one great-grand daughter.

He was liked by all who knew him, always full of good heart and cheer and he loved to ring up old comrades for a chat. We will miss the phone ringing and having answered be greeted with 'Hal-LO, its **George**!' followed by a burst of laughter.

TASKER - WO1 W Tasker (Bill) passed away on 13 November 2002.

Bill's call-up was delayed at the start of the WW2 because, being a plumber by trade, he was classified as being in a reserved occupation. But in 1941 he enlisted into RSigs, and served in North Africa, Sicily and throughout the Italian campaign, where he was wounded.

He met **Stelia** in Trieste and they were married in 1947. They returned to Scotland and raised four children. **Bill** maintained active links with the Corps, serving in the reserve. In 1966 he was finally discharged from the AER as a WO1 (RSM).

Bill was a staunch member of the Montrose branch of the RBL Scotland and the Tayside and Fife Branch of the RSA, as is his son, **Mike** and daughter-in-law, **Sheena**.

Bill was quiet and tended to hide his light under a bushel, but was well known, liked and admired throughout the area. In every sense of the word, he was a 'gentle man' who will be much missed.

HALL – Lieutenant Colonel Ian Terence Hall, TD (Ian) died on 11 January 2003.

It is with deep regret that we have to advise the tragic death **of Lt Col Ian Hall TD**, the Commanding Officer of 34 (N) Sig Regt (V) based at Brambles Farm, Middlesbrough.

Ian was on holiday in Florida with his family when he was seriously injured in a road accident on Thursday 9 January 2003. He subsequently died in hospital from his injuries early Saturday morning 11 January 2003.

Ian had only recently assumed command of the Regt in November last year, having joined it in Middlesbrough as a recruit in July 1980. He was commissioned in January 1984 and served with 90 (North Riding) Sig Sqn (V) and RHQ, working his way through the officer ranks to become the first TA CO of the Regt for 16 years.

Ian was a man of old-fashioned values, but with an un-blinkered outlook on both the present and future. He had a very dry and sharp sense of humour, which made people well aware of his presence.

He had a very high profile civilian career, working for Halifax Bank of Scotland as Head of Business Standards. His colleagues remember him, much as we in the Regt do, not only for his sense of humour, but his dedication and commitment to making significant improvements to working practices within his department.

It was whilst serving with the Regt that Ian met his wife, **Anne-Marie**, who was a fellow officer in 90 (North Riding) Sig Sqn (V). They married in October 1991. **Ian** was a devoted family man and a proud father to his two sons, **Jamie** and **Edward**.

Not only was he dedicated to his family, work and the TA, he still found time to pursue his keen interest in military history. It is for those of us who had the pleasure to accompany him on battlefield tours that we witnessed his ability, reliability and determination, which marked him out as a fine example of a TA Royal Signals officer

It was a fitting tribute to **Ian's** memory that his funeral was attended by so many people from all different walks and aspects of his life. He will be greatly missed by all who knew and served with him and it is at this sad time that our thoughts are with **Anne-Marie**, **Jamie** and **Edward**.

KENRICK – Capt A Kenrick (Gus) died on Sunday 17 November, at St Joseph's Hospital, Clonmel.

Following 11:30am Mass on Wednesday 20 November at the Augustinian Abbey Church Fethard, burial took place in the adjoining graveyard.

Gus Kenrick was born in Burke Street 85 years ago, son of **John** and **Margaret Kenrick**. Working in England, he was called up for military service with the outbreak of World War II in 1939. Realising immediately that the Army was the life for him, he rose quickly through the ranks, was commissioned and retired with the rank of captain after 37 years service. Serving with the 55/77th Regt of Foot, The Royal West African Frontier Force and The Royal Corps of Signals, he landed with the invading forces on the Normandy Beaches on D Day and was in active service throughout the entire campaign up to VE Day in 1945.

He made a nostalgic return to France in 1995 for the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of VE Day. There he renewed acquaintances with many of his old comrades and visited the graves of many more. He also served many tours of overseas

duty, including terms in Europe, Africa and Singapore. He was never willing to talk of his wartime experiences, many of which were rather hair-raising, except to tell of happenings of a humorous nature. As a brilliant raconteur, he could entertain for hours while recalling such stories at will.

Retiring from the Army, **Gus** was appointed Secretary of St Andrews Golf Club in Scotland, where he lived for many years. After deciding to return to his native Fethard, he took up a similar position with Clonmel Golf Club.

Always willing to help out locally when required, **Gus** was associated with the Meals of Wheels delivery service, with the 'front of house' with the Fethard Players and with the Annual Flower Show. **Gus** never married and will be greatly missed by his surviving sister **Mary Byard**, Burke Street, his nieces, nephews and a whole circle of friends to whom sincere sympathy is extended.

POWELL - WO2 A P Powell (Allan) died 21 December 2003.

It is with deep regret that the Liverpool Branch announces the death of 2323512 **Allan Powell**, who passed away on 21 December 2002 at Benham Nursing Home, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside, at the age of 87 years.

Allan enlisted in the Corps in 1934. He sailed for India on 28 January 1036, was posted to Peshawar on the Northwest Frontier and billeted at Khyber Barracks. Whilst on overseas service he overcame appendicitis and a serious bout of malaria. He married **Frances** in 1939 and they had two children **Phil** and **Janet**. **Allan** left the Royal Signals in June 1946 to start work as a shipping clerk in Liverpool.

He became widowed in the 1980s and in 1989 he married **Norma**. Up to only a couple of years ago **Allan** had been an active member of the Liverpool RSA, acting as Branch Standard Bearer at Blandford reunions. A minute's silence was observed at our Branch meeting place, 50 Sqn, 33 Sig Regt, Aintree, Liverpool.

The Branch offers our sincere condolences to his widow, **Norma**, son **Philip**, daughter **Janet** and their families.

PRATT - Sig Arthur L Pratt, died 2nd Feb 2003.

It is with sadness that we report the death of **Arthur Leslie Pratt**, aged 85 after a long illness. **Arthur** was in the TA and called to arms on the 2nd August 1939. He was initially in 'D' Section (DRs), 43rd Wessex Infantry Divisional Signals. In 1942, he was posted to 'J' Section, 128 Brigade, 46th Division. In the North Africa campaign Arthur was travelling as an 'Enemy Aircraft Spotter' on top of a 15cwt truck when a wheel fell off, as did Arthur. He injured his back and was transferred from DR duties to linework. In December 1944 the unit moved and fought through Italy.

In civilian life **Arthur** worked for the Southern Electricity Board. He was a RSA Life Member No. 37738 and a long serving member of the Southampton & District Branch of the RSA. He was also a Mason. He leaves behind his wife **Gwen**, sons **Henry** and **Stephen**, grandson **William** and favourite daughter-in-law **Julia**. The funeral and cremation was carried out at the Southampton Crematorium on the 12th Feb 2003. A Guard of Honour was supplied by his comrades from the RSA Southampton and District Branch, and the Branch Standard was carried by the Standard Bearer, Bryan Littlecott. **Arthur's** coffin was draped with the Union Flag. The service as very well attended by family, friends, comrades from the RSA and Fellow Masons. The lesson was read by son **Henry** and the eulogy by son **Stephen**.

His comrade, **Peter Ferguson**, remembers **Arthur** for his odd sense of humour and recounts the following 'During 128 Bdes last action in Italy in November 1944, **Arthur** was out in the night driving a jeep on his own. He came back to the HQ and he was wearing a white donkey jacket, which had been issued against the cold. The entrance to the HQ area was manned by a defence platoon sentry. **Arthur** pulled up and addressed the sentry in a very lofty Errol Flynn type voice, 'is the Brigadier in?' The sentry said 'Yes, who are you sir?' **Arthur** replied 'Field Marshal Kesselring', and drove into the HQ with the sentry running after him advising **Arthur** that it wasn't funny or words to that effect.'

CALLIS - Cecil John Callis (John) died 7 February 2003

The Southampton & District Branch report the death of another of our old comrades, **Cecil John Callis**. After a long illness, **John** (he preferred his second name) died on the 7 February 2003, aged 83. He was a long serving member of the RSA Southampton & District Branch (Life Member 31401) and also the Burma Star Association.

John was born in 1919 at Wellingborough into a farming family. His mother was born in China and both parents were missionaries. He attended Agricultural College in 1934 and then worked at Landsport Hall and at Althorpe for **Princess Diana's** grandfather.

Enlisting into the TA in 1939, he served with the Northants Regt in Northern Ireland, where he was shot by his own side. After recovering, he transferred to RSigs in 1941 and served in India with the 14th Army until his demob in 1946.

Post war, **John** worked firstly as a milkman, and then as an industrial representative, travelling widely. A kind, thoughtful, humorous family man, he had a great love of sports, especially rugby. In his younger days he played for his school and had a trial for the Northampton Saints, a team he followed for the rest of his life. He was also a keen follower of the Pytchley Hunt.

He leaves behind his wife **Margaret** whom he married in 1951, son **Peter**, daughters **Ann** and **Jane**, five grandchildren and one granddaughter.

KIRKPATRICK - Sig W H Kirkpatrick (Harry) died on 11 January 2003

It is with great sadness that the Manchester Branch began the new year with the tragic death of **Harry Kirkpatrick**. **Harry**, who was a very young 89, had recently undergone major surgery on his stomach and was recovering well when he was involved in a road accident in which he and his front seat passenger were killed. His wife, **Brenda** was badly injured, but is expected to make a full recovery.

Harry, the most amiable of souls with an extremely sharp wit, started his military career at Norton St Bks, Manchester (no dates available). Thereafter he served at Catterick, Hendon and Chichester, before being involved as a DR in the Normandy invasion. Carrying on to Belgium, Holland and Germany, he was demobbed in Hereford at the end of hostilities.

Harry was a man of many interests. Apart from being a keen member of the RSA, he also was a member of The Inland Waterways Association and had at one point owned his own narrow boat. He was a regular worshiper and member of the PCC of St James's Church, Gatley, where the funeral service took place on the 22nd of January before committal at Stockport Crematorium. 12 members of the Branch attended and the Branch Standard was paraded at both locations by **Bill Brianson** and **Norman Tipton**. At the February Branch meeting, Chairman **Ron Taylor** dedicated the exhortation to **Harry's** memory.

WILSON-WARDLE – Anthony Wilson-Wardle (Tony), Cpl RSigs, Sgt RASigs died in the Royal Brisbane Hospital on 19 January 2003.

Tony served with RSigs before migrating to Australia in 1972 to join RASigs.

As an Operator Keyboard, Radio & Cipher, he served with quite a few units and made many friends. After work, he enjoyed a drink with his mates. He collected quite a few nick-names, as one does, in Australia – 'Dubs' (for his double-barrel name), 'WW' (short for Wilson-Wardle) and WW2 (a combination of Dubs (twice) and WW).

Tony's funeral was held on Friday, 24 January 2003 at Albany Creek Crematorium, Lakeview Chapel, Bridgeman Downs, Queensland. A wake was held at the family home after the funeral.

He is survived by his wife, **Jeanette**, and children, **Mark**, **Caroline** and **Bronwyn**. They are all receiving much support and comfort from the Queensland Branch of the RASigs Association, whose motto is 'Honour the dead, but fight like hell for the living'.

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THE Wire

June 2003

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE LIFE OF A RECRUITER

by SSgt Fran Graham (R Sigs)

I was approaching posting time in my job, as a Tp SSgt at 11 Sig Regt, when a notice on Part 1 Orders caught my eye. Volunteers were required to take up recruiting jobs in various offices. As one of these jobs was in sunny Bournemouth, I decided to apply. To apply it is necessary to get your application endorsed through your own chain of command, and then it is forwarded to MCM Div, normally by your Adjt. A paper sift is carried out by MCM Div, and if you get through that, you will be called for an interview at HQ SORLS at Blandford. A panel, chaired by the Regtl Col, does the interview. The interview will cover your previous jobs, why you want to be a recruiter, and your living arrangements should you get the job. After this, you must pass an interview with the Comd Regional Recruiting of your office area, normally a Lt Col, and the Army Careers Officer, normally a Maj, of the office you will be working in.

Once successfully through the application process, the next step is to carry out an attachment in the Careers Office. This is normally for two weeks, and it helps to familiarise you with the application process. It also ensures that you can fit into the office environment. After this, you attend an intensive four-week course at the Army School of Recruiting (ASR) which you must pass. This covers all aspects of the recruiting process, giving you the tools you need to do the job. After the course, I started my posting, which is for 30 months.

Once back at the office, you are straight into dealing with your own applicants. It is a bit daunting initially, as there are lots of things to remember, but your work mates and the Senior Recruiter are there to ask if you need help. The job is varied. You have to be able to chat to all kinds of people, answering questions and allaying fears where necessary. If someone wants to make an application, you have to ensure they are eligible to do so. You test applicants, and then brief them on the jobs they are eligible to do (based on test score and academic grades). You write off for references and medical clearance, and when they are received, you interview your applicant. From this interview, you have to decide if the applicant is fit and motivated enough to go on. If so, you recommend the applicant for their job choices and attendance at Recruit Selection Centre (RSC). If not, you can stop or defer an application. If they pass RSC, you apply for a training date for them. Once you get this, you arrange a date for them to come in to enlist into the Army. You are responsible for ensuring the enlistment paperwork is accurate. This is vital, as it is a legal document. The process can take several months, and you must maintain links with the applicant throughout, ensuring that they remain motivated.

Other elements to the job include attendance at careers fairs in schools and colleges. We also man displays at local events, and support any Regimental Recruiting Teams in the area. We are often asked for advice and information by veterans and by members of the public. During any military operation, we are often the focus for questions from civilians (eg OP TELIC). We have to deal with these in a professional manner. Each recruiter is also responsible for visiting a number of Cadet detachments in the area. These visits are done on a regular basis, and are important, because a large number of cadets go on to join the Regular Army.

I had no idea what to expect from the job, or whether I would enjoy it. Thankfully, it has proved to be a fantastic move for me. I have had the opportunity to do NVQs in Management, IT and Customer Services, all of which easily relate to the Recruiting job. Other qualifications are also now becoming available through the ASR, and I intend to take these up. If you do not see yourself working in an office environment, or if you hate administration, this may not be the job for you. However, if you want a rewarding and different posting then watch out for the notice on Part 1 Orders and APPLY NOW.

SSgt Fran Graham

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The Magazine of the Royal Corps of Signals

The Wire

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FRONT COVER

Hearts and Minds

Making friends with the locals came easily to 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt. Here Lt Timmy Mallett of 201 Sqn takes time out with 12 year old Ali from a farm in Afwan.

BACK COVER

Assistance to Sierra Leone Signallers

Echo Tp from 30 Sig Regt recently deployed to Sierra Leone on OP KEELING in support of Comd 19 Bde and 2RGR, part of the International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT). LCpl Pollard is seen teaching equipment maintenance to local signallers. See 30 Sig Regt's report on page 267.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE....

Royal Signals Win in Two Ancient Tennis Events, with a First in History for a Non-Commissioned Soldier

On 10 February 2003 **Sig Daniel Lewis** of 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) flew back from Kosovo to join **Lt Chris Barker** in playing two very old forms of tennis, Rackets and Real Tennis. After only two hours of practice together, the pair were competing in the Army and Combined Services Rackets and Real Tennis Championships.

They took away the 100 year old Regimental Rackets Doubles Cup and the Regimental Real Tennis Cup. It also marked a moment in history for **Sig Lewis** and the Real Tennis event. For the first time ever, a non-commissioned soldier was to see his name on the coveted Cup.

See report on page 268.

Incoming Enemy Fire

'Every time Iraqi Scuds were launched, the Yeoman gave the command to take cover, and within seconds, we were all in the trenches. This was repeated again and again over the next few days, once 3 times in 5 minutes.' **Lt Frost** of 214 Sig Sqn describes conditions during the Sqn's move up through southern Iraq.

See 2 Sig Regt's report on page 257.

Farewell to a Gurkha Major

Saying farewell to a Gurkha Major is always a big event in the Bde of Gurkhas. Deployment of soldiers on OP TELIC didn't adversely affect the numbers of Gurkha Sigs personnel and their wives, who came together on 14 March at Gamecock Barracks, Bramcote, to see off **Maj (QGO) Navindrabikram Gurung MBE** and his family. The many hours of preparation put in by Gurkha Maj (Des) **Capt (QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO**, and his team ensured that the event was a resounding success.

See 30 Sig Regt's report on page 267.

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Corps of Signals or the Ministry of Defence.

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YOUR ONE DAY'S PAY - WHAT HAPPENED TO IT IN 2002

INTRODUCTION

Your One Day's Pay is the main source of income for Corps Funds. It is very encouraging that in excess of 90% of the Corps makes this generous annual contribution. Officers are invited to pay an additional 0.75 of One Day's Pay each year into the Officers' Fund, which is used in support of Officers' activities only. Retired Officers may volunteer to pay an annual subscription of £25 or more and this also entitles them to receive *The WIRE* and certain facilities funded from the Officers' Fund. SNCOs and WOs may subscribe an additional 0.25 of One Day's Pay for their own Sergeants' Mess Fund.

PURPOSE OF CORPS FUND

A Trust Deed is registered with the Charity Commission and sets out the main purpose for which Corps Funds may be used. These are:

The relief of poverty for all members of the Corps, serving or retired, their families and dependents. This is the main area of expenditure.
To maintain and improve the physical efficiency and morale of the Corps at large, e.g. Funds for sport and adventure training etc.
The payment of donations to charitable organisations concerned with the welfare of Signallers and their dependents.

HOW ARE THE CORPS FUNDS STRUCTURED?

There are three main funds known collectively as the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund. These are:

The Corps Fund (Soldiers' Activities)
The Officers' Fund (Officers' Activities)
The Association Fund (Welfare and Benevolence).

Expenditure can only be made in accordance with the Trust Deed and in compliance with Charity Law. The chart below shows the combined income and expenditure of all funds for the Financial Year 2002.

INCOME

The total income for the year was £876K. The main source of income was from the subscriptions of Officers' and Soldiers' (£538K). In addition most subscribers support their subscriptions by means of a Gift Aid Declaration, previously known as a Covenant, which enables the Corps to reclaim tax on subscriptions received at no cost to the subscriber (£151K). Income from our investments amounted to £110K and donations accounted for the final £87K. All donations and legacies, unless the terms of the Will state otherwise, are allocated to the Association Fund for reinvestment in order to ensure the future costs of benevolence are met. Tax may also be reclaimed from individual donations, however small, provided they are supported by Gift Aid Declarations.

Treated separately and not included in the figures presented, is a legacy of £450K received from the estate of Brig Rex Robinson which has been left specifically to the Corps as a whole and is currently held on deposit awaiting the deliberation of the Trustees as to its disposal.

EXPENDITURE

Some £368K, or 42% of total income, has been spent on benevolence in support of both the Serving and Retired Corps. This includes a grant of £31K to the Army Benevolent Fund, which gives the Corps valuable support in meeting its financial commitments of those in need.

The Corps employs a number of personnel, including for example the Corps Accountant and Welfare Officer, and incurs running costs all of which amount to £109K. The Royal Signals Institution and Heritage costs totalled £33K, which included the cost of Lectures and Corps Prizes and the Insurance and Maintenance of both Corps Silver and Paintings. The Royal Signals Corps Band was subsidised by £14K, mainly used to support the Band in a professional way with sheet music, instrument repairs and uniforms. The Northern Band and the Corps Pipes and Drums were also subsidised by £6K and £5K respectively.

The Games Club authorised expenditure of £65K in support of Corps Sport and the Royal Signals Yacht Club received £8K. *The Wire* was subsidised by £15K. Capital Grants of £11K were approved by the Heritage Committee for the purchase of Corps Paintings and Silver and £20K has been set aside in support of the White Helmets future capital replacement programme.

The funds allocated £49K to Corps Entertainment, including such occasions as Royal Visits to Units and the Annual Reunion of the Royal Signals Association. Further financial support of £165K was made to the Serving Corps and is summarised at Note 1 including £24K for Adventure Training and Grants to the Royal Signals Museum and for the Corps Silver Jubilee celebrations of £16K and £10K respectively.

SUMMARY

The One Day's Pay Scheme continues to be extremely well supported by the Corps and Regimental Headquarters is most grateful to those who contribute. However, the call on Corps Funds is an ever increasing one and every subscription received is both valuable and important to enable the current level of support to be maintained.

It is hoped that this brief explanation of our accounts for 2002 satisfies the interest of subscribers and is an encouragement to the few, who for whatever reason, do not currently subscribe. If anyone requires any further information please ring **Mr Alan Wilkinson**, the Corps Accountant, on Blandford Military extension 2086.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS BENEVOLENT FUND 2002

Where did the money come from?

INCOME	£k		%
Soldiers' Subscriptions	364		42
Soldiers' Gift Aid	101		11
Officers' Subscriptions	174		20
Officers' Gift Aid	50		6
Investments	56	44	11
Donations	87		10
	£876k		

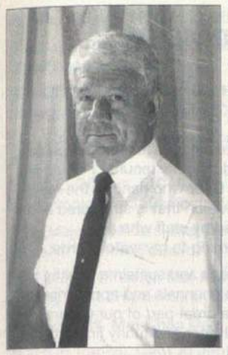
How was the money spent? (All figures are in thousands)

EXPENDITURE	£k		%
Association, Welfare and Benevolence	330		38
Association Grants (Army Benevolent Fund etc)	38		4
Salaries	50	25	8
Running Expenses	20	14	4
Institution	25		3
Heritage	8		1
Corps Music	25		3
Sports	73		9
Wire Subsidy	15		2
Capital grants	31		3
Entertainment	11	38	5
Other (Note 1)	165		19
Investment or Carried Forward	8		1
	£876k		

NOTE: The Association is shown in shaded areas

NOTE 1:

	£k		£k
Adventure Training	24	HQ Officers' Mess	34
Grants	35	HQ Sergeants' Mess	35
Recruiting	37		



EDITORIAL

Reading the stories that have come in from the Gulf, I feel greatly privileged to be editing *The WIRE* at this time. But, given that one of the four aims of this magazine is to act as a medium for the Corps informal history, I am also aware of the responsibility I bear for this particular issue and possibly the next two or three. Consequently, I have given priority to the coverage of OP TELIC, particularly in the colour section, which I have doubled in size. At the same time, I do not want it to be forgotten that our people have been, and are still, fulfilling vital roles in other parts of the world and in UK.

At the height of operations, we had almost 2000 signallers from six regts and five independent sqns engaged on OP TELIC. Not only this, but almost every other unit/sub-unit elsewhere in the Corps contributed personnel and/or materiel to ensure that the OP TELIC units and sub-units were fully manned, equipped and backed up. But it doesn't end there. Further units/sub-units were placed on standby and some have already deployed to the Gulf for OP TELIC 2. All of this, in addition to our continuing commitments to theatres such as the Balkans, Afghanistan, Northern Ireland and being on notice for OP FRESCO.

Our people have not only done a highly efficient comms job in the Gulf, they have also showed incredible flexibility and coolness in meeting other tasks and challenges presented to them. Having made a major contribution to converting 'a large sand berm with a very large white tent' into the forward concentration area, York Lines, 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207) trebled its strength to 600+ personnel and 250 vehs when it temporarily became the Bde QM Dept. For a short while, 212 Sig Sqn 'remembering that we are soldiers first and tradesmen second' transformed itself from a sig sqn to an inf coy as they took over a task from Royal Irish Fusiliers. During the height of 'the mother of all sandstorms' 75% of 102 Log Bde had to hold down a TALON antenna dome to prevent it from being lost.

A considerable amount of courage is also alluded to in unit contributions to *The WIRE*, with quotes such as 'The screaming of Scuds at 50 decibels became the norm and the long hours passed slowly' and '....we were all lined up [to go] when, Bang! a missile landed 500m away from our loc. Definitely time to move! '

We were all greatly saddened to have lost **LCpl Brierley** of 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt, whose obituary I have brought forward to this page. Although the war is over, OP TELIC continues and dangers remain. My fervent hope is that the rest of our people come home safely.

It was good to meet so many members of the Retired Corps at the RSA AGM in London on 5 April. I thank the Chairman, **MajGen Tony Boyle CB**, for allowing me a slot on the agenda to update you on the changes and the thinking behind them, and I thank all those at the meeting who offered constructive comment and helpful ideas.

As to the content of the meeting, I was pleased to note that the change of the RSA's second Objective to: 'To foster comradeship and morale within the Corps, serving and retired' was passed. As everyone knows, fostering comradeship and morale is something that the RSA has been doing all along, but simplifying the wording has brought into sharper focus that this includes both serving and retired Corps members. It seems that over the years, the belief has grown that the RSA is only for retired members. Through this new wording, I believe that what **Gen Tony** is pushing for (and I fully support him) is to spread the message that the Association is just as much the 'family home' for serving Corps as it is for the retired members. I'm sure that the majority of the retired Corps accepts this. We need to do much more work to get this message over to the serving Corps. I know that most RSA members are waiting anxiously to hear first-hand the experiences from those who have served in the Gulf, and I am sure that there many soldiers who were there who are just as eager to tell their stories. This seems to me to be an ideal opportunity to build on and develop the linkage that already exists between some serving units and RSA branches.

Finally, I have been pleased with the positive response from many readers to the changes we have made to *The WIRE*. Thank you to all those who have called or written in. In addition to my Deputy, **Maria Field**, who has helped so much to put design ideas into practice, you, the readers deserve some of the credit for feeding in so many ideas. Contributors are now starting to help by responding to my request in the *Guidance Notes* to make their notes more appealing to a wider readership. One example of this is 35 Sig Regt, who, for this issue, have used a different structure for their contribution. (See page 271)

BRIERLEY - LCpl Shaun Andrew Brierley, died on 29 Mar 2003.

It is with deep regret that we report the tragic death of **LCpl Shaun Brierley** who, at the age of 28, was killed in a road traffic accident during OP TELIC in Iraq on 29 March 2003. **Shaun** was a larger than life character, who always lived life to the full. A fun-loving man who always spoke frankly and honestly to those around him, he will be remembered with pleasure by those who had the fortune to serve with him. He always accepted life's challenges with an open mind and was never one to grumble without good reason. He will also be remembered for his wicked sense of humour and the skills that he possessed as a signaller, which were second to none. He was always willing to help out in any Tp duty and was a tremendous teacher to the younger members of the unit. These are the people who will no longer be able to benefit from the skills that the 'Comms Doctor' provided. **Shaun** was also renowned for his skills on the rugby field, where he flourished in the front row. On the field was a place that he managed to make a lot of friends during and after the game. This will be one of the times when **Shaun's** memory will live on with his friends long into the future. These occasions will be a lot less without him.

The funeral service was conducted at Batley Parish Church and he was buried at a local cemetery in Batley. It was a fitting tribute to his memory that his funeral was attended by so many friends and comrades. He will be sorely missed by all the friends and family that he left behind. Our thoughts at this time are with his fiancée **Birgit**, his son **Patrick** and all of his family in Yorkshire.

ROYAL SIGNALS MANNING & CAREER MANAGEMENT DIVISION

- by Maj CM Vaudin

INTRODUCTION *- By Col JE Richardson MBE, Colonel RSigs/Int Corps, MCM Div*

As a volunteer for this post, I am naturally delighted to be able to write this introduction in to the MCM Div notes that have a proper place in *The WIRE*. Communication, Consultation and Commitment are the watchwords that I hope to make evident during my tenure. I would first however, wish to offer my gratitude and debt of thanks, on behalf of the wider Corps and myself, to **Col Mike Dyer** who handed the reins over so recently. The changes in MCM Div have been huge. The vision has been met in full and we have a Division that is structured and balanced to meet the needs of our Corps. It was my predecessor who delivered this. I find myself surrounded by staff who are professional, energised and committed to provide the best advice and service to our officers and soldiers. Turning to my watchwords:

Communication is not only our business but also the lifeblood of all activity here in the APC. I want to encourage and sustain a healthy two-way dialog with every soldier in our Corps, but before you phone me to take me up on this, I do mean through channels and appropriate mechanisms. The Corps is now so much better equipped with skilled and experienced RCMOs who provide a great part of our Comms system. They speak in two-frequency simplex. A full programme of Roadshows is also planned; re-written, shorter and funny (in parts). Be there and protest if your OC sends you away on a detail. This is not the same as the fickle BFT!

Consultation is the key to achieving a satisfied soldier, happy where he is going, clear that we understand his skills, ambitions and requirements and confident he can communicate these requirements to us at MCM Div. The Formal Career Review is an important new initiative in opening up new route for consultation. In addition, I encourage everyone to ensure that a completed and sensible PPP is forwarded to MCM Div every time you receive a CR. It is my aim to ensure that full consultation has occurred before the posting of any and every soldier in our Corps.

Commitment is the main characteristic of all MCM Div staff. Committed to ensuring the potential of all of our officers and soldiers is optimised to meet the needs of the Corps and the Army. Committed to doing this in partnership with units and individuals. But in return, we seek a commitment from those individuals that the needs of our Corps and Army come first, and their own needs come a very close second. The key here is communication and consultation. Funny how things come round that way.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during the Roadshows.

ALL CHANGE AT THE TOP

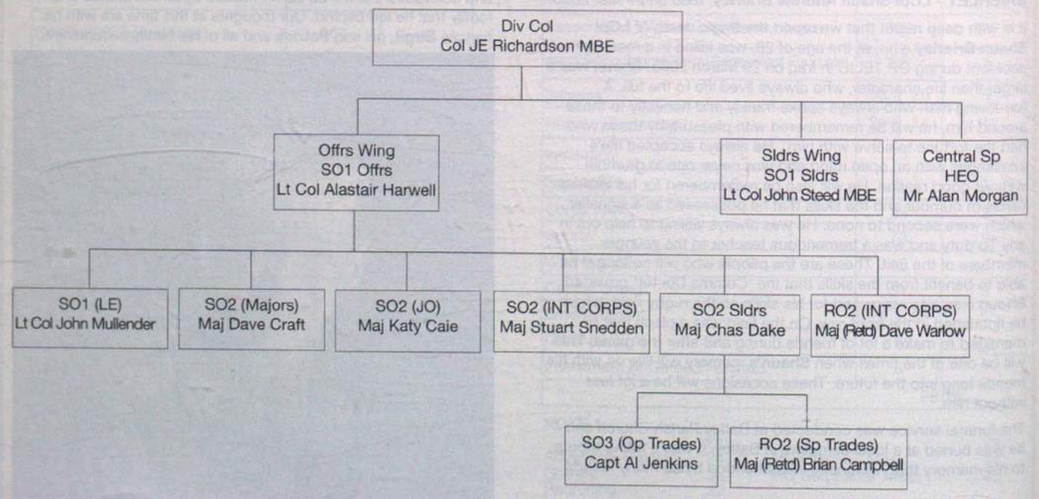
The last six months has seen a major changeover in personalities, and responsibilities, within the Div. We have said a fond farewell to **Col Mike Dyer**, off to command RSS; to **LtCol Simon Hutchinson MBE**, departing to take up command of 31 (City of London) Sig Regt (V); to **Maj Bob O'Hara**, departing on promotion to be the School's QM; to **Maj Colin Vaudin**, who has been issued with his 'Bob the Builder' pencil case ready to attend Staff College; and finally to **Capt Shane Knight**, who has decided to call it a day and leaves to join civilian life. And before you ask, no we do not get to choose our own postings - honest!

We welcome the new Div Col, **Col Jim Richardson** fresh from command of the 'mighty' (his words) 7 Sig Regt. **LtCol John Steed** is soon to arrive from COS RSS, **Maj Dave Craft** arrives from 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn to take over the majors' desk. **Maj Chas Dale** has arrived from 7 Sig Regt, and finally **Maj Katy Caie** and **Capt Al Jenkins** arrive in the Div, both from 15 Sig Regt. The Corps will also have two other officers in the APC, with **Maj Hugh Bardell** from BGN taking over as SO2 Gurkhas in Infantry MCM Div and **Maj Huw Jenkins** (also from 7 Sig Regt) due to take over in MS(B) as the ICS Sub-Field Manager. Is anyone else seeing the 7 Sig Regt flavour?

ROYAL SIGNALS/INTELLIGENCE CORPS MCM DIVISION NEW ORGANISATION

As you may be aware, we have reorganised over the last year and with so many new arrivals, it is an opportune moment to update the Corps on who does what in the MCM Div.

R SIGNALS/INT CORPS MCM DIV



ROYAL SIGNALS/INTELLIGENCE CORPS MCM DIVISION RESPONSIBILITIES

Divisional Colonel, **Col Jim Richardson MBE** - Overall responsibility for manning and career management for all RSigs and Int Corps officers and soldiers.

SO1 Officers, **LtCol Alaistair Harwell** - Responsible for policy and direction on all Officer matters. Also responsible for the career management of Direct Entry (DE) and Late Entry (LE) RSigs Lt Cols and their posting to E1 employment. Div focus for the Number 4 Board.

SO1 Soldiers, **LtCol John Steed MBE** - Responsible for manning and career management of all RSigs and Int Corps soldiers up to the rank of WO1.

SO1 (LE) Officers, **LtCol John Mullender** - Responsible for the career management of RSigs LE Officers (Majs and Capts), and their posting to E1 employment. Div focus for Army Retirements Board.

SO2 (Majors) Officers, **Maj Dave Craft** - Responsible for the career management of RSigs Majs, and their posting to E1 employment. Div focus for Number 5 Board.

SO2 (Junior Officers), **Maj Katy Caie** - Responsible for the career management of Direct Entry (DE) RSigs Capts and Subalterns, and their posting to E1 employment. Div focus for RSigs Conversion of Commission and RMAS Arms Selection Board.

SO2 Soldiers, **Maj Chas Dale** - Overarching responsibility for career management of all RSigs soldiers.

SO3 (Op Trades), **Capt Al Jenkins** - Responsible for all Career Management issues relating to the YofS, Supvr Radio, Spec Op, Radio Sys Op, Area Sys Op and Info Sys Op Career Employment Qualifications (CEQ)

RO2 (Sp Trades), **Maj (Retd) Brian Campbell** - Responsible for all Career Management issues relating to the Support Trade Career Employment Qualifications (CEQ), RD RSigs, FofS, Instl Tech, Tech Sup Spec, Sys Eng Tech, RSigs Elec, Dvr Lineman and Unspecified Posts.

MCM DIVISION JOINS THE 20TH CENTURY – APCWEB GOES LIVE

The APC has moved into the 20th century, (yes I do know its 2003) with APCWeb going live and relatively interactive on the net. There are two websites; firstly a RESTRICTED INTRANET available on the SLI or RLI (CASH, CHoTS, LAND ISIS, TAFMIS, AFOS, CASEY etc) at http://25.6.43.19/apc/RSigIntMCM and secondly an UNCLASSIFIED INTERNET at www.army.mod.uk/servingsoldier/career.

The APCWeb aims to build the ethos of joint responsibility between the MCM Div and the individual officer and soldier by giving them more information about their careers. You will find web pages on employment opportunities, promotion, career structures, what's new, useful information and humorous CR quotes. The two sites differ only slightly in content, due to the security restrictions placed on the INTERNET. Please visit the site. Your feedback would be gratefully received.

OFFICERS WING

With the Pink List about to be published and the summer session of musical chairs about to start, many officers will naturally be focussed on the short term necessities rather than slightly longer term issues. Therefore, I make no apologies to give you all a few key dates for your diaries:

Royal Signals Captains' Grading Board (CGB) 11 September 03. The CGB will grade all DE Senior Capts and LE Capts and make recommendations for their next appointment. Both SO1 (LE) Officers and SO2 (JO) will be publishing letters to their communities giving details of the board and available appointments.

Royal Signals Conversion of Commission Board 25 September 03. The Board will consider applications from both DE and LE officers to convert their commissions. Additionally, the Board will consider applications from LE officers to convert to a DE commission. An SOinC(A) PD for LE to DE conversion will be published prior to the Board. All officers are reminded that they must apply to convert their commission, using Annex 'N' to Army Commissioning Regulations, 1999, in addition to indicating their willingness to convert on their OJAR.

Royal Signals Beige List Pre-Filter Board 23 October 03. The Beige List Pre-Filter Board will grade all qualified DE and LE Capts for promotion to Maj. The Beige List Main Board is over the week 24-28 Nov 03.

Royal Signals Majors' Grading Board (MGB) November 03 (exact date tbc). The MGB will grade all DE and LE Majs and make recommendations for their next appointment. SO2 (Majors) will publish a letter to all officers due posting in summer 04, giving details of the Board and a full list of available appointments.

MS Reps and subject officers are asked to ensure that their OJARS are submitted on time. This year we hope to prevent the annual last minute rush to get reports in for these key boards.

SOLDIERS WING

With the introduction of Command Leadership and Management (CLM) training, together with ongoing discussions over the Non-Commissioned Engagement Structure (NECSt) and the Ratings Other Ranks and Aircrew Appraisal (RORA), life in Soldier Wing is not dull. However, whilst we are committed to continually providing an enhanced level of career management it is not easy. I have listed below a few areas where you can help.

REGIONAL CAREER MANAGEMENT OFFICERS (RCMO)

All our 9 RCMOs are now in place. They are responsible to Col R Sigs/Int Corps MCM Div for the local dissemination and delivery of soldier career advice and the promulgation of policy development through unit Chains of Command to regular RSigs soldiers. USE THEM! If you do not know where your nearest RCMO is located, speak to your chain of command or give us a call.

POSTING PREFERENCES PROFORMA (PPP)

Despite direction that all RSigs soldiers submit a PPP with their annual CRs, less than half submitted a PPP before their due posting date during 2002/2003. It is our intention to improve 'posting satisfaction,' but we can only achieve this when we are aware of an individual's aspirations. It is a unit and individual's responsibility to ensure that he/she has submitted a PPP to MCM Div at least once a year, or when circumstances change.

CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

The late submission of CRs continues to remain unacceptably high. Not only does this place an unnecessary burden on MCM Div Staff, but there is also the very real possibility that individuals may be disadvantaged by not appearing before the appropriate Promotion Board.

Dates for completion and submission are:

Rank	Report 'As At' date	Reports to MCM Div by	Board Sits
WO1	1 Oct 03	30 Nov* 03	LECB Jan 04
WO2	1 Oct 03	30 Nov* 03	Feb 04 ('A1')
SSgt	1 Oct 03	30 Nov 03	Mar 04 ('A2')
Sgt	1 Oct 03	30 Nov 03	Apr 04 ('B')
Cpl	1 Mar 03	30 Apr 03	Jun 04 ('C')
LCpl	1 Jun 02	31 Jul 02	Sep 03 ('E')
Sig	1 Aug 02	30 Sep 02	Oct 03 ('F')

*To include AF B225A for those recommended and seeking a LE Commission.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
APRIL 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Brig SG Hughes CBE	BPST - Kenya
Col TW Canham	COS HQ SOinC(A)
Col KJ Hadfield	Royal School of Signals
Col D M Steele MBE	BLO (USA)
Col TJP Watts	EC CCII HORG
Lt Col GJ Complin	DCOS HQ SOinC(A)
Lt Col A Ewell	RHQ AFDNorth
Lt Col PM Kelly	Shape Staff (BAE)
Lt Col AWT McComb	DGT & E
Lt Col AJ Rock	Comms Trg Wg CBT Engr Sch
Lt Col RG Thomas	TDT HQ SoinC(A)
Maj BJ Dalton	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
Maj A Helm	37 Sig Regt
Maj G Pickersgill	252 Sig Sqn DCSA(G)
Capt K Bolam	CIS 2 Sig Bde
Capt AD Clixby	30 Sig Regt
Capt JR Collyer	264 Sig Sqn
Capt O Dinnis	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Capt TJ Downes	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Capt B Fitch	15 Sig Regt
Capt OER Gardner	21 Sig Regt (Air Sp)
Capt BY Higgs	Infra & Networks HQ SOinC(A)
Capt DC Laycock	3 (UK) Sig Regt
Capt KH McAnulty	39 Sig Regt
Capt PG Newson	HQ D Int Corps
Capt FJ Reid	Royal School of Signals
Capt L O'Rourke	DCSA Svc Plans & Requirements
Capt PN Randell	225 Sig Sqn
Capt RJ Stanton	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Lt S Alexander	202 Sig Sqn 3 (UK) Div
Lt MJ Bentley	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (262)
Lt ST Cadywould	HQ Sig Sqn 7 Armd Bde
Lt DS Coslett	ATR Lichfield
Lt M Freemantle	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Lt JL Squires	ATR Lichfield

MAY 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col GMS Shipley	Defence Academy IPT Leader
Lt Col MS Reid	D Info(A) - Strategy
Lt Col A Robertson	SHAPE ACE COMMSEC
Lt Col IG Standen	JSSU Ayios Nikolaos
Maj MC Brookes	399 SU (Army Element)
Maj GB Ingram	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Maj SJ Purser	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Capt A Balsdon	HQ Sqn 21 Sig Regt
Capt EF Clee	SO3 DI SI Ops
Capt W McCreath	642 Sig Tp (Gibraltar)
Capt CG McKinley	209 Sig Sqn
Capt SA Dickson	ATR Lichfield
Capt JP Nicholls	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
Capt CD Roberts	35 Sig Regt (V)
Capt NH Smikle	30 Sig Regt
Capt SA Smoothy	HQ DCSA
Capt NM Stokoe	G6 HQ Land
Capt IG Rodger	31 (City of London) Sig Regt
Capt D Rook	21 Sig Regt (AS)

WOS AND SNCOS
APRIL 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 RD GCN Keane	BMATT Sierra Leone
A/WO1 RD AH Manktelow	7 Sig Regt
WO2 YofS JM Kilburn	39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn
WO2 YofS T Moran	30 Sig Regt
WO2 FofS RF Campbell	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO2 FofS GS Clapham	16 Sig Regt
WO2 FofS GS Duffy	39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn
WO2 FofS JF Ross	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO2 RD CN Hughes	30 Sig Regt
WO2 RD AJ Robertson	37 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 JM Whiting	DCSA Service Operations
A/WO2 FofS JP Walsh	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO2 RD P Coates	39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn
A/WO2 RD MW Emmerson	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
A/WO2 RD SE Littlefield	7 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD EC Williams	HQ SOinC(A)
SSgt YofS MD Reed	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt SJ Donnelly	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt IA Frame	30 Sig Regt
SSgt B Heslop	19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt SP Oliver	Royal School of Signals
A/SSgt SGC Booth	Royal School of Signals
A/SSgt DW Ford	SHAPE ACE Commsec
Sgt C Bentley	35 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt P Binns	39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn
Sgt W Bramwell	19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt CJ Brankin	JSSU Oakley
Sgt S Bruce	821 EOD
Sgt MJ Clarke	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt GE Dunstone	2 Sig Regt
Sgt ML Ebdon	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Sgt P Edwards	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt DJ Eyes	JSSU (Ayios Nikolaos)
Sgt M Farnfield	35 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt SP George	2 Sig Regt
Sgt J Hatch	HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt DJ Hudson	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt PG Hughes	2 Sig Regt
Sgt DP Jenkinson	2 Sig Regt
Sgt PJ Levick	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt DJ Paz	2 Sig Regt
Sgt S Thomas	HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt GR Tibbetts	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
Sgt CF Usher	71 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt KM Waring	242 Sig Sqn
A/Sgt MAW Collins	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt RA Sheard	14 Sig Regt (EW)

MAY 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 RD ST Archer	NCISS Latina
WO1 RD AP Staniford	HQ SOinC(A)
A/WO1 FofS S Erskine	HQ NI
A/WO1 RofS R Gorman	DEI Info Sys Branch
A/WO1 FofS S King	DEI Ent Man Branch
A/WO1 RD M Browitt	33 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 RD DM Buckingham	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO1 RD JH Greenwood	32 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 DM Hancock	30 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD AP Jolly	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO1 RD GC Smith	21 Sig Regt
WO2 YofS TJ Talbot	15 Sig Regt
WO2 YofS AS Yates	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO2 FofS DM Cook	BMATT Sierra Leone
WO2 FofS MC Duff	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO2 FofS KS Scaife	225 Sig Sqn
WO2 VK Tipple	ATTACS SSG
A/WO2 FofS SW Crowther	15 Sig Regt
A/WO2 FofS AJ Miller	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO2 FofS B Palmer	31 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 FofS BD Pradhan	36 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 RD PR Crawford	38 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 RD AC Fensom	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD A Macpherson	21 Sig Regt
SSgt YofS M Allen	2 Sig Regt
SSgt YofS DJ Bailey	259 Sig Sqn
SSgt YofS KJ Brooker	7 Sig Regt
SSgt YofS PM Crowder	2 Sig Regt
SSgt YofS IS Fowler	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
SSgt YofS NJ Harrison	PATA
SSgt YofS RW Menzies	242 Sig Sqn
SSgt YofS LJ Shaw	Comsec Monitoring Team (UK)
SSgt YofS DP Smith	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt YofS CJW Tucker	BOWMAN SST
SSgt YofS AM Watts	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt YofS RS White	21 Sig Regt
SSgt FofS DK Fielding	DEI Ent Man Branch
SSgt FofS RG James	RHQ AFNORTH
SSgt FofS NJ Mitchell	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
SSgt FofS LJ Morrison	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
SSgt C Hood	JSSU (Ayios Nikolaos)
SSgt MR Wilson	AFCO Middlesbrough
Sgt J Hawksworth	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt GA Jordan	39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn
Sgt J O'Neil	19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt D Petty	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt MD Reed	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt SP Renforth	DCSA (642 Sig Tp)
Sgt CA Stansfield	2 Sig Regt
Sgt TN Treadwell	15 Sig Regt
Sgt DT Whitfield	JSSU (Ayios Nikolaos)
A/Sgt IAF Johnston	JSSU (Ayios Nikolaos)

RETIREMENTS

APRIL 2003

Lt Col R Morley	07 Apr 03
Lt Col RD Symonds	05 Apr 03
Maj P Gaffney	24 Apr 03
Maj L Wood MBE	07 Apr 03

MAY 2003

Col G N Donaldson	20 May 03
Lt Col CB Keegan	29 May 03
Maj HC Britton	06 May 03

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF'S RECRUITING AND LIAISON STAFF

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE 2003 14-16 MARCH 2003

For those of you not in the know, EX LIGHTNING STRIKE is an annual UOTC competition hosted by SORLS on Salisbury Plain. The aim of the event is to introduce RSigs, its diversity of roles and equipt to the OCdts of the UOTCs through an informal competition. Indirectly, we also hope to attract young offrs into the Corps, or at least have them enter the civilian workplace with a positive view of the Army and particularly of the Corps.

The competition involves UOTCs from around the country participating in a round robin of stands provided by Corps units. Each stand should reflect the role and equipment of that particular unit. The event culminates in a Final Race, coordinated by 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn, 11 Sig Regt. Once the prize giving is complete, everyone heads for Blandford and a slap up dinner night.

The event this year took place near Rollestone Camp on the Plain. 14 UOTCs took part, along with undergraduate teams from RMCS Shrivenham and Newcastle DTUS. Stands were provided by 14 Sig Regt (EW), 21 Sig Regt (AS), 30 Sig Regt, 19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, 101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn and 2 (NC) Sig Bde. A big thank you goes to all those units for the assistance that they provided, especially in the current climate. Thanks also to 11 Sig Regt, who provided much of the admin for the event.

Glasgow and Strathclyde UOTC battling it out with Birmingham UOTC on the Final Race!

Bathed in glorious sunshine throughout, the event was a tremendous success. The OCdts all worked very hard at the various stands, and certainly entered into the spirit of the competition. It was quite clear that they all thoroughly enjoyed themselves, both at the event and the ensuing dinner night. The overall winners were London UOTC, runners up were Newcastle DTUS and third place, Tayforth UOTC. Newcastle DTUS won the Final Race and Speckled Jim, the trophy awarded to the team that competed with the best spirit but not necessarily the highest points, was awarded to Queens UOTC. Well done to everyone for the spirit with which they embarked upon the competition and the effort and enthusiasm they showed throughout. We look forward to seeing you all again next year.

For all you UOTC PSIs out there, the date for next year is 4-6 March 2004. Get the date in your diary and start rallying the troops!! For the Corps units, hopefully we can count on your support again next year

Regtl Col, Col John Ewbank presents the Final Race prize to Newcastle DTUS team captain

ROYAL SIGNALS MOBILE PRESENTATION TEAM

OC	**Lt Eddie Maskell-Pedersen**
2IC	**Sgt Billy Wishart**

With the 2002 winter season at a close, the Team has quickly sprung back into action for a very busy summer season. This not only brings new challenges, but also new faces to the team. We would like to welcome **Cpl Jane Robinson**, who has joined us from Radex 11 Sig Regt and **LCpl Wayne Hobbs**, who has arrived from Ireland. Sadly the team has had to say a sad farewell

to **Cpl Steph Brownless**, who is off to tour the world with 2 Sig Regt and **LCpl Angie Graham** who is off to drive the world with 12 Mech Bde.

The summer season started off with the Team participating in the Gloucester Skills Festival, held at the Cheltenham Race Course on 23 March. The one and only **Chris Accabusi**, who was once a member of the Corps, opened the event. After his opening speech, **Chris** introduced himself to the team and talked about the good old days of a Data Operator (handbag). We did not realise that he was that old!

The Festival itself was a chance for various companies and Armed Forces to show the public what it had to offer. Seeing thousands of children every day was very taxing on the team, so well earned breaks were very welcome. The only chore of these breaks meant helping the beauticians on the adjacent display by allowing them to practise their back massage techniques (It all in a hard day's work for the RSMPT).

All week the team had passed a life sized-artificial horse at the entrance to the racecourse, which tempted us right from Day 1. On the final day, some of the members from the Army display lost their self control and moved it onto the start line of the course. This seemed a good idea until the morning cleaner mistook it for the real thing and called the police to save an 'escaped horse' on the racetrack. So it was up to the RSMPT to save the day by returning it to its rightful place.

On a final note from the Skill Festival, the Team would like to say a huge thank you to 21 Sig Regt's Recruiting Team for providing extra support throughout this event.

However it was not all play and no work. The remainder of the Team was touring the UK finishing off the end of a busy winter season, visiting schools and colleges in Newcastle, Glasgow, Cardiff and Swansea.

It's hard to tell which one of these three is the real dummy

Meanwhile, **Cpl Shepherd** felt very close to home back at Blandford. He was helping run the first of many of 11 Sig Regt's 'Look at Life' courses and was placed in charge of one of the teams. To astonishment the team won all the events, as well as Best Overall Team.

A WELL DESERVED DAY OFF – *By LCpl Ayesha Muhammad*

Finally, after a few days of very early mornings and late nights, we managed to find a spare Friday, so what better way to spend it, than throwing ourselves out of an aeroplane. There were only 3 of us mad enough to do the jump, the others deciding on the more sensible option of a long weekend. So here was I, volunteering for another early morning and late night as opposed to a lie in.

LCpl Hobbs trying to force a smile before the take off!

After a whole night of preparing myself and boasting about it to everyone, I was ready to jump (or so I thought). There was the Team OC, eager to impress the ladies with yet another hobby. New boy **LCpl Hobbs**, who'd been in the Team for only a week and keen to impress the boss, volunteered to come along as well. Then there was me, always willing to try something new.

Most of the day was spent learning everything we needed to know about the parachute. I made sure I knew exactly where my reserve parachute was, and the drills required were spot on!

We were to jump at 17.00hrs but had to wait until the strong wind dropped. The waiting was the worst, as we were all excited and the adrenaline was pumping fast and furious. The longer we waited, the more we all thought about exactly what it was we were volunteering for. At one stage, they even mentioned that we might not get the chance to jump (which I have to say, I was relieved at) but in the last half-hour of daylight, they got us rigged up and ready to go. The jump itself was worth the wait **Hobbsy** was very confident with no sign of fear, but the Boss's expression was enough to scare me.

A good day and experience was had by all. The whole jump was on film, so there's evidence of the fact that not everyone's jump was perfect - but that's a whole new story, and anyway, it was our first time, so we all had and excuse.

The boss was definitely not looking so calm before his jump

The White Helmets

CO — **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt — **Capt J Malcolm**
CI — **SSgt P Boughey**

Life in the Team continues apace as we begin the build up to the Summer Season and the Opening Display. The quiet season has once again proven to be anything but quiet. The time has filled up with routine maintenance and servicing, courses and trg. Four members of the Team deployed on EX WINTER WARRIOR, twelve went to South Africa to visit Forest Town School (more on that later) and the remainder of the Team began the build-up to our annual Training Camp at RAF Sealand.

Congratulations to **Sig Kruczek** on his promotion to LCpl. And goodbye and good luck to **LCpl Woolnough** and **Sig Potter**. **LCpl Woolnough** has gone on to 4 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn to stag on the gate, and **Sig Potter** hasn't travelled far to his new job at 11 Sig Regt's MT.

SOUTH AFRICA

Last year the Team visited and helped to refurbish Forest Town School in Johannesburg. Forest Town School is an entirely charity funded school for disabled and special needs children. It is always short on funds and very grateful for any support. This year was no change and twelve members of the Team visited the School to continue the refurbishment begun last year.

The Team in South Africa

We were waved off on the morning of Friday 31 January by the CO, who exhorted us to work hard and not get into any trouble. At Heathrow we were very grateful for arriving extremely early, as we unravelled the inevitable ticket confusion. **Sgt Chris Hunt** was almost in tears when it was discovered his ticket bore the wrong name. Once it was all sorted out, we boarded the flight and set off.

Marion, the School's chief fundraiser and some of the children met us at the Airport and ferried us to the School. The school normally runs a small coffee shop. This had been emptied and filled with mattresses and sheets and was to be our accommodation for the next three weeks. With a huge kitchen and a small patio adjoining our room, we were all happy enough! **Cpl Baz Fullerton** was so impressed by the kitchen he bored everyone to tears talking about it (no change there).

With no time to acclimatise, we were straight into work. There were a number of jobs required throughout the School, so we split up into small groups. **Cpl Duncan Marsh** headed the largest group responsible for painting the seemingly endless corridors. **Sgt Hunt** and **Sig Ben Holroyde** spent the whole visit painting classrooms. The remaining Team members made up 'The Fiddling Crew'. This group spent the visit on a vast range of different jobs, from **Cpl Tonka Richardson** painting a corrugated iron roof in 40ºC temperatures, to **Capt Jon Malcolm**, **Cpl Jason Hooper** and **Cpl Baz Fullerton** cutting holes in walls for tuck shops. All in all, an incredible amount of work was achieved. 300m of corridors and 2 classrooms painted, 6 months worth of maintenance completed, a new tuck shop built and so many small jobs it became impossible to keep track of them. All this with the constant attention of the children at the School.

The visit was a great success. More sponsorship was secured for the School. All the work completed has set them up well for the rest of the year and it was great to see how much the children enjoyed having us there. We all look forward to another visit next year.

TRAINING CAMP - RAF SEALAND

While the Team members in South Africa were working in the sunshine, the remainder of us were training and preparing hard in the wind and rain to get ready to deploy to RAF Sealand, near Chester, for our annual training camp. We deployed entirely to Sealand 48 hours after the last group returned from South Africa. 6 weeks of extremely hard work was to follow. All day, every day was spent on the enormous grassy airfield, attempting to perfect ever harder tricks and rides. The first-years spent most of their time under the close supervision of **Sgt Chris Hunt**. They quickly learned the real meaning of perseverance, as they ran through their tricks again and again and again until they were perfect every time. **Cpl Ian Dickinson** and **LCpl Dave Kruczek** learned exactly how uncomfortable the 'Double Jimmy' could be for the hundredth time, and **Sig David Johnston** learned how sore it can be trying a Swallow dive from the 'Swallow'. The 'Tableaux' also proved a bit of a problem. 10 people on one bike is quite a hard thing to control. The rider, **Cpl Dickinson**, did his career no favours at all by ensuring the trick always fell down on the Team Captain's side. The more experienced team members fared no better. **Cpl Ed Lewis** improved his looks in the first week by breaking his nose, and it's always entertaining to watch people disco dancing up ladders on a moving motorcycle.

In the last 2 weeks of the camp, Honda UK dropped off a Honda CRF450 jump bike for us to trial. With no shortage of volunteers, some very successful trg ensued. **Cpl Mal Cooper** showed one method of jumping, and **Cpl Paul Forster** gave a more controlled demonstration. The Team Captain showed exactly what happens when you do a good jump but lose control on the ground!

At the end of the camp we put on a short display for the staff of RAF Sealand and a group of disabled children from the local area. It went down very well with all the spectators, and we left Chester on a high note, having had a great time and a very productive camp.

Cpl Forster making it look easy

NEWS OF TRAINING

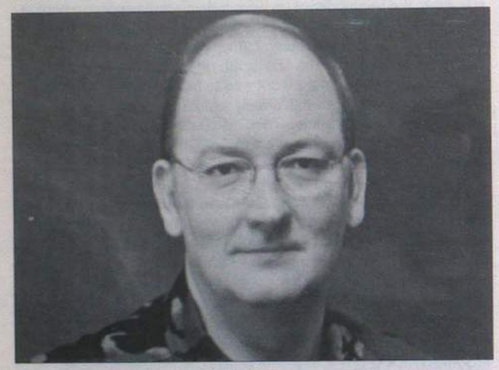
THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd	**Col MJM Dyer**
RSM	**WO1**

COLONEL DYER ARRIVES AT THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Col MJM Dyer assumed command of the RSS in March 2003. **Col Dyer** had previously been Col RSigs and Int Corps MCM Div in Glasgow. This is the second time that **Col Dyer** has served at the RSS. He had previously served as an EW instructor in the 1980's.



Col Mike Dyer

FAREWELL TO THE OUTGOING COMMANDER

Col John Ewbank

The outgoing Comd the RSS and Blandford Garrison, **Col John Ewbank**, received a caricature of himself at the farewell party given by his HQ staff at the Denbury Bowl on Friday 7 February 2003. Star of the Bowling competition was **Maj Dave Smith**, who showed himself to be a first class bowler. Less kind members of the HQ staff put his skills down to a misspent youth! The winning team was the Comd's of course, and this had nothing to do with the presence of **Maj Dave Smith** in his team. His score was deducted when it was found that the Comd's team had an extra player!

EXERCISE FROSTED CHALLENGE

EX FROSTED CHALLENGE was a team-building ex for HQRSS. The group, led by **SSgt Harry Harrison**, consisted of 4 mil and 8 civ staff, drawn from Garrison HQ, ISS Team, Budget Office, Civil Admin Office, Garrison Gym and Trg Ops Div.

The principle activity was skiing in the Holhfilzen, St Jacob, Fieberrunn and St Johann areas in the Austrian Tyrol. Skiing conditions were good and the already excellent snow was replenished during the ex. The ex was a little unusual in that the majority of participants were civil servants. However, in keeping with the aim of the ex, this allowed the civ staff to observe at first hand how the mil staff went about organising and leading teams. This meant that the somewhat relaxed time-keeping of some of the civvies came under close scrutiny. Obviously this had some effect as even **Colin Lee** became punctual - a major achievement!

The group was ably instructed by **Sgt Mandy Mason**, who instructed the intermediate group, and **SSgt Harry Harrison**, who instructed the beginners group. After a few days the beginners group split into two sub-groups, the younger fitter and more dynamic one comprising **Tamzin Marley**, **Mark Wareham** and **David Hollands**, and the senior, more sensible one comprising **Lt Col (Retd) Chris Melhuish**, **Colin Lee**, **Jackie Scott** and **Andy McCulloch**.

The intermediate group consisted of **Mel Prendergast**, **Phil Bowditch**, **Maj Mark Davison** and **Jim Elkin**. They cruised the red and black pistes while receiving valuable skiing tips and practice sessions from **Sgt Mandy Mason**.

Mark Wareham, Phil Bowditch, SSgt Harry Harrison and Maj Mark Davison (L to R) on the top of the mountain

On the final day a ski slalom was held at Holhfilzen, when the quickest time was put in by **SSgt Harry Harrison** and the fastest beginner was **Mark Wareham**. **Mark** was undoubtedly the most improved skier, and it was his first trip outside the UK.

SSgt Harry Harrison and Sgt Mandy Mason showing how it should be done

In addition to the skiing, a number of other activities were organised each evening, including ice karting, swimming and sledging. Undoubtedly the ex was a great success and, apart from some sore legs and the odd strain and blister, the team returned to UK unscathed.

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol AP Hudson MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D Forrester**

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC	**Major JGJ Howes CD RCSigs**
SSM	**WO2 N J Roberts**

We say farewell to **Capt Rich Byfield**, who sets off with the hope of educating himself on the JCSC. Those that know him, will understand what a challenge this will be! With his departure, we welcome **Capt Vanessa Galloway**.

RHINO TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1 Neil Furnival**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt John Morley**

We say goodbye to our Tp Comd, **WO1 Bob Clubb**, who has finally gone to the big wide civilian world, leaving the Tp in the capable hands of **WO1 Neil** 'Taff' **Furnival**. Goodbye and congratulations also to **SSgt Dave Smith**, who is promoted on posting to Cyprus (a man who has it all). His place has been filled by **SSgt John Morley**. Finally 'Au revoir' to **Cpl Bob Lovell**, who has been moved sideways to Kohima Tp and stepping into the Tp Cpl role is **Cpl Gordon Dunderdale**.

HARROGATE CUP VOLLEYBALL COMPETITION - *by Cpl Beattie*

The Harrogate Cup Volleyball Competition took place during the evenings and the 3 Sqns provided 2 male teams, and a female team. All the matches were well played, with some good players emerging for the future. As defending champions, 3 Sqn were keen to win and trained hard. The Sqn fielded three teams; a female team and a male team from each of Lightning and Ulster Tps. From Lightning Tp **Cpl Hart** chose **Sigs Jeet**, **Kagajram**, **Charlton**, **Harle**, **Taft**, **Pickup** and **Judbir**. They got off to a great start, winning convincingly. Then it was the turn for the ladies final between 2 and 3 Sqns. **Cpl Beattie** coached the 3 Sqn female team consisting of **Sigs McEwan**, **Atkinson**, **Thomas**, **Lewis**, **Phillipo**, **Houlker** and **Osborne**. It was quite a close match, eventually won by 2 Sqn, 2 - 0. Then came the final of the men's event between Kohima Tp and Beaufighter Tp, the two teams having previously met in round 1. It was to be a re-run of that first round game, with Kohima unable to cope with the outstanding attack from the Beaufighter team, who won 3 - 0. The trophies were presented by the CO, **LtCol P Hudson**

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Rob Gibson**
SSM	**WO2 Dave Allan**

IRON TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1 Craig Kearney**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt** 'Chalky' **Meek**

RESCUE SERVICES LIAISON EXERCISE

During March four members of 2 Sqn volunteered to give up two evenings in support of the Dorset Fire and Rescue Services in EX HARROGATE, which took place on Blandford Camp. The ex was to simulate a five-car RTA with injured people being simulated by Phase 2 Trainees. The objective was to test and practise the Fire Service in RTA procedures, whilst liasing with the Ambulance Service to develop effective rescue principles, including team approach, comms, comd & control and the incident comd system. The simulation was filmed for use in future classroom training by both services, which allowed the four trainees to display all their acting techniques, learned from watching *Casualty*.

All of those that took part thoroughly enjoyed the experience and received praise from the ex Director, **Leading Fire Fighter Steve Hitchings** for their impressive performances, which greatly enhanced the realism of the scenarios for the Dorset Rescue Services. Look out for copies of the video appearing in the NAAFI next month. Soldiers who are due to visit Blandford for a course in the future should also take note of the RSM's interesting new method of recycling illegally parked cars around the camp!

BEAUFIGHTER TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1 Mark Giles**
Tp SSgt	**Cpl Matt Lee**

EXERCISE CATTERICK RED DRAGON - *by Signaller Mark Charlery*

One fine Friday afternoon eight members of Beaufighter Tp and four members of Iron Tp made our way up the M5 to Capel Curig Training Camp. On arrival, we were given a safety brief and set the task of planning a route card for the ascent on Mt Snowdon the following day. On the Saturday morning we began the assent, with **Bdr Andy McCullough** and **Cpl Stu Green**, who had kindly volunteered to give up their weekend to us. We set off from Pen y Pass car park taking it in turns to lead a leg, constantly being stopped by our instructors and asked questions, including time estimates, back bearings, pacing, group management and other techniques we had learned in basic training. It was surprising how much we learned on the journey and our confidence grew with every contour climbed. The start of the route was very easy with a wide, gentle path right up to the old copper mines at the side of the lake. After that, the ascent was steep all the way to the summit, but when we got there we enjoyed a clear panoramic view that was fantastic. After a stop for lunch we followed the Pyg track back down to Pen y Pass, followed by a visit to Betwys Y Coed. Throughout the day we tried to improve our knowledge of the Welsh language and local history, driven by the knowledge that the two sections would do battle in a quiz later that evening. Local café staff were harassed into giving impromptu Welsh lessons and every information board was closely scrutinised for the smallest scrap of information. Unfortunately neither side did very well, with everyone finding Welsh a real challenge. For those of us who had not been before, it was good to climb the highest mountain in Wales and we all felt we had greatly improved our map reading.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AGR Hoensch**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Davies**

Recent months have seen a large turnaround in the Sqn cadre. We say goodbyes to **WO1 Dave Watson**, **WO2 (SSM) Dave**

Bousfield, his dog, **Hector** and **SSgt Martin Cowlard** and wish them and their families every success in the future. We welcome **WO1 Frank Roberts**, **WO2 (SSM) Chris Davies**, **SSgt Sid Crowton** and **SSgt Steve Bartleet.**

BLANDFORD SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Ray Patrickson**
SSM	**WO2 Mark Brunning**

We bid farewell to the QM, **LtCol Peter Whitehead**, who retires after 38 years' service. We wish him, **Maureen** and the family good luck in the future. The second person to go is the SSM, **WO2 Ian Pennell**, who leaves after 22 Years service. We wish him, **Helen** and the family all the best in the future. We welcome the new QM, **Lt Col Bob O'Hara** from Glasgow, and hope that he and **Maureen** enjoy their time here.

QUIZ AND BOWLING NIGHT

As already stated, the time had come to say farewell to **Lt Col Whitehead** and **WO2 (SSM) Ian Pennell**. In age-old tradition the Sqn held a quiz/bowling evening in the Denbury Bowl. TM Tp had a point to prove, as they lost the last quiz to the QM Dept. After the first half of the quiz, TM Tp had taken a slender lead. The bowling competition was next, with the RHQ team proving too strong for the rest.

The second half of the quiz started with an 'Identify the artist and album' round, with the QM Dept achieving an impressive 100%. Alas it was not enough to oust TM Tp from pole position, and by the end of the round they won by a slender two points. They were the overall winners.

A big thank you must go to **Cpl Mark Macdonald**, for organising the event, **Maj Ray Patrickson**, for his wisdom in selecting the questions and last but not least, to the staff of the Denbury Bowl, for allowing us to host the evening. A good night was had by all and we look forward to the next event.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1 (FofS) Frank Cowan**
PTO	**Mr Colin McIntosh**

A warm welcome is extended to **Cpl Mark McDonald**, who joins us on temporary loan from ASG, and a fond farewell to **Mr Cavanagh**, who is leaving us for the new challenges that face him in ISG. Finally, congratulations go to **Mr Dusty Miller**, who has recently been successful in gaining a Grade D position in the Tp.

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC	**Maj Don Macaulay**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Neil Roome**

KUKRI TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt (Tfc) Mark Harris**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt** 'Foggy' **Dewhurst**

During the past couple of months we have been kept active providing support for the Royal School of Artillery and the Royal Armoured Corps, to name but a few. During EX FINAL FLIGHT we were obliged to carry out a 'manual' box body change, which caused much wailing and gnashing of teeth. Amazing how just taking a switch off a flat bed seems to cure so many tech problems!

In our MAPPS garage we have just finished Course No. 3, which ran very well. Just to stop us getting bored, we spent our two weeks before the next course with the Army Website photographers (MAPPS will soon be in 3D!); installing new power lines in the garage and ... oh yes ... deployment on EX FINAL FLIGHT.

Cpl 'Richie' **Savage** is away on a 3 week 'holiday' on his EFP1 course and we hope that he passes. **Cpl Al Donaldson** is leaving us early, having managed to get his T1 brought forward. We have all noticed in the garage that **Cpl** 'Si' **Harris** is settling into married life well.

BATTLEAXE TP

Tp Comd	**Capt (Tfc) Mark Harris**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mick Openshaw**

VISIT OF THE ASSISTANT MILITARY ATTACHÉ FOR OMAN

The RSS has enjoyed close ties with the Armed Forces of Oman for a number of years now, with a number of their service personnel having successfully attended the Tp Comds and FofS Courses. In view of these close ties, the School has dedicated a presentation theatre to Oman. **Lt Col Rashid Bin Said Bin Salim Al Sidaira**, the Assistant Military Attaché at the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in London, was formally invited to the School on 26 March 2003 to carry out the unveiling ceremony. Amongst his many tasks, is overseeing the trg for Omanis carried out in this country and their general well being. **Lt Col Rashid** is an infantryman who has commanded the Northern Frontier Regt.

SYSEX TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Mahendra Limbu**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Neil Pollit**

Once again Sysex Tp have had a very busy month dealing not only with EX FINAL FLIGHT but also with EX SMALL WORLD. During the former, the DS from TN 015 spotted a very lively group of university students, and to raise the military public image (nothing to do with their being attractive young ladies!) challenged them to a football match. Not letting gentlemanly conduct get in the way of success, Sysex Tp came through 5-2. **Cpl** 'Jonah' **Jones** played well in the middle, but **Cpl** 'Shacks' **Shackleton** kept to a single touch of the ball, as he didn't want to break into a sweat .... he was also too busy chatting to the opposition. **Cpl Tony Eyre** played an excellent match in goal despite letting two girls score... What a gent! **LCpl Stevie Boon** played very well in defence. He almost looked good.

SHF low gain – down the hill shot

Sysex Tp welcomes **LCpl Tracy Ardron**. She is the first AS Op to go out to a working unit and come back to RSS as an Instructor. Her last unit, 16 Sig Regt, has taught her well, but we hope to do better on trade and skiing - she has been here less then a week and already off skiing. **Sgt Phil Cooper** has joined us on loan from Kukri Tp and is really looking forward to all the hard work that now lies ahead of him.

We say goodbye to **LCpl Jayne Robinson**, who is off at the end of March to the RSMPT. **Sgt** 'Loz' **Sharp** is also leaving us soon.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS GROUP

GROUP HEADQUARTERS

OC	**Maj Andy Tuson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Mark Sherwood**

The Gp continues in its forward momentum in the ever-changing world of IS. Exciting times are ahead, with the new DS2 strategy being put in place and the impending formation of a new section within the Gp. As usual, there have been comings and goings. We say farewell to **SSgt (FofS) Bob James**, who leaves us for

Brunssum and we welcome **SSgt (FofS) Paul Landregan** straight off the present FOS course. We also welcome a new PTO, **Mr Colin Cavanagh**, and we wish both a successful tour.

DATA AND SECURITY WING

OC	**Maj Ian Parry**
YofS	**WO1(YofS) Andy Drummond**

FIRST IMPRESSIONS - *by Petty Officer (RS) Ralph Hart*

As a PO (Rad Supvr) in the RN, my job is similar to a Rad Sys Op. On my last ship, *HMS Exeter*, a Type 42 Air Defence Destroyer, I was responsible for the provision of all necessary Strategic and Tac Comms circuits, associated Message Handling Systems, and the Ship's LAN. My welcome to RSS was very warm, both in the Data and Security Wing and in the Sgts Mess! My first impression of FMVT Sec was amazement at the extent and sophistication of CBT. The naval equivalent of FMVT, Kelly Sqn, at *HMS Collingwood*, relies much more on whiteboards and 'death by viewgraph'.

Another fundamental difference is that, in Kelly Sqn, the Instructor is also responsible for the 'Whole Ship' or Regtl aspect of the young sailor's development. Though rewarding, this can make for a very busy and occasionally harassed instructor! An aspect of the Army that I have found particularly impressive is the extent and ease with which soldiers are able to retrain from other trades if they find themselves in a rut. Meeting trainees from the various Corps and Regts has certainly broadened my knowledge of the various 'tribes' in the Army! Whilst in DSW, I intend to be of use as a naval point of contact in an increasingly 'purple' world, and hope to increase my knowledge of military comms systems and procedures whilst at RSS.

Social life in the Wing proceeds apace, and this month we all repaired to *Humph Bahadur's* of a Friday evening for a few jars and a curry buffet. It was a good opportunity to meet each other's partners and put faces to names. **Sgt Nanda** warned of the perils of the chutney, so of course it all soon disappeared. There were many that rued his wise words the following morning!

YEOMAN OF SIGNALS COURSE NO 56 - *by Sgt Ian Fowler*

As I write this, the course of new Yeoman are still working through what has been an intense year. But, with just 3 wks to go, the 'Cowboys' of YofS Course No.56 can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel. Postings have been given, exams have been sat, and only the minor point of a 40-minute presentation in front of several high-ranking offrs of the Corps remains.

On reflection though, the past twelve months have flown by. It seems only yesterday that 23 innocent, young (or old in **SSgt** 'Baldy' **Bailey's** case) SNCOs were seated in Blandford, excitement in their eyes at the prospect of starting a course that would lead them, inextricably, to become comms managers. After dozens of sleepless nights, what seems like hundreds of presentations and projects (on subjects that no-one had even heard of) and thousands of printer cartridges, we are now almost ready to take up the next stage of our training: The part that happens in the working unit.

So, as I finish this piece (quickly, I might add, because my final presentation is far from ready!), we of YofS Course No.56 would like to thank everyone who has been involved with our training. And 'Good Luck' to Yeoman of Signals course No.57, remember, it all comes down to 'Combat Indicators' and 'Time Management'.

COMMUNICATIONS INFORMATION SYSTEMS WING

OC	**Capt Mick Brooks**
Supvr IS	**WO2 Mick Johnson**

THE FIRST SUPERVISOR INFORMATION SYSTEMS COURSE

On 6 January 03 the first Supervisor Information Systems Course (SIMR02/001) commenced at RSS. The course, which ran for nine weeks, concentrated on management-based skills, similar to the YofS and FofS courses, but very much more IS related. During the last eek of the course a dinner night was held, attended by the new Comd, **Col Mike Dyer** and the CI, **LtCol Jim Dryburgh**. The Guests of Honour were **Mr Bob Fewings** and **Mr Keith Butler**

Mr Bob Fewing of BAe Systems presenting WO2 (Supvr IS) Rab Burns with his Top Student Award

from BAe Systems, the sponsors of the course. The best student, **WO2 (Supvr IS) Rab Burns**, was presented by BAe Systems with a silver soldier in Combat 95 working on a notebook computer. This presentation piece will remain in the WOs&Sgts Mess and will be presented to the top student of future courses.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

We welcome **Mr Paul McCreeth**, who has taken post as a civilian instructor in ATacCs. We also congratulate two of our Burnham Lecturers, **Mr Guy Bowdler** and **Mr Roger Cooke**, on gaining permanent contracts.

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

HEADQUARTERS

OC	**Maj Guy Benson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Rob Melotte**

The Gp's ex commitments remain high and our workload increases. Our major news is the selection for promotion to **WO1 (YofS)** for **WO2 (YofS) Paul White.** What an achievement, top tradesman! Well done Yeoman.

EQUIPMENT SECTION

HIO	**Mr Peter Braithwaite**
2IC	**SSgt Smuj Smith**

The Sec has been very busy practising its furniture removals during the last month, by moving a number of classrooms, as we start to make way for BOWMAN. **Mr Duncan Mason** (our resident VRC353 expert) is happy with his new room, especially now that we have finally moved his stage. Finally, we congratulate **Sgt Paddy Ferguson** and his wife **Karen** on the birth of their daughter, **Sophie** on 20 March 03. We wish you all the best for the future, and may your nights be quiet ones.

OPERATOR SECTION

HIO	**Mr Mick Altham BEM**
2IC	**Sgt Vicky Hawtree**

Welcome to **Sgt Ginty McTurk** (PP), **Sgt Bob Morton** (A&P) **Sgt Andy Brown** (PP), and our new 2IC, **Sgt Vikki Hawtree**. We bid farewell to **SSgt Steve Bartleet**, posted to 11 Sig Regt and **Cpl Rory Milne**, posted back to Radex Tp. Just to show we work hard and play harder, congratulations to **Sgt Ginty McTurk**, on winning the Inter-Service Ladies Badminton Final and being selected to play for the Combined Service Team and also to **Sgt Vikki Hawtree**, for representing Army at Badminton and winning her Army colours.

RADEX TROOP

Tp SSgt	**SSgt John Batts**
Tp Sgt Sldr Trg	**Sgt Chaz Fox**
Tp Sgt Comd Trg	**Sgt Side Snape**

The Tp welcomes 3 new members this month. **Cpl** 'Clubby'

Clubb who arrives from Arborfield with his wife, **Natasha** and children, **Sophie** and **Liam**; **Sig Matt Slater**, from 16 Sig Regt with his new wife **Paula** and **Cpl Tony Gallagher** who apparently has been in the Tp for nearly a year, but has been away playing rugby and going fishing since his arrival. We bid farewell to **Cpl Dave Wallace**, on his posting to 1 Mech Bde. Finally, the Tp was stunned to hear that **Cpl Cal Hewitt** has signed off after 26 fi years of service to Queen and Country. Rumour has it he will finally get his green beret, not as a Royal Marine, but as a barrier tech in Blandford with the MPGS.

POWER SECTION

SNCO IC	**SSgt John Graham**
2IC	**Sgt Pete Stidwell**

The Sec has been quite busy over the past reporting period. Firstly we had a going away bash for **Mr Malcom Woodman**, which involved copious amounts of beer, many ports and an extremely tear-jerking farewell speech from **Malcolm. Mr David Balderson** presented **Malcolm** with what is known by all RSigs Electricians, as the coveted and last Woodman 'T' Key. But do not worry fellow Electricians of the Corps, the first batch of Balderson 'T' Keys are under construction by a Basic course right now.

The current Basic course, ELBR 02/003 deployed onto EX SOUTHERN LIGHTS, under the very watchful eyes of **Sgts Stidwell** and **Amrit**. As always, the ex was an immensely professionally set-up, with the students learning much about life in the field and power distribution. They also learned how to work around Offrs, as mid week the ex was visited by the CI, **LtCol J Dryburgh**, CO 11 Sig Regt, **LtCol P Hudson MBE** and OC 1 Sqn, **Maj J Howes CD**. Rumour has it that the Boss, **Maj Guy Benson** may make time in his palmtop to visit the Sec. Finally, we welcome **Mr Rab Haggart**, who joins us from ABRO.

EX SOUTHERN LIGHTS L-R: Lt Col Dryburgh, Sigs Carr, Cargill, Potter, Ronaye and Craven, Maj Howes, Sgt Amrit, Lt Col Hudson MBE, Sigs Collier, White, Hurley and Devonshire

TROOP COMMANDERS' COURSE 54 - *by 2Lt Lucy Webster*

The final few months of the Ttroopies course have been surprisingly busy. Radio Gp managed to dispell all the negative rumours we'd heard about them. The final ex, SEARCHING GLANCE, in the glorious weather, was enjoyable. We all got to run around pretending to be Ops Offrs and Yeomen for four days. Our thanks go to Colour Hayward for the breakfast Burger King run, whoops, sorry, I meant toilet run! Radex deserve a mention for their continued professionalism and enthusiasm throughout the four weeks. Our sympathy goes to **Lt Lepan**, who was stuck in a Landrover with **Lt Nirmal Gurung**, who unfortunately got navigationally challenged for 3 hours!

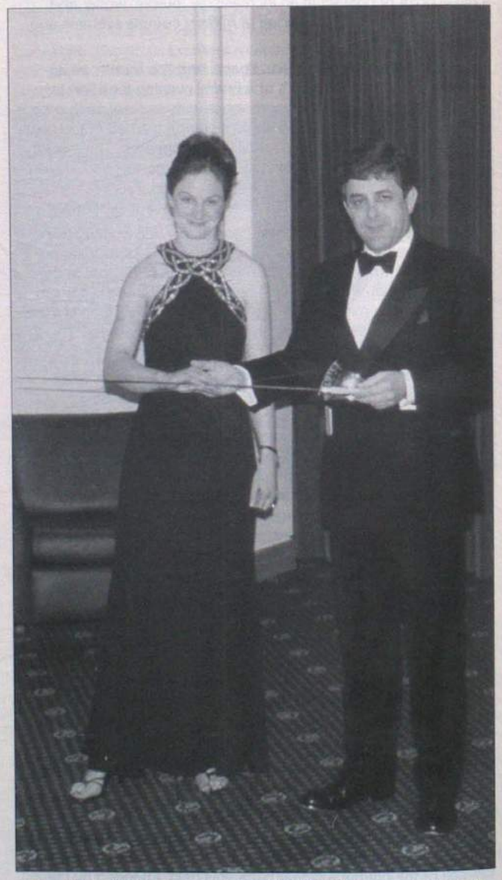
The course sadly says goodbye to **2Lt Liz Pointon** who has returned to 101 Log Bde to join our comrades out in Iraq. We welcome TC55 to Blandford, and want them to remember that it does end eventually.

In the last few weeks of the course we managed to escape from Blandford to go on a sailing expedition and then to visit the French Signal School in Rennes. The sailing trip was a chance for all to let their hair down. We recommend that 2Lt **Sarah Clifford** visits the opticians after crashing the boat into a boat-sized buoy! A word of advice to anyone tempted to make a bet with **2Lt CKat Yarroll**, don't do it, you'll only loose.

The French trip was a mixture of work and play. **2Lt Kemba Protain** from Trinidad & Tobaggo and **2Lt Nirmal Gurung** from Ghurka Sigs especially enjoyed the trip, having been refused entry into France and were forced to take a week of free leave. The remainder were hosted extremely well by the French Tp Comds. We learnt more about the French sigs equipt and also enjoyed being tourists in Brittany (Sorry about leaving you behind **2Lt Ben Stone**. Stella wasn't the same without you).

Our congratulations and best wishes go to **2Lt Ian Flannery** and his fiancée/wife **Roz**, who wed at Easter. We're not quite sure how you put up with him **Roz**, but we hope your marriage will be in direct proportion in length to that of **2Lt Flannery's** tongue!

Our final congratulations to **2Lt Sophie Alexander**, who won the Evis Memorial Sword for Top Student of TC 54. **Sophie** is posted to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt as Tp Comd in 202 Sig Sqn.



The SOinC(A) Brig David McDowall MBE ADC presents the Evis Memorial Sword to 2Lt Sophie Alexander

ARMY

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT (LICHFIELD)

RSigs presence at ATR Lichfield has continued to develop over the past few months. Both 1 and C Sqns are now operating at full capacity with male and female recruits training in each Sqn. This month marked the end of one era and the beginning of a new one, with the hand over from **WO1 (RSM) Paul Mort** PARA to **WO1 (RSM) Steve MacLaren** RSigs. **RSM Mort** returns on commissioning to 2 Bn Para Regt as MTO with our best wishes for the future.

RSM hand over

This month also saw the mounting of a newly commissioned RSigs engraving at the Church of St George here on camp. Along with Whittington Barracks, the church celebrates its 125th Anniversary this year. Constructed by the REs 1878, the Church was the first building built on the camp. The RSigs engraving continues the long tradition of symbolising all those who have trained here throughout those 125 years.

The 125th Anniversary of Whittington Barracks will be celebrated over the period 8 to 13 July 2003, culminating in a large county fair open weekend over 12/13 July. The event will be attended by the SOinC(A) and supported by the Royal Signals Band, Pipes and Drums and the White Helmets. Anybody in the area wishing to come along is more than welcome.

A LIFE IN THE DAY OF A SECTION COMMANDER AT THE ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT LICHFIELD - *by Cpl DM Howie*

05.00 hrs – My bed: As a Sec Comd in an ATR, you are expected to lead from the front, and by example. Today, as Duty NCO, I am responsible for waking the recruits at 06.00hrs, ensuring they all wash, shave and dress correctly. So I call my alarm clock all sorts of unprintable names at about 05.00 hrs, as I drag myself out of bed and prepare for the days ordeal.

05.45 hrs - Tp Lines: As I enjoy the first of many cups of coffee for the day, it is almost time to wake the young recruits up. No banging of metal bins, or shouting and screaming, just the bright flash of the fluorescent tubes to spring them into life and a gentle word or two of encouragement shatters their night's dreams of Britney Spears. By 06.20 hours they are on parade. I make a quick check of the nominal role, and identify anyone who wishes to go sick, or have medical appointments for today.

06.30 hrs – Cookhouse: Time for the first of the day's visits to the cookhouse. That delicious Army breakfast of streaky bacon, fried bread and runny eggs awaits those foolhardy enough to give the cereal a miss and take a chance with their future cholesterol levels. Skill at Arms today, so must collect weapons on the way back from the cookhouse. I prepare for the morning room inspection until 08.00 hrs. A locker inspection to make sure the kit is all clean and ironed, and an in-depth check of the best books makes sure the recruits are keeping up to date with the NVQs they're working towards. The best book acts as the portfolio for one of the NVQs they undertake, and as Sec Comd, I am responsible for writing weekly updates on the progression of each recruit towards this.

08.30 hrs – Classrooms: We cover a wide variety of topics in a typical trg day. These range from the much-loved NBC, First Aid and Skill at Arms, to the less familiar and less celebrated adventures of Character Development Trg with the Padre.

12.30 hrs – Cookhouse: Gone are the days when you had 10 minutes to fight your way through the masses to reach a half-empty hotplate for your lunch, only to be told to leave it and get outside on parade. A full hour and a half for lunch is now set aside in the trg programme. During this time however, there is always vital admin to be done: arranging trg aids, leave passes, pay parade, mail collection, getting changed for PT, or any of the hundreds of other tasks needed to keep the recruits on top of things.

14.00 hrs – Gym, Ranges, Church, SAT, Drill Square: After lunch, trg continues at a feverish pace. A quick 40 minutes' drill lesson, trying to get your slowest recruits to remember to step off on the left foot. The remainder of the afternoon is spent working between the SAT and the NVQ cell. The NCOs keep the recruits entertained on a variety of practice shoots in the SAT, whilst the NVQ staff take the waiting details on concurrent activity - anything from Guardroom duties, such as Pass control and Identity checks, to Radio and telephone procedures.

17.30 hrs – Cookhouse: The third and final visit to the cookhouse heralds the end of the trg day. After scoff, the recruits generally hand in laundry, and occasionally lectures take place, sometimes up to 20.00 hours, but this is by no means the norm.

18.15 hrs – Tp Lines: A quick head count. Everybody's here, so I hand out the mail and brief the recruits on tomorrow's activities. What kit do you need? When do you need it? Any unusual tasks, collect packed meals, bring ear defence – that sort of thing. Each tp normally produces a daily detail sheet, which gives the recruits a written confirmation of everything you are telling them to do. Timings for tomorrow: Reveille 06.00hrs. Parade 06.20hrs. First lesson is Combat Endurance PT (Bergen to weigh 15 kg) – where are the scales? Kit and equipt you will need, notebook and pen, BFAT Aide Memoire, NBC suit and respirator etc. Tasks for tonight: clean ablutions, locker inspection tomorrow, fill in leave passes for Week 6 long weekend, etc, etc! Straightforward to you or me, but enough to send a recruit into a flat spin, therefore guidance is required.

19.00 hrs – Staff Room: The Sec Comd can take a 5-minute breather to sort his own life out whilst his sec prepares for the next day. Your kit is ironed and hung up and your training aids/bergen/NBC suit is ready to go for the morning. A final check with the recruits to make sure they are all doing what they should be doing and you make sure they know what is happening

tomorrow. Now it's time to head home - after checking one last time!

20.00 hrs – Home: Today is Monday, at the beginning of each week you write a report on the performance of each of the 12 recruits in your sec. These are then passed to the Tp Comd for their input. Generally, if you have had no real problems, this takes about two hours to complete 12 reports. If you have been on ex or are doing summative tests or ranges, you will also have to collate all the scores from your sec to enter into the report. By the time this is finished, you have definitely deserved to put your feet up, watch the game, and have a Bud.

22.00 hrs – Sofa: Damn it! Fallen asleep on the sofa again, missed the game, and spilt my Bud. I crawl up to bed and push out some ZZZZZZ's.

06.00 hrs – Home: Groundhog Day! At least I am not on duty today, so I get a lie in, at least until I beat my alarm clock into a pile of springs. By the time I've washed & shaved etc, and walked into work, the recruits are on their way back from breakfast. I get changed into uniform, and prepare for war, starting with room inspection at 08.00hrs.....

ENDNOTE

Being a Sec Comd at ATR means that you hold the responsibility for moulding and developing the RSigs soldiers of the future. You provide the role model and set the example they will try to emulate. It is a very demanding, yet massively rewarding posting for those who are suitable and willing to take up the challenge. The job is not just about instructing. It covers a whole range of responsibilities, from career advice to providing an ear to listen to and hopefully solve the recruit's personal problems. For a lot of these recruits, this is their first time away from friends and family, and it can be a shock for them. So you are there to assist! Whilst you are here, there are also good opportunities for courses sports and adventure training. It offers a break from the routine type of posting and also the opportunity to work with those from other cap-badges.

Cpl Howie's Tp, Waters Tp passed out of ATR Lichfield on 3 April 2003. The Reviewing Officer for the Parade was Lt Col IPF Vingoe QGSigs, CO of 30 Sig Regt

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

BRITFOR SIGNAL TROOP

XVI

Tp OC **Capt Docherty**
TSM **SSgt Macpherson**

Another month gone at the Metal Factory, and we are all counting down the weeks till the end of tour. The snow has finally gone and the weather has thankfully started to warm up.

The Tp would like to say a big thank you to **Capt** 'V' **Galloway**, who made the first 3 months of tour very enjoyable - but could no longer hack the pace?? We wish her the best of luck as 2IC of 1 Sqn, 11 Sig Regt. She'll need it! We welcome the new Tp Comd, **Capt** 'Joe' **Docherty**, who has had a good start, only having to drink out the furry cup twice! He has a big job in front of him, not only getting ready for the handover, but also moving the Tp loc further up camp and preparing the Tp's role change from Britfor Sig Tp to Pan Balkans Sqn.

We also say a farewell to the 'short tourers' who will be going back, making way for fresh meat in the form of 6 New Zealanders, which the girls in the Tp were glad to hear about. The 6 chosen short tourers are **LCpls Pickup**, **Reddy**, **Macartney** and **Mclachlan**, and **Sigs Thornley** and **Byrne**.

On 2 March, the Tp took part in the Dutch led 'Bridge to Bridge' 10km run. In true Sigs style, 5 of the Tp, led by **Cpl Sunderland** completed the run with Bergens on and gave the Dutch a little taste of what fitness is all about! Congratulations to **Sgt Nicky Francis** for winning the female category by totally thrashing the opposition. Keep to the road running though, **Nicky**. We don't want you knocking your self out on the treadmill again.

A happy band of cyclists set off on another 'outside the wire' sports session. We were all in our finest sports attire and the weather was just perfect. What could possibly go wrong? On reflection, leaving the navigation to a clerk and a tech was the most likely nail in the coffin. After a fairly uneventful start, and a couple of hills, we eventually reached a point of command decision 'Yep, we're here. We should be going down this road here now!' If only we'd known at the time. Still, with a large section of downhill action, and dubious brakes, what soldier could resist the challenge? So, after 15 mins of fast paced downhill action, a crossroads appeared that wasn't on the map. This understandably threw the group into a little debate. Unfortunately, one sec had revolted and had headed off in one direction already. With the OC off in hot pursuit, we felt it would all end happily.

LCpl Heathcote, Cpl Sunderland, Cpl Knowles, Cpl O'Connor and Cpl Page

Then, like a lighthouse shining to the sailor in the storm, **Sgt Turney** took command of the navigating. After surveying the area, he took charge and led the way - from behind. After an unguided tour of the local area, the intrepid explorers at last returned to home base.

On 16 March, the Tp had planned to take part in the 'Emerald Expedition', a 35km walk in uniform, carrying weapons. It was to be held over 2hrs away, near Bugojno, so we had planned to meet at 06.00hrs. Most of us had an early night, not even going to the bar for our 2 cans. Fortunately, while on duty, **SSgt Scoots** found the event had been cancelled due to bad weather and managed to wake people up and spread it around. However, the Tp Comd was not informed. Keen as mustard he stood outside the gym at 06.00hrs, ready for a 35km walk by himself.

Members from the Tp were lucky enough to have a week adventure training at Brac. The activities included snorkelling, sailing, windsurfing, rock climbing, mountain biking and trekking. **LCpl Phil Heathcote** came back with a smiling sun burnt face to remind him of the blue sky, warm seawater and 23 degrees heat. But the smile soon disappeared when he realised he was back to sweet-smelling Banja Luka.

We welcome back **SSgt Macpherson**, who not only got 2 weeks R&R, but managed to swindle another week by claiming to have washed his passport. Congratulations to **LCpl Riches**, who's just been promoted and on his first step up the ladder. Also a big 'well done' to the FofS, **WO2 Richie Cleminson**, who has been promoted to Sir. Good luck to them both.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col NP Metcalfe MBE QGM**
RSM **WO1 J McNaught**

VISIT OF SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

On 12 February 03, HQNI and 15 Sig Regt was honoured to be visited by the SOinC(A), **Brig David McDowall MBE ADC**. The aim of this visit was twofold. Firstly, to visit the Sqns that make up 15 Sig Regt and secondly to present awards and medals to members of the Regt.

The recipients, pictured below from left to right, were: **SSgt McGachy** (LS&GC), **SSgt Mudway** (ACSM), **Sgt Johnston** (QCVS), **Sgt Booth** (GOC's Commendation), **Cpl Bond** (LS&GC), **SSgt McEwan** (LS&GC), **Sgt Simpson** (LS&GC) and **Cpl Davidson** (LS&GC).

Visit to 15 Sig Regt of SOinC(A)

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj DTH Wilson**
SSM **WO2 G Steel**

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CUP ORIENTEERING COMPETITION 13 MARCH 03 - *by Sig Emma Needham*

As part of the CO's Cup Competition, orienteering was organised at a local park close to Belfast. What started off as a bright promising morning soon turned into an average dull cold Northern Irish day. But the weather didn't put a damper on the day, and spirits were still running high, even though our mini-bus had been sent to the wash down point!

The first runner to set off was **Sgt Andy Carrick**, who, after only half an hour, misplaced his check point card, and so not only had to collect a new one but also had to run around getting his card punched for a second time. **Sig Louise Martin** and I decided to do a joint effort, but still managed to get lost in an area, which can only be described as a scene from Jurassic Park. After finally finding daylight again (and **Sig Dean Luck**), we found the finish line. We hadn't done as well as first thought. All the rest of the teams were already back in!

The results were as follows:

1st - 225 Sig Sqn
2nd - 233 Sig Sqn
3rd - HQ Sqn

All in all a fun, an eventful day with a lot of effort put in by all involved. As for HQ Sqn - there's always next year.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SJ McConnell**
SSM **WO2 Lappin**

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CUP PHYSICAL TEAM CHALLENGE - *by Cpl Lowe*

On 20 February 2003, the CO decided to test the mettle of the Regt with the Physical Team Challenge. 233, 225 and HQ Sqns put their finest on display to battle it out. The events that we had to overcome were the multi-stage fitness test, gym test (comprising two rowing machines and two exercise bikes) and the swimming test. Our gladiators were **SSgt (FofS) Clish** (team captain), **Sgt Spruce**, **Cpls Lowe**, **Phillips**, **Ansell**, **Murphy**, **Hubble**, **Chadwick** and **Clough**, **LCpls Gill** and **Montgomery** and last, but not least, **Sig Udall**.

Our first event was the multi-stage fitness test (bleep test for all the old sweats), the event we knew we had a good chance of winning. By Level 14, there were only **Cpl Dave Phillips** and **Cpl** 'Jay' **Lowe** left. **Cpl Phillips** came out at a respectful 14/13. This left only **Cpl Lowe** to carry the mantle. He reached an excellent 15/3 before hitting the wall. Overall, everybody put in an excellent performance with the average being 13/9. This proved to be far superior to 225 and HQ Sqns' efforts.

Our next event was the gym test, and our target to beat was set by 225 Sig Sqn, with 18km on bikes and 7.5km on the rowing machine. The boss of the team, **SSgt (FofS) Clish**, made sure everybody spent the same amount of time on each individual apparatus, thus giving the maximal output. At the end of this

event, 233 Sig Sqn ended with 10.5km on the rowing machines and 21km on the bikes, again ending up in first place.

For the final event, the swimming, the pool was divided into two lanes. One lane was used to drag a dummy end-to-end as many times as possible and the other lane was for individuals to swim as many lengths in the time given. 233 Sig Sqn had a couple of secret weapons, namely **Cpl Dave Phillips** and **Sig Pete Udall**. Overall this proved to be the sternest test for 233 Sig Sqn.

Everybody put in a valiant effort, but only managed a 2nd place to 225 Sig Sqn, but as Meatloaf used to sing, '2 out of 3 ain't bad'.

In the end, 233 Sig Sqn proved to be the fitter team. 225 Sig Sqn and HQ Sqn showed they need to stop eating the pies, and start going to the gym if they want to compete with 233 Sig Sqn for next year's trophy!

EXERCISE THIEPVAL DISCOVERY – *by Cpl Glendenning and LCpl Waugh*

On the morning of 24 March, we set sail to France to begin our eagerly awaited battlefield tour. We arrived at Heathrow airport with no problems, but due to the excellent navigational skills of **Cpl Lawyer**, half of the group managed to get lost. Several heated phone calls later, we were all together again back on the bus, ready for our journey to Amiens. We finally arrived at the hotel, dumped our bags and went to sample the local nightlife. This time, chief navigator, **WO2 McHugh** got us lost, and eventually led us to the most expensive watering hole in town. One drink later, we finally found some real nightlife and had a couple of quick drinks before preparing for the next day's lectures.

At 08.30hrs the next morning everyone was back on the bus, ready for the days events. **Capt Hemmings** started the day with an account of the action of the Ulster Div in the Battle of the Somme. It opened our eyes to learn how courageous these men were to fight outside their own country, in such a harsh environment and in such a brave manner. We then visited the Ulster Tower, which commemorates the Ulstermen who fought in the Great War. Next, we made a visit to the Thiepval Memorial, which, although ugly, was still a spectacular piece of architecture, commemorating the tens of thousands of servicemen who lost their lives on the Somme.

The next day we had an introduction on trench raids by **Lt Basham**, and then split up into teams to mastermind how we would conduct a trench raid of our own. Later in the day, we crossed the French-Belgium border and arrived at the historical town of Ypres, where we visited the ground on which the Battle of Messines took place. We were given a first-class account by **WO2 McHugh** on the mining tactics used by both the British and German sides. This gave us an in-depth idea of how frightening, shocking and uncomfortable it was for the troops. In the late afternoon we went to the impressive Bedford House Cemetery, where **Cpl Chadwick** talked about the significance of this graveyard. It was set in spectacular surroundings and was immaculately looked after.

Thursday, the final day of activities, began with a visit to Hill 60 (60ft ASL). Although seeming insignificant, this was a strategic point where many battles were fought, falling in and out of the hands of opposing fronts. Many lives were lost, and to this day, there still remains wreckage of pillboxes and craters from mortars and exploded mines. The most memorable part of the day was Tyne Cot Cemetery. Here, the bodies of tens of thousands of soldiers lie in peace. Around the cemetery was a wall, naming thousands more whose bodies were never found. A wreath was laid and a prayer said, followed by a minute silence for us all to pay our respects to the brave soldiers who gave their lives.

Later in the day, we visited the Menin Gate ceremony. With the exception of a short period during the Second World War, this has been carried out every day since the end of the First World War. The ceremony consists of the playing of the last post, a minute's silence and the laying of wreaths. This was a very moving experience but at the same time left an immense feeling of pride.

Overall, the whole exercise was very moving and a great deal was learned. It is hard to grasp the sheer numbers of lives lost in the Great War. It was a great opportunity to pay respects to those soldiers and experience the history first hand.

Members of the Regiment on Battlefield tour to WW1 sites

EXERCISE CANARY GOLD – *by LCpl Parker*

'Right lads! Listen in. You have been hand picked from a tri-service shortlist for this exercise. It will involve travelling through the dead of night, crammed like sardines, in terrible conditions to somewhere hot and sandy and there is a chance you might die.' Do you accept?' Damn right! We couldn't refuse the chance to crawl out of our dark windowless bunker and bare our pasty white bodies to the unrelenting sunshine of the Canary Islands. Commiserations at this point to **Sgt Rimmer**, who as the fifth reserve, missed out on this memorable experience.
After a long and arduous trip to this sunny hotspot, it did not take long for the group to settle in. We crammed all of our personal belongings into a tiny square nano-metre of a locker aboard the JSASTC yacht, *Sabre* (a Nicholson 55 for any of you spotters out there) and then it was straight to the nearest pub. In this first outing, **LCpl Fraser** was determined to get a tan. He sat out in the sun for no more than a couple of hours and was rewarded with the classic English vest tan in a shade of red that could only be described as that of a lobster on heat.

When we set off, the sailing was great and everyone was enjoying themselves. We sailed around five of the seven Canaries starting off from Lanzarote then on to Fuertaventura. From there it was an overnight haul to La Gomera, then swiftly on to Gran Canaria. We stopped off in Tenerife before heading homewards to Lanzarote. The sailing on a whole was fantastic, which even **Cpl Banks** agrees, although he spent more time down below than **Cpl Smith** does trying to control the uncontrollable (his quiff). However, when it was rough, there was no place to hide. It was like your second worst hangover on top of your first. If you were rough you just had to get on with it. Changing a headsail while thrashing up and down like a rodeo rider soon made the adrenaline kick in.

There were a few laughable occurrences, which kept us amused throughout the trip. These included **Cpl Rodger** and his potentially lethal, international crisis-inducing man-overboard into a German dinghy flotilla; and **Cpl Smith**, who tried to act calm and collected when he was given a crash rigging course at sea, 60 feet up and doing 6 knots. The crazy disco leg when he came back down gave him away. If anyone gets the chance to do something similar I would recommend it, but now for us it is back to our bunker we go.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj G Inglis**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Hogg**

EXERCISE WINTER WARRIOR 4 – *by LCpl Tindall*

'Ten days in Germany learning how to ski. Only beer money required. Any volunteers?' Was the e-mail sent by the Tp Comd really necessary?

After an early start, the lucky few, **SSgt Ian Frame**, **LCpl Marc Hyder** and **LCpl Mark Tindall**, caught the London bound flight from Belfast just in the nick of time. Having finally made it to Chelsea Bks, we boarded the coach to endure the sixteen-hour journey to the Allgau region of Bavaria in southern Germany.

Waking up to bright sunshine on the first few mornings (a shock for anyone who serves in Northern Ireland), everyone was first issued their equipment, donned their Berghaus jackets and was taken out onto the nursery slopes to learn the basics. As most people had never even seen a ski before, we were taught how to stand up and turn using the 'snowplough' position, to stop, and finally how not to fall over. Most people spent their time either in a heap in the snow (**SSgt Frame**) or shooting off at ridiculous speeds crying for their mothers. In good old squaddie fashion, this was much to the delight of everyone else (until it was their own turn of course) and the shouts of 'switch on will ya' or 'start sparking' could be heard echoing through the Bavarian valleys.

Everyone quickly became proficient and progressed onto the more challenging blue and red slopes. Then we found out quickly how much fun you can have on two planks of wood strapped to your feet. The instructors were frequently encouraging races between ourselves, usually so that they could laugh mercilessly when we crashed. At the end of the day everyone would be in the bar for a few quiet beers, which usually turned into a few noisy ones. There was then a mad dash to be back before the 23.59hrs curfew.

There were also three days of ski touring, which consisted of walking up a mountain 'off piste' then skiing down the other side. During this phase, we were taught techniques of avalanche survival and searching for buried people, as well as how to dig a snow hole to survive overnight. These techniques came into play when a mini avalanche (of a few tonnes of snow) buried a queue of people waiting to board a ski lift. **LCpl Hyder** and other ex personnel were quickly on hand to help with the digging out. Emergency helicopters were then called to ferry the many injured to hospital.

Unfortunately the ex ended as quickly as it had begun. Each course performed a 'skit' on the last night and generally seemed to enjoy making fools of themselves (with a typical squaddie sense of humour….). Having thoroughly enjoyed ourselves the previous ten days it was a shame to leave, especially as another coach journey lay ahead!

Members of the Regiment take a break from Ex Winter Warrior

3 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

OC	**Maj T Carmichael**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) R Hood**

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt F Loxton**
SSgt	**SSgt K McIntosh**

All members of the Tp would like to welcome the following: **Cpl Dickenson** and family from 15 Sig Regt, **LCpl Stokes** from JSSU (AN) and **Sig Dowling** from 30 Sig Regt. A fond farewell to **Cpl Sluman**, off to 4 Armd Bde, **Cpls Topping** and **Lynn** to Blandford and **LCpl Sankey** to 280 Sig Sqn. Good luck in your future posts.

MERCURY CUP TEAM PHYSICAL CHALLENGE

In last year's Mercury Cup Competition 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn finished a close second overall. This year we are going for gold! It was with this in mind that we set off to Lisburn for the first event of the 2003 Mercury Cup, the Team Physical Challenge (formally Tough Guy). The first event of the day was the stretcher race. Simple enough, we thought, until we picked up the stretcher and realised it weighed the equivalent of **Lisa Rilley** of *You've Been Framed* fame. No mean feat to carry that weight around a 3km circuit. However it was made easier by having **Cpl Mark Neillings** and **LCpl Dom Box** busting a gut for the team. Just fifteen minutes after finishing that event, we moved to the gym for a beep test. Results were impressive with legs still shaking from the previous event. However of special note were the performances of **Pte Sam Bevan** and **Sig Kye Topping**. You would never have believed that they had just done a stretcher race. Straight from there to a snatch pull – pulling a snatch vehicle as far as you can in 20 minutes. Going down hill proved to be as hard as going up hill as the snatch threatened to catch you up and run you over.

The gladiators at the front led the way: **Cpl Phil Thompson**, **Cpl 'Bri' Belshaw**. Finally we all changed for the swim, 20 minutes to do as many lengths as possible with a burden in one lane. By now, exhaustion was setting in, but the end was in sight and 100% effort was put in by all. Special note to **WO2 (FofS) Jim Ross** and **Lt 'Fi' Loxton**, who struggled up and down the pool with the burden. Now all we could do was wait for the other teams to finish and then the results. We had a suspicion that we had done well and we were right. We had stormed to victory, winning the stretcher race and coming second in all the other events. Six points in the bag for the Mercury Cup competition - an excellent effort by the Tough Guys of 203 Sig Sqn.

3 INFANTRY BRIGADE WINTER SPORTS DAY – *By Ssgt McIntosh*

The Bde Winter Sports Day was held on the 11 March at Ballykinler Training Centre. The sports day consisted of units within the Bde area entering teams to take part in the following: Tug of War, Swimming, Squash, 7's Rugby, 6 a side Football and a 6 mile Cross Country run. Despite some attempts at organising and training teams prior to the event, as always, work took priority. **WO1 (RSM) Rob Hood** managed to scrape the football team together in the NAAFI break the day before, and the Tug of War team had to poach anyone they could find. All teams did well, with a few finishing in second place, including an impressive display by the ad hoc Tug of War team, who were narrowly beaten into second place by the Devon and Dorsets.

Sgt 'Macca' McKenna – Competitive? Us?

CORPSSAM – *by Cpl Belshaw*

This year our team consisted of the usual suspects: **Cpl Belshaw** and **LCpl King**, who were accompanied by Team Captain, **Lt Loxton**, **Sig Brock** and **Sig Nicholson**. The competition was once again held at Pirbright Ranges. Not surprisingly, the number of teams was down on last year, but the standard of shooting was just as high. Our whole team had a good week, but we were narrowly beaten into third place due to a couple of unfortunate mistakes. In the pistol competition shooting went very well with the team picking up second place overall, with **Sig Brock** winning the Best Young Soldier and fifth best pistol shot overall.
With a little more practice and revision of the shoots, we hope to return next year and pick up more silverware.

SUPPORT TROOP

Quartermaster	**Maj M Wright-Jones**
RQMS(A)	**WO2 A Buckle**
RQMS(M)	**WO2 I Wylie**

A quiet period, in which several personalities have left and joined our merry bunch. We say farewell to **WO2 (RQMS) Chris Davies**, who is replaced by **WO2 (RQMS) Buckle** (Welcome, RQ); and **Cpls Robson** and **Kite**, **LCpls Davison** and **Wilson**, who have all left for sunnier climes (keep safe lads). We welcome **Cpl Major**, **LCpl Thompson**, **Pte Kanavakatini** and **Pte** Parry.

24 HOUR RUNATHON– *by Sgt Steele*

This event was organised by **Cpl Sue Turner** RMP – an excellent way to raise much needed money for Marie Curie Cancer. On the day, one team of six brave individuals turned up, and they were to run around the one-mile circuit in Mahon Barracks for 24 hrs – a test of patience as well as endurance!

Our first runner was **Cpl McGrath**, who felt the need to do two extra laps (the Int Corps never were good at maths!). The second runner was our very own OC, **Maj Tim Carmichael**, who included in the event a very impressive warm up and warm down routine. Third up was **Capt Jerry Redford**, who put in a fine performance, even though he kept nipping home for sleep. Runner number four was our **WO2 (SSM) Colin Deegan**, who was relegated to a distant corner of the gym during rest periods due to the volume of his snoring! **Pte Sam Bevan** was next up, and he completed one of his legs on a treadmill due to a bad back! Runner six was **Sgt Dan Steele**, who had to shoot off and complete his Referee's fitness test on top of completing his legs of the run. In all an impressive £805.22 was raised for charity, and many thanks go to **Cpl Turner** for organising such a worthwhile and challenging event.

Never too tired to pose for the camera

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC	**Maj DC Gaul**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) KJ Simmons**

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt RN Wilson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Mayell**

EXERCISE ROUGE FINN - *by LCpl Pauley*

Our group departed for Capel Curig adventure training area early on Monday morning. After an arduous 9-hour journey **Sig** 'Silkie' **Wilkie** and I were informed we were to be the camp fire-piquet for the first night.

After an uneventful night, we gathered on the Tuesday to go climbing at the indoor climbing centre at MTC. We split into 2 separate groups. One group went climbing with an instructor, where they were shown climbing techniques and abseiling. The other group went on the bouldering wall, where **Pte Henry** demonstrated his spider like skills.

On Wednesday we went mountain biking around the Marin trail, led by **Sgt** 'Tomo' **Thompson**. The trail is man-made and consists of steep forest tracks and near vertical uphill sections. The going was rough in some sections and **Sgt Thompson** ended up breaking the front suspension on his bike.

Thursday was run by a company called AC Adventures, and consisted of activities that were highly anticipated by many of the group. The day started with a fairly difficult outdoor climb on wet rock, followed by a 60-ft abseil. We then went caving in an abandoned slate mine, coupled with more abseiling to get to the lower levels of the mine. Once there, our guide told us of the (I quote) 'fascinating history of the slate industry'. To end the day we all braved a 150-ft high 'death' slide into the coldest lake north Wales had to offer.

Friday was the day we walked up Snowdon (fairly compulsory for any visit to North Wales). Sadly the gods weren't smiling on us and we had to brave gale force winds and driving rain for most of the 8-mile trek. It did stop raining eventually, but only to allow the snow a chance to make us colder. About 750m from the summit our MLT decided the snow was too deep for us to go any further, and we turned round to go back again. When we got to the bottom, we all went for a pint in a quite local pub with a log fire to warm us up.

We used the weekend to relax from the pressure of life in Northern Ireland and **Pte Henry** managed to find the time to go to London and get married. The week was rounded off with everyone going to the pub to watch England beat Italy in the 6 Nations.

Monday was another early start, and we departed the cold Welsh countryside and headed back to sunny Londonderry. Everyone was subdued as they recovered from a very active but enjoyable week adventure training.

EXERCISE ZEUS FINN - *by LCpl Nex*

EX ZEUS FINN was held in Scotland at HMS Faslane from 10 - 21 February. Its primary role was to get people who have been long term injured or downgraded back into training and getting fit. It was attended by a mixture of characters from the Bde. There were four people from the Sig Sqn, **Pte Jarvis**, **LCpl Haworth**, **Cpl Stone** (a syndicate PTI) and me, plus an admin party. After an eventful journey, and rough ferry crossing, we arrived at *HMS Faslane* in the dark. We then travelled up to our accommodation in the small training camp that looked like it had come out of WWII. Nevertheless this was to be our home for the next 11 days.

We started properly on the Tuesday with a BPFA, strength tests, and body measurements. All the prodding and measuring made us all feel a bit like lab rats. We were split into 3 syndicates for the rest of the ex and I was in C Syndicate, which by the end of the week stood for 'change'. We had several lectures throughout the ex concerning everything from the correct footwear to use in training, diet and smoking, lectures on training techniques, and how to set up our own training programmes. There were six training sessions a day and then sports in the evening. Fortunately, we were able to watch the international football matches and Six Nations rugby. Everybody enjoyed the 11 days, even if we were extremely tired every night. Quite a few life changes went on, and ultimately everybody felt that it had definitely been a worthwhile experience.

SOUTH AFRICA CRICKET TOUR - *by LCpl Beazley*

The squad was a total of 20, made up of people from various units and cap badges in 8 Inf Bde. We only got together for a couple of practices before flying out to Cape Town and a lot off us had not played for a while. The RSigs element consisted of **LCpl Beazley**, **LCpl Bibby** and **LCpl McGeachey**.

On 15 February we flew out from Heathrow to Jo-Burg, then transferred to Cape Town. After a long 15 hr flight, we were expecting a relaxing afternoon by the pool, but had to go straight into a 2 hr practice in preparation for the next days game against Wynberg Old Boys School.

We arrived at the ground and, to our delight, we discovered that we were playing against a school boy team. We then went on to lose the game, with **LCpl Bibby** edging his way to a mighty 8 runs, and a big duck for **LCpl McGeachey**. We later found out that they were one of the top schools in SA. After the game, we proceeded to drown our sorrows, explore the local nightlife in Cape Town. Luck was on our side as a cruise liner full of rich American students had docked in that day. So to keep up Anglo-American relations we introduced them to Fish bowls, Tequila and 'Zig and Zags school of dance', which went down well.

The next day we had another game against The Old Sax Boys. The ground was set in stunning scenery, surrounded by vineyards, with Table Mountain in the background. It gave a really good atmosphere to the game, with both teams wanting to have a laugh, while still enjoying a good game of cricket. It was a tight game, but we were on the losing side again, after I contributed a massive zero.

After the game we enjoyed a BBQ and a few beers. We got back to Ritz Hotel, (where was we were staying) and got our glad rags on. We then all went out for a team meal and made the discovery of the tour, the mighty 'Giraffe'. This was a 5-litre beer dispenser about 5ft tall, with a tap at the bottom and it cost a bank breaking 5 pounds.

Although in the next game, against The Western Province Development Side, we continued our losing streak, fun was had by all. Our last game was against a military side, Simons Town MCC, and although a closer match, we again left in defeat by four runs.

Saturday was the highlight of the tour for most of us, watching England's victory against Pakistan in the cricket World Cup in Newlands ground. We even managed to get on TV and the front page of the Cape Town Times. We spent the remaining two days relaxing before flying back to a very cold Heathrow on the Tuesday.

'The Mighty Giraffe'

This tour taught us a few valid lessons, the most important being that a good team does not just consist of a lot of first class winning players, but a team that has played together before going on tour. In summary, the tour was excellent and everyone in the squad had an amazing time.

MT SECTION

MTWO	**WO2 A Stronach RLC**
MT Sgt	**Sgt S Williams RLC**

MT has again had a busy period, with a lot of people posted in and out. This began with the departure of **Pte Birkmyre**, who went off to explore 7 Regt, Bielfield. We then welcomed **Pte Jones**, who was left over from RAnglians and had been working with Coldstream Guards. We also welcome **Sig Jones**, who has arrived from 3 Div, Bulford. At last I'm not the only sig in the MT!

Congratulations to, newly promoted, **Sgt** 'Andy' **Doyle**, who, has left the MT fold to make his own way in the Trg Wing. Talking of promotion, 3 of the RLC members who were selected for promotion are now completing their MPC course. Hopefully **Ptes Dewar**, **Locking** and **Payne** will pass with flying colours. Good luck lads.

JUNIORS V SENIORS FOOTBALL MATCH

This was a farewell match for **Sgt Paul Walledge**, who over his

period of time with the football team, served it very well, scoring important goals in a number of matches. All this was forgotten about as the juniors aimed to show the 'golden oldies' (Seniors) how the game was meant to be played. The game was very entertaining and the Seniors started the better team, going 2-0 up at half time. The Juniors played their hearts out in the second half, but **Sgt Walledge**, determined to leave a winner, scored the all-important fourth goal. Final score – 4-1, a win to the Seniors.

Sgt Paul Walledge accepts the Squadron football trophy from WO1 (RSM) Simmons, on behalf of the Seniors Team

RQMS DEPARTMENT

RQMS	**WO2 D Inman**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt C McCabe RLC**

The Dept has had a busy few months. Since the end of winter, a lot of manpower has been away on different exs and courses.

LCpl Custance went away to the mainland on a first aid at work course, which he found enjoyable and interesting. He had a laugh with all the fake blood and bandages that ended up making him look like a mummy. Congratulations to **Cpl Paul Munslow** on passing his EFP1 and trying to use his new management skills at work. Is anyone actually listening to him though?

LCpl John Devlin and **Pte Jarvis** went on EX ZEUS FINN. **LCpl Devlin** spent most of his days just sitting around, while **Pte Jarvis** was running around trying to keep fit - which we don't believe as his report says he actually put on weight. The RQMS, **WO2 Dave Inman** and **Sgt Ian Taylor**, continue their attempts to escape to the golf course whenever the opportunity arises.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC	**Maj D A Craft**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) P Marshall**

SUPPORT TROOP

OC	**Maj S Harvey R IRISH**
WOIC	**WO2 (RQMS) D M Buckingham**

We say farewell and congratulations to the RQMS, **WO2 David Buckingham**, who is off to 3 Inf Bde as RSM. Good luck 3 Bde. Get them boots bulled and bed blocks made! We also say bye bye to **Sgt Hawksworth**, who deploys to the Gulf with 7 Armd Bde. Thanks for everything; goodbye and good luck from all the Dept.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt SR Bennett**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt PP Corcoran**

OPS SECTION

Ops Sec have done well on the recent promotions board, so it's congratulations to the new **LCpls Sophie Gibson**, **Ryan Parker**, **Steve Barber** and **Liz Fox**. A second congratulation to **LCpl Liz Fox** for all her hard work in Syscon, her recent move to the Commcen and finding someone in EOD to marry her. Well done.

TM SECTION

Over the last couple of months members of TM Tp have been involved in various competitions and adventure training exercises. In February a party from the Sqn flew out to Calpe in Costa Blanca, Spain, to undertake two weeks of hill-walking and rock-climbing. The whole ex was a great success, combining excellent weather, beautiful views and plenty of native liquids.

Some of the remaining members of TM Tp participated in a March & Shoot Competition, part of the Munroe Cup. The team didn't win, but the team members enjoyed the event.

In March the first of many events for the Mercury Cup got underway. The Sqn organised the Tough Guy Competition, which consisted of four arduous events. The first was a timed stretcher race, followed by all team members undertaking a Multi-Stage Fitness Test, a Range Rover Pull and finally a multi-stroke, swimming event with a burden incorporated. The team finally came fourth out of the eight teams participating. With Athletics as the next event at the end of April, organised by 15 Sig Regt, members of TM Tp will surely be part of the 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn team.

RIGGING SECTION

The Sec welcomes back **Cpl McGrouther**, from his Class 1 Inst Tech course at RSS and congratulates him on his promotion to Cpl. Welcome back also to **LCpl Wells** on successful completion of a fibre optic course at the RSS, and to **Cpl Healy**, who, after an intense month attending the RSJCC, is now worthy of his rank. We say a temporary hello to **LCpl Stokes**. Having just arrived into the unit, been shown the ropes, and completed a safe to climb course, he has been posted already, because other units require his priceless skills. Good luck, mate!

The past couple of months have been rather demanding for the riggers section. Despite being temporarily undermanned, we took on a large workload, and were successful with all of it. One of the highlights of February saw **LCpl Osborn** arrange a spectacular event, in which only competitors of the highest calibre dared enter. I am of course talking about the Sqn Third Friday Club bowling competition, which the techs won (techs winners?)

EXERCISE IBERIAN FINN – *by LCpl Mathieson*

WEEK 2 9–16 MARCH

The second group knew they were off to a good start when, arriving at the airport, we found that our plane to Alicante was delayed by 3 hours. But this gave us time to prepare for the flight by having a couple of cold refreshing beverages. When the plane finally turned up, we all found out the reason for the delay. **LCpl Matty Grounds** was on the returning flight, and the pilot had been concerned about stowaways and illegal immigrants. But after several checks by the Spanish authorities he was allowed to board the plane, under close watch from the stewards.

On the first day, after the morning brief by **Sgt Richard Brown**, we all headed out for the first day of rock climbing in glorious sunshine. Everyone took to rock climbing like a ducks to water, but certain people where showing off, some more than others. **LCpl Al Allardyce**, decided he wasn't going to climb up rock face, but dance up instead, using the impressive disco leg technique.

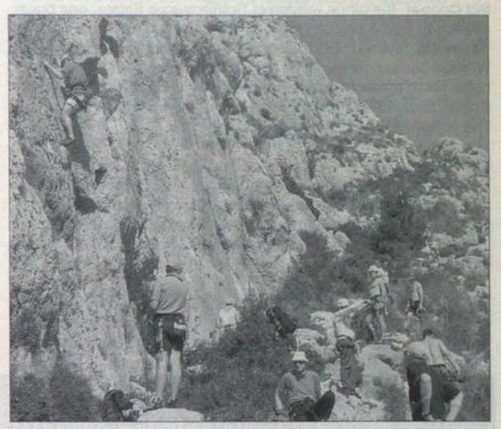
Next morning, after a good nights sleep, we were woken by a Spanish alarm clock in the form of a pneumatic drill. After breakfast we all headed into Benidorm for the first of our little walks. Before we set off, the RSM said he would meet us at the top of the hill. He would only be tabbing at 1 mile a minute! When we arrived at a big cross overlooking Benidorm, all the fat lads thought that was the end of the walk, but to our horror, it was only the start. After another trot into town, we all sat down to watch the Newcastle v Inter Milan game. After a fairly good result for the Toon, a few of the lads decided to stay out and sample the Spanish nightlife, but they couldn't find it.

It was a slow start to the third day, especially for **Sig Marc Cooper** and **LCpl Williams**, who managed to climb a staggering 5ft. After some impressive climbing by **Cpl Mick Jennings**, it was decided to have a gentle stroll back to Calpe, except for the selected persons who decided to run back. Well, the RSM told them they had too. Unlucky. The evening's activities included watching the Manchester United game against Deportivo, so we all had an early night.

The fourth day was the day of the big walk. This included Deadman's Agony, a section of the walk, which would prove to be a bit challenging for the larger gentleman amongst the walking group. We organised ourselves into two groups, a fast one and a sane one. When we arrived back from the 12km walk, we all had a great surprise. The DS had organised a BBQ, a welcome gesture for all who had walked that day. But before that, there was one more challenge, a 120-ft abseil. Most people completed it, and the BBQ commenced. Chef **Sgt Hawksworth** provided some top food, and the conversation was mainly about the abseil.

The last day commenced with rock climbing. Everybody seemed to be doing really well, until the RSM asked if anybody wanted to go to McDonalds. For some reason, everyone wanted to go with him. The afternoon was spent on the beach having a game of football. The arrangement was that the winners would be the first in the shower, but somehow, **LCpls Williams** and **Kat Fagan,** from the losing team, were there before everyone else, using up all the hot water. That evening, all with our best shirts on (**LCpl Williams** had even ironed his), everybody went into Benidorm, where a good time was had by all.

Overall this was an excellent week, enjoyed by everyone who participated. It was well organised and we will look forward to events like this in the future. Many thanks to **Sgt Brown** and **Cpl Tedby**.



Ex Iberian Finn. Rock climbing in Spain

40 (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**LtCol RJ Kelly TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) T Henry**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The last few months have been extremely busy with ops both at home and abroad affecting the legendary calm of RHQ. Firstly, OP FRESCO had us playing host to the Green (no, make that yellow) Goddesses. As we thought things were calming down, OP TELIC reared its sandy head and work on deployability matrices began in earnest. Combine this with the anticipated deployment of tps on OP OCULUS, and you can see why the Trg Maj is now looking harassed.

However all this hard work has been recognised with duly deserved awards. Lord Lieutenant's Certificates for service to the TA and the community were awarded to the following soldiers: **SSgt Burton**, **SSgt Wolfe** and **Sgt Montgomery**. Congratulations! Work in the Sqns also continues apace, and by the sound of it, working hard seems to be followed with playing even harder. Especially if you are a member of 85 Sig Sqn……

85 (ULSTER & ANTRIM ARTILLERY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj T Dick**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) T Johnston**

SQUADRON FORMAL DINNER NIGHT – *by Sgt Cush*

The formal dinner for 2002 was held on 29 November at Clonaver Park, as Balloo Road TAC was being used as a temporary fire station during OP FRESCO. This of course did not dampen our spirits. The evening, in the WOs' & Sgts' Mess, commenced with a champagne reception. **Cpl Wilson** piped the Sqn into dinner. The CO, **LtCol Kelly TD** addressed the Sqn and began his speech by promoting **2Lts Mayo** and **Lamb**. After the top table had left, Mr Vice, **Sig Charlie Sansom**, who had just returned from his recruit's course, entertained everyone. A very enjoyable evening was rounded off with a lively disco, and **LCpl Alan Smith** entertained us with his fancy footwork.

85 Sqn Formal Dinner, 29 November 2002

EXERCISE JIMMY McFINN– *by WO2 (SSM) Johnston*

The Sqn deployed on adventure training to the Cairngorms area of Scotland on 21 February 03. Thirty-five soldiers participated.

CULLODEN AND FORT GEORGE VISIT

A group visited the battlefield at Culloden and was enthralled by the pre-tour lecture given by 2IC 66 Sqn, **Capt Wilson**. No one expected such a depth of knowledge and certainly no one expected the history lesson to move the battle two centuries before it actually took place. **Cpls Bailey** and **McCandless** looked dumbfounded, but not as dumbfounded as they were at Fort George when they wanted to know what was kept in the Anti-Tank garages.

SKIING

This year, the snow was poor, but it did not stop **Maj Dick** leading a party of keen skiers to the Cairngorm Mountain Range. Due to the adverse conditions, he decided, to call an early stop to this activity and was later seen floating in the swimming pool of a local leisure centre.

CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING

Sid Cooper, the range warden of Rothiemurcus Estate, was brave enough to let the boys and girls of the Sqn have a competition. Young **Sig Taylor** hit the top score of the day for the lads. **LCpl Winters** scored the most hits for the ladies (hope this practice helps her in the Gulf) but there was an objection raised by **Sgt Cush** that **Sgt Simcock** was shooting at **LCpl Winter's** birds. The objection did not hold up later in the bar.

GOLF

The golf was in full swing when at hole six, **Sgt Campbell** (a first timer) asked was there much further to go, as he had been out a full hour already. **Sgt Telford**, who was playing like Tiger (paws instead of hands), gave poor **Sgt Campbell** the good news that there were only twelve holes to go.

POOL

Sig Lally thought he had found fame in the British Legion's pool competition, only to lose in the final to that old fox, **SSgt McClay**.

DARTS

Just a word of warning to anyone who thinks they can play darts. Stay away from **LCpl McKay**, especially if money is involved.

EXERCISE SPRING FALCON – *by Cpl Bailey*

In March, EAN 565 deployed to Hydebank TAC on a Friday evening to take part in EX SRING FALCON. Because of the ongoing security situation in NI, TA units are restricted in the locs available for trg.

On arrival in loc, two trunk links were established to other EANs located in other TACs in the greater Belfast area. By midnight, a network of four EANs had been established. However, during the early hours of Saturday some re-engineering was required, as interference became progressively worse.

During Saturday, the network stabilised, and the Dep Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Col Davenport**, visited the loc just prior to my RR being deployed to another TAC as the network was reconfigured. Trg continued into the early hours of Sunday morning, when things eventually became a little quieter. Our one change of loc proved to be all we were going to get, and we recovered back to Camp at 12.00hrs on Sunday. Although the same familiar locs were used, the ex proved a useful introduction to a number of recent recruits about to start trade trg.

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

HEADQUARTERS 2 (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

ARMY

Comd	**Brig JE Thomas MBE**
COS	**Maj JD Forrest**

BRIGADE STUDY PERIOD

The Bde held its annual Study Period over the weekend of 24-26 January 03. The theme of the Study Period was Delivering Strategic Defence Review New Chapter (SDR NC). The Comd's intent for the day was to ensure that Unit Comd teams gained a wider understanding of the New Chapter of SDR, with a particular emphasis on the conceptual, physical and moral component issues.

The day got off to an excellent start with an up-date from the Joint Planning Staff (UK) and G3 Ops LAND, followed by a Integrated Contingency Planning (ICP) brief. The second part of the morning concentrated on SDR NC and this Bde's support to all the elements, including Civil Contingency Reaction Forces and Bde Re-enforcement Teams. During morning coffee and the lunch break, a capability demonstration was made available to all personnel. On show were elements from across the Formation, including the NCRS, REEBOK, LANWARD and a Fibre Optic repair demonstration.

After the lunch break the emphasis shifted to Rapid Compulsory Mobilisation Issues and the Future of the TA, and the day was brought to an end with discussions on Recruiting and Retention and Honours and Awards. After the Bde Comd had given a final summary, the SOinC(A) was invited to unveil the 97 (BRITFOR) Sig Sqn (V) Painting, commemorating the tour of this mobilised TA Sig Sqn, which deployed to the Balkans November 01 – May 02.

Everyone was then practised in the art of quick change and paraded back in the theatre for GOC Th Tps' speech on The Moral Component - a fitting end to an interesting and informed day.

The SOinC(A) unveils the 97 (BRITFOR) Sig Sqn (V) Painting and thanks the artist Lt Hugh Beattie

OPERATIONS UPDATE

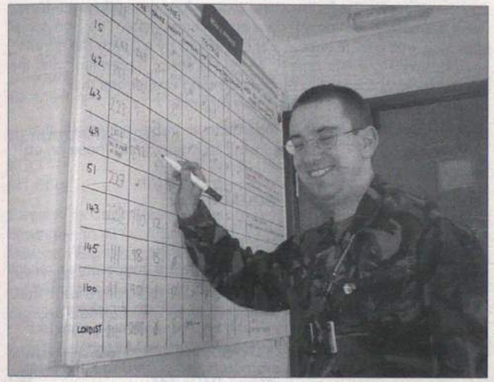
With everything that is going on at this time, it is worth pausing for breath to acknowledge a few people and the efforts that they have made. From the start of OP FRESCO and subsequently OP TELIC, TA volunteers have permanently manned the Bde Ops Room. They have been intimately involved in all aspects of the tasks placed on the Bde for both ops.

(After a great spoonerism by the COS) OPS 'FROLIC' and 'TESCO' have required the deployment of multiple teams to support ICS assets at JOC Centres; of LOs to support G6 branches in Regional Bde HQs; of Support Teams to assist the reception of military patients back to the UK; of surge manpower to key establishment comms facilities in the UK; as well as keeping an eye on the ever present ICP threat. At various times the Bde has had Operational Control of Regular tp elements from 2 Sig Regt, 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt and 7 Sig Regt, as well as its own Regular and TA component.

The Bde Ops Team TA staff have managed all of this whilst keeping a check on: 200 Remote Access System laptops; 2000 mobile phones and their associated bills; Mould radios and infrastructure; new Cleartone radios, that have replaced some of the ageing Mould stock; and any other system in the UK, that someone had a problem with. They have maintained a close liaison with the G6 branches at all Regional Bdes, with the relevant DCSA agencies and with IPTs.

The main players have been **Capt Thelma Ward**, **Capt Jeff Jephcote**, **Capt Andy Whalen**, **Lt Hamish Fell**, **Lt Nev MacMillan**, **2Lt Dom Leeds**, **2Lt Adrian Matthews** and **2Lt Chris Harvey**.

Thank you all.



Temporary augmentee 2Lt Kevin Dempsey makes a blind stab at deploying more mobile phones during OP FRESCO

EXERCISE HORSESHOE REFLECTION - *by SSgt John Whitty*

Bright and early on Saturday 14 December 02, members of HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde congregated in the deserted Corsham car park in preparation for a weekend of discovery. We were met and counted aboard by the organisers of the trip, **Capts Chris Biddulph** and **Steve Slater**, prior to a leisurely drive to Portsmouth for the ferry. The following day we met up with **Lt Col (Retd) Michael Chilcott** at the Bayeaux War Cemetery, who gave us an in-depth and passionate introduction to various elements of the D-day Landings, the characters buried in the cemetery and the surrounding area.

The formidable sight that faced the landing parties on Omaha beach is reviewed by (L-R) Maj Mike Bailes, WO2 (SQMS) Mat Church, Capt Steve Slater, Lt Col Simon Leigh

The weather was typically poor, making our excursion to the Normandy War Museum opposite the cemetery, a welcome escape from the elements. There was a comprehensive display of weaponry and a significant amount of literature to support all kinds of visitor.

It was our intention to visit the famous Bayeaux Tapestry prior to lunch, but unexpectedly, the museum was closed. To fill in time, we made a welcome diversion to the American Cemetery and Omaha beach, both of which were formidable sights.

In the afternoon we walked around the Merville Battery before returning to the hotel. That evening we all met in a local restaurant for dinner and were entertained by courageous attempts to order food in French. This normally resulted in either the waiter speaking English or our resident French speaker, **Paula Jones**, coming to the rescue.

The following day we met up with **Lt Col (Retd) Chilcott** again, except this time we sat in the comfort of his Map Room. He spent over an hour with us discussing the D-Day operation from start to finish. We then had the opportunity to rummage through his vast array of photographs and maps of the event.

On Mon 16 Dec 02, we visited the infamous Pegasus Bridge. After this we progressed to the Bavent Ridge, the British Beaches and the Longues Battery.

The whole party pose for the obligatory photograph with the 'new' Pegasus Bridge in the background.

After visiting the Longues Battery, we implemented the return journey - after one or two hiccups. The NCOs were concerned by so many Officers congregated around a map! Would we return in time for Xmas? We arrived back in the UK on the Tuesday morning, brimming with information and fairly tired. An enjoyable weekend was had by all. Special thanks to the organisers, **Capts Steve Slater** and **Chris Biddulph**. The Bde YofS already has dates for the next map reading courses!

REUNION DINNER 2003

The next Horseshoe Reunion Dinner is planned for Saturday, 4 October 03. This year the event will be open to current and former members of the Bde HQ, also present will be Hon Colonels and Regtl Comd teams. For more details contact this years event organiser, **Maj Iain Brownlee**, on 01225 814462 or Corsham Mil 4462.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

3 (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col D Hudson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Kelly**

The past couple of months have seen some significant departures from Bulford Camp. Firstly the GOC and secondly, and with far more significance to the Sig Regt, the 2IC, **Maj Phil Osment** was posted. He was moved from post very early on in his tour, not for doing anything wrong: far from it. He has been promoted, and now finds himself working at Land. It is therefore fitting that both the GOC and the Regt 2IC were captured on camera shortly before their departures. The Regt welcomes **Maj Chris Laycock** to the post of 2IC.

Maj Phil Osment and GOC 3 Div Maj Gen JC McColl CBE

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Freeman**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Buckley**

206 Sig Sqn would like to say farewell to **SSgt Mcgrail**, on his selection for promotion to WO2 and his forthcoming posting to 14 Sig Regt; and to **Sgt Smith** on his internal posting to HQ Sqn. We welcome **Sgt Turner** to Cambrai Tp, and **Sgt Scaife**, **Sgt Lund**, **Sgt Wildsmith**, **Cpl Kingford-Smith**, **Cpl Telfer**, **LCpl Human** and **Sig Parry** to Normandy Tp.

During the last few months it has been a busy period, with preparations for the forthcoming exs and op commitments, along with the normal equipment care and maintenance. The Sqn social function was a huge success and enjoyed by all, with the benefit of it raising money for charity. Morale is still at a premium, and the Sqn is looking forward to the forthcoming challenges that inevitably lie ahead in the next few months.

206 Sig Sqn also send their regards to all those individuals that are serving on OP TELIC, deploying to Kosovo and those on op tours in other theatres.

202 (ARMOURED) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj AM White**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) M Wakeling**

The Sqn would like to congratulate **SSgt Phil Joyce** on his recent selection for promotion to WO2. Also all the soldiers detached from 202 Sig Sqn are wished the best of luck on whichever operational tours they are deployed on. Please have a safe tour and come back soon. The Sqn bids farewell to **Lt Matt Freemantle**, who has been promoted and posted to 7 Sig Regt. The courts in and around Bulford will never be the same!

LS & GC Medals were also awarded by the GOC before his departure and the recipients are pictured

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col GR Norton**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) ST Archer**

HEADQUATER SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Campbell**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Shepperd**

TM TROOP - PARAGLIDING

The Course commenced on 17 February 2003 and took place over nine days at Drei Mulen Lodge in Wertach. At the end of the course all pilots should achieve elementary pilot hill launch and tow launch if the weather is good enough and enough flying can take place. Taking part in the course were **2Lt Humpreys** (16 Sig Regt), **SSgt Wigley** (PT Corps), **LCpl Amis**, **LCpl Petch**, **LCpl McCaig**, **LCpl Gallacher**, **LCpl Charlton**, **LCpl Thomson**, **Sig Pickersgill**, **Sig Leadbetter** and **Sig Boyle** all from 7 Sig Regt, who achieved both qualifications.

Unfortunately **LCpl Thomson** although starting the course with the rest of the group, finished his course on day 3 having been introduced to the only cow shed within a 3-mile radius, which sadly left him hospitalised for the remainder of the course.

HEADQUARTERS MT

MTO **Capt T Smith**
MT SSgt **SSgt G Tanner**

Farewell to **Capt Steve Jackson**, to RSS Blandford; **Cpl Neil Grainger**, to ATFC Arborfield; **LCpl Charlie Lester**, to 19 Mech Bde; and **Sig Chris Pawsey**, to 3 Inf Brigade. Many thanks for your hard work and efforts whilst at the Regimental MT. Hello to **Capt Tom Smith**, **Cpl Ross Harmer**, **LCpls Young** and **Bramell**, **Sig Lee Cairns**, and **Sig Si Mayson**.

QUARTERMASTER (ADMINISTRATION) DEPARTMENT

QM **Maj (QM) Taylor**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Morgan**

Notes by LCpl Bradbury.

For the QM (A) Dept, it has been business as usual after the Regtl Board of Officers Inspection. The QM has been away on a Battlefield Tour (holiday) to Rome, (tough at the top!) while the RQMS has been away getting qualified on his RQMS's Course, (yes Mat Regs this, Mat Regs that - boring!)

LCpl Bradbury represented the Dept in the recent EX SILVER CHILD event in UK. **Sig Jodie Williams** topped up her tan in Grand Canaria, then left us for Blandford to join the Corps footballers.

229 (BERLIN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj TA Crilly RASigs**
SSM **WO2(SSM) AJ Crawford**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

Once again there are troop hello-good-byes. With the onset of OP TELIC, SHQ have lost our Tp Comd, **Capt Sally Richardson**. We wish her all the best. With the reorganisation inside the Sqn, we welcome all the techs to the Wksps, especially the newcomers to the Sqn, **Cpl Wes O'Connor**, from 238 Sqn; and **LCpls Russell**, **Williams**, **Thompson**, **Dodds**, and **Hawley**, all from training. We also welcome **LCpl Young** to the MT from 54 Tpt Sqn, RLC. In the SQMS Dept we say goodbye to **Sig Blackburn**, gone to the QM's Dept and hello to **Sig Ja'ali**.

On an even happier note we congratulate **WO2 (SSM) Andy Crawford** and **SSgt (YofS) Simon Boase** on their selection for promotion. We await your postings (as do you) with interest.

BRANDENBURG TROOP - *by Sigs Holbourn and Kerswell*

Tp Comd **Lt K Milner**
Tp Sgts **Sgt J Wood**
Sgt A Delaney

Once again the Tp has had many comings and goings. Welcome to **Lt Kate Milner**, taking over from **Capt** 'Aussie' **Wettenhall**, who leaves on promotion to 7 Armd Bde Sig Sqn. Farewell to **Cpl Marsh**, **Cpl Brown** and **Sig O'Neill**.

Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Ollie' **Holbourn**, **LCpl** 'Robbie' **Kerswell** who have both recently been promoted to LCpl. Also well done to **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Collins**, back from his Class 1 in Blandford; **Cpl** 'Al' **Doyle**, back from the RSJC Course (well done for making Top Student and Top Soldier, field and classroom); **Cpl Glen Hislop**, for completing the BIT Course; **Cpl Wright**, for finally completing his EFP 1; and **Sig Terry John** for undertaking the RSigs Leadership Course.

It has been a very busy couple of months for Brandenburg Tp (Satcom – the busiest troop in BF(G)). It's been exercise, exercise, exercise. Just about everyone is calming down from the hefty workload and are now waiting for the next load to come around!

EX ARRCADE GUARD

Three dets deployed on this ex – TSGT Hornet, Bee and Moth. During the ex, TSGT Talon Det (Hornet), had a power failure. **LCpl Hunter** decided to investigate. After a while, a sheepish-looking **Sig O'Neill**, decided to come clean and admit that he had snapped the end off of a power cable. **LCpl Hunter** then handed **Sig O'Neill** the live end of the cable and unwittingly proceeded to put 240V down his arm. Needless to say a valuable lesson was learned by all! Generally a very good exercise which definitely separated the good from the bad and the ugly!

TSGT TALON COURSE

This was run by **Sophie Johnson** (BAE Systems) at the Trg Wing, 7 Sig Regt, and was the first time the course had been run in-theatre. As there were a lot of personnel posted out on promotion, or who had finished their time with Satcom Tp, a few other volunteers took part. As result the Tp will have some 'new unknown operators' being identified as the new 'brew-bitches' on each det. We look forward to welcoming the new 'slaves' (sorry operators), as soon as we start the next exercise (tomorrow).

CHARLOTTENBURG TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt AT Limb**
Tp SSgt **SSgt SE Littlefield**

March has been a busy time for Charlottenburg Tp, seeing many arrivals and departures. Those leaving the Tp are: **Cpl Dave Booth**, **Cpl Al Cheetham**, **LCpl Glen Bolden**, **LCpl Nabokow**, **Sig Stanley** and **Sig Gill Piercy**. Those who have been lucky enough to join the Tp are **Sig Bennett**, **Sig Burr** and **Sig Whitehead**. Welcome to the Tp. We hope you enjoy your tour. Our congratulations go to **SSgt Shaun Littlefield**, who was recently selected for promotion to WO2 and will take up his new post as SSM, 232 Sig Sqn at the end of April.

PARAGLIDING – *By Sig Mawer*

On 3 March, **Sig Kate Brimfield**, **Sig Vicky Millar**, **Sig** 'Woody' **Woodward** and I, **Sig** 'Scotty' **Mawer** left for Bavaria in the south of Germany to the Drei Mullen adventure training centre to join a paragliding course. On arrival, we were introduced to our instructors, **SSgt Callum Bruce**, **Andy Ehmann**, **Dickie Davis** and **Alistair Harvey**. Initial issue of our equipment was quickly followed by some theory lessons including a video of what may go wrong when paragliding.

The next phase of the training was completed out on the fields, where we were winched up to heights ranging from 300ft to 500ft. This was particularly frightening for me as I am afraid of heights, but I soon forgot about this when it was time to land.

Towards the end of the course we were all reaching heights of up to 900ft, affording us a beautiful view of the Alps. During the course we all worked as teams, checking each other's equipment and putting trust in each other - something we all benefited from. Finally, we all received our Elementary Pilots Licences. I personally enjoyed it so much that I have applied to attend the Club Pilots Course in April.

WILMERSDORF TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt B K N Robson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Curry**

Whisky Tp participated on EX HARD TASTE, a Sqn-level ex, to test the leadership and comms skills of the soldiers. For many of the Tp this was their first ex. After several nights of no sleep, the ex changed its emphasis and the tps started to complete a series of command tasks and stands for a twenty-four hour period. It particularly placed emphasis on the JNCO's.

One of the most memorable command tasks for those taking part, involved a river crossing, the objective being to erect a pole crossing over the river to provide a comms link on the other side and transferring all their own kit across. For a select (if not strange) few this proved to be entertaining, if not enjoyable. However, for the rest, it was one of the most unpleasant events they have had to complete, particularly **Sig Gareth Duggan**, who found the temperature unbearable to the extent of hyperventilating at the thought of touching the water again. The DS were not so sympathetic and all eventually (after many girlish screams) completed the task.

We would like to say farewell to **Sgt** 'Nige' **Howard**, who has moved to 16 Sig Regt and **Cpl** 'Mally' **Mallison**, who is off to complete his T1 course at Blandford.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Andy Fallows**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Kevin Read**

SHQ TROOP

It has been yet another busy period for the Sqn hierarchy. We continue to plough our way through the forecast of events, tackling the numerous exs, planning a battlefield tour, competing in the odd tug-of- war competition, and finally watching with green eyes the rest of the British Army deploying to the Gulf on OP TELIC.

We began March with EX ARRCADE GUARD, an opportunity for the ARRC staff to conduct contingency planning in field conditions. We would like to thank 232 Sqn for affording us the opportunity to build another HQ. We certainly enjoyed the practice and are now much more familiar with the terrain at the end of the airfield! GUARD was full of the usual banter. The OC did his best to reassure COSARRC that we never try to pull the wool over anyone's eyes, whilst the YofS set a new record for the most hours slept during an ARRC exercise. We will try and ensure that your comfy chair is moved in to the field environment for those quieter moments in future! **Sgt Mark Ward** was kept busiest of all, reprogramming HICOM, doing the odd interoperability ex as well as trying to keep his job as acting FofS. Shame he failed on the latter!

Congratulations go to **WO2 (SSM) Kevin Read** for his outstanding performance for the Regtl football team during the Army Cup (Germany) final against 1 LI. Who said you can't teach an old dog new tricks?

OSCAR TROOP

2003 kicked off for Oscar Tp with an air of excitement and apprehension, as contingency planning for the Gulf began. The Tp was temporarily disbanded as a trunk node Sqn was formed. Then the excitement and apprehension quickly turned to disappointment and frustration as everything started to change from the one day to the next, until we were finally stood down.

The Tp was then reformed and it was back to our bread and butter of preparing for ARRC exercises.

The first exercise of the year was EX ARRCADE GUARD. This was a perfect opportunity to teach the new arrivals a thing or two about deploying as a MAN in support of the ARRC. We welcome to the Tp **Sgt** 'Billy' **Kidd**, who joins us freshly tanned from Brunei; **LCpls Gillian** and **Lawlan**; fresh from RSS; and **Sigs Sorby**, **Bevan** and **Hall** from Blandford. We bid farewell to **Cpl Cornfield**, who leaves us for Bulford. And we say special congratulations to **Sgt** 'Jenks' **Jenkinson** on the birth of his new baby son **Sidney**.

On the sporting front, the Tp is well represented in the Sqn football team. **LCpls Iddon** and **Malcolm** and **Sigs Burn** and **Pitt** have all been taking part in the Sunday Football league. It appears that the Sqn may have a very real chance of winning the league, with the dead eye accuracy and goal scoring abilities of **LCpl Malcolm** who has notched 8 goals in 5 games. **Sgt Jenkinson** and **LCpl McArthur** are congratulated for their part in the successful Regtl cross-country team who won the BA(G) championships. **LCpl McArthur** has also been busy representing the Regt and the Corps back in UK.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj H Jenkins**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M Browitt**

TAC TROOP

Tp Comd	**2 Lt Webster**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Rob Atherton**

Congratulations to **LCpl Jim Alderman** upon gaining his first tape. We welcome **Cpl Steve Hudspeth**, from 280 Sig Sqn and **Sigs Izzard**, **Pollitt**, and **Lee O'Brien**, fresh from RSS. Welcome to Tac Tp.

Another busy month has passed with inspections and exercise commitments being a priority, though the Tp has still managed to find time to form a bowling league, run by **Cpl Tony Watmuff**. With the best of the bunch representing the Tp in the Station league. The Tp also enjoyed a day out paintballing in Holland, with bruises aplenty appearing on every available body part! **Sig Izzard** certainly caused a few with some of the most vicious attacks ever witnessed on a battlefield!

Finally a big 'hello' to all our guys on deployment with OP TELIC. We hope things are going well for you all and look forward to your return, preferably before RSIT!

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Wilson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Taylor**

Delta Tp have had another productive period. We completed a very successful Tp trg ex, organised and run by the Tp Cpls. The ex included both trade trg and mil skills based tasks, and finished with an orienteering ex. Everybody got cold, wet and tired and felt like they deserved a break, so it must have been good! On the intellectual side of things, the Tp visited Arnhem, for a closer look at OP MARKET GARDEN. Unfortunately, Arnhem Bridge itself was covered in scaffolding which ruined any ideas of photos for *The WIRE*.

We say goodbye to **LCpl Kate Connelly** and wish her all the very best at AF North and say hello to **Sgt Bob Bowden**, and **Sigs Orton**, **Williams**, **Edmondson**, **Trebilcock**, **Davies** and **Kirkpatrick**. We hope you all enjoy your time in Delta Tp and reap the financial benefits of being in Germany!

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt AS Youngman**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt G McGuire**

The Tp was relatively quiet this month, as everyone was cramming leave in before the end of the year. **Sig Kev Taylor**, however, was taking his time out in Colchester, before being posted to civvy street. Unable to return to the unit after his short 56-day holiday, we wish him all the best for the future. Leaving on promotion are **LCpl Shane Wilson**, to 16 Sig Regt and **Sig Clare Donald**, to 15 Sig Regt in Northern Ireland. An old favourite to

leave was **Sig Spooner**, a well-known character who will be missed for his outspoken comments and his outrageous dress and dancing style.

Whilst the majority of the Tp were resting their wearing bones on leave, **LCpl Becky Edmondson** and **Sig Freddy Laker** managed a jolly down to Bavaria for 2 weeks ski-ing on EX SNOW WARRIOR. Quality, fresh snow and après-ski where in abundance, but there was little time for sunbathing. On their return to work, they tried to convince us that their orange faces were earned on the slopes, rather than in the sun-bed shop down town!

Sgt Paul Bone was glad to see the back of February, as he had grown to appreciate the finer points of the Blue Orderly Sgts Sash. Congratulations to **Cpl Andy Martin**, who competed in EX SILVER CHILD, and helped to raise over £30,000 for the Great Ormond Street charity. Congratulations on his engagement, to **Cpl Sam Clarke**.

EXERCISE SILVER CHILD FINAL EVENT 21-22 MARCH 2003 - *by Capt N Coatsworth*

Following 12 months of fundraising, the time had eventually arrived for the final event of EX SILVER CHILD IV, the team race from Sutton Coldfield to Aylesbury, a total distance of 168 kms. The CO of 7 Sig Regt, **Lt Col GR Norton**, braved a particularly cold morning to wave farewell to the twelve competitors and the support team at 06.00 hrs on 19 March. Two days later, on an equally cold morning in Sutton Coldfield, the teams were lined up at the start.

Day One of the race was divided between biking and running, with both teams having to complete 52 kms in each discipline. All six competitors had to be on the ground during the bike phase, and two of the six at any one time for the running phase. The decision on how this was organised was left to the two team captains, **Capt Caroline Woodbridge** and **Cpl Nikki Dean**. Surprisingly, at the end of Day One only nine minutes separated the teams, which meant **Capt Woodbridge's** team set off first on Day Two, with **Cpl Dean's** team in hot pursuit. The bikes having been returned to 30 Sig Regt at the end of Day One, it was pure foot power all the way, a distance of 64 kms, once again with two members on the ground at all times.

Both teams had sustained injuries over the two days, during which each team member had cycled 52 kms and run close to 40 kms. It was a little unfortunate that there had to be a winning team, as everyone did exceptionally well, but it *was* a race, and the victors on this occasion were **Cpl Dean's** team. **Cpl Hill**, who was 'chosen' as **Cpl Dean's** running partner was heard to comment: 'I don't know how she does it. She's an animal'. But she put her success down to tactics, 'We ran each pair for only 1.5 kms at a time, which helped keep everyone stay relatively fresh.' **Capt Woodbridge**, who was magnanimous in this marginal defeat was quoted as saying 'We may have been beaten to the finish, but the moral victory was ours. Great fun though.'

Of course none of this could have happened without a dedicated admin team, and thanks must go to **Sgt Yuill**, **Cpl Griffin**, **Sig Johnson** and **Sig Noble**, who all worked extremely hard throughout the day and often well into the evenings to ensure everything ran smoothly - and it did. A special mention also goes to those soldiers who have helped over the previous 12 months, and now find themselves on OP TELIC. Good luck to you all, and come home safely.

The race now over, most retired early that night in order to be fresh for the visit to Great Ormond Street Hospital the following day. At 12.00 hrs Sunday 23 March, we met up with Great Ormond Street Hospital's fund raising manager who showed us to reception. Once orientated, it was time for the photograph at the entrance to the hospital, and the chance to show off the cheque for the £42,000 that had been raised during the previous 12 months. This was followed almost immediately by everyone being taken on to the wards to visit some of the children and present them with the toys we had collected en route. The fatigue and aching muscles from the past two days exertions were all forgotten, as the sheer bravery of some of these children, all of whom managed a smile, made each and every one of us count our blessings.

Everyone felt justifiably proud of what they had achieved, and have almost certainly been changed in some way. And, although our £42,000 may be drop in the ocean compared with the £17,000,000 the hospital needs to raise each and every year, we know we have made a difference.

I would like to end this report by adding my personal thanks to **Capt Chris Hymas**, for allowing me to co-organise this SILVER CILD, and wish him every success with future events. I for my part have been humbled by the whole experience, and would gladly assist in future events.

The Team Members were:

Team 1: **Cpl Dean**, **SSgt Pavier**, **Cpl Hill**, **Cpl Martin**, **LCpl Gallagher** and **LCpl Bradbury**. Team 2: **Capt Woodbridge**, **LCpl Tuck**, **LCpl McArthur**, **LCpl Petch**, **Sig Heath** and **Sig McDowall**. Team Support/Fund Raising: **Capt Hymas**, **Capt Blakeway**, **Capt Coatsworth**, **2Lt Bates**, **Cpl Brown**, **Cpl Clarke** and **Sig Healin**.

3 Soldiers from 7 Sig Regt giving gifts to the children

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT FOOTBALL TEAM UPDATE - *by Sgt Collins*

The last couple of months have been a very busy time for 7 Sig Regt Football Team, being involved in both the Signaller and Army Cup competitions. In the Army Cup we were drawn against the current Army champions, 28 Eng Regt, a very hard fought game with us coming out winners, 5-2. Having gained a bye into the final our next opponents were 2 Light Inf Div, from Paderborn. With a lot of pride at stake no side gave an inch, and having gone behind to an early goal, we managed to draw back level though a penalty scored by **Cpl Wes O'Connor**.

The second half was as toughly contested as the first, but a late goal by **Sig Rik Blackburn** proved to be the winner and gave the

Team Capt Sig Rizza out manoeuvres the opposition

BA(G) Champions title to 7 Sig Regt. This win paved the way for a trip back to UK to face 6 Bn REME in the overall Army Cup semi-final. Although 7 Sig Regt were on top for most of the game, a late goal gave 6 Bn the win and a place in the Army Cup final. The other competition the Regt are still involved in is the Signaller Cup. Having beaten 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt 1-0 and 20 Armd Bde 6-2, we've progressed into the semi-final, in which we play 15 Sig Regt. So, hopefully the next issue will show us all smiling and holding another trophy.

MITSUBISHI BRUGGEN 10 INTERNATIONAL ROAD RACE

On 5 April 03, 7 Sig Regt hosted the Mitsubishi Brüggen 10 International Road Race, having taken over running the event from the RAF when they left what was RAF Brüggen. The first race run under the 7 Sig Regt banner was last year in April, since when the Regt has been keen to maintain the profile of the Bruggen 10 in the running calendar. The race first started as a inter section race between the old RAF sqns in March 1980 and since then has developed into an international event, attracting professional, semi-professional and fun runners from all over Europe. Races since 1980 have attracting up to 1500 runners of all ages and abilities.

There were concerns this year that with the number units away on OP TELIC, the race would not be well supported, but they proved untrue on the day, with over 700 people registering to run. As well as the main race this year, we also hosted two children's fun runs of differing lengths for the different age groups, and, for the first time, roller bladers were allowed to compete in their own separate race following the same route. The weather was sunny but not too hot, and all was set for a brilliant day.

Fun runners at the finish

Started by the CO's wife, **Mrs Amanda Norton**, the children's race set of first at 13.00hrs. The fastest of the runners completed the mile-long course in just over 6 minutes. Next off were the roller bladers, who were started before the main runners so as not to get in their way. This year there were just over a dozen racers, but it is sure to get more popular as news spreads. The main race then started at 14.00hrs, with its usual mix of professional and fun runners, including vets and super vets. The winner in the open category male race was **Cpl Ian Smith**, from 3 UK Div HQ and Sig Regt in a time of 53.31. The winner of the female open race was **Mrs C Beurskens**, in a time of 1.02.30. An ex Dutch Olympian, she ran in the super vet category.

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT'S ANZAC DAY CELEBRATIONS

On the 25 April, 7 Sig Regt celebrated ANZAC Day. The Regt has a long relationship with the Australian Army, having a permanent exchange post for one RASigs Sqn Comd. So we have always made a point of celebrating the day in grand style. As usual, the day commenced with the Regtl Offrs and SNCOs serving 'Gunfire', a traditional Australian (*and NZ!! – Ed*) drink of tea and brandy, to the single soldiers living in their accommodation.

At 06.00hrs the Regt's Padre and **Maj Troy Crilly RASigs** led the Dawn Candlelight Memorial Service. This was followed by a presentation on the history of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps and on ANZAC Day itself, delivered by **Maj Crilly**.

An Australian Rules football game was the next item on the agenda, and was played between two teams from 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn. The final event for the day was a BBQ at the *Archie's Bar*, enjoyed by everyone who attended.

The Dawn Service

10 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol SA Leigh**

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Wally Drain**
SSgt	**SSgt Rick Owen**

OPERATION CASEY DRAWS TO A CLOSE

Sgt Nicki Coombes and her team can finally stop to draw breath now that the entire south east of England has Casey capability. Many thanks to the two mercenaries, **LCpl Taff Williams** and **Sig Dave Harris**, who have now moved on to ply their trade for whoever will pay the most.

VISITS TO THE SQUADRON

On 10 March, **Maj Drain** entertained GOC 4 Div, **MajGen Judd** and CO 10 Sig Regt, **LtCol Leigh**. They were both treated to a brief on the Sqn's role, given by **Capt (TOT) Mackey**, followed by a tour of the Depts to meet the key personnel and discuss the way that the Sqn should move.

THIS SPORTING LIFE

The Sqn's much-anticipated annual day-trip to Fleet took place on Sunday 16 March, an event which always seems to coincide with the Fleet Half Marathon. There was an excellent turn out from the Sqn (credit to **Mr Derek Keen** for filling out the application forms). Those nursing sore feet for another year are, **Maj Wally Drain**, **Maj (Retd) LB Gurung**, **Capt (TOT) Colin Mackey**, **Capt Keith Roach**, **WO2 (YofS) Pat Smith**, **SSgt Rick Owen**, **Sgt** 'Webby' **Webb**, **Sgt Richie Bryan**, **Sgt** 'Dobbo' **Dobson** (who incidentally won the coveted 'Rolling Pin Trophy' for being the first home from the Sqn) **Sgt Judith Allsop**, **Cpl Mark Turner**, **Cpl Mick Frain**, **LCpl Matt Richards**, **Sig Dave Harris** and finally **Mr Keen**– flying the flag for the civilian element of the Sqn.

In other news, **LCpls Matt Richards** and **Kev Hebenton** had a good time on the piste in Bavaria, which was a bit of a culture shock for **Matt**, coming from sunny St Vincent in the Caribbean.

Sue French and **Christine Steeples** abseiled down the tower block at St Omer Barracks to raise money for cancer research. Well done to you both.

And finally, on 27 March, a select few had the pleasure of being hosted by **Mr Tom Sharpe** (no, not the author, but the Chief Yeoman at the Tower of London – and ex RSigs) who have us a tour of the Tower including watching the 'Ceremony of the Keys', followed by a buffet in the Wardens' Club.

600 SIGNAL TROOP

OC	**Capt Phil Cooper**
CDPT/ Tp SSgt	**SSgt JC Cordery**

HAIL AND FAREWELL

The Tp extends a warm welcome to **Sgt Louise Rigby**, posted in to the RSSST Ptarmigan Support Team. No doubt you will quickly settle into the routine of Ptarmigan Screening and Hub cover.

OP TELIC

Currently the Tp have a Forward Repair Team deployed in support of the OP TELIC – **SSgt Kev Wosika**, and **Cpl John Mackenzie**. Word from Theatre is that both have been extremely busy, overcoming whatever obstacle arises as new systems are introduced into the comms network. We now have a Ptarmigan Hub team in place to deal with the extra demand for Ptarmigan facilities, and also members of the ATacCS team from Blandford.

JCUFI

Last but not least we have **Cpl Gareth Lester** currently working in Syscon down in the Falkland Islands, where he has been trying to perfect the mating call of penguins. So far he is enjoying himself, however he says the nightlife of Port Stanley hardly compares with that of his native Swindon.

LIMA TROOP

The last few months have been an extremely busy period for the Tp. Ongoing projects around the globe have seen Tp personnel deployed on ops and installations, especially in the Balkans. OP AGRICOLA and OP PALANTINE are to be replaced with OP OCULUS. This has required significant changes to the infrastructure in both Theatres. The Comms Planning Office has been instrumental in producing the detailed infrastructure planning required to ensure a smooth transition and forming the project teams to complete this work. This has been ably guided by the sound knowledge of **SSgt Dave Laverie**.

Kosovo has seen a major change, with the Finnish element taking over as lead Nation, which has resulted in a reduction in British manpower and sites. To facilitate these changes, **SSgt Tim Rigby** has been busy designing and planning this infrastructure to ensure security and integrity of the UK National Comms. The overall project is expected to take 3 months. With manpower being in short supply due to operational commitments, manning for the project has been pooled from 3 (UK) Div, 14 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt and 21 Sig Regt (AS). A large fibre optics installation in PJHQ, under the command of **Cpl Ian Pearce**, was a nice change, enabling the soldiers to sample the delights of London.

Sig Tony Mason has replaced **Sig Patrick Kerr** for a 4-month tour in the Falkland Islands. The Tp is currently deployed on OP TELIC under the comd of **WO2 Mark Bullivant**.

Congratulations and welcome to **LCpl Si Hill**, on his promotion to LCpl and his recent arrival from 243 Sig Sqn. Congratulations to **Cpl John Blowes** on passing his Cpls course and to **LCpl Steve Hurl** on passing his upgraders course.

14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**LtCol NJ Borrill**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) AP Staniford**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj PJ McElwee**
SSM	**WO2 D Clash**

A strange time for the Sqn, with approximately half the Regt away on OP TELIC, one would expect the workload to decrease .... Not so! Certainly, the LAD and Gene Bay have fewer vehicles coming into the hangar, but there are fewer people to do the work. SSgts have their coveralls on and their sleeves rolled up. At the moment the QM's Depts are in dire straits concerning manpower. It has got to the point where the QM(T) Dept is consistently working a 5 day week - gasp!

As ever, a change in personalities has occurred with the departure of **WO2 (SSM) Daz Newton**, to be RSM of 34 Sig Regt. Congratulations and all the best. **WO2 (SSM) Daphne Clash** has the unenviable task of attempting to follow in **Daz's** capable footsteps. Another change afoot is the move of Sqn 2IC and WO, **Capt Slack**. He will also undertake the job of MTO when **Capt McGinley** takes up his new post.

Finally, a mention should be made about the OC. He is becoming renowned for his ability to injure himself recently. Firstly, he happened to walk off a four-foot wall next to the QM's Dept, resulting in a badly damaged knee and left wrist. Having just about recuperated from these injuries (which occurred in December), he fell off his bike, resulting in another stay in hospital! Apparently, they felt they should keep him in overnight for observation, as he appeared to be speaking gibberish. Little did they know....

TM TROOP - *by Cpl Francis*

The past month has seen a few arrivals and departures in TM Tp, however the number of arrivals has tailed off somewhat compared to recent months. **Cpls Prickett** and **Walshe** have arrived from 1 UK Div and 259 Sig Sqn respectively; and **LCpl Patrick** was also posted in after serving some time in the now disbanded 249 Sig Sqn. The past week has seen the arrival of the only tech to arrive from the factory in the past month, **LCpl James**. Other arrivals include **Sgt Jacobs**, who arrived to reinforce the huge number of people (four) working in the IT cell. Also welcome back to **LCpl Gerrish**, who has returned from sick leave after recovering from a broken leg, which he sustained after a bit of male bonding during a NAAFI break with **Sig Rutter**.

On the departures side, **LCpls Poole** and **Turnbull** have both left for cushy tours in JCU NI and 259 Sig Sqn respectively, and **Sgt Jukes** was posted to 280 Sig Sqn. **Cpl Steward** is also due to leave in the near future. After finishing her resettlement, she will be venturing out into the big wide world to earn her stars at Macdonald's.

TM Tp has also committed a number of personnel to OP TELIC too. **Cpls Smith**, **Feeney** and **Taylor** along with **LCpls McCluskey** and **Howarth** are currently scanning the desert for such things as desert combats and NBC suits that fit. **Cpls Evans** and **Trott** are also on their way to the desert, but not before a quick crash course. I myself am also waiting to join the tps already on OP TELIC, to relieve **Cpl Taylor**, who is due to begin the no doubt mind-numbing process of Class 1 training.

Congratulations to **Cpl Jones**, who has just recently been promoted. No doubt he was chuffed to bits coming off guard

where, due to lack of personnel available, he had to stag on then go back on guard the same day as guard comd.

As many soldiers may be in for a lot of hard work on OP TELIC, the remainder here in TM Tp and the rest of the Regt are rumoured to be in for a good time, being put through their paces by the SSI, **SSgt Irvine** and his mob of PTIs. With PT sessions on the increase, I'm sure it's just to keep us occupied.

QUARTERMASTER (G) DEPARTMENT

QM	**Maj SM Toms**
RQMS (G)	**WO2 T Parle MBE**

Maj Toms is still busy with his part-time fireman's job, with OP FRESCO keeping him tied down. An extremely busy period again for this dept readying equipts for deployment. **Sgt Waters** got himself on local radio and papers with a now all too-famous quote: 'As a veteran of the first Gulf War I have to sit back and watch everyone else go and leave me behind. At least the wife will be happy!' **SSgt Smith** can now finally start resettlement for real and leave the running of the dept in **Sgt Waters'** capable hands. We bid a fond farewell to **Sig Owen**, who is leaving the Army for Civ Div. This now leaves us with 1 JNCO posted recently and 1 Sig leaving the Army with no replacements in sight. Under-manning is a Corps-wide problem.

QUARTERMASTER (T) DEPARTMENT

As ever, it's been another busy period in the QM (T) Dept, not helped by the recent departures of **WO2 (RQMS) Archie Gemmell**, who heads for the sanctity (does he mean 'sanity'?) of 37 Sig Sqn (V) in Glasgow, and **Cpl Nige Camplin**, who's away to possibly the best posting of all, at the end of 22 years' service. Good luck and best wishes to **Nige** and family. Finally, goodbye and good luck to **Sig Mark Hamblin**, who's off to 2 Sig Regt with wife **Liz** and son **Mark Jnr**.

We say hello to **WO2 (RQMS) Glenn Kitchen**, from 1 Mech Bde and congratulations to the newly promoted **Cpl Karl Deakin**, from 39 Inf Bde.

With the majority of the Dept currently deployed on OP TELIC, a Board of Officers looming, followed closely by a LSI, and the ever helpful UNICOM system, things remain, as ever, a little bit stressful. Still, with the strong professional ethos and 'troop bonding', together with a determined 'will to win" that can only be formed at times like these, morale remains high.

MT DEPARTMENT - *Notes by Sig Thompson*

MTO	**Capt CG McGinley**
SSgt	**SSgt DA Welch**

Life in the Regt MT has been somewhat hectic over the past weeks with bus details taking the lads and lasses to airports for deployment to the Gulf. Two bus drivers who pride themselves as SBS (Special Bus Service) are **Cpl** 'Taff' **Powell** and **LCpl** 'Matty' **Bussell**, who got the majority of the details. Well done lads!!! Another one of our drivers, **Sig Glendinning**, had an ordeal up in the North of England and Scotland with the 55-str bus. The wipers just weren't playing and this resulted in him booking into the Priory for therapy and the bus VOR! A few late farewells go to **Sigs Sarah Dunwell** (to 1 UK Div), 'Simmo' **Simmons** (to 2 Sig Regt), **LCpl** 'Dicko' **Dickinson** (to 225 Sig Sqn) and **Cpl Billy Davison** (to DST Leconsfield). Hope you all enjoy your new postings. Along with farewells come 'hellos' to **Sigs** 'Mo' **Shahid** and 'Jonesy' **Jones**. Hope you enjoy your stay with us at Brawdy.

Good luck to **LCpls Chris Dee** and **Dave Coffell**, who are at present doing their Class 1. Well done to **SSgt** 'Daz' **Welch**, on his promotion which he'll be wearing at his new unit this forthcoming summer. **Sig Lesley Thompson** was awarded her Regtl Colours at the present sportsman's dinner. Hurrah!! Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Taff' **Powell**, on his promotion to Cpl.

In the next month or so, more farewells (and, dare I say it, leaving drinks) will be held in the MT. **LCpl** 'Ski' **Turowski** and family will be going up north and settling there, and **Sig Lesley Thompson** and her bump are off to Warminster. Good luck to the pair of them. The MT will also soon be getting a new MTO, as **Capt McGinley** is leaving us to be replaced by **Capt Slack**.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

OC	**Maj J Sutton**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) K Scott**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

The last few months have flown by, the OC has been summoned to take over at Regt Ops for 31 days and he has taken the Ops WO with him. The Sqn have attempted their own version of musical chairs, starting with the SQMS, **SSgt Andy Craig** applying for the soon-to-be vacant MT SSgt's job. Meanwhile the MT SNCO, **Sgt Brett Newton**, sniffing a chance of pay of higher rank, has bid for the SQMS job and has already started quoting Mat Regs to anybody willing to listen. Not to be outdone, the YofS has gone off parachuting with the French so that he can apply for Para pay and get the chance to wear another set of wings. Sacré Bleu!

The SSM has been busy with the Sqn ITDs, getting the magical figure of 80% of the Sqn having completed the trg for the year. Now where did that tipex (does he mean Tip-Ex?) go? On the sporting front, the Sqn FofS, **WO2 Andy Amies**, has decided to join the football team so that he can finish work at 16.00 hrs and rediscover his youth. For some, like the SSM, it's already too late. The next few months will be taken up with the exciting thoughts of veh maint and servicing and the Board of Officers. All Sgts and above take cover. A final thought to those on OP TELIC. Hurry back. We need someone to be PMC Summer Ball.

A big hello to the new boys who have just arrived in the Regt: **LCpls Wood**, **Hunt**, and **Davidson**, **Sigs Woodward**, **Smith 112**, **Watts**, and **Kenyon**. A special mention goes to **LCpls Davidson** and **Wood**, for their climbing exped that raised a few eyebrows, especially **LCpl Wood,** in his lovely Ron Hills. A big mention for **Sig Botchett**, for his massive catch at the weekend, of a 2lb carp. A long awaited return to the Regt for **Cpl Chichester**, after the horror of his crashing his beloved 0.75 cc Robin Reliant (Soft-Top) on his driveway. Commiserations to **Sig Pinwill** after failing his rat-catching course and being posted to the MT Department.

Also a big 'See you later' to **2Lt D Lish**, who is sadly off to OP TELIC maybe for the rest of the year, and **LCpl Sam Rice**, who is regrettably leaving the Regt to broaden his horizons in Ireland for his next posting, after a successful month in Bosnia. Good luck, Mate from all the lads.

EXERCISE WHITE HORSE DRAGON 03 - *by Capt Knightly Brown*

EX WHITE HORSE DRAGON was an Alpine Level 3 adventure trg exped to Hindelang, Bavaria. The aim of the ex was to introduce and develop personnel to alpine skiing and award relevant ski qualifications. Due to operational pressures, a lot of the original cast had to bow out, leaving space for hardened skiers who could spot a bargain. Augmentees from other regts filled the extra spaces. Although the weather for the week was freezing cold, the snow conditions were excellent - it snowed all week! The group was split into three, under the watchful eyes of **Maj Dave Drinkall**, **Sgt Perry** and **Cpl Bond**. For the majority of the party, the week was spent at Oberjoch, though the advanced group

Getting ready to go on the piste

managed a day of thigh-burning activity at the Fellhorn. Thanks must go to **Capt Geoff Woodcock**, who showed us all the runs. 'Heiße Chocolade mit Sahne' has never been so much appreciated!

Whilst the 'Gods of the Slopes' were appreciating the true meaning of arduous adventurous trg, the rest were falling off T-bars (**Sgt Perry**) or just falling over (**2Lt Hele**). The final day was meant to be a group visit to the Fellhorn, but the bus was stopped by the German police for failing to have winter tyres. Thankfully, **SSgt Jase Bayles** APTC and **Capt Woodcock** managed to borrow a mini-bus from the BAC, and did shuttle runs back to Oberjoch. This enabled everyone to successfully pass his or her Basic Ski Proficiency test.

Who says we need snow tyres?

It was, without a doubt, a very successful and highly enjoyable week, which would not have happened without the hard work from **SSgt Bayles**. Thanks also go to those who answered the signal and prevented the trip being cancelled at the last minute.

SHQ TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt R Knightly-Brown**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Newton**

The Tp has the majority of its soldiers deployed on OP TELIC in support of 245 Sig Sqn, but the hierarchy have been left behind to suffer the delights of rear party duties. **LCpl Duff** found himself elevated from Tech Wksp brew boy to Tech Wksp IC in a matter of days - a position of immense power and responsibility for one so young. The Dept SQMS has now been reinforced by the addition of **Cpl** 'Worz' **Worsley**, until he disappeared on sick leave after an operation that he forgot to mention it to the SQMS. The SQMS, **SSgt Craig**, has finally admitted defeat in his mission to get deployed on OP TELIC and has instead refocused his efforts on moving to the Regtl MT!

Congratulations to **LCpl Glenn Russell**, on his promotion. Commiserations to him and the other Sqn EDs on their enforced postings to HQ Sqn! This leaves the MT/ED Sec consisting of just **Sgt Brett Newton**. Still, the Sqn owns only 65 vehicles, 42 trailers and 36 generators – barely enough work to fill his days.

EXERCISE FOXES DRAGON 03

This ex was planned so that **Sgt Brett Newton** could gain some quality mountain days in his quest to become a ML(S). He graciously allowed some of the newly-arrived Spec Ops and Techs to go along as well, and forced the Sqn OC to send the Sqn FofS, **WO2 Andy Amies**, along as the instructor. The Ex was based in the adventurous training hut in Ambleside in the Lake District.

The first day dawned wet and windy (a not totally unexpected turn of events for March) and a not overly enthusiastic group set off to conquer the heights of Helvellyn and its satellite peaks. The weather deteriorated throughout the day, peaking with 70 mph winds and heavy rain - not an ideal introduction to adventurous training for the younger soldiers. Back at the hut, the arctic rations were tackled for the first time and a meal of mash and shoe leather was ignored by all, except **LCpl Kinson**, who refused to waste 90 pence on chips.

Day 2 dawned clear, but with icy cold winds. But the improving weather rejuvenated the group and, after a total failure by all personnel to eat the huge portion of porridge from the rations, we set off to traverse the High Street ridge. The first steep climb gave the group the opportunity to test whether a zigzag or direct ascent was quicker. **Sgt Brett Newton** bravely led the zigzag group, leaving the FofS to lead the easier, lung-bursting, direct route. The direct team won, but suffice to say, their recovery took a little longer. **Sgt Frost** then took over the navigation, and led us down a near-vertical slope for what seemed like hours, resulting in a number of trousers with well-worn backsides.

Because the weather was forecast to be dry and bright for the next two days, it was decided to carry out an overnight exped in the Scafell area – much to the delight of the team members! The first day was spent climbing to the highest point in England, in the case of some, via every subsidiary peak en route to fill up logbooks before descending to the campsite at Styhead Tarn. Prior to the exped, a great deal of discussion was had in the hut over whether or not to carry roll mats. Suffice to say, the instructors took theirs and slept like babies and the youngsters did not and had an average of 20 minutes sleep. Well worth carrying, those extra 25 grammes! The chatter from the other tents awoke the leaders early, and therefore a pre-dawn ascent of Great Gable was made over the frost-covered rocks. A beautiful sunrise was witnessed by all, before a race back to the tents for the porridge-eating competition. The route back to the minibus was designed to summit on as many peaks as possible, and therefore a rather jaded group arrived at the obligatory finishing-line pub after 11 hours of peak bagging. At this point, **LCpl Friend** revealed what a blister looks like when you spurn the offer of comspeed and use your socks instead – nasty! There then followed the usual short trip back to Brawdy (thank heavens we're not based in the middle of nowhere) to begin our pre-deployment trg.

XVI 16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col CJ Thackray**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Fisher**

NEWS FROM THE HEAD SHED

As we pen the June *WIRE* notes, our thoughts are very much with all the military personnel currently involved in the war in the Middle East and in particular the RSigs personnel, 35 of whom we count as our own. Those of us that are left behind share a sense of frustration that we are not able to take a more active role at such a crucial time in world history. Nevertheless we applaud those close to events and wish them a speedy and safe return. In addition to the gaps left by our augmentees, OP TELIC has influenced us in other ways. With significant chunks of trunk deployed from within the Corps, a large number of personnel and equipment from the Regt has been called upon to plug the number of gaps in other div exercises. Having already deployed a sqn for a number of weeks up-country, helping out the 1 Div, the same are soon off to the Salisbury area for a couple of weeks on EX IRON TRIANGLE. Rather a unique scenario, as we are more inclined to see Ptarmigan assets moving in the opposite direction. These commitments have impacted considerably on the Regtl Forecast of Events, and Battle Camps and internal sporting

competitions have had to be put on the back burner for the foreseeable future.

On the subject of sport, the Regt can boast a number of successes of late. The Regtl Hockey team, under the expert guidance of **RSM Neil Fisher**, made it through to the BA(G) Major Units Final, where they played 7 Sig Regt. The fact they there have been a number of friendly encounters over the last year meant that there were few secrets to be had between the teams. This was reflected in the game, which was a close-run thing, with ourselves narrowly emerging as the winners. Congratulations to the soccer team, who have won the North Rhine Inter-Services League - some compensation for their 2-1 defeat in the Army Cup Quarter Final against 26 Eng Regt. The Cross-Country team put the disappointments of their season behind them by winning the prestigious Rhine Area Relay competition. The event was held at Javelin Barracks, with the notorious Hill 60 being the pivotal point for the changeovers. Well done to them. Those who have been following the fortunes of **Sig Natalie Waller**, will remember that she won two silver medals at last year's Army Judo Championships and was subsequently selected for the Combined Services team. I am delighted to report that she has picked up another couple of medals at this year's Combined Services Championships - a Silver in her weight category and a Bronze in the Open. She is currently sweating on a place in the Inter-Services trip to the USA next month. Fingers crossed! As a matter of interest, **Natalie** is an installation tech who is currently on deployment in the Balkans. How does she fit it all in?

In April the Regt played co-hosts to the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen IOJ Sprackling OBE**, as he paid his first formal visit to Javelin Barracks. The Master retires later this year and he was keen to see how three signal units got on 'in bed' together. He was not to be disappointed. Now into our second year in Javelin Barracks, much has happened over the preceding 12 months. The Bowling Alley has now opened, the Fitness Centre bristles with newly acquired equipment and the work on the temporary gymnasium and soldiers' NAAFI is well ahead of schedule. The Master marked the occasion of his visit by unveiling the final piece in the Regt's front lawn Jig-Saw. A Fug! For the uninitiated a Fug is an APC of Czech origin liberated from Iraq during the first Gulf War. Thanks to the enterprise and expertise of the Regt's LAD, it has been transformed from a rusting hulk to a wonder to behold, and joins the Regtl Wall and the Roman numerals in front of the RHQ - well worth an eyes right when transiting through the bks.

Fridays continue to be dominated by the Regtl Trg and Development packages and are proving to be a welcome distraction from routine for our soldiers. As a way of change, the CO decreed that on one particular day in March, the Regt would indulge in something out of the norm. So it was that **Capt Gordon Wills** came up with the alternative sports package. A whole array of activities were made available to the soldiers, which included skiing (Neuss Ski Dome), fishing, clay pigeon shooting, horse riding, golf, go-karting, gliding and model aircraft. The criteria were that none of the participants had attempted that particular activity before. The day was a great success and it is hoped that, PRI funds allowing, another will be programmed later in the year.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Guy Richards**
SSM	**WO2 Gaz Greaves**

Life continues at a pace in the Sqn, with deployments and commitments changing on a daily basis, the buzz phrase at the moment being 'remain flexible'. The disappointments of missing out on the big push are well behind us now and the depts are as busy filling the gaps left by OP TELIC augmentees and providing echelon slices to 230 Sqn, who in turn, are deploying their Nodes in support of exs that have lost their trunk providers to OP TELIC. This all sounds a bit strange, I know, but in short, it's busy, busy, busy! The long overdue shuffle of the WO pack took place recently and a number of personalities changed jobs. The Sqn were the beneficiaries of former MTWO, **WO2 Gaz Greaves**, who moves 5 metres down the corridor as the new Sgt Major. The down side of that of course is if you take one sgt major, add a new-born baby and combine it with some sleepless nights, the result is misery for the clerks.

MT TROOP

MTWO	**WO2 Ben Batley**
MT SGT	**Sgt Jim Pritchard**
	Sgt Scott Tremain

A lively period for the Tp which, amongst the plethora of other tasks, managed to send a four-man team back to Scotland to participate in the BAMA Rally. This was an arduous event that tested our driving and navigational skills to the full. The Team did themselves proud and returned with the 'Best Overseas' award. A special mention for Team members, **Sigs Dave Needham** and **Scott Halley**, who put the other two team members, including **Sgt Yorkie Taylor**, to shame on the map reading phase. **Yorkie Taylor**, of course is the Regt Orienteering Offr, who must have left his compass behind. Better luck next year Sarge! Congratulations to **LCpl Lester** on completing this year's Brüggen 10 in fancy dress. **Lee** has been training his wife, **Carole**, in preparation for this year's London Marathon. **Carole** would like to have it on record that 'it is much to **Lee's** encouragement, enthusiasm and involvement that has transformed her from TV couch potato to where she is now' and will run the race for 'her **Lee**'. We would like to say Goodbye to **Sig Johns**, off back to UK (if you can call Brawdy UK). Hello to the new MTWO, **WO2** 'Ben' **Batley**, to **Sgt Scotty Tremain**, to **Cpl Shane Wilson** and to **Sigs Mike Stoker**, **Bramald** and **Patrick Pestell**. May your tours be as strange and interesting as everyone else's seems to be.

LCpl Lester, model husband and inspiration to all, completing the Brüggen 10 Mile Road Race

TRAINING WING

RTWO	**WO2 Andy Jones**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Pringle**

The Trg Wing has been keeping its end up over a very busy period and has been heavily involved with OP TELIC pre-deployment training, the mad rush for ITD's (the end of the training year is nigh!) as well as all the other bread-and-butter stuff in the rich tapestry of life. The Dept is branching out as **SSgt Lloyd Bath** and **Sgt Mick Makin** are busy setting up Trade and Driver Trg Wings respectively. Both Depts are starting to produce good initial results and a more detailed report will follow in the next *WIRE*.

A belated welcome to **SSgt Scott Pringle** (and family) from 1 Div and **Sgt Shaun Thomas** (and family) from 3 Div. Fond farewells to **WO2 Mick Angove**, who has moved across to 230 Sig Sqn. It was a very quick hello to **WO2 Steve Maclaren**, who, after 3 weeks in the chair, was promoted and disappeared off as the RSM at ATR Lichfield. He was finally replaced by the third RTWO in a month, **WO2 Andy Jones** (and family) on promotion from 230 Sig Sqn.

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Dom Sharkey**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Angove**

Having failed dismally to get our previous offering of *WIRE* notes in on time, this submission covers the last 2 periods. The last few months have been unbelievably busy. We spent December doing all the normal Christmas activities and trying to get our vehicles ready. In last week before the stand-down, when we were officially warned to prepare to deploy to the Gulf, we worked extremely hard so as not to rob the Regt of their Christmas leave. So when we started back on 6 January, we were running hard and well on the way to having a full Sqn ready to deploy. To say we were gutted when we were stood down on Friday, 10 January would be an under statement. Nevertheless we had achieved a lot in a very short time. Thanks to everyone in the Regt who supported us so strongly. It will probably be the only time that we see 170 personnel on parade for a while.

Having moved back into ARRC support mode we have, in one month, gone from a full Trunk Sqn of three nodes back to two again. That said. we have just re-opened a third trunk node, albeit a mini node at the moment. Until **2Lt Sarah Clifford** returns from her Tp Comds course, it is led by a mini sgt in the form of the diminutive **Sgt Dean Wilkinson.** Let's hope we can get some personnel to man it fully!

As the only Trunk Sqn not deployed to the Gulf, we are finding ourselves very popular at the moment, as tasks usually filled by others are coming our way. We have recently completed a week's ex up in the north of Germany and are currently preparing for shipment back to UK in support of a 3 (UK) Div ex in May. We are currently seeking FMED 8 status for the members of the Sqn who are actually looking forward to an ex on Salisbury plain!

On a sad note it's bon voyage to **WO2(SSM) MacLaren** and his wife **Julie** on their move to ATR Litchfield. The SSM goes on well-deserved promotion and will take over as RSM. For those *WIRE* readers who have experienced the very unique pleasure of his 'quiet attitude adjustments', you will agree that ATR will be in for an interesting time. The ideal man for the job, he is the first member of the Corps to hold the post. The hand over should be interesting though as he relieves **WO1 (RSM) Mort** of the Para Regt. 'Mort' (French for death) the whispering Death… Nice move MCM Div!

In his place we welcome that other personality of monumental proportions **WO2 (SSM)** 'Mr Angry' **Angove** from the Trg Wing. Well known throughout the Regt for his diplomacy and tact, particularly when dealing with the lower ranks, we wish him every success. Also farewell and good luck after 22 years service to **SSgt Swithenbank**. A welcome back to **SSgt (FofS) Glover** from Bosnia and to many other members of the Sqn who had a 6 month tour (holiday) in the Balkans and a final farewell to **SSgt Brodie**, as he heads off to pastures new in 35 Sig Regt.

It is all change at the top, with the success of **SSgt John McNeill** and **SSgt Andy Jones** on the SSgt to WO2 board. **WO2 (SSM) Jones** moved straight to the Trg Wing and **John McNiell** remains camped outside the 2IC's office until he finds out where and when he is posted. We say a sad farewell to **Lt Laura Clark** and **Sgt Taylor.** Supt Tp is no more. A further note for all. The Tps now have names that stem from the aircraft types that have once used the old RAF Brüggen.

255 SIG SQN

OC	**Maj Ashley Hayden**
SSM	**WO2 Den Yates**

As Easter rapidly approaches the calendar shows no sign of slowing. EXs ARRCADE GUARD and WHITE JAVELIN have been and gone with a heavy engineering bent on the non-Ptarmigan comms systems, teaching us all a bit more about new systems. It is all coming together for EX ARRCADE DEPLOY. This ex takes place in Italy and the in-fighting has already started for the limited number of places. The summer is looking good. Unfortunately in one foul swoop the Ops Team has been decimated, with **YofS Mick Kilburn** off to 39 Bde (yet to be replaced) and newly promoted **WO2(FofS) Mick Campbell** joining the fray in the Gulf with 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. Good Luck to you both, and be safe.

IS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Dick Rutherford**

It's been another busy reporting period for the Tp, but let just start with some hello's and goodbyes. Hello and welcome to the cone zone: **WO1 Mike Rudenko** (Dental Corps), **WO2 Paul Waters** (RA), **WO2 Andy Potter** (AGC), **SSgt Woody Wood**, **SSgt Nige Williamson** (REME), **SSgt Craig Dickman** (AGC), **Cpl McLuckie** and **Cpl Mick Fernie**. Goodbye and a fond farewell to: **Cpl Record**, off to build sandcastles with 7 Armd Bde; **Cpl Angie Cassidy**, to be a REMF in PJHQ and **Sig Gemma Davies**, promoted to Civ Div.

Over the last 6 weeks the Tp has been employed in many tasks, including training the ARRC Staff in the mysteries of GP3, providing close IS support to HQ ARRC in the Big House, and on op deployments to the Balkans (3), Kuwait (1), Iraq (2), London (1), and with two more on 48 hrs NTM for the sandy place. There have also been the usual exs and major equipt trials, with further exs and trails to follow every month up to the summer leave period (and if anything like last year, during the summer leave period). These include trips to Denmark, UK and a nice little trip to Italy, which everyone is trying to get on. So as usual the Tp commitment calendar is filling up yet again - and its only April.

Our thirty multi cap-badged WO and SNCO Application Ops and Database Administrators are now adapting well to the rigors of life in RSigs, with many of them experiencing for the first time in their Army careers the joy of deploying on exs (including a WO1 and at least two WO2's – you know who you are!). The team works well, with everyone giving their all, irrespective of rank. Although it can seem quite daunting to come to a Tp that has 6 WO1s, 14 WO2s and only two LCpls!

Finally congratulations on their recent selection for promotion to WO2 go to:
SSgt Marty Abraham, **SSgt Jack Payne**, **SSgt Joe Rowe** and **SSgt Chalky White**.

DIGITISATION - THE WAY AHEAD - *by WO2 Dave Brett*

We have at times all tended to be fascinated by electronic gadgets and the potential benefits of information in digital form (unlimited access, flexibility, enhanced capabilities for analysis and manipulation) are outstanding. The notion that all existing collections of books, manuscripts, photographs, and other materials should (and will) be digitised is not surprising.

So where is the Army in this new revolution and what has it got to do with 16 Sig Regt you might ask? Well, in reality the Army should be driving its own IT ambitions to be in line with the commercial world. However, we find the Army is usually one step behind in terms of gismo and gadgets. The good news is the realisation that new technology and better equipt is out there to be utilised and moves are afoot to start using them as quickly as possible.

Digitisation Stage 1 (DS1) was launched within HQ ARRC in October 2002 and within the next few months the Army is moving on to Digitisation Stage 2 (DS2). The forefront of Digitisation Stage 1 has been GP3 (G Area Project 3). GP3 is a bit like Red Alert 2 or Age of Empires 2, where you can command a battle and see everything at your disposal, using tools similar to AutoRoute.

You have a large map with units on it and you engage in war. What's simpler? There is a lot more to GP3 than this of course, however if you have an interest in IT and you enjoy sitting at your Playstation 2 for more than an hour a day then this could be the thing for you.

ARRC has decided that GP3 is the way forward and has installed it in barracks ready for deployment on ex permanently. However, not everyone is ready for new technology and an IT world, so help is needed in the form of the new 'computer era soldier'.

If you are based at Elmpt station, you might have heard of a sudden influx of 'old gits' just arrived in 16 Sig Regt to save the day! The Army decided that it needed to get several computer geeks together, train them in the software and hardware and then let them loose on the ARRC.

This is where the 30 SNCOs come in, all with varying degrees of IT backgrounds and from many different Corps, including AGC, REME, Cavalry, RE, Dental Corps, AAC, RA and RSigs. Take me for instance, WO2 RE for eighteen years. I have a sigs background and an interest in computers. Here I am encouraged to attend several courses in IT and then, if that is not enough, I am then asked to work on a computer for most of my time. Each to their own, I say. Not convinced? During the last ex with the ARRC, two sigs, when not working or on duty, sat in front of a Playstation 2 for up to six hours. Is there really much of a difference?

Are we a stop-gap to bridge (engineer) the lack of manpower for DS1 to DS2? We might be! However, the Army has now identified the need for more of these computer gurus, which means there will be more jobs for people who are interested in computers!

What does this mean for you as a soldier? In a word - Qualifications. You could begin with the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and build up to a degree in IT qualifications. If that does not sound exciting, how about doing the many civilian courses associated with the Database Administrators (DBA) and IS Op trade, with the chance to earn civilian qualifications such as MCSE or CCNA?

So what is the future? Well with DS2 steaming in (BOWMAN), the Army has identified that it is going to need lots and lots of IS Ops, not just running applications or configuring PCs, but real IT specialists in areas such as Windows 2000, Cisco Routers and IT security. If this sparks your interest then this could be the stream for you.

This may appear to be a recruitment drive for the RSigs IS Op roster and IS Tp, 255 Sig Sqn, 16 Sig Regt. However if you think about it, the whole Army is going to have to get on board, not just us. So if you think you are up to a challenge this could be for you.

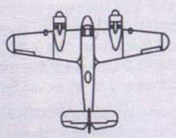
MAN TP

Tp Comd	**Lt Jane Squires**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Balmforth**

Welcome to **Sig Statter**, who joins us straight from the factory and a sad farewell to the Tp OC, **Lt Jane Squires**, who leaves us to torment the poor recruits at ATR Lichfield. Good Luck, Boss! Many congratulations to **SSgt Balmforth** on his promotion to WO2.

March started with the first major ARRC ex of the year, EX ARRCADE GUARD. The Tp again proved their ability to keep the staff happy with first class comms, whilst at the same time carrying out in-depth tests on all the latest playstation games. The opening of the Javelin Bowling Alley saw a number of professed experts emerge from the Tp, claiming to be the best thing since sliced bread in the bowling stakes. And so it was that 'Homers Heroes' was born (aka **LCpl Andy Winters**, **SSgt Balmforth**, **Cpl Dave Whitehurst** and myself. We prepared to take the new league by storm and cleared our mantelpieces in expectation of much silverware. Needless to say, we were whitewashed in our first encounter. But we will be back. Watch this space!

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)



CO	**Lt Col I Hooper**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D Rook**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

With over half of the Regt deployed to the Gulf, life in Colerne has almost returned to normal. After the frantic rush to get everyone trained and deployed, the rear party, under the command of the 2IC **Maj Mike Burke**, is now breathing a sigh of relief as the pace and amount of work has calmed down slightly. The main business now, is supporting those deployed, along with their families and ensuring the other more routine tasks are completed.

Congratulations go to **WO1 (YofS) Mel McCorry** and **WO1 (FofS) Paul Lewis MBE** on their selection for a Late Entry Commission and to the RAOWO, **WO2 (SQMS) Summerville** on his recent selection for promotion to WO1.

We must also say farewell to the Asst Ops Officer, **Capt Phil Waddell** who is off to JCSC and hello to his replacement **Capt Heidi Grierson**.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SJ Morgan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) AA Chapman**

Since January the Sqns' efforts have been almost totally centered on providing support to the Regts' OP TELIC deployment. All depts pulled out the stops to ensure the soldiers and equipment departed Colerne and reached Kuwait in good order. There are now almost 50 members of the Sqn out in the Gulf region, and we hope to see them all safely returned to Colerne as soon as the situation allows. SHQ has seen a well-deserved success on the SSgt to WO2 promotion board and congratulations go to **SSgt (SQMS) Paul Coates** on his selection for promotion. He moves on to take up the post of RQMS at 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in April.

REGIMENTAL MT

MTO	**Capt A Balsdon**
MTWO	**WO2 (MTWO) B Rigby**

Unsurprisingly, it has been another extremely busy period for the Regtl MT as we became fully engaged in preparations for the OP TELIC deployment. The main effort has been the collection of stores from, literally, all four corners of the country and then controlling the move of the Regts vehicles from Colerne to Marchwood, ready for embarkation for the long journey to Kuwait. Alongside this was the impending ECI inspection, which, thanks to the efforts of all members of the Tp, resulted in a 'Green in all areas' pass.

Congratulations go to **Sig Craig Bibby** on his recent promotion to LCpl and his marriage to **Jenni**. The Tp says farewell to **Sig Phil Merrills** posted on promotion to 102 Log Bde, **Sig Ray Culshaw** departing for civilian street and **Mr Cyril Turner** on his retirement. Good luck to you all.

As we move into the new trg year we now look forward to completing our countless ITDs before going down to Dartmoor for the Regtl Battle Camp in May.

QUARTERMASTER (TECHNICAL) DEPARTMENT

QM	**Capt PJ Griffiths**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) JJ Johnston**

As usual, the QM Dept has provided the complete service to the Regt to enable them to deploy on OP TELIC. Many hours have been spent putting the equipment and accounts together to enable a smooth transaction into the operational deployment. The following personnel are now enjoying the sun and sand of the Kuwait/Iraq desert: **WO2 (RQMS) JJ Johnston, SSgt Ralph Deegan, Sgt Barry Botwright, LCpls Helen Best** and **Sara Parker** and **Sig Cheryl Smyth**. We have been informed the only reason that **WO2 (RQMS) Johnston** has deployed is that his wife,

Pip, has finally taken the plunge to take her driving test. Good luck to her and all the other road users in the area. The remaining department personnel are fully aware of the situation on OP TELIC, thanks mainly to **SSgt Ralph Deegan's** in depth interview with a Daily Telegraph reporter, which was published on 13 March 03. This may be the only mention in dispatches he will receive. **Capt Pete Griffiths** has finally managed to talk MCM Div into posting him, and is in the process of putting our lives/health in the hands of **Capt Al Balsdon**. The command has already been given to get the real accounts out and start to look busy whenever **Capt Balsdon** is around. **Sgt Paul Selby, Cpl's Lee Peacock** and **Kerry Varley, Sigs Glenn Gibbs and Si Ashcroft** have all been left behind to carry on with the mundane life of a RSigs stores accountant. Rumour has it that we may be able to take a sports afternoon sometime around August. Finally, the Dept congratulates **WO2 (RQMS) Johnston**, who has been deservedly selected for promotion to WO1. Farewell to **LCpl Dawn Bailey**, who off to 264 Sig Sqn. Also congratulations to **Cpl Lee Peacock** and his wife **Bea**, **Sig Glenn Gibbs** and his wife **Natalie**, two sets of proud parents of recently born baby boys. **Cpl Kerry Varley** must finally be commiserated with for getting herself married to **Rob**. We warned you!

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

FofS	**WO1 (FofS) PLJ Lewis MBE**

We welcome **Sgt Beckett, Cpls Costello**, **Dacosta** and **Jowett**; and **LCpls French,** and **Dolan** to the Tp. Good luck and goodbye to **Cpl Cook** and **LCpl Coupe**, who are both off to 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt. Congratulations to **WO1 (FofS) Lewis** for his success at the recent commissioning board and to **Cpl Cook** and his wife **Jenna** on the birth of their daughter, **Beth**.

With recent events and deployments to Bosnia, Kosovo and the Falklands, the Wksp has never been so clean and so empty. Darts has become very competitive with the same names appearing on the loser's board, namely **Cpl Lee** and **LCpl Simmonds**. Thankfully to keep us all occupied, the Regt has organised some remedial stagging on, so watch this space for some nice 'Shirt Sleeve Order' tans.

Finally, good luck to the following on OP TELIC. We hope you don't spend too long in 3 Romeo: WO1 **(FofS) Lewis**, **WO2 Graham**, **Sgt Hannah**, **Sgt Pilmer**, **Sgt Robins**, **Sgt Murphy**, **Cpl Palmer**, **Cpl Cowell**, **Cpl Darke**, **Cpl Rowland**, **Cpl Smith**, **Cpl Leslie**, **Cpl Wressel**, **Cpl Turner**, **LCpl Jones**, **LCpl Smith**, **LCpl Gollop**, **LCpl Eyre** and **Sig Bates.**

REGIMENTAL TRAINING WING

Trg Offr	**Capt RC Quinsey**
Trg WO	**WO2 DA Giles**

With a large proportion of the Regt now deployed on OP TELIC, there seems to be no let-up in the workload up at the Regt Trg Wg. After the intense pre-deployment trg that took place following Christmas leave, we have still managed to keep ourselves out of trouble through organising Regt ITD trg, ranges, planning for Battlecamp and other future trg. With **SSgt Dan Burdus** away on his EFP2 course (on which he came top!), it was left to **Sgts Sven Gronn** and **Willy Pool** to steer the mil trg ship, and what a fine job they did! However **Sgt Gronn's** sister still has a lot to answer for following her unfortunate slip with the clippers whilst attempting to give him a trim. What was supposed to be a mere neck shave ended up being a 'no 1' all over.

On the trade trg side, we still await the return of **Sgt Williams** following his three-month long suffering from the 'kissing' disease (glandular fever). In his absence, **SSgt John Faichney** has been busy with all the normal day-to-day trade trg issues, such as organising 2-1 crammer courses, pre-deployment comms trg, along with attending a couple of courses himself.

Amongst all this we have somewhere found the time to move offices. Having been given the opportunity to move from our older and much less plush offices into those now vacated by the RAF SATCOM Trg Team (much more luxurious, as would be expected!!) we wasted no time in 'upping sticks'.

The main focus for the Trg Wg over the coming weeks will be EX RED BEAUFIGHTER, the Regt Battlecamp. This is due to take place in Dartmoor over the second half of May, and will be an ideal opportunity to get the majority of the Regt rear party together for some high quality and, more importantly, enjoyable trg. It will also allow those from 244 Sig Sqn and elements of HQ Sqn to brush up on their military as well as trade skills, with a view to potentially taking over from members of the two Sqns already deployed in the Gulf.

Finally we would like to say hello and best wishes to **WO2 Dave Giles** and **SSgt (YofS Hutchinson**, both of whom are currently deployed on OP TELIC.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SO France**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) C Budding**

SQUADRON MT

MT Sgt	**Sgt Key**

With the pillaging of the Sqn for OP TELIC, and the usual postings in and out, the MT office has its fair share of hellos and goodbyes to get through.

A big hello to **LCpl Simm** and **Sig Robinson**, who have been promoted to 244 Sig Sqn, to **LCpl Thompson**, who has recently arrived from 30 Sig Regt and to **Sig Laura Radford**, who came from the factory.

Goodbye and congratulations to **LCpl Jamie Ranson**, who has been promoted on posting; and farewell (for the time being) to **Cpl Matt Parkes** and **LCpl Jase Knight** who left us for a holiday in the desert (We're thinking about you, lads!).

We would like to send huge congratulations to **LCpl Simm** and his wife **Mandy** on the birth of their baby girl, **Charlie.**

Since half of the Regt's vehicles have now deployed to OP TELIC, we could assume that life in MT would be slightly less hectic, but the ECI put paid to that! **Sgt Vince Key** had a bit of a flap, but now the inspection has been and gone (and with a good result) we've settled back into our new office, complete with sporting facilities!

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt ZK White**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Hook**

With the emphasis of the Tp firmly focussed on preparing for redeployment later on in the year, trg has started in earnest for summer in the sun. With the majority of the original Tp still roughing it in the Gulf, the rest of us are making sure that the maximum periods of leave are being taken.

Sgt Thisby is busy planning EX COASTAL ENDEAVOUR, a mammoth walking expedition along the Cornish coastline. This is due to start early June, by which time he will be posted to 20 CTT. Good luck in your career change and enjoy life in your Ronhills and walking boots!

Congratulations to **Sig Gardner** who recently married **Lindsay** at Bulford. Good luck for a long and happy future, especially now that you have finally managed to get a quarter!

In an attempt to bolster a particularly minuscule Tp, we have been inundated with a wealth of new faces. We welcome **Cpl Howe**, and **Cpl Jones**, who joins us from RHQ AF NORTH. **Sig Bryan** has finally arrived from 249 Sqn, swiftly followed by **Sig Polhill**. From the factory we have received: **Sigs Copson**, **Laycock**, **Lyle**, **Murphy**, **Robinson**, **Stafford** and **Young**.

ALPHA TROOP

EXERCISE COLD LION 30 JANUARY – 07 MARCH 03 - *by LCpl Gav Hall*

During the month of February the four remaining Norway veterans from A Tp, deployed on EX COLD LION 03. Their mission was to train and support 28 Sqn RAF to operate in a cold weather environment, in order to continue the trial of the Merlin Helicopter in arctic conditions. Those chosen for this task were: **LCpl Jamie Smith**, **LCpl Gav Hall**, **Sig Kev Whitely** and led **Sgt Bish Bishop**.

Sgt Bishop provided a three-day Novice Survival Course (NSC), which ended with a dip in the ice; **LCpl Smith** and **Sig Whitely**

covered all the MAOT tasking (feeding the elks) and **LCpl Hall** managed a desk job again, keeping the ops room in good order. As well as trailing the Merlin, which 28 Sqn say went really well, we got involved in aid to the civil community, when a 73 year old lady missing on the mountain after skiing all day with her grandson. The Merlin, mountain rescue, two BV's and loads of skidoos were deployed in the search, which lasted all night. Just as people were giving up hope the lady was picked up by the helicopter the following morning. She had survived nineteen hours on her own.

The dets most vivid memories were the under-slung loads (feeding the moose) and experiencing the full brunt of the Merlin's downwash, which even the BV couldn't handle as a chunk of flying ice went straight through the drivers side window.

DOWN UNDER BUT HEADING FOR THE TOP - *by OCdt Neil Swift*

Having completed my degree at the RMCS, my sponsors at the RSigs agreed to my request to defer my entry to the RMA Sandhurst for one year to enable me to train full time at the sport of Triathlon. I was keen to train at Bath University - a centre of excellence for Triathletes and the training venue for British Olympian athlete **Simon Lessing**. **Lt Col Hooper** kindly accommodated me at 21 Sig Regt (AS) in Colerne, and I am grateful for his tremendous support.

In Colerne, I made full use of the swimming pool, hilly countryside and the athletic wisdom of **SSgt Clash** and local coach **Mr R Appleton**. My ambition to become an elite athlete was on the move! During this period I formulated my plans for the year ahead, aiming to make the transition from competing in Age Group events to racing with the Elite Sportsmen in national and international competitions. I planned to prepare for two major races in the forthcoming season; the GB Elite Championships in June 2003, and the European Championships later that summer. A few months after beginning my training at Bath, the Scottish National Triathlon Coach, **Darren Smith**, invited me to train with the Scottish National Squad in Stirling. This was a unique opportunity, and offered more personalised coaching from an Australian Coach who specialised in Triathlon. The only drawback I anticipated was that having become a southern softy in the temperate climes of England, I would need to readjust to Scottish winter weather.

On arrival at Stirling, the trg regime stepped up a gear and my thirty-hour a week schedule incorporated nine swim sessions, five or six runs, two bike rides and two gym sessions. In addition, I was taught the importance of good nutrition and learned to eat the correct quantities and types of energy-replacing food and drink. After refuelling and a short power snooze, I would be ready for the next one of up to four training sessions per day. Lights out was rarely after 2130 and any nocturnal social life non-existent. After Christmas the Scottish Team flew out to a camp in Christchurch, New Zealand. Six of us and our coach linked up with some top Kiwi Triathletes and their coaches. The opportunity to train during the Southern Hemisphere summer was great, as we were able to leave our indoor cycle and running machines behind and enjoy the freedom of the outdoors. The spectacular rugged scenery was of such as I'd only previously seen in *The Lord of the Rings*, and was ideal for getting out on the bike. The Kiwi team shared a few of their secrets with us and I was particularly impressed with their state-of-the-art swimming flume.

Using this training aid was like ploughing down an endless swimming pool, and allowed a six video camera analysis of my stroke technique. The play-back was accompanied by constructive commentary, which I found extremely useful. Unfortunately I learned that there is no such facility in the UK. We also experimented with a Hypoxic Breathing Mask, which provides a legitimate method of increasing an athlete's red blood cell count, without having to train at altitude. Breathing through this mask for an hour every day restricts the oxygen levels to 12%, compared with the 21% we normally breathe. I found that apart from making my head spin when I came off the machine, there were only slight performance improvements. Ongoing research is needed to determine more conclusive results. Such Gucci training gizmos provide an insight into how well athletes in the Southern Hemisphere are supported compared with those in Britain. I have learned that to succeed in any sport requires an extremely professional attitude from the individual and the backing of a solid infrastructure of coaches and good training facilities.

Whilst in New Zealand I competed in local sprint triathlons, and raced in a few dedicated cycle races with Elite competitors. The best result was in a 110km race that went half-way across the country, East to West, and over some large mountains that happened to be in the way! I came 12th, and felt pleased that a Triathlete managed to complete the distance in one piece. Before heading home, I am entered for the Oceana Triathlon Championships, which are expected to contain a strong field of international and domestic competitors. Hopefully this event will give me the confidence to launch myself into the UK's racing season when I return at the end of March. The Nationals aren't far away, and I hope to report back again when some good results start to flow in during the season.

31 (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

ARMY

CO	**Lt Col Paul Wenlock TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Paterson**

CORPSAM 2003 – *by OCdt Sara Barnes*

For the presentation ceremony and the whole weekend the weather was lovely. So much for the old adage 'If it ain't raining it ain't training'. This added to the feelings of the team from 31 Sig Regt (V) who had a very successful weekend.

For the team, the competition had started just before Christmas on a cold and not too pleasant weekend at Henley Park ranges. The QM took those of us in attendance through our paces and set the scene for the forthcoming trg sessions. Come rain and sunshine, we were all there ready and willing to turn rounds into brass, with the aim of winning as much as possible. And it paid off! All the members of the team saw a vast improvement in their shooting, thanks to the time and patience shown to us by the QM. And believe me, we tried his patience! The QM will be truly missed next year, when he leaves us to go to 2 Sig Regt, but his legacy will live on through the shooting team and the successes they have achieved.

We remained focused and committed, and the CORPSAM weekend came at last. The weekend started bright and early on the Saturday morning with the A and B Teams and a few of the individuals from 31 Sig Regt (V) being the first down the range. After initial teething problems, the game was afoot! The QM asked only that we beat the average of our scores from the trg sessions. This was daunting for some of us, but for others who excelled on the day, this was but a minor challenge.

Next was the FIBUA shoot, which went well. A few of us needed reminding of the rules of 'Watch and Shoot', because when a target came round we let it have all 10 rounds! Needless to say we were told to go up, paste out and that part of the shoot was re-shot. Mind you, it was nice to see where the previous shots had gone!

Onwards and upwards, and off to Ash Ranges for the afternoon, where alongside the competition firing, there were a number of other weapons which could be fired under the supervision of the safety staff (and as long as you purchased the rounds).

The Gun Run (LSW shoot) was the most interesting to watch, and by all accounts the most exhausting. There were many red faces at the end of it! The pistol shoot was another challenge, which the team admirably rose to - more weapons to clean on Sunday!

After a great day's shooting where we thought we were doing very well on the scoreboard, we all headed off to Woking to have a final social as a team. We enjoyed an eat-all-you-can Chinese buffet for £10 a head and I think most of us ate our fair share! Then back to bed before midnight in order to be up and ready to shoot the next morning.

Sunday and again the weather was lovely sunshine! The main event of the morning was the falling plate event, where the teams faired reasonably well. Despite some amazing performances and highly planned out tactics, we didn't make it to the finals.

At the prize-giving many of us met the Bde Comd for the first time and realised just how well the Regt had done. There were a few funny moments when people forgot to salute, approached the wrong person and so on, but all was taken in good humour and it rounded the day off nicely.

Looking back on the weekend now I can say that it has been one of the best weekends I have had with the TA since I joined in 2002. Let's hope that next year we do as well.

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Steven Ong**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Watson**

The Sqn held a 'back to basics' defence of a comms site exercise in March, and many lessons were learned, especially for the Sqn's new Ops NCO **Cpl Julia May**. The tps revisited old lessons and gained new practical skills, courtesy of the Sqn PSI **SSgt Shaun Fardy**. We were constantly kept on their toes, thanks to the very keen enemy force provided by the Air Cadets.

The Sqn also provided 3 members (**Maj Steven Ong**, **Lt Lee McEvoy** and **Sgt Nick Tuck**) for the Regt Shooting Team, which went on to win the TA RSigs CORPSAAM. Well done to all their hard efforts.

The Sqn also deployed 4 of its members to OP TELIC - **SSgt Bob Stanton**, **Sgt Simon May**, **Cpl Paul Starbrook** and **LCpl Barbara Ennis.** At the time of writing, they are currently in Iraq with either 7 Armd Bde Sig Sqn or 216 Sig Sqn. We wish them all the best and a safe return.

83 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj James Gagen**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Cahill**

EXERCISE FRESH START 1, 14-16 MARCH 2003

Well if it could go wrong on this one, it did! The loose outline was to deploy to Stanta, carry out some low-level comms trg, support the call sign at EX LIGHTNING STRIKE and then do some mil skills trg on the Sunday.

Breakdown One hit us at 11.30pm in the contra-flow coming off the M11, getting us a mention on the travel news! A long drive by our recovery team, in the shape of **SSgt Roy Smith** saw our first FFR dropped off at ABRO!

Accident One appeared at 08.30hrs, when **Sig Pete Maunder** saved the 1624 from damage by placing his head between it and the local flora! **LCpl Louise Wilkins** and **Sig Andre Ramsaran** loaded the dazed siggie into the medevac Rover and headed to the nearest casualty dept. Breakdown Two closely followed the appearance of a cloud of smoke the size of a Polaris launch, which forced the medic Rover to pull over to the side of the road.

It was time to call in the big guns. **Maj James Gagen RASigs** and **WO2 (SSM) Matt Cahill** decided to go and sort it out! In the capable hands of the local casualty dept, **Sig Maunder** got his head glued together and volunteers returned to the field.

The trade trg progressed well under the supervision of **Sgt Farquharson-Roberts** and **Cpl Nisbet**, with many modules taught and tested for the newer sigs and valuable leadership experience gained for the JNCO's.

As dusk fell, the ex security state was heightened and the enemy – in the shape of the OC, SSM, **Sgt Si Butler** and **Cpl Gary Baker** - departed to their hide, which was cunningly surrounded by Stanta's version of a swamp! Having sensed something was afoot when the site Senior started dishing out blank like it was Rourke's Drift, the Sqn finally stood down. The expected last light attack failed to materialise, but we got bumped an hour later, when most of the enemy finally penetrated the Southern Comfort style terrain without drowning themselves. A spirited defensive plan ensured a frantic enemy scramble back to their RV. The Sqn took it's revenge by deploying a fighting patrol to the likely enemy route out of the area and a well-placed ambush made certain of no more night time intrusions from the enemy.

Once the Sqn left, the enemy made a miraculous recovery and made their way back to their hide for some well-earned sleep to prepare for the dawn assault on their now compromised hide. A sleeping bag stand-to was prompted at the enemy hide, when the local wildlife seemed to have set off a trip-flare intended for the expected Sqn recce group. But even **Cpl Baker's** lion-like roar failed to penetrate the OC's slumber and he managed some uninterrupted sleep.

A fantastic spring morning broke on Stanta, and the enemy made a valiant last stand in the ruins of an old farm, but despite every effort to disrupt the Sqn, our well worked out plan saw a well-executed lightning assault. And so it ended - or at least that's what the Sqn thought. As the packet made their way to Frog Hill, they were tested on their vehicle anti-ambush drills. Once the ambush was tripped, good aggressive work by the junior commanders saw that the ambush was suppressed and then quickly rolled up. An excellent example of soldiers taking command!

A lot of training had been crammed into the time available, and there was plenty to talk through when the Sqn arrived at White City TAC - generally the sign of a good ex.

EXERCISE COCKNEY EX-GRATIA, 7-9 FEBRUARY 2003

The ex name gave some indication of what was ahead and the documentation given early on Saturday morning confirmed it. Ex-Gratia – 'Done or made as a favour and not under compulsion', or in lay mans terms, 'something for nothing'. Teams of two were dropped off at varying locs around the country, carrying only their MOD 90s, a £10 note and a whole series of tasks to be completed. Dressed in smart attire, the aim was to test the resourcefulness and initiative of the Sqn to return to the TAC by 2 pm on Sunday.

Some pairs found themselves as far away as Birmingham, Derby and Gloucester. **Lt Andy Knight** drove a bus gingerly around Birmingham airport with **Sig Grahame Tyler** before flying a Cesna at a private airfield. It gave few extra hours on his pilot's licence and task points well earned. **LCpl Ken Blackburn** had an interesting interpretation of 'Fly in an aeroplane' with a fly sitting inside a paper plane.

Cpl Jay Eastwood-Bell with Nottingham Forest Captain Des Walker

Nottingham Forest Football Club provided a welcome stop for **Cpl Jay Eastwood-Bell** and **LCpl Otis Whittaker**, where they

managed to tick off a number a number of tasks. 'A famous person's autograph' was provided by former England player, **Des Walker** and he kicked a ball around on the pitch with **Cpl Eastwood-Bell**. On top of this, Sky Sports helped them appear on television with pitch side reporting by the pair – all thanks to an ex-REME producer. Most teams had cleverly photographed themselves on CCTV cameras with throwaway cameras kindly donated.

Capt Mark Windibank and **LCpl Paul Bullivant** secured top points by staying in a smart hotel in Derby. The hotel couldn't do enough and gave them a good meal for an hour's pot washing in the kitchen!

Sgt Mark Eastwood-Bell and **Sig Raymond Obedencio** travelled back in style from their jaunt round Northampton by linking up with the QPR Football Team, who are based round the corner from the TAC. They had played in Northampton on the Saturday and offered up the spare seats in their media team's vehicle.

All participants threw themselves into the ex, and came back with stories of giving blood, riding horses, working at fire stations and the testing challenge of getting home. All were back by the deadline on Sunday with initiative well and truly shown.

PRESENTATION OF THE BURBERRY TROPHY 2002, 12 MARCH 2003

The Burberry Trophy is presented each year (along with a cash prize of £500 for the selected soldier) to the Greater London Area 'Volunteer of the Year'. The award marks an outstanding achievement over 12 months in support of the Reserve Forces. This year the Sqn was proud to nominate **SSgt Dave Alleyne** for the award and he won it.

94 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Hugh Robertson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Watson**

21 soldiers from the TACs at Windsor and Reading have been

Lt Andy Knight and SSgt Dave Alleyne on presentation of the Burberry Trophy

called up for OP TELIC. Mobilised at Chilwell and deployed are: **Sgts Steve Collins, Andy Smith, Mike Chittenden, Jimmy Hearn, Cpls Pete Billcliff, Ian Birks, Sonia McCoy, Gareth Nicholas, Dan Searle, LCpls Aiden Dalgleish, Al Gray, Andrew O'Marah, Alan O'Meara, Lianne Weston, John Wilkinson, James Stacey, Sigs Dominic Chan, Liam Gaitens, Ami Tapping and Graeme Watts.** Most are posted to 1 ADSR, 7 Armd Bde and 216 Sig Sqn. Our thoughts go with them and we look forward to their safe return. **OCdt Sara Barnes** is working hard as correspondence rep and bombarding all those above with blueys and parcels.

Having this number of soldiers no longer training caused the temporary amalgamation of the two tps at Windsor TAC. They are now known as **Suvla Tp** and are under the command of **2Lt Nick Storey.** 'Suvla' is a Battle Honour won by the Berkshire Yeomanry in Gallipoli in 1915. Ironically, most of those deployed on OP TELIC took part in the battlefield tour the Sqn organised last year.

32 (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col EM Blyth TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) S Russell**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj CS Payn**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Sproul**

TRADE CAMP

A number of Sqn members attended the trade camp, held at Cultybraggan Camp at the end of February. Notable among the achievements of the week were **Sig Chris Lawson** attaining his class 3 qualification on his tech's course and **Sig Fern** passing her Class 2 Operator course. Far above the rest, however, was **Sig Kelly O'Donnell**, who came top of her Class 2 Tele Op course.

REGIMENTAL TRAINING WEEKEND 10 – RSAAM

There was a large turnout for the RSAAM and one of the last bounty weekends of the year. While 52 Sqn took most of the glory in the shooting, **Sig Young** did at least restore some semblance of pride with a very worthy victory in the lung-bursting LSW shoot. Any thoughts of an easy day were put to rest with the TACFT. **Cpl Plunkett** managed admirably in his first serious physical efforts with the Regt, but both he and **LCpl Buntine** had to admit defeat (and express great awe) when challenged to a 'who's got the heaviest webbing competition' by **Capt Phil Donegan**

OFFICERS' MESS WHISKY TASTING

The healthy Offrs' Mess social scene continued with a Whisky Tasting event held during RTW 10 at Elgin (appropriately deep in the heart of Malt whisky producing Speyside). The event was hosted by the enthusiastic whisky amateur, **Capt Phil Donegan** and involved a short presentation, followed by the evening's main effort - the tasting. As the presentation finished, the assembled company hesitantly approached the tasting session with a wary eye on the bottles (and their livers). However, this initial reticence was soon forgotten as they merrily 'swallied' their way through the bottles of *Auchentoshan*, *Dalwhinnie*, *Cragganmore* and *Lagavuilin*. Adjt, **Capt Alun Crapper** particularly enjoyed himself. Buoyed by England's rugby success earlier in the day, he set about the whiskies in a determined and enthusiastic manner. With each dram his face took on an increasingly ruddier hue, his voice developed a distinctly more Caledonian brogue and his questions about whisky became ever more incomprehensible. The whisky also had a positive effect on SSM, **WO2 Norma Sproul** who, after 4 or 5 *Dalwhinnies*, discovered that it was not just Alcopops that fuelled the desire to 'hit the dancing'.

AWAY ON OPERATIONS TELIC AND FRESCO

Leaving various jealous onlookers, P&D's **WO2 Smith** was mobilised for the Gulf and is now out in Kuwait. The Regtl Pipe Band and the Sqn are looking forward to his safe return. **Cpl Rab Brannigan** continues to provide sterling service performing his OP FRESCO duties.

ARRIVALS

The Sqn was pleased to welcome **RQMS Gemmell** from 14 Sig Regt (EW). After a few longish stints with the Electronic warriors, the RQ is looking forward to a new challenge with the Reserves. One of his biggest challenges will be dealing with the rebuild (an extension of Kitchener Block). This is expected to last no longer than a year and will test the Sqn's ability to train in this period of change. Arrivals of a different kind came in the shape of **Sgt Jim Wilson's** new son, **Gary**, who arrived in mid-March and **Terry McVey** and **Karen's** new arrival, **Ryan**, soon after.

REGIMENTAL SHOOTING CADRE

As the dust of the RSSAM RTW finally settled, **Capt Terry McVey's** week-long shooting cadre swung into action. The aim of the cadre was to prepare and select a shooting team for the CORPSSAM at the end of March. The whole week was blessed with some very fine (in fact almost tropical) weather. A number of shoots were rehearsed including the Association Cup, the Roupell and the FIBUA. The cadre was also enlivened by the inclusion of the first ever Regtl Chef's APWT. There was not a ladle in sight as **Cpl Debbie Carruthers** and **LCpl Christine McCormick** had a rare opportunity to leave the confines of the kitchen and gleefully engage figure 11s. Also included in this unique shooting competition was **Cpl Rab Brannigan**, who proved an equal to his culinary competitors. Those who were not too tired after a day's shooting, took to the bright lights of Elgin City centre in the evenings. The week ended with a competition shoot, and the honours went to **Sig Sinclair**, for the Association Cup, **LCpl Costello** for the FIBUA and **LCpl Hunter** for the Roupell.

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj A Thomson TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) L Bertram**

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Sqn says a sad farewell to the 2IC, **Capt Davy Crockett**, who leaves us to take over as 2IC at 2 Sig Sqn (V) in Dundee. **Capt Crockett** has been an invaluable asset to the Sqn, in particular in providing first-class military and adventure trg to both the Sqn and the Regt. He will be sorely missed, and 2 Sqn's gain is very much our loss. **Capt Mick Granitza** now takes over as 2IC. Also leaving us recently were **Lt Milne Weir** and **Lt Colin Bruce**, who have transferred to RARO. We wish them both well for the future. We welcome the return of **LCpl Thomson**, following his recent operational tour in Kosovo. Another of our Sqn stalwarts, **Cpl Henderson**, has now departed for service in the Gulf, and is currently posted with 16 CS Med Regt, 16 Air Assault Bde. No doubt, **Cabbie** will do us proud, and we look forward to the party on his safe return.

SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING

Edinburgh seemed an interesting choice of loc for an adventure trg weekend, given our Sqn locs in Aberdeen and Elgin. Saturday commenced at the deep end (literally) with the Army swimming test, supervised by brand shiny new PTI, **Sig Wiggin**. 'But this was supposed to be fun,' we said. Undaunted by our complaints, we were then commanded to jump off the top board in various orientations, followed by water polo. 'First team to 3 goals,' he said. 'Not too bad,' we thought - until the 3 goals having been achieved, we changed ends for another 3 goals. He definitely has the hang of this evil PTI role, we thought.

The day's events continued with a lesson in basic ropework and belaying, supervised by **Capt Crockett** and **SSgt Mike Webb**, in preparation for an afternoons climbing at Alien Rock in the Leith area of Edinburgh. The venue is a former church, within which, every available inch of space is given over to rock climbing walls. Most felt outclassed by the numerous small children, who scrambled up the walls like monkeys.

Sunday morning required the clearing out of a few cobwebs, and a brisk stroll to the top of Arthur's Seat did the trick. Tremendous weather for early February ensured panoramic views over the city, the Pentland Hills and the Firth of Forth. A good conclusion to a very enjoyable weekend, well planned and organised by **2Lt Chris Buckley**.

TRADE WEEK

While many Sqn members were having fun in Edinburgh, a few others were going about the serious business of upgrading trade qualifications at the Trade Training Week, hosted by the Regt at Cultybraggan Training Camp. Hard work and commitment was rewarded, with **Sgt Riach** and **LCpl Thomson** qualifying as Class 2 RS Ops and **Sigs Mackay** and **Maclauchlan** passing as Class 2 RS Ops.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj D Gordon**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) K Swan**

VICTORY AT RSAAM

As usual, the last few months have passed in a blur of green. With the shooting season fast approaching, February kicked off with a Sqn shooting day. This gave members of 52 Sqn the chance to practise grouping and zeroing and get used to firing the weapon in preparation for the Regt SAAM at the end of February.

The investment proved to be worthwhile, as on the day of RSAAM, the only competition was that which the 52 Sqn team was going to win! The Regt SAAM was held at Fort George Ranges and we were lucky enough to wake to a scorching highland day (remember, this was February). As the day progressed, it became clear that the other sqns were falling by the wayside to the glorious 52 Sqn. 52 Alpha & Bravo were neck and neck all day, which was proven when the 52 Sqn teams met in the finals of the falling plates. The 52 Bravo team won through in the falling plates, with **Cpls Brown** and **McCole**, and **LCpls Barrie** and **Lawson** winning medals. But the 52 Alpha team of **Lt Iain Davidson**, **Cpl Gary Cambridge**, **LCpl Henry Rodger** and **Sig Andrew Donald** brought home the silver, winning the APWT, FIBUA, Association, MMTT and the Best Team trophies. In addition, **Cpl Cambridge** was named Regtl Champion. They almost won the Pistol Tiles as well, but felt sorry for 61 Sqn and let them win. **LCpl Rodger** also took pity on HQ Sqn letting **Sig Young** win the LSW Match.

Other highlights of the last few months have included the Regtl Shooting Cadre, EX SNOW LION, Regtl FIBUA Training, CORPSAAM and a successful TA Open Day. A big shout out from all of the Sqn to **WO2 (YofS) Helen Jephcote** and **LCpl John Shearer**, who are currently in sandier places and being missed desperately by all of us. The next few months' activities will include DIVSAAM , a fiendishly clever trg programme devised by the Young Officers and the highlight of the training year, EX GOLDEN BOOT, the Sqn Patrol Competition.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj AA Bruce**
SSM	**WO1 (SSM) Clarke**

EXERCISE TARTAN CHAMBER - OTTERBURN TRAINING CAMP

This is the ex that the Sqn looks forward to the most in the year - that is if you count the Sqn as **SSgt Bob Harvey**, our friendly PSI. He likes nothing more than a bit of degradation drills in 4-Romeo. EX TARTAN CHAMBER, the culmination of the month's NBC training, a sophisticated mix of fieldwork, ITD testing and a good Burn's Supper are added for spice. With the enemy force comprising of members of the local RMP unit in Livingston, the Sqn was in for a treat.

Disaster struck early that Saturday morning when the Sqn's combat Pay Clerk, **Sgt Munro**, was stuck down with a mysterious illness. Symptoms of running nose, high temperatures and wide staring eyes provoked frantic donning of respirators and waving of RVD's in his direction. Once it was confirmed as just flu and he was given his get-out-of-exercise note from Matron, the Sqn deployed into enemy territory.

The PSI lived up to his promises - lots of firefights, bridge demolitions, sneak chemical attacks and long tabs in the hills. However, at the end, the scenario abandoned reality in favour of good old physical beasting, when some unexpected logs showed up in desperate need of human assistance in order to get back to camp.

Not to feel upstaged, **Capt Phil Donegan** put on a spectacular performance in the Respirator Testing Facility (not the same as a Gas chamber, honest). With a warm up game of Australian Rules football just to get the pulses racing, the testing drills were carried out while performing aerobics to a heavy thumping beat. Just try that down the local gym!

CARNETHY HILL RACE

Once again the Sqn deployed for it's annual tramp in the hills to support the Carnethy 5 Hills Race. This race is part of the national fell runners' calendar and this year had a record attendance of 452 official starters. The weather was glorious and nothing could put off the enthusiasm of the tps for striding out to the checkpoints - except for the checkpoints being at the top of the five hills. **Sgt Garner**, not usually accustomed to such vigorous physical activity, volunteered to run the show as MC from the start/finish loc. Whether this was due to the idea of taking control or the fact that it was closest to the road is still a matter of speculation.

H-hour loomed, all comms were in and tested, the marshals stood pensive with their clickers in their hands and then a host of insane runners exploded onto the hills. One hour later, it was all over, and while the victors received their medals and buns, the Capital Sqn recovered themselves back home with anticipation for next years' event and the knowledge of a good job done.

RSAAM

Although it was the first time in living memory that the Regt had deployed further north than Perthshire, 51 Sqn (Aberdeen) still managed to complain about the travelling distance – despite being the closest Sqn by a margin of at least 100 miles! Sadly the Sqn couldn't match the sterling efforts of 52 Sqn, although there were allegations from the highest level that foul play was involved on the zeroing range. Nevertheless the Capital Sqn did manage to win the best pistol shot (allegedly because no zeroing and hence foul play was involved) and **Sgt Jane Chisholm** won best female shot - clearly not a woman to be crossed!

EXERCISES MERCURY GLACIER 6 AND SNOW LION

Skiing is a popular activity in the Regt and has enjoyed newfound popularity in 61 Sqn, thanks to the conversion to the joys of sliding down hills of a number of Sqn members, including **LCpl Wes Florence**, **Sgt Lindsey Munro** and **Capt Domhnall Dods**.

However, despite much effort, competitive success has always evaded the Capital skiers, until now. Things began slowly, with many members of the Regtl team deploying in two parties to Austria for EX MERCURY GLACIER 6. Due to space constraints, the team had to deploy in two halves; the first group under **Maj Cammy Payn** going out to Austria for the trg phase, and the second under **Capt Domhnall Dods** for one week of trg and then a week of racing. Many of the strongest skiers gravitated towards the first party and got some excellent training under **Maj Huw Jenkins** (skiing on one ski for a large part of the time!).

L-R Maj Payn, YofS Jephcote, LCpl Florence, Sgt Munro, Sig Andrews, Cpl Henderson, Mrs Payn.

Unfortunately this meant we won nothing in Austria, but the tactic paid off in March on EX SNOW LION. In glorious conditions at Aviemore, **Sgt Munro**, with the last run of the day, scooped the prize for the best AGC Skier Giant Slalom. Despite a vile plot to undermine 61 Sqn representation by telling the Sqn 2IC that there was 'not enough snow, don't turn up,' we were well represented, with **WO2 (SSM) Rowena Clarke** also competing. **Sgt Munro** was so impressed with his own performance that he insisted on filling the trophy with a bottle of whisky on the next available trg night and forcing the rest of the Sqn to toast his success!

EXERCISE TARTAN ERECTION 2003

Another annual event organised by the PSI, this weekend was a chance to welcome **Sig Sinclair** on his first weekend with the Sqn and say cheerio to **Maj Shankland** on his last. The idea of the weekend is for participants to climb some very big towers and in so doing, confront their fear of heights.

The first lesson was a brief introduction to ropes and knots, with the DS being very impressed at the knowledge of our group in this field. Next, it was a climb up a 90ft tower, and everyone happily made their way to the top, using external ladders. Also everyone performed the 'Screaming Angel' test from 50ft, after clambering up using the wooden struts. All these tests are designed to give confidence in the safety equipment worn by the students.

The day was rounded off at the airfield's very own go-kart circuit, with **LCpl Traynor** livening up proceedings with speedy starts, breakneck speeds and overtaking on the yellow flag. **LCpl Davanna** spectacularly crashed out on the boy-girl grudge match race after losing a front wheel. A subsequent stewards' inquiry detected a wheel bearing had snapped due to excessive loads, **LCpl Davanna** quickly pointing out that **Sgt Kelly** had used the kart in the previous race.

There then followed early celebrations of St Patrick's Night in Lincoln. The obligatory Karaoke was present, so bringing out the true colours of the Sqn, **SSgt Faichney** made a special return visit just for this occasion, despite being on FTRS with 21 Sig Regt. The locals were all stunned into submission by **Sgt Chisholm's** adaptation of many old favourites using her own particular flair and colourful vocabulary. Not to be outdone, the normally shy and retiring **Sig Morrison** subconsciously did a Britney, publicly announcing that she's 'Not that innocent' no more.

Sunday was the big one: Stenigot Mast - a 360 ft WWII radar installation used for confidence tests. After viewing the briefing video and passing the smelling salts around, the Sqn set off on a short drive through the wonderful countryside to this Grade II listed structure.

Did she fall or was she pushed? – WO2 (SSM) Clarke up a mast

One could not have asked for better weather, the sun shone through the last of the early morning mists, and there was not a breath of wind to shake the 65-year-old structure. After the final briefing and warnings from the OC that although no longer needed, it would look bad if he was somehow broken on his last day, we set off upwards.

Things looked good with all making base camp on the 50ft platform, but personal records were at stake. **Sgt Fair**, renowned for his fear of venturing more than 2 metres above ground level, was determined to go further and pressed on up two more levels. All but 4 made the 220ft platform, where the OC took command of the FRV for the final push on to the summit.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

Good luck and best wishes to **Cpl Bill Scott**, who was mobilised at the start of March. Also leaving is the OC, **Maj Brian Shankland**, who leaves the Sqn after 14 years. He leaves us for Edinburgh UOTC, so at least hopes are high of a dramatic rise in Officer recruiting levels. New Sqn OC, **Maj Andy Bruce**, assumed command in mid March. Welcome.

33 (LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col David Somerville MBE**
RSM	**WO1 S Day**

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Dave Titheridge**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Coburn**

INSPECTIONS GALORE

The Sqn has just emerged, somewhat punch-drunk, from a hectic month of March, during which HQ 42(NW) upset our reasonably tranquil existence by sending wave after wave of inspection teams down the M61 from their base in Preston to see what we had been up to during the last year. Unless you were lucky enough to get away on the annual Sqn ski trip to Aviemore, there was little respite. No sooner had one team left then another team was coming in the main gate (or so it seemed). First down were the Environmental and Health boys, led by the tenacious **Dougie George**, followed closely by **Maj Ray Wells** and his SPS team to check our pay and documents. Then it was the turn of 53 MI Sect with a full security survey, before the Master Driver arrived to conduct his annual POL inspection. At the same time as this was going on, we were holding a Regt Stores Board to prove to our new CO, **Lt Col David Somerville MBE**, that we hadn't mislaid any of our starred items. Oh, and just to make sure that boredom didn't set in, we had EX SRING FALCON and EX WHEATSHEAF ROSE thrown at us for good measure.

Capt Kenny Sirr, the Sqn Ops Offr, with the happy look of a man who has just arrived on transfer from 80 Sqn in Runcorn and who can't be blamed for any problems with the 42 Bde checks

EXERCISE NORTHERN MANCUNIAN EAGLE

The annual Sqn ski trip was conducted at Rothiemurchus Lodge during the second week in March. Led by the Sqn OC, a party of TA and Regular members of staff headed north, hoping that the unseasonable good weather would not mean a lack of the white and fluffy stuff. Rothiemurchus Lodge has an enviable position, nestled in the heart of the Cairngorms, just 7 miles from the highland village of Aviemore and with breathtaking, panoramic views of the Cairngorm and Spey Valleys. The lodge complex is for the exclusive use of Regular and Reserve personnel of all three services and their families to enjoy outdoor pursuits in some of the most beautiful scenery in the British Isles.

Unfortunately, due to high winds and the sun beaming down from a clear blue sky, skiing was not possible on the first day. However, this gave the Sqn an opportunity to try out their brand new mountain bikes (courtesy of the Sqn PSAO, **Capt Gerry Whelan**) and they set off on a bracing 25 km cycle ride. Initial high spirits were tempered after a while, when those unused to pedal power developed saddle sores and the weather suddenly became wet! During the ride the Foreman, **WO2 Andy Owen**, proved invaluable in adjusting bikes to fit the riders properly and generally administering loving care and attention where necessary (to the bikes not the riders).

The white water rafting party. Front row, L-R: Pte Carrol Owen, Sig Allen Lowe, Sig Kev Macnally, Sig Richard Lewis, Sgt Brent Jefferson, SSgt Bob Duffield. Back Row, L-R: Cpl Carl Sproston, LtCol David Sommerville MBE (hiding), SSgt Sam Faulds, WO2 Brian Calder, WO2 Andy Owen MBE, Mrs Elaine Calder, Maj Dave Titheridge

The CO joined the party on Day Two, just in time to take part in the white water rafting trip down the River Spey. This proved to be great fun until, for reasons unknown, the instructor decided to throw a surprised **Sgt Brent Jefferson** into the river. This proved to be the signal for all-out war between the two rafts provided, and **SSgt Sam Faulds** did his career no good at all by being the one who gave the CO an early bath.

Happily, on Day Three, the conditions allowed for skiing and the novice skiers, who had been taught the basics on the lodge dry ski slope by ex SSgt and member of 33 Sig Regt, **Glenn Martin**, took to the Cairngorm slopes to improve their techniques. After 2 days skiing in lovely sunny weather, it was decided to do some hill walking and, for those with the most resilient bottoms, to carry out another session of mountain biking. On the final day, before packing up and returning to Manchester, clay pigeon shooting was on the agenda to round off an extremely enjoyable, varied and fun packed week for one and all.

Some of the ski party pose against the magnificent Cairngorm mountain scenery. Maj Dave Titheridge in the foreground with, from left to right: Sig Richard Lewis, Sig Allen Lowe, Sig Kev Macnally, SSgt Sam Faulds and WO2 Andy Owen in the rear

98 (BRITFOR) SIG SQN - OPERATION OCULUS

In the last edition of *The WIRE*, the Regt reported on the progress of the 98 (BRITFOR) Sig Sqn. This is a composite Sig Sqn made up of volunteers from units within 11 Sig Bde which has been formed, trained and deployed under the direction of 33 Sig Regt (V). The Sqn will provide CIS in support of HQ British Forces in Bosnia. This is only the second time that a formed TA Sig Sqn has deployed to Bosnia to conduct a 6- month tour in the place of a Regular RSigs sub-unit. Eight members of 42 Sig Sqn (V) are taking part in OP OCULUS. They have been through the mobilization process at Chilwell, and are currently attached to Regular RSigs UK units for special-to-arm trg before departing for the Banja Luka Metal Factory base in Bosnia.

OPERATION TELIC

To add to the growing high profile of the TA, the Sqn has other soldiers on operations but this time in the Gulf. **Cpl Roman Marczac** was the first to deploy to Kuwait with 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn from Colchester. He was followed swiftly by **LCpl Christine Jackson** and **Cpl Andy Connell**, both with 1(UK) ADSR and attached to 211 and 201 Sig Sqns respectively. And last but by no means least, **Cpl Steve Oliver**, who is serving with 219 Sig Sqn, part of 2 Sig Regt. Several letters have been received from them all, and on the whole, they seem to be 'enjoying' the experience. They have been inundated with 'e- blueys' from many Sqn members and have received lots of shoeboxes filled with goodies from friends and families alike.

So that they are not forgotten and receive the same level of welfare support as is available to their Regular counterparts, their families have received visits and have been kept fully informed on all aspects of the conflict concerning their next-of-kin. At a recent coffee morning held in the TAC - the first of many similar planned functions - they were able to compare notes and talk to other anxious relatives and wives. It hardly needs saying, but the remaining members of the Sqn feel a natural sense of pride that they are represented in the conflict, and wish their comrades at the 'sharp end', a safe and relatively quick return to their families and friends.

COMBAT CHEFS

As the army marches on its stomach, it was decided that it was about time our head chef was given a mention in *The WIRE* to reward him for all the excellent meals he has provided since his arrival last year on transfer from CVHQ. The picture included features **Cpl Pete Marchant**, together with some more of the RLC's finest, after completing his B1 Chefs Course at Prince William of Gloucester Bks in Grantham. **Pete** is also a chef in the real world, and works for Manchester University, cooking for some 300 students at one of the Halls of Residence in Owens Park, in the Fallowfield area of Manchester. A single man, **Pete** originates from Southampton, and has served with the TA RLC at CVHQ for over 11 years. His reason for transferring was to enjoy a more settled TA career, rather than being farmed out on attachment to units all over the UK.

Cpl Pete Marchant, second from left, appearing on his end of course photograph taken at the RLC training school in Grantham

CONGRATULATIONS

Finally, the Sqn would like to congratulate OC Trunk Node 031, **Lt Sophie Curtis**, on her recent engagement to her long time partner **Mr Steve Kelly**, the Purchasing Manager for the Manchester branch of Siemens. All Sqn members wish **Steve** and **Sophie** a long and happy relationship in their newly cemented life together.

80 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Capt Phil McGiveron**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Neil Olssen**

OPERATIONS

The Sqn has provided two personnel for OP TELIC. **SSgt Mick Barton** and **Sgt Paul Wilson** are both now in the Gulf doing 'for real' the job that they trained for. The Sqn keeps in touch and wishes them well with their TODs. **Sgt Wilson** is apparently very pleased to have been promoted just prior to deployment and as a result, has been located in an ERV, with aircon?

The Sqn parking area still remains host to five Green Goddesses and a number of other vehicles for OP FRESCO. Over recent months we have hosted various batteries of the RHA in carrying out their firemen training and duties for this op. The Sqn' s cars have never been so clean!

BRITFOR has also depleted Sqn numbers, with 6 personnel now deployed on this op and more on 6-month roulemont. **Sgt Bland**, **LCpl Hutchinson** and **Sigs Dowling** and **Walker** are now all enjoying the pleasures of the Bosnian TAOR. **Sgt Booth**, a Sqn PSI, has even deployed to the region, and one of our chefs, **Pte Jones**, has taken up the call. The Sqn wishes them all well with their tours, and looks forward to their return. Bar takings have dropped dramatically as a result of some of the operational deployments!

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NEWS FROM THE GULF

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol AP Bristow**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) GM Baird**

OPERATION TELIC - THE GATHERING OF THE G4 CLAN

It was a gathering that *CrimeWatch* would have been proud of. All the logistic planners from the Corps in Kuwait gathered at 1 (UK) Armd Div's Echelon location to plan the Combat Service Support plan for the Corps assets in theatre, hopefully covering all eventualities. It was a unique gathering that optimised the operation's catchphrase 'this is Op Can, not Op Can't!'. After fruitful discussions the motley crew had a photograph taken for posterity, followed by an MIZE lunch before dispersing back to the various locations throughout the Corps AOR. Apologies to the 2 Sig Regt crew for the nonavailability of crabs' legs for lunch.

The G4 Gathering The Radar Site Kuwait –
Front Row, L-R: Capt (QM) Mick McKenna; Capt (MTO) Brummy Lawes; Maj Steve Clarke, OC HQ Sqn, 2 Sig Regt; Capt (QM) Blod Godwin; Capt (QM) Paul Anderson; Capt (QM) John Williams; Capt (QM) Gary Stoker MBE; Capt (QM) John Fradley.
Back Row, L-R: Maj Steve Clarke (RLC); WO2 (SSM) John Reid; SSgt (SQMS) Newns; Capt (MTO) Dougy Craig; SSgt Holroyd; WO2 (RQMS) Maylett; SSgt Fitzpatrick; SSgt Martwich.

REGIMENTAL MT

MTO	**Capt SFM Lawes**
TCWO	**WO2 J Pirrie RLC**

After weeks of planning by the Sqn Ops Team, **Capt Brummy Lawes** and **W02 (TCWO) Jim Pirrie**, RLC, the Regtl MT deployed to Kuwait on 4 February for EX LUCKY WARRIOR. As normal, things would not run to a smooth programme. We arrived at Hanover airport and were processed without any problems, but unfortunately, the plane had been delayed for 24hrs. The next morning we boarded our Boeing 747, everyone was made very comfortable, and we were off. We arrived at Kuwait in the early hours of the morning. The lads were quickly processed into theatre, and put onto the buses for the next leg to the transit camp, an American camp called Commando. We were to stay here for 5 days awaiting the arrival of our vehs.

The task of organising the collection of some 200 vehs fell to the TCWO, **WO2 Jim Pirrie**, RLC and his team from the MT. The Kuwaiti police traffic units escorted each packet of forty vehs to Camp Commando in the small hours of the morning. Two days later it was time to move Echelon up-country towards the border.

The SSM, **W02 John Reid** pointed out our standto positions and where the SCUD bunkers had to be dug. The Tp got straight down to the task in hand, and had dug three bunkers and completed them before any of the other depts within Ech had started. This was supervised by our resident expert, **LCpl Mac McCrone**, late Scots Guards. The bunkers where tested out by **LCpl Steve Pearce**, one of the slim lads in the Tp, for load stability, and thanks to him, the lads are more confident of using them now!

As the days went by the Tp were detailed out to complete many tasks, rations and fuel being the biggest issue. **Sgt Paul Hounsell** and his POL crew worked like Trojans to keep an ever increasing Regt on the road with the vital commodities. After ten days in-theatre it was time to start the Regtl Distribution Points (DPs). The junior NCOs of the Tp were given the task of delivering a full set of formal orders by the MTO to the remainder of the Tp prior to the DPs. They were given guidance on the delivery of orders by **Sgts Barney Revell** and **Steve Cowe** (RLC) as well as anti-ambush drills and the use of GPS in the form of TPs. **Cpl Wood** gave a classic set of orders; we wish him well on his retrade to IS Op!

As part of the in-theatre training, the Sqn was allocated range time to zero weapons. The SSM could not pass up the opportunity to turn it in to a March and Shoot competition over a distance of 4kms. The MT team were there in strength, with **Sig Tyson** at the front to show the way, they finished a credible 5th out of 5 teams.

Not Far To The Finish!
Members of the QM's Dept flagging in the wake of the MT team. W02 (RQMS) Andy Maylett (left) gives encouragement to the team

Congratulations to **Cpl Steve Watson** on his promotion to acting Cpl, and a farewell to the outgoing MTO, **Maj Stevie Clarke**, who will be posted in the next 2 months. the Tp wish you all the best on your future posting.

SHQ RANGE DAY

Members of SHQ enjoyed the opportunity to get on the ranges to show the rest of Ech what we could do! For **SSgt (SQMS) Karl Overton**, it was a chance to show off his new chest rig, purchased from the PRI ('all the gear no idea' springs to mind). The team was led by **WO2 (SSM) John Reid**, who took sympathy on his ageing 2IC, **Capt Brummy Lawes**, on the March and Shoot phase of the competition. The shooting phase was not particularly stunning from the team. However, as the cigarettes were lit at the end it was stated: 'It's the taking part that matters, not winning'.

The Shooting team from SHQ
L to R: W02 (SSM) Reid, SSgt (SQMS) Overton, Capt Brummy Lawes, Sgt Tenant REME, and Sig Brindley

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AM Churchill**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) S Cook**

Despite rumours around about a possible Regtl mobilisation, 201 Sig Sqn were able take their full Christmas leave entitlement and have an unhurried return to work in early January. We hit the ground at a fast pace though, with preparations for possible ops in the Gulf region gradually gathering momentum. With all hopes of receiving extra manning and equipment being replaced by the stark realization that any deployment would be a 'best effort' or a 'come-as-you are party' as it became known, the Sqn set about training and preparing equipment for war-fighting in a desert environment. With few clear details on the real scope of the mission, the Sqn's equipment and manpower were drip fed into Kuwait from late January under the guise of EX LUCKY WARRIOR, a UK/US coalition CPEx. By 10 February, the Sqn's centre of gravity was firmly embedded at the aptly named Camp Rhino in Kuwait, a small suburb of a larger compound named Camp Commando, which was occupied and run by the US Marine Corps. With the ex on-going, the Sqn soon found itself providing real-time Ptarmigan coverage over various parts of Kuwait in order to enable the influx of troops and equipment into the country. Despite being 'pinned', trg was able to begin in earnest. The initial focus was on low-level tactics and individual skills, before culminating in collective drills. At the early stages, speculation was rife and Rumour Control was on overdrive. Many equipment issues were also not resolved and a great deal of lateral thinking was required for each problem that arose. Reassurance was given that, should the time come to move into Iraq as part of a coalition effort, then the necessary tools for the job would be provided.

After a number of days, and with a political fog of uncertainty hanging low over the thousands of British tps now in theatre, the Sqn's trunk nodes and centrals gradually migrated northwards towards the British Concentration Area of Camp Coyote, some 30km from the Iraqi border and the same distance from Camp Rhino. Along with the weather, the situation was hotting up, and it was clear at this stage that every member of the Sqn had a little extra spark and attention to detail about them. Trg continued, with a considerable effort being placed on CBNR defensive measures. Assets from 2 Sig Regt and 3 Div Sig Regt gradually joined the party and were assimilated into the overarching Ptarmigan plan.

At the end of March the executive order was given, and Coalition forces moved across the border into Iraq. With the forward elements, and in the midst of the masses of US and UK armoured vehs, were trunk nodes and centrals from 201 Sig Sqn. In line with the tempo and flow of the battle ahead, the Ptarmigan plan evolved and was executed professionally. Robust access and SCRA coverage were provided for a whole myriad of users, despite ongoing and potentially show-stopping problems with the dated equipment in our possession.

The Sqn now finds itself dispersed and in the throws of tentatively bedding in for the transition to the fourth phase of the operation, peace support. But with a bit of tweaking here and there of course. For every member of the Sqn, the outcome of the conflict has never been in doubt, regardless of the media hype and speculation, and the lack of world support. The Sqn have so far conducted themselves in the manner accustomed to any RSigs unit, and sees itself as privileged to be flying the Union Flag (proverbially, if not actually) in the name of freedom from oppression.

Capt Hawkins and Maj Churchill on a captured Iraqi T-55 tank.

FALCON TROOP (TN 041)

Tp Comd	**Lt E F Brookes-Smith**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt J Tinnion**

After a well-earned Christmas break, the Tp returned to duties on the 06 January 03 and started an extensive deployment package in preparation for OP TELIC. With the uncertainty of events unfolding in the Middle East, Falcon Tp began a wide-ranging deployment package to cover all eventualities. This included mine clearance, unarmed combat, LAW 94 trg, to name just a few. Individual dets were prepared for a long sea move to Kuwait, and once they departed, our individual battle skills were enhanced and finely tuned. The Sqn arrived in Kuwait early February, and commenced desert training under the watchful eye of Sqn HQ. A lot of trenches and stand-to's later, the Tp are now thoroughly integrated in the Coalition effort to liberate Iraq. In between the daily Scud alarms and rigorous PT regime set out by **SSgt Jase Tinnion**, life goes on.

We say a big hello to **Cpl Mark Flintham**, fresh from his class 1 course and a big well done to **LCpls Davies, Hathaway and Porter** for their recent and well-deserved promotions. By the time this goes to print we will have lost **Sgt Paul Lester**, returning to Blandford to complete his YofS course. Best of luck to **Paul** and **Tracey** in not so sunny Blandford. As the war effort gains momentum, we can only hope for a swift and decisive end to hostilities, so we can return to our families in Germany and the UK.

EAGLE TROOP (TN 051)

Tp Comd	**Lt KA Larsen**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt G Davies**

Having watched the news all through the Christmas stand-down, I doubt if anyone in Eagle Tp thought they would be anywhere but the Gulf come February. So it came as no sort of shock to see our dets dispatched up to Emden Port. A vigorous, 'get fit', 'get focused' and for most of us, how to don a respirator in less than 9 seconds, sort of routine was embarked upon. Only for an 'exercise' of course! It was roughly 2 weeks following the mad rush of packing the vehs with everything we thought we might need plus a whole lot of stuff we didn't, that the first wave of Sqn personnel landed in Kuwait.

Once in Kuwait, it took **SSgt Davies** no time at all to motivate the rather lethargic sleeping lion more commonly known as TN 051 into some PT. Once the dets were collected, it was time that **Sgt** 'Gunny' **Green** got his hands on the Relay Ops for 'some real training', harking back to 'the days when I was a sprog!' At one of our first desert locs we encountered our very own zoo, with lizards, a gerbil, a cat, 2 dogs and a donkey. Some of these creatures are considered pests, but this didn't bother **Cpl Savage**, as he painstakingly ensured all of our leftover rations went to his new friends. **Sig Elias** also convinced herself donkeys loved chocolate!

It didn't take long for TN 051 to establish itself as the premiere outfit in 1(UK)ADSR, and we were informed that as soon as the conflict began, we would be the racing across the border ahead of any other British Forces. We were going with the US RCT 7 combat support team! Anyway it was a little bit of an anti-climax, and we finally went over the border on G+1 in a huge traffic jam. As we progressed north we saw the ravages of war, but the most pleasing part of the experience was to see so many of the local inhabitants smiling and waving. So then to our first loc, and the routine of comms, trenches and comfort!

TN 051 was poised to race forward yet again, and we even had our sights set on a nice little bridge over a canal. Unfortunately, we reckoned without SEP and A Sqn QDG. We were due to move to a hide loc about 40 mins away. Unfortunately the QDG insisted on being bad at map-reading and intelligence analysis, because we ended up bogged in doing a 'cross-country, uncleared, unsuitable for B and C vehs' route. We were also only 2 km away from a hostile town! The QDG obviously wanted more excitement and mayhem and abandoned us after the Gunny recce Rover rolled into a tank ditch. Luckily other cavalry arrived (a CVR from 7 Bde) and hoisted it out. Eventually, we managed to extricate all the vehs, and arrived in loc 11 hours after we were due. **Cpl Standing** still had boot prints on his helmet from being used as a ladder out of the rolled Rover.

Cpl Johnson was a little distressed at our hide loc between the AS90's (they are LOUD) and the attack helicopter landing site. TN051, having stolen back its satellite det, led by **Cpl Seymour**, departed to the only hill in southern Iraq. The craters were a difficulty, but there is a nice view from the top. Best wishes to **SSgt Davies** in Blandford!

HAWK TROOP (TN 061)

Tp Comd	**Lt Mallett**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Tressider**

The last few months in the 61st have been jam-packed and full of activity. After the return from Christmas leave, Rumour Control had finally rung true, and the deployment frenzy to the desert began. This initially started with the movement of vehs to the port at Emden, followed by a couple of weeks of military trg and ITDs to prepare for the deployment. With an unexpected stop over at Hanover Airport Hotel (due to the ever reliable flight timetables of the RAF), we made our way once more into the breach and on to Kuwait. Well most of us, if some people had managed to remember to renew their passports in time (namely **Sig Hodge**). Sorry, better luck war dodging next time!

Lt Mallett and his new mate the GOC

After a period of 'acclimatisation' at Camp Commando, the Tp were finally reunited with their vehs at the Kuwaiti port, with some elements deploying out as soon as 48 hours later. The remainder of the Tp deployed a few days later to take up position in Camp Coyote, some 30km north of Camp Commando. Here we polished our comms and military skills and learned some new ones (mainly how to reverse a PV into a trench - courtesy of **LCpl Hatchard**)

After another couple of 'relocations' and **LCpl Simon Rowe** torching the OC FFR, TN061 finally crossed the border at G+1. We swiftly moved forward to establish the first trunk comms at a place locally known as Watford Gap (due to every man and his wife stopping by for a few rations, a pitch and a bed for the night). Trench warfare ensued, much to the delight of **LCpl Perry** and **Sig Fitzsimmons**, who seemed to burrow more than a bated badger. One week later, after a few PWs, a dog-called Naiad and an OSC visit, we moved again waiting for the push forward.

A few welcomes into the Tp this month. **Sgt Eve Eden** joins us from 2 Sig Regt and **Sgt George McMinn**, joins us from 16 Sig Regt. A farewell to **Cpl Andy McFarlane**, who departs the Tp bound for crypto geekery at the Air Warfare Centre; and congratulations to **Cpl Richie Barrett**, who recently received promotion. Also a well done to **LCpls Leeming**, **Giann** and **Jasjew** for recently completing their Class 1. Finally congratulations also to **Cpl Stani Braund** and his wife **Emma** upon there recent marriage and the birth of their first child **Holly**.

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Lucas**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) C Lloyd**

With the HQ set up in a bermed area in patch of desert in northern Kuwait known as Camp Coyote, the Sqn played host to the CDS at the start of March. This was the first of a number of high profile visits hosted by the Sqn, including the CinC and the Secretary of State for Defence, **Mr Geoff Hoon**.

It was in Camp Coyote that we finally organised the painting of the wagons to a nice sandy shade of yellow. Some vehs were rushed down to the paint workshops in the middle of the night, driving down a previously flood-lit Basrah road to another patch of desert. Cunningly overtaking a slow-moving convoy of massive NBC decontamination vehs to get to the front of the queue, the wagons were masked up in record time and then sprayed equally as quick. The imported team of civvies averaged 3 minutes to paint a Land Rover and 8 minutes for a DAF. Much more time than this was then spent scraping paint off headlights that someone had forgotten to mask up. The remaining vehs were painted in situ by a team of mobile sprayers, who worked their way around the armour and anything else that stayed still long enough.

Two moves of the HQ later, we were within 13km of the Kuwait/Iraq border, with burning Iraqi oil fields visible in the distance. We set up within a bermed area near the Abdaly farms, much to a local

landowner's delight. It was in this location that the Sqn saw the start of the war, with an Iraqi Seersucker Cruise missile roaring past overhead at seventy feet heading south. Scud bunkers and respirators saw regular use as every missile launch in Iraq had us hurrying for cover. Thankfully there were numerous Patriot batteries nearby to provide protection. It was at this loc that we finally gave up the staff to 212 Sig Sqn and became the preferred alternative HQ after being Main for 8 weeks. Shortly after losing the staff, we headed north towards Iraq.

With **Maj Lucas** commanding the lead Panzer, the Sqn headed west at dawn to the Basrah road and turned north just as the sun was creeping over the horizon. With Land Rovers and DAFs evenly spaced between the armour for force protection, three 20-veh packets trundled towards the border.

The border was full of large American convoys waiting their turn to cross to deliver much-needed fuel and supplies to their quickly advancing colleagues, but we had our time slot and drove straight through. There were four checkpoints in all, a Kuwaiti Army one, a US Marine checkpoint, an RMP 9x9 tent and finally an abandoned UN post. After crossing the massive border ditch, we immediately turned left to bypass the small town of Safwan, where there had been troubles with aid distribution and locals mobbing military vehs. We weaved through a number of minefields before heading out into the Iraqi countryside around the small town. It was like stepping back in time. Mud huts and primitive field systems littered the landscape and local shepherds, dressed in long flowing robes, herded their goats and sheep with a pack of dogs nearby. Many of the locals stood and stared; others waved whilst patting their stomachs and pointing to their mouths. Our route took us through dangerous looking quarries and close to the recently bombarded Safwan Hill, the previous site of an Iraqi OP.

After passing a couple of Bedouin encampments, we arrived in our new home in the southern Iraqi desert. It was an abandoned Iraqi military position, complete with discarded cluster bomb cases and bomblets. The RAF EOD found over 100 potential UXOs in the area after an RE tractor scooped a bomblet up in its bucket and set it off. There were no injuries but it wasn't long before the Sqn upped sticks and moved on, this time for an altogether different task.

211 Sig Sqn was tasked to conduct a relief in place from the Royal Irish Fusiliers and take up a key role in the main effort in the Rumaylah Oil Fields. A fascinating drive north through the desert, past destroyed Iraqi ordnance and discarded equipment, took us to the oil fields. Iraqi civilians in the distance would pull over and hoist a white flag out of their truck window before passing the armoured convoy, whilst we saw the same waving and patting of stomachs from bewildered locals as we trundled past. The HQ was set up quickly, as we still had to provide an alternative HQ for the staff, whilst patrol routes and OPs were established in our new AOR. Remembering that we are soldiers first and tradesmen second, we stripped down our Land Rovers and dusted off the GPMGs ready to emulate the infantry we had just relieved. Quickly revising how to set up VCPs and how to ask politely in Arabic where people are going and please can we see your identity papers, the Sqn took on the new task with great gusto.

COMMAND TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt C Hamp**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt T Allan**

Moving north has been a challenging experience; no move has been without dramas for Comd Tp and the travelling circus. **Cpl Palin**, driving the lead veh in our longest move yet, tried his hardest to delay it by driving over an 8m metal stake and somehow entwining it around the track in a kind of reef knot, which delayed things rather. Luckily the convoy made it – albeit a few hours late, and dragging half of Comms Tp, literally.

D-Day arrived and Comd Tp in diamond one continued their stag on the brew tent, amongst the action in the rest of the 1 Div AOR. This, however, wasn't enough for **Sig Moughton**, who tried his hardest to liven up proceedings by enticing US gunfire from his gun pit. He had the honour of firing the first rounds of the conflict anyway, though slightly less glamorous than originally hoped. War was rather more nerve-wracking for recent arrival, **Sig Walsh** who, having been targeted by an 'enemy' laser pen a couple of weeks previously, found himself under helicopter spotlight whilst on guard – and proceeded to try and take it on single handedly. Luckily no shots were actually fired!

Unfortunately for **2Lt Hamp**, currently undergoing the 'alternative tp comds course', this was the kind of thing she'd have to put up with. The Tp has undergone various changes in the last couple of weeks welcoming our TA friends, **Cpl Birks** and **Sig McAllister**, but losing **Sig McDuff** and **Lt Brereton-Martin** – both of whom will be greatly missed. (**Lt B-M's** singing especially!)

Anyway, the move up north was soon followed by a couple more in quick succession. Comd Tp crossed the border (after **2Lt Hamp** had found it) in style. It was a moving experience to see all the local children waving and smiling, but while they may have appreciated the sweets, maybe MRE chilli sauce wouldn't have gone down quite as well.

The prospect of transition from Sig Sqn to Inf Coy was met with excitement by Comd Tp. However, while most seized the opportunity to look hard, tearing around the new AOR in the adapted Rovers, **Sig Walsh** once again made life difficult for himself by finding the only patch of quicksand in the desert and had to be pulled to safety by the remainder of his patrol. Maybe brew tent stag was a good idea after all.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt C Cassidy**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Lee**

The majority of Comms Tp has been out here sunning themselves for over two months now, but a mention must go to **Sig MacDonald**, who joined us out here late after staying in UK to get married. Congratulations to the new **Mr & Mrs MacDonald**. Hopefully it won't be long until you can set up home together.

We also like welcome into our fold **LCpl Chrissy Jackson**, from 33 Sig Regt (V); **WO2 (YofS) Helen Jephcote**, from 32 Sig Regt (V) and **Cpls Pete Billcliff** and **Dan Searle**, both from 94 (BY) Sig Sqn (V). You're all doing a great job. Thanks for coming out to us!

Life and routine is continuing for Comms Tp, varying from the manic mach 3 rate we suffer as Div Main HQ and the sedentary Sunday afternoon lifestyle of Div Alt HQ and now onto the inf side of life. We also have newly acquired qualifications as hole and trench diggers and carpet fitters! Seriously though, the Tp has been working flat out and all are looking forward to a break once we return to Herford, whenever that may be.

We bid a farewell to **Sig Ian Round**, who has left us for 102 Log Bde & Sig Sqn. Oh well, not too far to travel! We'll be expecting the leaving crate from you on our return to Herford.

We've had a great performance from the Tp so far, but special thanks must go to 'Combat Barbie' (**Sig Julia Boon**), 'Combat Sindy' (**Sig Dee Swift**), 'Pte Benjamin' (**Sig Gemma O'Reilly**) and 'GI Jane' (**LCpl Dougie Douglas**). Your antics are providing hours of fun and laughter. Keep it up, but what do you mean 'How do you flush the portaloos?' and '...someone has their head stuck in a fridge?' Please somebody take me away from here! No, the solar showers don't come with the water already provided!

SUPPORT TROOP - *by LCpl Chapman, Sig Jones and Sig Chadwick*

Tp Comd	**Lt G Gaw**
Tp Seniors	**Sgts McNeilly, Rodway** and **Struthers**

Life in Supt Tp has changed in many ways since our deployment to the Gulf. We are still the black sheep of the Sqn, not having any beloved operators, but our 3 secs have moulded nicely for once into a good team. All this with our illustrious new leader, **Lt Graham Gaw**, having arrived on a two-year FTRS shortly before our deployment.

The MT have been very busy, especially with **Cpl Jase Duke** creating one of their biggest jobs of the tour by breaking a half shaft on a DAF, two weeks into the operation. He capped off the week by mistaking a deep trench latrine for a Scud bunker during an alarm. Bad skills and drills!

The techs have been busy as usual. The tans are coming on, but their hard-earned bellies are shrinking because of all the Compo. But **LCpl Dave Williamson** got us our first kill, even though it was an 18-inch lizard that he rolled onto in his sleep.

Finally, good news for **LCpl Mikey Moss**, who recently got promoted. Congratulations! And also **Sig Dave Jones**, who has been moved up to a new pay-band for his role as Regtl Hairdresser.

The Tp welcomes **Sgt Eastwood**, **Sgt Ferguson**, **LCpl O'Meara**, **Sig Poulton** and **Pte McCrone**, from various TA units throughout the country. Their assistance is greatly appreciated and they will take a vast array of experience, and war stories, back to their units in UK. So all in all, we are enjoying things so far.

212 SIG SQN

OC	**Maj Alderson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Douglas**

There will be no surprises when I say that the Sqn has been exceptionally busy over the past couple of months deployed on sandy OP TELIC. The initial warning orders came through in December that we could maybe, possibly, perhaps be going somewhere, and so we were all waiting with bated breath! When we did know that something was happening, this resulted in a mountain of work being done to prepare the vehs for sea, get everyone up to date with paperwork and trg, and pushing the Sqn a few thousand miles south to be in the right place at the correct time to provide the Div HQ. Not an easy task - we can all vouch for this!

As anyone would expect, the Sqn has been through its fair share of highs and lows but, true to form, we soldier on. Once there, we were treated to a nice tour up to our form-up locs in the most humid buses that the Army could provide - probably to make everyone sweat out the last remains of any alcohol in their systems!

A number of moves have been accomplished moving from one patch of sand to another, and for each move the Sqn's adaptability has been truly tested as the staff numbers and hangers-on has varied each time. At this point I think it is only right for me to point out that the courageous 212 boys and girls were one of the first British units to cross the border and were the furthest forward British unit for twelve hours (maybe not intentionally!).

Our route through had been cleared by the Americans as they pushed on in their rush for Baghdad. The locals appeared dazed, but otherwise happy to see the forces around them. Brandishing white flags and leaflets that had been dropped by the coalition, they waved us on our way to our first loc in Iraq. Our early move across the border was due to the Sqn being deeply embedded into the US Marines Fwd HQ, and so we went wherever the Marines dictated. This experience proved nothing short of educational, but this was resolved when **WO2 (SSM) Douglas** bent them to his will. Additionally, we had to educate them in the principle of 'Hearts and Minds' - virgin territory for American troops and thus contradictory to all their training. We shall prevail!

212 is currently located in the middle of an Iraqi farming community, that is overjoyed with our presence here. We are their protection against the old Regime, but unfortunately, we are not in a position to provide them with the much-needed humanitarian aid. But they are in the position to provide their visitors with much-needed locally grown tomatoes!

The daily work has been running smoothly in 212 Sqn, although it has been just a little bit on the hot side compared with Sennelager, our normal haunt. Also the usual HQ that we deploy was suddenly increased with the addition of a huge American contingent. Just what you don't want to see when getting up in the morning, a queue of five hundred in front of you to use the 'customised' bottomless portaloos!

Moving on from here we have the rest of the 'tour' to look forward to, with possibly many more locs. The Sqn's main effort now is to persuade the General that the best HQ loc must surely be in the lobby of the most air-conditioned hotel we can find, before the temperatures get to the mid-forties!

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col S K MacRostie MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Dick**

By the first week of February, a significant portion of the Regt had deployed to Kuwait in support of OP TELIC. 2 Sig Regt Gp has since grown to over 960 deployed personnel, with individual and det attachments from 7, 10, 16, 21 and 30 Sig Regts, as well as 222 Sig Sqn(Trunk), complete, from 3 (UK) Div.

As well as controlling the Operational Systems Communications Architecture (OSCA) and Ptarmigan comms throughout the theatre, the Regt also provides close support comms and life support to HQ JFLOGC in lieu of 262 Sig Sqn, which is still forming in Gütersloh. Comms dets from 2 Sig Regt Gp have been providing Secondary Access nodes to 16 Air Assault Bde and 3 Cdo Bde as well as comms dets to the Logistic elements throughout Kuwait and Um Quasar, in Iraq.

Meanwhile back in Imphal Bks, the Rear Party continues to provide support to both the Regt and families, as well as to the soldiers from the Regt who are deployed elsewhere on OP FINGAL (Kabul), OP VERITAS (Tampa and Stuttgart), The Balkans, The Falklands and The Corsham Hub.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj S Gillespie**
SSM	**WO2 M Ginty**

JFLOGC FWD / 102 LOG BDE HQ - *by Lt Frost*

JFLOGC FWD started life as a collection of FFRs led by **SSgt Icke** as a Forward HQ for the staff officers. It was soon realised that this was not going to be sufficient, so SAN 893 was added, along with **Lt Frost** as Tp Comd and a LWRN to be run by **Sigs Bentley** and **Chadwick**. By this stage **SSgt Icke** had already put in a huge amount of work, pulling together kit, equipment and personnel not just from 2 Sig Regt, but from 262 Sig Sqn and 30 Sig Regt as well. The Fwd HQ deployed up to Camp Coyote on 24 February 03 and co-located with DSG, who were kind enough to provide food and toilet facilities. The HQ started on a small scale, being run from an 18 x 24 tent, with only 8 staff officers led by **Col Beattie**. This soon changed, and when DSG moved, the HQ moved into the huge white tents they had left behind. At first this seemed a little ridiculous, as 36 people were occupying ten 100-man tents, but within a week the place was over-run by additional staff and sigs personnel. However, it was only the first few who got to experience the first sandstorm in these tents. This meant being unable to open your eyes outside without goggles, and even if you did have them, you could still only see about a foot in front of you. It was soon obvious that the tents were not meant to stand up to these kinds of winds and were in serious danger of collapsing. The Sig Tp and the staff officers rallied together and spent a rather unenjoyable hour-and-a-half, ensuring that the tents that were still standing were secured.

In the subsequent weeks, the site has expanded beyond all belief, and now includes an OSCA node run by **WO1 Hague**, providing JOCS, Patron and X-NET for the HQ. **WO1 Hague** and his team have had their work cut out for them, as lack of air conditioning (for the equipment, not the personnel!) and inherent problems within the system have meant continual breakdowns and constant

challenges. **Maj Gillespie**, OC Sig Sqn, has also been busy meeting the developing comms requirements of 102 Log Bde, including recces to site the TAC HQ at Umm Qasar. This is being led by **Sgt Towers**, and is a minimal HQ, providing a base for the staff when they wish to move forward.

All in all, it has been a busy and unpredictable period, but the end is in sight, as 101 Log Bde come out this week to conduct their recce for their eventual roulement in approximately 4 weeks time. At which point, most of 214 Sig Sqn should be returning to York to start Cormorant trg.

WITH 102 LOG BDE SIGNAL SQUADRON - *by Sig Chadwick*

It was your typical English winter morning, with snow on the ground and a chill in the air. 48 hours later we were in the Kuwaiti desert, booking into theatre. This was 2 Sig Regt preparing for the most adventurous endeavour to date - finding some where to sleep in Camp Arifjan. The accommodation was far from Z type, in fact it was more like C type (the 'C' standing for cramped), and apart from sharing with over 1000 other personnel, it was quite spacious really. The food was fantastic, (OK then, it was pants). Camel burgers and chips were frequently on the menu, if you call 'frequent' 3 meals a day.

After a short stay at Arifjan, we all moved to Camp Kohima, a dust bowl still waiting for construction. A week passed by and the camp became a hive of activity, with a million Chiefs and only one Indian. Day by day, more British troops rocked up at Hades gate of Kohima. This was guarded by our very own Cerberus (**SSM Griffis**) who was waiting to greet the professional soldiers of our Corps and the ones who fancy a stab at it. As it neared the time of war, we were all assigned our specific tasks, under the command of our very own keen, green, fighting machine, **SSgt Icke**. We moved forward to Camp Coyote, where we established 102 Log Bde HQ and enjoyed the delights of sand with everything. After an eventful week at Coyote, things were starting to look up, a few minor problems with comms were ironed out by the fantastic **Lt Frost** and the Brigadier began to smile again.
It was all going so well, the weather was fine and the beer was

HQ Sqn in Camp Kohima

flowing (well.... we wished anyway). After a few days of sun and sand, we were warned off to stand by for a sand-storm heading our way. All the lads prepared as much as they could by sandbagging and loading the tents down. The BAE Systems designers were not to know that their forty thousand pound radiation dome was not sand-storm proof. It decided to take off into orbit, aided by a Kuwaiti sand-storm. This required all of the Det crew (**WO1(ISM) Hague**, **WO2 (YofS) Thomas**, **SSgt Dudley**, **SSgt (FofS) Palmer**, **Sgt Brotherston**, **Sgt Fisher**, **Sgt Lovick**, **Cpl Bennett**, **Cpl Kadlec**, **Cpl Powell**, **LCpl Allen**, **LCpl Greenfield**, **LCpl Homer**, **LCpl McKeen**, **Sig Chadwick**, **Sig Knowles** and **Sig Wray**) to pile their combined body mass onto the dome. But it still required 75% of 102 Log Bde and the 2 Sig Regt det to hold it down on the ground. Upon waking the following morning, we found our dome a bit under the weather. But three hours later we were back up to full operational strength with a bit of 'improvise, adapt and overcome' theory. One day as we sat monitoring our comms, we were visited by **Sgt** 'Freddy' **Starr** and his new found friend 'Iggy' the lizard. Iggy took an instant dislike to **LCpl Deepak** of 30 Sig Regt, due to the fact that **Deepak** was planning to eat him for dinner. Probably with some green chillies! Our desert haven was now looking more like Ikea every day, with **LCpl Steve** 'DIY' **Homer** on the job, creating coffee tables so that the likes of **Cpl Simon Powell** could take a break and find his mug.

We now stand alone in the desert, a joint force of 2 Sig Regt, 30 SigRegt, 7 Sig Regt and 262 Sig Sqn, waiting for the sound of the final advance into the heart of Baghdad to free the people of Iraq, knowing it will soon be time to return home to our loved ones. Hopefully then my wonderful girlfriend will stop writing so many blueys as I have been 'crated' once too often (10 letters in one day isn't excessive is it?). Just remember: fight to survive and if you can't take care, take cover.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	Major R C Young
SSM	WO2 D Abson

DEPLOYMENT – OPERATION TELIC

The last time 219 Sig Sqn was in the desert can be traced back to 1966, when it was based in Tripoli, Libya and left to allow a certain **Col Kaddafhi** to rule his country. The Sqn has now found its desert feet, and deployed in support of the British involvement to OP TELIC. The flash-to-bang was quick, and within 6 weeks the Sqn were deployed across the whole of Kuwait, supporting the HQs of 16 AA, 3 Cdo, 102 Log Bde and also helping to compliment the Ptarmigan network. Now the war has started, they are playing a pivotal role inside Iraq. There are bound to be many stories in the bar, which will get better after 8 pints!

With the exception of a few, all personnel have now deployed, as have all equipments. The garages are bare, no matter what the TOT, **Capt Andy Forbears** might think! So where have all the personnel gone? **SSgt Reg Gutteridge** and his crew have found out what digging holes is all about with 3 Cdo Bde. They have been well looked after by the marines, even to the extent that **LCpl** 'GI Jane' **Cullern** had them running around digging her a personal loo! **Sig Bellerby** has become a real admin queen, and even sends everyone to sleep with his favourite all time Welsh Rugby stories. Nothing recent! Over at 16 Air Assault Bde, **LCpl Keirs** has been doing the job of two men and sleeping with one eye open, whilst **Sig Stoddart** is keeping a tight rein on everyone. The only casualty has been **Sig Parr**, who was medevac'd to Cyprus with an infected foot, probably sustained from some irate Paras after he had run them into the deck! On A Day we had **Cpl Curly Watts** and **Sig Greenhalgh** on the gun line with 7 RHA, and doing a similar job with 29 Cdo RA, were **LCpl Allen** and **Sig Anderson**.

Everyone in theatre has done a sterling job so far. We have been supplemented with a backfill element from the TA, who are also doing fine work.

OTHER NEWS

Life however must go on, and unfortunately we must say goodbye to a number of the Sqn. Gone from theatre, but still with us is **Capt Sue Jeffery**, who is off to Tampa and **Lt Russell Plested**, who is taking a tour of duty in Afghanistan. Posted from the Sqn is **SSgt YofS Lewis**, on promotion to 2 Sig Sqn in Dundee; and the Foreman **SSgt Lee Morrison**, who is off to Middlesborough. They need the rest after having to guard Umm Quasr whilst waiting for the Marines to arrive! Good luck to **Cpl Cal Calam** on his T1 course; to **Cpl Orange**, who is off to London; to **Cpl Hanes**, who is off to JCU(NI) on promotion, then onto his Yeomans course; and to **LCpl Micheson**, who goes to 11 Sig Regt. Finally, congratulations to **SSgt Derek Peters** on being selected for promotion to Warrant Officer. Well done. Stop Press: **Cpl Curly Watts** is now the father of a healthy baby girl. Congratulations from the Sqn.

ATTACHED TO JFLOGC FWD HQ/102 LOG BDE - *By Cpl Dinsdale*

Where do we start? It had been a hectic month starting in February back in York, when the call came for 10 skilled operators to fly out on OP TELIC to work on the Fwd HQ for JFLOGC. Upon arriving it was lucky that 5 of the 10 were highly skilled sand sweepers! From the mighty 10, we were down to just 2 from 219 Sig Sqn, the rest coming from 262 Sig Sqn and 30 Sig Regt.

After much hard work building the Fwd HQ from nothing, a few do-nuts and one or two Burger Kings, it deployed under the leadership of **Lt Frost** and **SSgt Icke**. For the first two weeks the HQ ran like clockwork and slowly began to grow. Only after the first move did we realise just how much it would grow. From one small tent we now occupy 10 big tents, along with all the joy that working with that many staff in one place brings.

Sadly, dreams of moving the HQ over the border seem just a distant memory. We became victims of our own success. The job we did was so effective and the team so well bonded, that the staff didn't want to leave. It just goes to show that a mix of units does work, and we proved **Sgt Chico Towers** wrong!

246 SIGNAL SQUADRON

It was a beautiful Thursday morning, the date was 13 February 2003 and I was in a coach destined for Brize Norton. The Sqn was being deployed to Kuwait to provide Ptarmigan communications for OP TELIC. We flew from Brize Norton in the early hours of Friday and after 6 hours in the air we landed at Kuwait City International Airport where the local time was 1200hrs.

At the airport we spent almost 5 hours being briefed and processed by the MCCP, before we were bundled on to Kuwati buses and taken to Camp Arifjan. At this point we had not set eyes on our kit, but we were assured that it would meet up with us in the end. Camp Arifjan was a huge US military camp for about 10,000 troops. There was a PX, a Baskin Robbins ice cream parlour and a Burger King available for those who did not want to eat in the 'chow hall'. After being re-united with my kit and issued a camp cot I settled down for my first night in the Gulf. The following day we packed our kit in the vehicles for a move up-country. Although I had shared a hangar with over 3,000 people I had slept very well.

Our next base was Camp Commando, just north of Kuwait city. It was also an American camp, controlled by US Marines, but because of its proximity to the border, there were no luxuries. But we did have access to welfare phones, Internet, showers, laundry and even Sky TV. People were taking things much more seriously, and the Americans conducted a lot of FIBUA training. We stayed there for almost 3 weeks, setting up several operational links with different Trunk Nodes and proving that SAN equipment was working before they deployed to start locs. My role was to man the SCC (System Control Computer). In performing my duties, I gained lots of experience troubleshooting and engineering. At the same time, I was gaining more and more ideas and information about the Op and how the SCC would support it.

In the first week of March, we moved to another loc where TN 024 was set up in the North East of Kuwait. It was open sandy land, and nothing could be seen for miles around except blowing sand-storms. However, it was better than we had expected. As soon as we arrived in that loc, we set up everything and made all the dets operational. The loc was made secure by mounting a guard post and conducting roving patrols. For personal safety we were ordered to dig trenches to protect us from Iraqi Scud Missiles and to carry full IPE (Individual Protective Equipment) to protect from BC (Biological and Chemical) threats. Each day we carried out Stand-To practice, NBC Drills and Scud Missile Drills, under command of the Sqn OC, **Maj Caesar** and SSM, **WO2 Tara Pun**, to improve confidence against any sort of enemy threats.

It was around 0300hrs on the morning of 20 March 2003 when the Allied Forces started to strike with missiles targeted against the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, and many other places. With the war having begun, we were more active, alert and vigilant and we could hear the noise of artillery attacking a position on the Al Faw to our East. We were already well warned about the possible use of Iraqi WMD, so every time Iraqi Scud Missiles were launched, Yeoman **Cade** in OSC 132, gave the command to take cover, and within the seconds, we were all in the trenches. These events repeated again and again over the next few days, once 3 times in 5 minutes. It looked like a practice, but it was real. The OC had already declared that morning after the Stand-To practice that when we did it next time, it would be real - no more practices.

Most of the Iraqi Scud Missiles were destroyed in the air by Patriot Air Defence missiles, but one did land 2 kms from our position. While we stayed with TN 024, service and support was not bad, so we were able to celebrate all the SNCO promotions and OC Sqn's Birthday. Every evening, apart from 2 or 3, we were provided curry by the resup group in Coyote. On the other evenings, we ate Compo rations, as movement was very strictly controlled after the war had begun.

Our next move was to co-locate with TN021, which was further north of Kuwait, 3 km from the border. They had been there since the start of the war and had seen the artillery firing onto Iraqi positions. They didn't sleep much that night. Because the Americans had pushed far into Iraq the Scud missile threats were minimised, and we did not have to spend so much of the time in trenches. But the sand-storm was strong and terrifying. It blew away one tent from our OSC group and was caught in the cam net. Fortunately no one was sleeping in it at that time. I was not initially concerned because I was on shift in the SW & FC, but I felt the vehicle moving in the strong force of storm. After that horrible night, TN 021 was ordered to move into Iraq, as Coalition Forces were pushing further and further and needed Ptarmigan. Our boundary was the Kuwaiti border, which meant that OSC had to return south to Camp Coyote, our current location.

TN021 with Node Comd & SSgt at loc Mutlor Ridge Line 001

We are connected to TN 023 and after carrying out our SOPs, like digging trenches, setting up dets and tents etc, every thing is going smoothly so far. We are professional and are doing well with the additional task we have been given. Now that we are well set up, we will let things settle for bit longer, so that we can catch up on admin. The OC hasn't told us about our future loc, but as all three Tps are in Iraq, I think he wants to move there. Nobody knows when and how the war will end, but we will continue to carry out our responsibilities and hope it will be soon, so we can look forward to happy peaceful days.

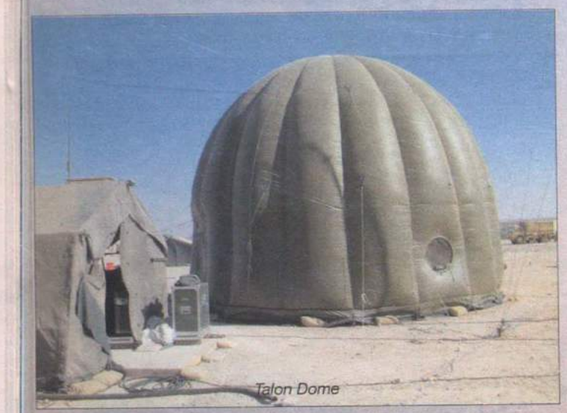
Note from Cpl Indra Kumar Gurung and Sig Prem Tamang:

So to summarize our whole battle plan, 1 UK Div is supported by two comms battle groups (OSC 131, and 132), both led by two of the most famous leaders of all time, **Maj Andy Churchill** and **Maj Julius Caesar**. We wonder what could possibly link this Iraqi president to two such glorious leaders? The envy of their monthly pay packet or just a plain and simple need for power! I guess we will never know. As for the rest of the battle groups, they can be safe in the knowledge that 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn is holding comms from the border all the way into Iraq. And will continue to do so for the duration of the war.

OPERATION FINGAL: KABUL COMMUNICATIONS DETATCHMENT

The Det has been very busy during the month of March due to under-manning caused by R&R and the premature departure of **LCpl Finners**. This resulted in menial tasks, such as maintaining comms taking the back seat as the few remaining brasso'd their rounds and dusted behind bookshelves! The 3-man det at Bagram has been working hard, dragging themselves out of bed just in time for dinner. I actually thought there would be more to write about them but: no, that's about it!!

The Regtl Yof S gets a new toy



Talon Dome

A COMMANDING OFFICER KEEPS FOLK IN UK INFORMED

*During OP TELIC, **LtCol Ivan Hooper**, CO, 21 Sig Regt (AS), kept families back in UK informed through his regular series of 'Beaufighter' emails. Here are some extracts and photos that he has kindly allowed The WIRE to reproduce – Bernard Redshaw, Editor.*

Kuwait, 14 February 03

All things considered, conditions are reasonable. Everyone has a tent to sleep in, 3 meals a day and hot water or showers available. However, the US Marine Corps Camp is creaking under the sheer number of troops pouring in, and we have had to queue for up to an hour for meals - resorting to US rations on occasion. Showers are frequently out of water, and people are tightly packed on bunk beds, 50 or so to a tent. Even drinking water is in short supply at present. Conditions have improved from 2 weeks ago and continue to improve daily. Fortunately it is still reasonably cool during the day, but it is also very cold at night. The last few days have been very windy, with sandstorms and rain. Camels abound even on the motorways and we are all desperate to go to one of the locally-held camel races.

Life with the US Marine Corps is an education. The Americans are clearly pleased that we are here. They are friendly and welcoming, and individually they are far more balanced and less 'gung ho' than one might believe from the media. For a while we fed in their 'chow house' ham n' eggs, waffles, grits and creamed beef (quite possibly the most disgusting foodstuff ever conceived) for breakfast. Every morning and evening the strains of the 'Star Spangled Banner' sound out over the camp. If you are caught in the open you face the flag, stand to attention, and if in uniform salute. One hour later we get the Muslim call to prayer from the local town and, with church services available at 10.00hrs daily from the camp padre, we have a truly diverse cultural experience.

Kuwait, 15 March 03

At last the Regt is complete in theatre, the last two members of 220 Sig Sqn arriving today. Experiences vary. Some individuals have taken as little as 24 hours to reach Kuwait, while others have endured 3-day treks and arrived blinking into the desert sun, very much the worse for wear. Nevertheless it is good to have everyone present and correct, and well into the acclimatization process. The emphasis is firmly on trg, and support to the RAF Chinook and Puma helicopters.

All dets are now deployed or stood by ready to move. Those deployed into the desert have benefited enormously from the Regt's experience on ex in Oman in 2001, and on ops in Afghanistan last year. This has meant that simple mistakes have been avoided and personal admin is good. It comes down to simple, but not necessarily obvious things, like protecting laptop computers and telephones with cling film to prevent sand and dust ingress.

The weather has been relatively kind to us so far, and it has been mercifully cool. But we had the 'mother of all sandstorms' two nights ago: tents ripped away, kit infested with sand and dust and everyone shot blasted from wrestling with canvas in the storm. We have also had torrential rain, with marble sized hailstones; very galling as it stripped much of the paint from our newly 'desert painted' Land rovers and turned the locations into a gluey quagmire.

Iraq, 26 March 2003

A week into the war, and as far as the Regt is concerned, so far so good. I am always wary of tempting fate, but the fact remains that to date we are all accounted for and well.

We have had a challenging and vital role in the conflict so far. We were one of the very first British Army units to cross into Iraq with elements of the US Marine Corps, and have continued to support RAF and US helicopters operating north of the border. Although, for obvious reasons, I cannot be specific about our dispositions, the Regt is currently deployed from Central Kuwait to Southern Iraq. We are in good heart and I have been enormously proud of the professionalism, determination and courage that everyone has shown. I know that you would be proud too.

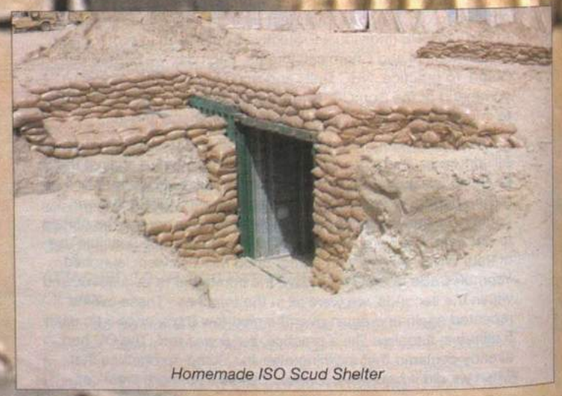
We still have much to do, but I promise you that the protection of our people and their safe return remains my priority and that of our commander. Rest assured that we will have plenty of stories to tell and to bore you with on our return.

Finally, it seems appropriate to include the text of a message sent on G Day from our RAF commander, to Chief of Air Staff and copied to SOInC(A): 'From Comd, Joint Heli Force. You will wish to be aware that wef 04.45 hours today, JHF assumed responsibility for its own AOR within southern Iraq. Force includes 21 Sig Regt, 51 Sqn RAF, Tac Supt Wing, 20 Sqn RE and 5231 Sqn. The RAF has returned to the soil of Iraq!'

CH407 at FOB

Camp Rhino

ATacCS Management



Homemade ISO Scud Shelter

Scud Attack!

Sgt Nolan adds water

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Major Steve Vickery**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Dave Watson**

After answering the war calls, the mighty black rats are now rapidly approaching their third month in the Gulf region on OP TELIC. Having arrived in Kuwait City, we soon set up camp, and whilst existing on a diet of solely rice and chicken, we started to provide a complex for the HQ DSG to work from. Since that moment, we have been extremely busy providing the HQ, which runs 24 hours a day providing the log comd and control for the Div. You wouldn't think that it's a log HQ, as we have always been further forward than both 1 Div Main and Alt. As time went on, we got sick and tired of the constant Scud attacks in Kuwait, so we have moved north into the heart of enemy territory.

HQ DSG's Recce party (consisting of **Cap Lee Rickman**, **Sgt Tim Ralley** and **Cpl James Scott**) were the first to cross the border, closely followed by the OC, who wasn't at all annoyed at not being the first over. All was going well until several cluster bombs were found, and we were forced to move. During the search for another loc, **Sgt Tim Ralley** managed to drive over an anti tank mine, which did not impress the 2IC who was travelling with him. Luckily it didn't go off, so everyone left in one piece.

The long move of the main armd complex was at night and went smoothly, well apart from **WO2 (YofS) Gaz Tabor** deciding to run the 43 into a burm, throwing a track in both senses of the word. Well done **Gaz**! Luckily his buddy, **WO2 (FofS) Neil Trengrove** raced to his rescue. The rest of us didn't think it was worth the bother!

We are now stationed in a defeated Iraqi position in the southern Iraqi desert. As the news of our presence has spread, we have had many others scrambling to latch on to the mighty 204. These include B Coy, 1 Para; Alma Coy, 1 DWR; A Sqn, QDG; 14 Sig Regt; 256 Sig Sqn and several other small dets too numerous to mention, all seeking our protection. We have just witnessed the destruction of the Iraqi tanks left behind, which was cool.

During our time here we have encountered vicious desert storms, floods and fires (both inside and outside of the panzers), all in the name of world safety, and are justly proud of our achievements. You will all see the highlights of our time here, as a BBC2 documentary film crew have been living with us and recording our greatest moments for posterity. They are also ensuring that we all get crated, especially **Sig Stacey Lyon** and the OC, **Major Steve Vickery**, who have both ensured that they will play a starring role in the documentary. All we need now is the return of our personnel detached to 207 Sig Sqn, and our world domination will be complete.

LIFE IN THE LAD - *by SSgt 'HRH' Allcock*

We deployed to Kuwait between 4 and 7 February with a fitter section of 11 with one member left in Osnabruck, to follow on later. We eventually arrived at the APOD after more false starts than an Olympic 100m final. A few days later, we were reunited with our vehs. Shortly afterwards we took our first veh casualty, as **Cpl Steve Rees** broke his Foden. The repair of this turned into a massive project, which took over four and a half weeks.

Whilst at Camp Rhino we made a cricket set out of MDF and a piece of 2 by 4. We were duly challenged by the OC, **Maj Steve Vickery** to a test series between the LAD and Sqn HQ. The SHQ team consisted of the OC, RSM, Chief Clerk, FofS and **Cpl Rock**. The LAD team consisted of the Tiffy, The scribe, Massive, Towrope and Oliver Hardy. I can safely say that the OC's team were thanked for turning up and dully left to go and practise basic ball handling skills.

We left Camp Cushy after 2 weeks and were again challenged to another test match (surely we couldn't win again!!). We'd like to thank the OC for again showing up and again being defeated by the LAD. We didn't play cricket again. More NBC trg followed (revenge for the cricket, we think) along with GPMG trg and a lot of digging.

We moved out of the assembly area, leaving every other unit behind, for a better look at the border (and a burning oil well). Our additional member joined us, as his wife had given birth (Congratulations to **Cpl Aaron Pentith**). The war started shortly afterwards (we think it was due to **Cpl Pentith** upsetting the locals, but this is yet to be proved), and more digging and NBC drills, courtesy of **Mr Saddam Hussain**, followed. The screaming of Sud at 50 decibels became the norm and the long hours passed slowly.

Field Promotion at Camp Rhino

Soon we received orders to go over the top into Iraq. We rang ahead and made our reservations, as everyone was determined to be in Baghdad by midday. The move was delayed by 24 hours, but eventually we were all lined up when Bang! a missile landed 500m away from our loc. Definitely time to move! So with anticipation, we set off into the great unknown (in the dark). I think I can safely say that a certain part of everyone's anatomy was opening and closing with increasing regularity as we crossed the border. But the move passed without incident, except for the YofS throwing a track. So here we are, still ahead of Div Main, who are moving up (still behind us though). Since we arrived we have fixed vehicles, made DTL's, showers, dug holes and even had a promotion. So from the members of the right hand corner gang, its goodbye.

Congratulations go to all those who have been promoted since the start of the op. They are too numerous to be listed here, but well done to you all.

7th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj Chris Ford**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Martin Walsh**

OPERATION TELIC, OC's PERSPECTIVE

Well the Rats are back! Indeed, we initially set up very close to where we ended up 12 years ago. I suspect, however, that the stories from OP TELIC will be different. Most of these are recorded far more eloquently by the troops, but I felt that I should highlight a few general themes:

It was good to see that 7 Armd Bde dominated the vital ground in Camp Rhino (i.e. surrounding the mess tents) and usually found ways around the inevitable queues (for every meal, shower, basin, laundry and even sometimes, toilets).

On deployment into the desert, it was a superb effort to build York Lines in the middle of nowhere. It was the envy of the Bde units. It was also a valiant fight to keep it maintained (especially keeping the tents standing) despite the atrocious weather, and all this whilst watching the official shower block being slowly built (they were finished 3 days before we left!)

The entry into Iraq went exceptionally well. The Bde comms were the envy of our sister American unit (7 RCT). Needless to say, the first Bde tps into Iraq were two of our Rebros (who went in with the Americans) and the rest of the Sqn were jostling for position in the race to be the first over the breach. Despite some interesting moments, I am pleased to record that the worst injuries to date have been a broken wrist, a scorpion sting and sitting on an open Leatherman.

To achieve all this, the Sqn has trebled in size. All in all, 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (plus attachments) is now over 600 strong, with approx. 250 vehs (of many varieties). The tps, especially the QM's Dept, have worked tirelessly to deal with this influx. Indeed, we did become the Bde QM Dept whilst the rest of the Bde units moved into theatre – a huge task. A special note must also be made of 501 Det from 30 Sig Regt, who have valiantly (and cheerfully) fought the system to get their det fully functional. We are also very grateful that the Sqn augmentees have integrated so quickly and seamlessly – despite the fact that some of the TA thought that they were deploying to Germany.

So morale remains very high as we endure the weather, rations and problematic supply system (never believe the 'you will get it in theatre' line). The blueys and parcels are the main morale boosters but I must also record the following efforts: **WO2 (YofS) Jase Phillips** discovering that night sights work better without the lens cap on and also eating the iron filings out of the MRE; **WO2 (FofS) Steve Erskine** confusing the sat phone numbers with the time; **Lt Simon Lord's** moustache; **Capt Stu Whitley's** sideburns; **Cpl Jim O'Mahoney's** graffiti on his chairs; **Cpl Tom O'Hanlon**, **Sig** 'Thomo' **Thompson** and **Sig Sara Fisher** confusing BATs with NAPs; **Maj Alan Owen** (16 Air Asslt Bde LO) on his second op tour with the Bde.

So without further ado I shall hand over to the Sqn for a more detailed account of the life and times on OP TELIC for 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn - 'The Desert Rats'.

ALPHA TROOP – *by Sig Thompson*

Tp Comd **2Lt AJC Grant**
Tp SSgt **SSgt S Walton**

Alpha Tp's vehs rolled out of the port at Kuwait City in the early hours of 11 February. Most of the Tp had already been in-theatre since the 4 February and were looking forward to receiving our vehs and getting down to business. Our destination, Camp Rhino/Commando, was like home, with a sandy carpet. People united with friends from trg or other units, and the morale was high. We shared the camp with the Americans, and in the morning you could wake up to either Arabic prayers or the American national anthem. Showers, bunk beds, warm water, ice cream and a coke machine were some of the gifts that allowed us to live this luxury lifestyle. We even managed to get Sky TV and watch the Six Nations Rugby.

The Bde HQ was keen to start exercising the staff, so we set up HQ right in the middle of the British camp and with our green cam nets, we looked like a welcomed oasis. From there we got low-loaded to Camp Coyote in the northern Kuwait desert. Here we found one gigantic tent in a berm, and knew that we were in for a lot of hard graft. Digging, pegging and tent erecting seemed to last forever, but in the end, it resulted in a smart little camp, complete with cookhouse, cold showers, a church and some quite happy faces. These faces soon became rather pale, as a great wall of sand seemed to box us in then fall on us on regular occasions. We finally got issued with our desert combats and cam nets, which raised morale no end. But at no time did we forget what lay ahead.

The Sqn 2IC and Sig Evans after being presented their shamrock on St Patrick's Day

20 March was **Sig Thompson's** birthday, war was declared and Alpha HQ, which had now grown to about 60 vehicles, was lined up ready to go. With a few NBC and Scud alerts under our belts, the decision was made to deploy A Tp north in order to gain some distance between the two HQ complexes. We set off mid-afternoon, and tension was building as we travelled towards the FAA. On arrival, another deliberate set-up was completed in the dark. Comms were in and people got their heads down, the unlucky ones falling down shell scrapes on the way to the guard post (which seemed miles away if you were tired). Alpha Tp took control as Bravo Tp flew the 7X flag crossing the Iraqi border.

Finally, on 23 March, all armed and ready to go, the rest of the Sqn passed over the border on the way to our next loc. We encountered a few problems in the early hours of the following day when the order was given to get into dress Cat 4 (another false alarm). Moving up to our next loc was eerier. The landscape was barren and still in the shadows of burning oil pipes. However, the locals all seemed pleased to see us, and waved as were drove past. During the hasty HQ set-up, **Cpl O'Hanlon** tried his luck at gymnastics, but failed and found himself with a broken wrist. He soon felt better when he was given his morphine!! Having been ordered to move again, a very nervous night lay ahead. We were held at our rolling replen loc because of an alleged group of 20 militia in the area threatening to shoot at any military. But with **Sig Moseley** on the LSW, we were all safe. After another long night and another long convoy trek, we arrived at our current loc. The weather started off well, but it soon turned as the rain and wind

pounded us, flooding trenches and making huge puddles deep enough to be called lakes (what happened to the desert and sun!). As everyone settled in, the Gucci plastic toilets were installed and the morale was high again. Night after night, we experience firework displays from the battle groups and gun positions. Even though it all still seems quite surreal, you just need to look around our local area and see the leaflets dropped by the Americans prior to the conflict and chalk diagrams of mines drawn on the walls to understand that the threat is real.

A Tp HQ at Shaiba Airfield

BRAVO TROOP – *by Lt Si Lord*

Tp Comd **Lt Si Lord**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Deano' **Cox**

Currently, I am sat in a 9x9 with weapon, body armour, NBC suit, helmet and PRR close at hand. As you can appreciate, since our last instalment, we've been rather busy. Bravo Tp has been complete in-theatre for just over one month and currently all is well.

I arrived a week or so ahead of my Tp, having spent a delightful 7 hours travelling from Hanover to Kuwait, then another, not so delightful 7 hours getting from the airport to Camp Commando. On arrival, I found that **Cpl George Spence** had had an interesting encounter with his Leatherman. He discovered that sitting down on an open blade isn't good for your health. The surgery was minor, and his hole is just about healed. Fortunately, I spent only one night in Camp Commando, a large American base, where lots of US Marines jogged round chanting 'I love working for Uncle Sam' etc, etc. (Yes they really do it. The film makers are not lying!). From there, I moved up with Alpha Tp to the forward concentration area, York Lines. We were greeted by a large sand berm with a very large white tent in one corner and little else. The Circus Tent, as it's best described, lasted one night in the strong winds before it collapsed. The re-building of said tent became a regular and rather comical event.

The next task was to make York Lines a decent place to live. Trenches were dug, sandbags were filled, showers were built (the LAD are useful for something after all), and portaloos were sited. It was all work, work, work. Naturally, the RSM had his say in the look of the place, and had us painting sandbags white in order to line the route to Ech – 600m away. Once my Tp had arrived, the priority was to track the vehicles down at the port, get them to our loc, then get them painted.

Naturally, Bravo Tp was first to cross the border. Alpha was left behind in the Forward Assembly Area - unluckily. I became one of the first battlefield casualties after a rogue bungee leapt from the Comms Ops vehicle and assaulted me. It is now a trophy on the penthouse frame. I believe the 2IC has written a fitting Mention in Dispatches for my selfless valour.

The route north through Iraq was fascinating. People were lining the roads, waving and giving us the thumbs up. Personally, I'm convinced they were amazed that **LCpl Kez Hopkinson** was able to follow my directions without making any wrong turns. If only she could do it back on the Hohne training area! Our first loc was somewhat hostile. As soon as we stopped, the mortar rounds landed - not too close, but close enough. 500m to the east lay an abandoned Iraqi Army barracks. After a quick recce with the QMSI, B Tp, **W01 Phillips**, we found massive quantities of weapons and ammunition. The locals had begun to steal anything they could find - primarily spare parts for cars and petrol. In and around our HQ position we found APCs, mortars, mines, rifles and clothing. It seemed the Iraqis had dropped everything and run.

Our second casualty was **Sig John Birch**. During a Stand-To, he encountered a dog-sized scorpion (according to the recollection of a dazed **Birch**) who, it seems, disagreed with his fire position. After a quick meeting of its tail to his leg, he was casevac'd back to Kuwait for treatment. He now assures me he killed the beast with his bare hands. Strangely, it took him 5 days to return to our location. It seems the morning volleyball, afternoon sunbathing and smiling nurses back at the field hospital were difficult to leave behind.

The FofS, YofS and LCpl Jennings enjoying another day in Comms Ops

The move from that loc to our current one was a somewhat drawn-out affair. The convoy was approximately 70 vehs, and the view from the front was quite impressive. A veh brief prior to departure looked more like a regtl parade. Our new home is somewhat more secure and has given everyone a greater sense of confidence. How long we will stay here, remains to be seen, but the Engineers have dug me a rather nice berm around the whole loc and some impressive toilets, so we're OK for now.

CHARLIE TROOP – *by Lt Steve Caddywold*

Tp Comd	**Lt Steve Caddywold**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Adie Sims**

The initial wave of tps landed on Kuwaiti soil back in February. Those brave men and women of Charlie Tp's advance party had no idea what to expect from a possible conflict situation. Measure their surprise, when all they found was sand and 1 to 4 hour queues for anything from meals to the local shop. This was soon remedied by a swift move into the desert to establish the 7 Bde concentration area, AKA York Lines, a big barren patch of sand. The guys soon slipped into a good routine of waking, washing, eating and digging (courtesy of the RSM). This dream routine was rudely interrupted by the arrival of the Bde Staff when suddenly, work became more demanding.

On 28 February, the rest of the motley crew arrived in Kuwait, and after a tortuous arrival procedure joined the Bde at York Lines. With the Tp complete, it was time to start operational trg, preparing the dets for desert operations. The first and definitely most important lesson was GPS familiarisation. Navigation in the desert was proving to be a little tough, and no one had even left the concentration area yet. After brief preparation, the RRBs were deployed. Vital lessons were learned during the training, and

Don't blame me

after ironing out a few small glitches, it was time for the tps to return to York Lines.

Very early on 18 March, fully loaded and tested, carrying 5 days worth of supplies, the RRBs and the Armd LO lined up ready to deploy. Their destination was Iraq and they were guided there under the watchful eye of **Maj Andy Flay** and 7 RCT.

After the closure of route Rat (the route into Iraq) RRB F (AKA 'the ethnic det', having crew from 4 Bde, 12 Bde and 30 Sig Regt) was ordered to close down and to join the rest of the Bde. However **LCpl Crutchley** and his crew had other ideas, burning the clutch out and breaking down 5 kms short of the border. Fortunately (unfortunately?) for them, we were able to tow them into loc.

Finally a warm welcome goes out to **Cpl Newson** from 34 Sig Sqn in Sheffield. Also to **Cpl Hadley**, who gave up the opportunity to complete his commercial pilots' licence to experience the desert. **Cpl Byrne**, joining us from 31 Sig Regt, has been assigned the task of keeping tabs on the illusive **Sgt Scott**. Last but not least **Sigs Prescott** and **Yates** who have been thrown straight in at the deep end. Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Chloe' **Cowen**, who has joined us from A Tp on promotion with the extra special task of looking after the QM, who is never busy and always happy.

MIKE TROOP

Ops Offr	**Capt Ollie Dinnis**
YofS	**WO2 (YofS) Jason Phillips**
FofS	**WO2 (FofS) Steve Erskine**

A warm to the new Ops Officer, **Capt Pete Wettenhall**, currently enjoying an extended handover period with **Capt Dinnis** and also undergoing intensive Comms Ops training from **WO2 Jase Phillips**. **Capt Dinnis** has finally succumbed to the 7 Bde OpsO curse and got engaged to **Sarah**. Congratulations also to **FofS Steve Erskine** on his selection for promotion to WO1 and onward posting to Northern Ireland. Some people will do anything to escape early! Congratulations to **SSgt Sanderson** who has recently passed his FofS entrance exam. It is rumoured that his course preparation now includes spending long days in his ERV bulking up on MREs and toast! Let's hope his strategy is successful. **LCpls Phillips**, **Tallboys** and **O'Brien** have all recently been promoted to full Cpl and are earning their money keeping the Bde Comms operational.

Meanwhile, some of the junior techs are busy cutting their teeth on loan to the Battlegroups. **LCpl Bourne** has deployed with 1 RRF, and has apparently joined in with their PT sessions too! **LCpl Boffey** is with 1 BW and **LCpls Clark** and **Drummond** are deploying to 2 Bn REME to show them all how to repair radios correctly. We also welcome our second YofS, **SSgt (YofS) Hutchinson** from 21 Sig Regt.

ECHELON

OC ECH/Bde QM	**Capt John Fradley**
Bde RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) Jim Duncan**

The current situation for the Sqn Sp Tp personnel is that we are located in Iraq in support of OP TELIC. Over recent months the Bde HQ and Sig Sqn manning and equipment figures have risen from 230 personnel and 80 vehs to over 600 personnel and 250 vehs. This has been an enormous challenge, which the Tp has coped with admirably. Additionally the increase in veh fleet has meant that our numbers have been bolstered considerably, with the Tp receiving approx 20 augmentees, all of whom have been welcomed. A big hello goes out to **Sig Amy Tapping**, **LCpl Leanne Weston** and **LCpl Amy O'Marah**, who join us from 94 (BY) Sig Sqn.

A very busy time has seen the whole Sqn prepared and equipped (less desert clothing, body armour, NBC Suits, or anything else soldiers really need), and deployed firstly to Kuwait and more recently into Iraq. The Tp deployed within hours of the lead battle group into Iraq, leaving A Tp firmly back in the rear in Kuwait. **LCpl Brian Read** had the dubious pleasure (or not) of driving into Iraq in a Fork Lift Rough Terrain (FLRT), this done at the stunning speed of 20kmh. The A1 Ech elements have been focusing on their re-supply methods and tactics under the watchful eye of **Capt Paddy Shields** (Irish Guards), the new MTO and **SSgt Mick Yendall**.

The QM's direct staff has been busy, especially the two seasoned and longest in theatre supply specialists, **LCpl Holmes** and **LCpl Wilson**. **Sgt Dave Fitton** has finally joined us. Despite having nothing to issue, the whole team have kept their spirits up by taking part in a competition for the best line containing 'we haven't got any'. Congratulations go to **RQMS Jim Duncan**, who has been selected for both promotion to WO1 and Commissioning. The G1 Team of **SSgt Brian McGowan**, **Cpl Marlow Lomas** and **LCpl Brian Gillmartin**, all have done a sterling job, with **SSgt McGowan** having being the current record holder blowing 150,000 dollars in cash in one day (the firm's money, obviously).

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col I P F Vingoe**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) M Nuttall**

EXERCISE ARDUOUS CYGNET

The Training Wing stops for nothing – not even war! This year's CO's cadre took place in the Stanta Training Area with a platoon of young hopefuls (mainly from 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn), despite operational fast balls including the ex OIC, **Capt Irwin's** return to barracks.

The ex started with military skill tests and excessively early PT, courtesy of **LCpl Autar**. There were some great feats of endurance, including **LCpl Yates** and **Sig Resham**, who nearly tabbed to Ipswich when they got lost on a night navex! The course ended in a four-day field ex with little sleep, apart from **SSgt Evans** and his cronies in front of the log fire in *Smokers Hole*.

During the last dawn attack, **Sgt Mitchell** used his experience gained on Senior Brecon to give the Pl some last minute building clearance tips. **Sig Gwilliam** thought that attaching a right-angled torch to his rifle barrel would help him shoot straight; but he might have been able to watch his footing a bit better. The Pl were clearly overjoyed when endex was called, because they wouldn't have to listen to **LCpl Betts** sing any more Elvis.

Congratulations go to **Sigs Milan** and **Kiran Ale**, who were joint top students (no it wasn't because we couldn't tell you apart) and to **SSgt Evans** for coming off the board.

EXERCISE ICY DRAGON

The ski group enjoying a pause in the demanding training!

EX ICY DRAGON was an alpine skiing expedition conducted by members of the Regt in the Hochfilzen and Fieberbrunn area of Austria. Defying the German language, rapidly melting snow and **Capt Bill Anderson's** choice of skiwear, virtually all members of the exped attained Advanced Ski Proficiency status, as well as a taste for ham and cheese rolls.

Special mentions go to **Cpl Billy Hotkiss**, for his mastery of the egg; **Sig Alan Neesam**, for his sleepwalking antics; **LCpl Ski Sokolowski**, for his scabs; **Cpl Nicki Roberts**, for her headbanging; **2Lt Emelia Ker**, for her break-dancing and startling confessions; **Cpl Ronnie Barker**, for demolishing a tree; and **LCpl Leona Caulfield**, for kicking **Sig Mark Lawrence** off a chair-lift.

All in all, it was a cracking week with fantastic skiing, no broken bones, plenty of panda eyes, some interesting karaoke numbers and a lot of quality Weiss bier.

ECHO TROOP - OPERATION KEELING

'They don't make PU12 masts like they used to' – E Tp Creating a sun shelter at a local blind school

Echo Tp are currently in role as the tp to support the Spearhead Lead Element (SLE). We recently deployed to Sierra Leone on OP KEELING in support of Comd 19 Bde and 2RGR. We were located at Leicester Square, Freetown, which is the HQ for the International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT). The tour was exceptionally difficult and proved to be a 'survival of the fittest' test, only those who were robust and tough enough seeing it through to the end. Or was it really that only the techs and senior offrs needed medevacing for moments of weakness! Suffice to say **Cpl Dawson** and **Cpl Bird** were RTU'd with malaria and OC Sqn, **Maj Donovan** with amoebic dysentery.

EXERCISE BROTHERIDGE SWAN

EX BROTHERIDGE SWAN was a Cpls, WOs and Offrs Battlefield tour to Normandy, named after **Lt Dan Brotheridge**, the first allied soldier killed on D-Day whilst taking part in the assault on Pegasus Bridge. It was a fully-packed tour for a whole weekend, with considerable time spent on the actual ground that was fought on. The first site we visited was Pegasus Bridge, where we were fully briefed by the CO. This set the scene for the rest of the tour, where instead of falling asleep in some museum, we went to all the beaches that were stormed. We saw the beaches from both the British and the Germans' perspective - really quite breath-taking to see what they had to conquer. It made the tour a lot more interesting and was actually unexpectedly really enjoyable.

We finished the tour with a visit to the British Military Cemetery, where we had our own ceremony at the grave of a RSigs Cpl, laying a wreath and a unit plaque. The whole battlefield tour was finished with a minute's silence at the grave – a very moving experience.

Cpl Tye's grave, British Military Cemetery, Normandy

FAREWELL TO GURKHA MAJOR, QUEEN'S GURKHA SIGNALS

Saying farewell to a Gurkha Maj is always a big event within the Bde of Gurkhas. With this in mind, planning and preparation to bid farewell to Gurkha Maj QGSigs, **Maj (QGO) Navindrabikram Gurung MBE** and his family, started in the first week of March 03 under the watchful eye of **Capt (QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO**, Gurkha Maj (Des). The date for the function was set as 14 March 03, to be held at the WOs and Sgts Mess at Gamecock Barracks, Bramcote and all QGSigs Offrs, SNCOs and their families, regardless of where they were based in the UK, were expected to attend. Since all personnel from 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, York and some from 250 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, Bramcote were away on ops the turnout for the evening was expected to be low. However, the families of all Offrs and SNCOs deployed on ops did attend the function.

On the evening of 14 March 03 all QGSigs Offrs, SNCOs and their families assembled in the WOs and Sgts Mess at Bramcote at around 19.30 hrs. Guests for the evening included the Comd QG Sigs, 2IC, Adjt and RSM of 30 Sig Regt and their families. The guest of honour, The GM Saheb and his family, were received by **Capt (QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO**. After a few drinks the Mess Manageress called everyone for dinner at 20.30 hrs. A speech in Nepali by the Comd QGSigs, **Lt Col IPF Vingoe**, followed the superb dinner, provided by **Sgt Nanda** and his staff. In his speech the Comd highlighted The GM Saheb's 29 years of distinguished service. This speech was all the more remarkable, as the Comd has not done any form of formal Nepali language course! The Comd then made a presentation on behalf of all QGSigs personnel. He also thanked **Mrs Bindiya Gurung** (The GM Saheb's wife) for her active role within the Gurkha community and the guidance she provided to all Gurkha families. The GM Saheb then spoke and thanked all members of QGSigs for their support during his tenure.

Capt(QGO) Hitman Gurung being promoted to Gurkha Maj by the Comd QGSigs, Lt Col IPF Vingoe and the outgoing Gurkha Major, Maj(QGO) Navindrabikram Gurung MBE.

Once the speeches were over, everyone gathered in the main bar for the highlight of the evening, a Nepali cultural show, which included traditional Nepalese songs from Gurkha ladies and dances from the children. This was followed by *Khusiko Nauch* (Cocktail dance) and everyone, including the CO and The GM Saheb, actively took part. The *Khusiko Nauch* lasted well into the early hours of the morning and it all came to an end at around 05.00 hrs.On 24 March 03 all Bramcote based personnel along with all QGSigs Offrs and their families lined up in front of the Guard Room at 14.30 hrs to see off The GM Saheb and his family. A very nice moment occurred when The GM Saheb went around and shook hands with every single person who paraded to see him off. After inspecting the Guard of Honour, the outgoing GM Saheb assisted the Comd QGSigs promoting **Capt (QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO** to Maj (QGO) and handed over the post of Gurkha Major to him. Finally the outgoing GM Saheb and his wife were then driven to the Airport to catch their flight to Nepal.

Finally we, as a Regt, extend our best wishes to both outgoing and new GM Sahebs and their families for the future.

Maj(QGO) Navindrabikram Gurung MBE with Garlands

THE ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM

by Colonel (Retd) Cliff Walters

PRESENTATION OF MEDALS TO THE MUSEUM

- by Colonel (Retd) Cliff Walters

On 14 March 2003 the medals of **MajGen Richard Moberly CB OBE KStJ** were presented to the Museum by his three daughters, **Mrs Jane Mallinson**, **Mrs Pricilla Allaway** and **Mrs Sarah Sharp**. **Gen Moberly** died in December 2001at the age of 95. His obituary was recorded in the June 2002 *WIRE* and I will not repeat the detail of one of the most distinguished careers of any RSigs officer. His wartime service included Airborne Forces operations, D-Day planning and the drive through Europe, Arnhem, operations against the Japanese and service in India. The latter he revisited in 1977 where he met his bearer of some 30 years previous.

Col Cliff Walters receives the medals from (L to R) Mrs Jane Mallinson, Mrs Priscilla Allaway and Mrs Sarah Sharp

But there were as many significant landmarks in his peacetime career, albeit less dramatic. He was the first SOinC after the appointment was reorganised in the MOD in 1957. He was also the first officer recruited directly into the Corps (in 1926 from RMA Woolwich) to be promoted to MajGen. As SOinC he was responsible for the move of the School of Signals from Catterick to Blandford, although the original destination was Middle Wallop. The needs of the AAC for the airfield took priority, and so 30 Sig Regt moved from Middle Wallop into Blandford to 'safeguard' the camp for the Corps.

On a lighter and less well publicised matter, he was responsible for safeguarding the Berlin Cable Bear, then the mascot of 18 Army Gp Sig Regt and now the mascot of 10 Sig Regt. When he was CSO in Germany in 1954, he was approached by Siemens Ltd. They claimed (quite correctly) that the Berlin Cable Bear, which a subsidiary company of Siemens had adopted as their mascot, had been taken from Berlin by a British Sig Regt. In fact 18 Sig Regt had saved it from the ruins in 1945, and it was taken to their barracks in Herford and named Bruno. But now the company wanted it returned. **Gen Moberly** came up with the idea that the company should provide an exact replica in exchange for the original. To cut a long story short and to give credit to the company this is exactly what happened.

Some years later, the Bear was relocated to Wilton, where it currently resides. However, it is intended that it should soon be moved to the Basil Hill Site, where the recently-formed HQ 10 Sig Regt is now located. Incidentally, 28 May 1958 was the date that the reproduction model was handed over - exactly 45 years ago. I am sure that **Gen Moberly** would be delighted to know that his idea lives on.

The Museum Trustees are delighted to have been entrusted, by his daughters, with **MajGen RJ Moberly's** medals and they will soon be on permanent display.

TENNIS

ROYAL SIGNALS WIN REAL TENNIS AND RACKETS EVENTS – AND A FIRST IN HISTORY FOR A NON-COMMISSIONED SOLDIER

Lt Chris Barker and Sig Daniel Lewis with the Regimental Real Tennis Doubles Cup and the 100 year old Rackets Cup

On Monday 10 February 03 **Sig Daniel Lewis**, from 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228), flew back from Operation OCULUS (Kosovo) in Pristina to Brize Norton in preparation for the Army Real Tennis and Rackets Championships. After a short overnight stopover in the Unit Barracks in Aldershot, he and **Lt Chris Barker** travelled up to The Queen's Club in London (home of the Stella Artois Tennis Championship) for a day's practice in these two unfamiliar games. **Lt Barker** had competed in the previous year's event, whereas **Sig Lewis** had never even heard of the games.

Essentially Rackets is a larger version of squash, played with a longer racquet and a hard ball, and is one of the fastest games in the world. Real tennis is the forerunner of lawn tennis, played indoors using a curved wooden racquet and a felt-coated wooden tennis ball.

After a total of two hours' practice, shared between the 2 games, and a fair amount of viewing match-play, the practice day was over and the competitions awaited. These were the Army Singles and Doubles in both Rackets and Real Tennis, open to all serving members of the Forces, and the Combined Services Doubles open to all past and present members of the Forces. Since all six competitions are played over three days, it is as much an endurance event as a test of skill and game fitness. If you progress in all competitions you can expect up to eight hours on court in a day.

The first two days saw **Lt Barker** and **Sig Lewis** progress through all competitions except the CS Doubles Rackets, and on the Thursday evening they won the coveted hundred year old Regimental Rackets Doubles Cup presented by **His Royal Highness, Prince Edward**. **Lt Barker** also won the singles event.

On Friday 14 February the Real Tennis competitions were concluded. Again **Lt Barker** and **Sig Lewis** missed out in the CS Doubles Tennis, but triumphed in the Regimental Doubles and Army Singles competitions. **Sig Lewis** became the first non commissioned rank to see his name on the Regimental Doubles Cup.

After a weekend at home to celebrate, **Sig Lewis** flew back to Kosovo having created a place for himself in Army sporting history.

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INSPECTIONS AND MORE INSPECTIONS

Just to heap the pressure on whilst 33% of our regular attendee's are on ops, the rest of the Sqn has had to prepare and present for the following inspections, all within a twelve-week period: RSIT, PRE, environmental health check, documents check, POL check, security check and a Board of Officers. **Capt Chris Hopkins**, **SSgts Paul Langley**, **Paul Richards**, **Sammy Collister**, **Hazel** and **Becky** as well as a small core of TA 'Black Hand gang' are all to be congratulated for their sterling efforts in securing good reports for all the inspections.

SQN MATTERS

Alongside ops and inspections, Sqn life and trg has continued, with a lot of focus being put on recruiting. **Sgts Caroline Catton** and **Andy Knowles**, with assistance from **LCpl Kevin Tilley**, have made great improvements in this area, doubling the number of recruits on the books. The Sqn attendance has been on the up and up, with the OC, **Capt Phil McGiveron**, keeping a close eye on statistics and process. Some would say 'cooking the numbers', but this, of course, has been denied! Prior to deployment on ops, **Sgt Tony Booth** also assisted to get the system working more effectively.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go to three personnel in the Sqn. **SSgt Mick Mahoney** received the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate, a great achievement. **LCpl John** and **Angie Clothier** were married prior to his involvement in Gulf operations. Thanks go to **Capt Chris Hopkins**, **SSgt Sammy Collister**, **Sgt Caroline Patton** and **Hazel** for organizing the function for the happy couple at very short notice.

ADVENTURE TRAINING

OCdt Tim Hooper continues to put his energy into organising adventure trg for the Sqn, which everybody is looking forward to. **SSgt Sammy Collister** managed to escape the rigors of SQMS work for one week on a winter mountaineering course. Some, including **Sammy**, would say that he is still grasping for youth (and doing well, being one of the fittest in the Sqn!).

LCpl John Clothier and his wife Angie

TRAINING

We recently had a mil trg weekend, for which the majority of the Sqn turned in and gave a good account of themselves. Special notice is made of **Sig Julie Brew's** grit and effort on the assault course and **Capt Ken Sirr** who led the winning team (after all, he does have the nickname, Capt Competitive). The Regtl PTIs didn't miss the opportunity to don their white vests and do lots of shouting!

FAREWELLS AND ARRIVALS

The Sqn says farewell to **WO2 (SSM) Jim Eddowes**, off to 59 Sqn and thanks go to him for his work whilst in the Sqn, especially on the recruiting initiatives. **WO2 (SSM) Neil Olssen** is welcomed from 59 Sqn.

34 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col G Hearn**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D Newton**

We welcome the new CO, **Lt Col Garry Hearn**, who at the time of writing, has been in the chair for a whole week. We were disappointed though, to find that he hadn't fallen for **Maj Les Wood's** explanation that due to Regtl connections with an Australian unit, it was traditional to wear the unit flash upside down. Keep trying, **Les**!

SPSI BONDING DAY

The RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Daz Newton** decreed that a day of team building be held for the masses of regular troops in the Regt (well most of the 30 of us). And so it was that 49 (WR) Sig Sqn (V), and in particular, **SSgts Greg Sharp**, **Ian Middlemiss** and their merry bunch were detailed to arrange it.

After travelling to Carleton Bks in Leeds, the fifteen of the thirty who could be spared were ushered into the transport and off to wage laser war against each other. The Green Team emerged victorious after several base-busting missions from **Cpl Law**. No sooner had we finished that, we were off to bowling, where the following deserve a mention: **SSgt Williams** for delivering strikes with no emotion and **Sgt Jenkins** for pin-busting Barnes Wallace style.

Back to the bar for a few beers, a chilli, shower and a change, then into town.

After several more beers, dancing (well moving around wildly), we had a huge sandwich snack. We bonded, some more than others. Cheers to the RSM.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Major Mark Finch**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Dave Carr**

703 TRUNK NODE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Vic Wedgwood-Jones**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mark Alexander**

Following 2nd lines, the Sqn games night got into full swing, with the junior ranks taking on the seniors - the better side winning by a point. **Lt Vic Wedgwood-Jones** was particularly adept at apple bobbing, assisted by **SSgts Greg Sharpe** and **Ian Middlemiss** in a somewhat unusual manner. One sig was giving tips to competitors to 'suck it, not bite it.' He was something of an expert with an apple!

Two members of the Tp are off to 98 (BALKANS) Sqn - **Lt Vic Wedgwood-Jones** and **Sig Clare Norton**. Good luck and safe return. A warm welcome is extended to new Tp members **Sigs Sarah Carlisle**, **Renata Gordon** and **Beth Wrigglesworth**. Congratulations to **Sig Sarah Carlisle** for receiving the trophy for Most Improved Recruit.

745 ACCESS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Keith Holdstock**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mark Carrick**

Time has really flown over the last two months, and it's all change once again at 745 Tp. We said farewell to **Sgt Rob Godfrey** and a warm welcome to **Sgt Eric Casse** (our new tech PSI) and to **LCpl Sanlon** from 40 Sig Regt (V). Congratulations go to the erstwhile **Sig McKerr** who is now **OCdt McKerr** after passing the OSB.

OP METALLIC has seen the mobilization of Reservists and TA soldiers nation-wide, and as part of this, several members of the Tp are currently going through the possess of mobilization and posting to the regular Corps. Two members, **Sgt Curly Geddes** and **Sig Ben Evans** are departing to Bosnia as part of 98 (BALKANS) Sqn. We wish you all well and a safe return. Wherever you are serving, I am sure your professionalism over the coming

Col Davenport, Dep Comd 11 Sig Bde, congratulates Doc McKerr on becoming an Officer Cadet

months will be a credit to the Tp and the Regt.

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Capt Jez Bailey**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Les Middleton**

MOBILISATIONS

Along with most of the regular army, 50 Sqn is playing its part in OP TELIC, and so far, three soldiers have been mobilised for duty. These are, **Cpl Paul Standing** and **Sig Graham Black**, to 1 UK Armd Div Sig Regt and **Cpl Ruth Grainger**, to 2 Sig Regt. The OC was there to wave them off, and wished them on behalf of the Sqn, a safe tour. We will be keeping our eyes peeled to see if we spot them on CNN!

In addition to the mobilisations for OP TELIC, two other soldiers have volunteered for service in the Balkans with 98 Sqn, these being **Sig Freddie O'Brien** and **2Lt Karen Ford**. Both were mobilised in mid March for pre-deployment training at Chilwell, followed by special to arms training. They have an in-theatre date of early May. The whole Sqn wishes them a safe and enjoyable tour.

EXERCISE NORTHUMBRIAN CHASE

For this the Sqn was based at Debdon Garden TAC. **SSgt Chris Ogg** organised the ex, with the first part being a vehicle-borne map reading and navigation exercise. In true 'adapt and overcome' attitude, when a failure in one of the Landrovers almost prevented one of our groups from starting, **Sig Pat Hutton** stepped in and volunteered to use her own car. She and **Cpl Ruth Grainger** then enjoyed the style, comfort and radio of her car during their circuit of Northumberland. On Sunday morning, having rested and recuperated from Saturday's activities, the Sqn practised navigation skills, a new nav task, but this time on foot! This phase was lead by **WO2 (SSM) Les Middleton**.

EXERCISE CENTAURS BOW

Originally this comms ex had been arranged in conjunction with 7 Air Defence Bde, but due to other taskings for them, we were left to hold it alone. We hit the ground running, but our pace quickly slowed, firstly through the weather – it being thick fog for the initial move out to the locations. Then one of our RR dets, driven by **LCpl Tony Standing**, broke down during the harbour phase of the clearance patrols. To add a bit of light relief, our chief Driving Instructor, **Cpl Craig Straughan**, reversed into the Landrover driven by **SSgt Heather Fraser**. To get his own back, and for good measure, after the exercise **WO2 (SSM) Les Middleton** reversed his Landrover into **Cpl Straughan's** car. As they say, all good things come in threes. So the following week, during **Cpl Staughan's** driver training lessons, his HGV rolled back onto another car during a lesson for **Sig Wayne Brown.**

ARMY CADET COMPETITION

50 Sqn provided two stands for the Regtl Army Cadet Competition. **Sgts Ross Blair**, **Mickey Jemmett**, and **Cliffy Readshaw** ran stands of Mast Erection and Line Laying. Ultimately the competition was won by the Cadets at Strensell near York, one of the units that 50 Sqn helps support.

OC 50 Capt Jez Bailey, inspecting the cadets at Darlington for their Annual Inspection

LORD LIEUTENANT CERTIFICATES

The three soldiers nominated for this prestigious award this year, were **Sgt Stef Gibson**, from Darlington, **Cpl Ruth Grainger**, from Newcastle and **LCpl Worral** of the Northern Signals Band. **Sgt Gibson** and **LCpl Worral** received their certificates at the ceremony held at Hartlepool TAC on 25 February. **Cpl Grainger** should have received her certificate the following week, but due to her mobilisation for OP TELIC she was unavailable and will receive it next year.

The Lord Lieutenant of Durham presents LCpl Worral with a Certificate

THE FINAL DINING OUT OF MAJOR JENNINGS

Following the dress rehearsal held at the Regtl Traffic Officer, **Capt Stephen Wayman's** residence in Baldersdale, the main dining out event was held at Darlington TAC on 8 March. 80 plus friends and guests joined 50 Sqn in a right royal send off for the retiring OC, **Maj Graham Jennings**. Guest of honour was **Col Roger Davenport**, Dep Comd 11 Sig Bde. Also included in the guest list were our friends from the local RSA. Entertainment for the evening was provided firstly by the RSigs TA Band, and latterly by the 'ramblings' of the replacement OC, **Capt Jez Bailey**. One exception from the dinner was the Tp Comd at Darlington, **Lt Paul Denning**, who was away dangling from a rope in the Cairngorms. **Lt Denning** wished the retiring OC the very best via telegram prior to sharpening his crampons and setting off for the summit push.

AND FINALLY

Following the success and antics at her 25th Birthday party, 742 Tp Comd, **Lt Jo-Ann Barr**, has developed her theme of 'damaging' Regimental Majors. Following the incidents with the TM, **Maj Dave Sixsmith** and OC 90 Sqn, **Maj Richard Lenton**, **Lt Barr** has now attacked the Regt 2IC, **Maj Graham Jennings**. From now on **Miss Barr** will be know as 'Lurpak Lil', for her liberal use of butter that brought a smile to the face of the 2IC. Well done, and keep up the good work!

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**LtCol CR Owen**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) JT Cauldwell**

TELIC LIKE IT IS

While we breathe a sigh of relief that events in the Gulf have now moved on dramatically and rapidly to a more positive phase, it presents us with the opportunity to report one or two amusing stories from the front, starting with **LCpl Pete Frizwell**. **Pete**, who has the dubious honour of being the first soldier to be mobilised from the Regt. He thought he was in for the adventure of a lifetime, but on arrival in Kuwait, discovered that his specialist skills were oversupplied. He then spent the next three weeks transferred to the vital task of filling sandbags with some American colleagues – at least he had a never-ending supply of sand. He then caught a mysterious infection and was medevac'd back to the UK via Cyprus. Now that he is recovered, he is on his way back via Germany, having spent a leisurely time up in Canley. **Pete** now sports a T-Shirt with the motif 'TA Grand Tour, Chilwell, Beckingham, Grantham, Germany, Kuwait, Cyprus, UK, Germany, Kuwait' with some pride. Meanwhile before the magnificent push into Basrah, **LCpl Marieanne Meek** was catching up with a bit of well-earned sleep outside her AFV. If you remember that bit of news on TV about the worst sandstorm in living memory, Marieanne awoke in the middle of it, literally. She had to be dug out by her crew, who swiftly removed her to the back of the AFV to recover her composure, while mumbling something about cold beers! She now refuses to read *The Sandy Times*, because it gives her nightmares.

Parcel Force – Mrs Bridget Woods delivering parcels from Princethorpe to LCpl Peter Cater

We cross quickly over to 1 Armd Div Sig Regt, where **SSgt Colin Richards** is serving. **Colin** could not contain his joy at receiving a sand-coloured T Shirt from the RSM (who by the way sent one to every other member of the Regt serving in the Gulf) and the goodie bags, which he no doubt shares with others. However, although he was not amused at the Christmas Card he received from one bright spark , he was delighted to receive a parcel from the pupils of Princethorpe College, Rugby. **Colin** also bumped into an ex TA member from his Sqn, ex-Sig **Stephen Slater**, who is now serving with the Irish Guards and who appeared in one or two newspapers escorting an Iraqi PWs.

Sgt Wendy Geddes of 48 Sqn was completely surprised when she was re-united with her Node Comd from Trunk Node 037 in Kuwait. Unbeknown to **Wendy**, her Trunk Node installation was also mobilised shortly after her mobilisation and quickly followed her. News from the front suggests that she is still trying to complete the outstanding 'A jobs' from the Second Line inspections, and we believe it was a cunning plot by the Regtl Foreman to prevent it from being presented to the RSIT team. Sadly though, **Wendy** has not met up with hubby, **Nav**, who was also mobilised, but hopes to do so very soon.

EXERCISE MIDLAND SOLDIER

The Regimental Recruiting Team

EX MIDLAND SOLDIER provided an interesting concept of joint Regular and TA recruiting. In effect, TA soldiers are attached to Regular recruiting teams or ACIO's or AFCO's in an effort to enhance recruiting for both the Regular and TA. This whole Army recruiting operation took place during the period 17 – 29 March,

and as expected, 35 Sig Regt played a vital role in the Expertech and TA Open Day phase of the exercise. A team deployed from the Regt in support of 30 Sig Regt's regional recruiting team for the Expertech phase at Tern Hill. Here 400 young people visited the Army display each day to engage in hands-on activities, and the seeds of interest in both the Regular Army and TA were effectively sown. Our display team acquitted themselves well, although **Sig Jethro Towers** is still smarting from being mistaken as an Army Cadet when the Armoured Corps tried to recruit him. EX MIDLAND SOLDIER drew to a close with the National TA Open Day, which took place on Saturday, 28 March, when teams from the Regt descended on their local Town Centres both to encourage recruiting and generate some much needed free publicity. We even received brand new recruiting banners from CRLS to help, although 89 Sqn being re-named 85 Sqn did not help. Thankfully the Recruiting Team from 30 Sig Regt, led by **Sgt Wagstaff**, also supported us by deploying their brand new Gucci caravan to a major retail park near Rugby. As well as a few potential recruits, notable visitors to the event included the Dep Comd 143 Bde. Only time will tell whether or not this interesting joint recruiting concept will work. We certainly hope it does, and we look forward to attaching our soldiers to the ACIO's and AFCO's in particular.

REGIMENTAL ROUND UP

Many other activities have taken place during the past two months, ranging from exciting trg weekends to the usual series of inspections and orienteering successes. We are, however, in the inspection season, with one closely followed by another. This has seen much preparatory work towards ECIs and the dreaded RSIT. Emotions are running high, not least though during the EX SILVER SPANNER in the works weekends, when the MTWO, **WO1 Mick Doherty** and his intrepid team lend an expert hand to resolving many equipment maintenance issues suffered by many Sqns. He would, quite rightly, like to see more support, so I hope you Det Comds are reading this, because his assistance has proved invaluable, even if his sense of humour has been put under considerable pressure. Elsewhere Health and Safety has taken centre stage, as the QM, **Capt Gordon Shelley**, will testify. He understands the old adage that no matter how much you try, those dreaded inspectors will always find some fault and will always hit you with 'but that procedure changed last year – didn't you know?' Which leads me neatly to the Regtl Foreman, **WO2 Steve Brown**, who is beginning to experience a sense of humour failure over Second Line Reports and is now looking for an 'A' Team to resolve them. He now appreciates though that the working day, just like the long weekend, is but a brief flicker in time. Now I must take a break to finalise my Audit Bored and try to explain to the CO why my profit is high but my GPF low!

The MTWO and his hard pressed team

March also saw the final bursts of trg in pursuit of that grand inducement the TA Bounty. As well as the Bde Comex (which was interrupted only by the Worthington Cup Final), a number of trg weekends took place designed to complete Bounty qualifications. These included a range weekend at Llansillen to a last gasp ITD and leadership trg weekend at Leek Training Camp, both of which were deftly organised by **SSgt Tosh Hodgskins**, who is presently producing his memoirs of those weekends for the Regtl magazine. Unfortunately his article did not arrive in time for this edition of *The WIRE*. But at least we have received a full report from **SSgt Dave Arnot** on the Reg's Orienteering success in the 5 Div Relay Championships. This took place at Hare Wood near Andover on Wednesday 19 March. The Team, which competed as a minor unit, consisted of **Capt Tom Jeffries, SSgt Chris Jones** and **SSgt Dave Arnot.** Unexpectedly, against some very tough opposition from Regular units, the team performed remarkably well, achieving a highly commendable runner up position, and is to be congratulated on their fine performance. They are now looking forward to the Army Championships, that will take place at Catterick in May.

RING THOSE CHANGES

Further movements have taken place during the past two months, the most notable being the Adjt, **Capt Jack Jennings**, who has been posted to Afghanistan. We have welcomed his replacement, **Capt Charlie Roberts**. Elsewhere, we have also said farewell to **SSgt (FofS) Miller**, on his posting from 58 Sqn to 14 Sig Regt. 89 Sqn have extended a warm welcome to **SSgt** 'Waggy' **Wagstaff**, from 30 Sig Regt, who replaces **SSgt Andy Lloyd**, who is moving to 58 Sqn. By the way, there is absolutely no truth in the rumour that **Andy** has a T-shirt sporting the motif 'Grand Tour of 35 Sig Regt Birmingham-Canley-Rugby-Stoke!' To all those leaving, we wish them well in their new appointments. To all those who have recently arrived, we wish them and their families a happy and rewarding tour with 35 Sig Regt.

Handover/Takeover of the Adjutant

36 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col PN Willmott TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) WJ Morrow**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Pete Minshall**
Acting SSM **SSgt Graham Carroll**

EXERCISE WANDERING WARRIOR

The Sqn conducted EX WANDERING WARRIOR over the weekend 89 February 03. We all moved to STANTA training area on the Friday evening, where the accommodation was the usual 5 star rating. After the briefings, most of us got bedded down at around 01.30 hrs, only to be bumped at 3 by mystery forces. The response was excellent, with everyone out of their pits ready to throw weapons mags and anything to hand at the enemy (as ammo wasn't issued at this point). The Saturday morning saw the Sqn split into three sections and doing a round robin, which included a refresher on how to conduct section attacks, led by **SSgt Marlowe** and **Sgt Griffiths.** This was followed by a lesson on the art of camouflage taught by Sgt **Price and Sgt Woods,** ably assisted by **Cpl Manifield.**

Trg that was given during the day was put to excellent use on the evening, when three locs were chosen to be entered and information gathered. A touch of realism was added to the proceedings with the abundance of blank ammo, pyro, and tripflares. Most were tripped at some time, and we all had a good time.

Sunday saw an early dawn start for a platoon attack on an isolated occupied farmhouse. This was quickly dispensed with and all occupants duly dealt with. Reorg was then called, after which everyone then was involved in a 1000metre section attack. Pushing tiredness aside, the sections soon overcame the enemy and ENDEX was called.

OPERATION TELIC

HQ have provided some personnel for OP TELIC. First to go was **Cfn Peter Wright** of the LAD who is currently serving with 1 GS RLC. He was quickly followed by **Pte Caroline Evans** and **Pte Gill King,** both AGC both serving with 34 Field Ambulance, **Cfn Peter Dye,** serving with 3 RHA and **Sig Clare Hill,** deployed with 2 Sig Regt. All are currently in Kuwait. Our very best wishes go with them and we await their safe return.

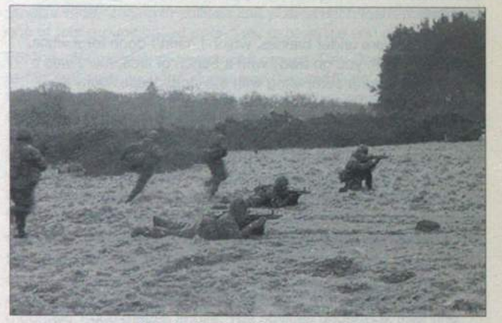
44 (CINQUE PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Bob Davis**
Acting SSM **Sgt Davis**

EXERCISE COLD SNAP by Sig Hurst

On arrival at location it was cold and dark as we unloaded from our vehs. Immediately we patrolled to our harbour area, with Section 2 on point. Within 10 minutes of the start point, **Private Cyril** was lost. Not a good start! With a prompt from the DS, he was quickly located, and we were verbally sharpened to the tempo of the weekend. Once in our harbour area, we attempted to get some sleep and start a routine. The DS however had other ideas! In particular, the SPSI, **SSgt Craig Marlowe** and **Sgt Rob Price** decided a lesson in duties of a sentry was needed. As Saturday morning started, a number of excellent lessons were laid on, covering all the basic skills, and some new ones. Plenty of pyrotechnics and blank ammo made the training both realistic and worthwhile.

The DS clearly believed we were special, and paid particular attention to the conduct of close target recces. In fact, most of the students were convinced that the SPSI was a part time cat burglar, as he displayed an unhealthy knowledge of doors, windows, locks and latches. We were also versed in the art of rummaging for hidden stores, which to any passing civilian must



Attack - Ex Cold Snap - Feb 03

have appeared as a group of soldiers who had lost a pound coin in the undergrowth! That night we put all our new skills into practice (well that was the idea anyway). We moved to a new harbour location on foot and planned the night's recce patrol. The brief and orders were clear, and everyone knew exactly what was going on. On arrival at our FRV, **Cpl Lee Bland** and **LCpl Wright** went forward to carry out the close target recce, and within 50 metres of leaving the FRV, triggered a tripflare and compromised 4 hours of planning and patrolling. At this point, the DS showed their total disbelief at **Sgt Mick Woods** and **Sgt Taff Griffiths** chasing us under continuous harassment with blank and flares until we reached the safety of our harbour area.

The next morning we took part in a platoon attack against a number of enemy targets. In the first contact, a number of soldiers were KIA, including **Capt Stuart Rowson,** who was brought back to life later as **Rifleman Rowson**. **Sig Hurst** ended up leading a fire team consisting of **Capt Rowson**, **SSM John Davis** and **Sgt Babbs Babbister.** No surprise then that we lost this battle!

All in all a fantastic weekend was had by all, and as this article goes to press, 44 Sig Sqn are looking forward to EX SUDDEN SHOCK, our combat survival ex. More about that in the next issue.

'....and then we shoot 'em all.' Ex Cold Snap - Feb 03

45 (ESSEX) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Capt Mark MacKenzie-Bell**
SSM **WO2 Louise Walker**

EXERCISE ESSEX COMMUNICATOR by *Sig Davies*

We left Colchester at around 21.00 hrs on the Friday night for a long drive to the north Norfolk coast. The people from Warley,

the other part of the Sqn, went to Stradishall, 100km away from our loc. I had already about 6 layers of clothing on but then that's normal for me, being a girl! Three and a half hours later, we arrived at Keeling Heath, an Army trg ground not far from Sheringham. The drive up to the loc had been fairly uneventful, except for when one of the members of the Sqn (who shall remain anonymous) tried out his manoeuvre, signal, mirror, frightening me and the other road users who happened to be along side him at the time.

At night we were under bashas, which I hadn't done for a while. As always when you go away with a bunch of lads, there was a snorer in the camp competing with the local geese (lucky it wasn't tactical). The idea of the ex was to teach us how to use HF equipment. We started with the whip antenna at a short distance, then a couple of the lads relocated further away to see if we could still communicate. As a sqn we use Euromux, which is a trunk communication, so using HF was pretty new to most of us. The ex was set up as a number of serials, where the situation changed every hour, the idea being that we were to record what happened when we did something different with the antenna.

We tried out various antennas, eventually building two 12' masts 50 metres apart with the antenna suspended between them. As each serial changed we had to either change the height of the antenna or adjust the antenna to suit a frequency change and still record what we heard and whether or not we could communicate with the lads at Stradishall. Not all of the frequencies worked (they were not supposed to), but this demonstrated that if you use the right antenna with the right frequency you can communicate with someone at a large distance, in our case, 100km.

We did get to talk to Stradishall and they transmitted some letter sequences, which was part of the exercise (we also heard what sounded like Russian but no one could translate!) The weekend was a good learning experience, as we do not often get the opportunity to use different kinds of comms systems other than Euromux. **Cpl Molineanx** kept us well fed (he is a chef after all!) and the SPSI kept us well entertained with horror stories of his recruit's course back in the days of the flintlock rifle where they had horses not Land Rovers!

The drive home was quicker (isn't it always!) and for an Ipswich Town supporter, it felt like betrayal driving through Norwich. But we all arrived safely back to Colchester in good spirits. I assume the guys from Warley did too.

We wish our two guys, **Cpl Strain** and **Sig Andrews** a safe and successful tour on OP TELIC and we are all thinking of you and your families. A fond farewell goes to the SSM, **W02 Walker** who has now departed. We wish her all the best in her new post.

54 (EAST ANGLIA) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Dennis Prince**
Acting SSM	**SSgt Osbourne**

Over the past few months a lot has happened to members of the Sqn. Of notable interest was the marriage of **Lt Darren Ambler** to his fiancee **Miss Harrison.**

During February the TAC had to be evacuated to allow the Bomb Disposal team to blow up an object found in our lake. Apparently the items found have been in the lake for years.

OPERATION TELIC

Five members of the Sqn received their call up notices. Of those accepted into service, **Cpl Trevor Webb** is currently serving with 2 Sig Regt and **LCpl Chris Goodman** is with 1 ADSR. Both are (at the time of writing) well and we wish them a safe tour.

98 (BALKANS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Some members of 98 (Balkans) Sig Sqn are about to deploy to the Balkans. There are four members of 54 Sqn, **SSgt Jo Outlaw** (SQMS) **Sgt Les Roles** (Tech) **Cpl Ruth Griffith** (AS Ops (EUROMUX)) and **LCpl Karen Everitt** (Tech). We wish you all a safe tour and look forward to your many war stories on your return.

OFFICERS & SNCO'S DINNER NIGHT

On 22 March 03 the Offrs and SNCOs, together with their wives/partners, dined out **Maj** and **Mrs Prince** in the OTC Annex in Cambridge. Also present were former members of the Sqn, notably ex 756Tp OC, **Lt Iain Sainsbury**, **W02 (SSM)(Retd) Martin Wright** and their wives. It was a marvelous meal, once again prepared by **Sgt Pete Route** and his helpers, **Cpl Geoff Shearing** and **LCpl Paul Rymills.** The evening was a tremendous success thanks to **SSgt** 'Gaz' **Sinclair** and his band of helpers.

Looking ahead to the future, there are no changes to the current PSIs, led by **SSgt Sinclair.** However the change of OC is due to take place sometime in April 03 and the Sqn hierarchy will look somewhat like this:

OC (Des)	**Maj Phil Taylor**
21C	**Capt Ros Keegan**
Ops	**Lt Glenn Baker**
Tp Comd 754	**Capt Jason Wragg**
Tp Comd 755	**2Lt Ross Anderson**
Tp Comd 756	**2Lt Andrea Spurling**
Tp Comd 757	**Lt Darren Ambler**
Sqn Offrs	**Lt Nick Migallo and 2Lt Rick Morley** (currently at Bristol Uni.)
SSM	**SSgt Andy Osborne**
FofS	**W02 (FofS) Rogers**
YofS	**SSgt (YofS) Robertson**
OCdts	**OCdt Katharine Begg**

39 (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**LtCol AH Campbell-Black**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) JR Stillie**

If anyone in the unit was hoping for a slightly more sedate pace in the run up to Easter, they would be disappointed! Up to February, we were working hard to launch the outgoing CO, **Lt Col Paul Towers** from the unit to MOD in London. After quite a hectic period, everything that needed to be achieved had been, and the CO was quite literally dragged from the Regt on 23 February. Thanks to LAD for all their hard work preparing the chariot! Our best wishes to **Lt Col Towers** and **Sue** for the future!

All that hard work done, and thinking the worst was over, it was time to say goodbye to **WO1 (RSM) Frank Roberts**, who leaves us after three years to be a Tp Comd in 11 Sig Regt. We all wish him well in his final tour at Blandford. **Capt Timmy Godden**, the Regt Admin Offr and his wife **Wendy** move on to Bristol OTC as Adjt/QM. Good luck to you!

Life at 39 still goes on, and with farewells said, we say hello to the newly-arrived members of the team. We welcome our new CO, **Lt Col Adrian Campbell-Black** and his wife **Jenny**, who arrive from Koblensk; and his right-hand man, the new RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Jim Stillie**, who, with his wife, **Lynne**, hails from 2 Sig Regt.

Our congratulations to **Rick Lock** on his commissioning and appointment as RAO. Welcome to **SSgt Geoff Kerr**, who joins the Permanent Staff of the Regt as FSA for six months. Life on the other side of the fence should prove interesting.

REGIMENTAL OPERATIONS

As usual this is a busy time for ops, with constant trawls for manpower in support of current deployments, and the inevitable taskings from Bde to provide manpower for demonstrations and visits. The team consists of **WO2 (YofS) Spence Wolf**, **SSgt (FofS) Dicky Dickinson** and **SSgt Richie Arundel**, the Trg SSgt, ably assisted by **Miss Jo Hunt** the Ops clerk, provider of coffee to the world! Our leader, **Maj John McKay**, the Trg Maj, has locked himself in the office and is refusing to speak to anyone. Apparently Bde still haven't got the idea that a TA unit cannot provide 20 tps to a task on a Wednesday unless they mobilise!

The impending refurbishment programme is causing consternation, with the ops team looking for accommodation for all the comms assets, and trying to convince the TA that trg will continue as usual - and of course, the bar will be open. Anyone in the Bristol area with free garaging for 50 vehs and trailers, please contact the FofS!

The escape committee is pleased to announce its latest success, with **FofS Dicky Dickinson** running (honest!) off to 280 (UK) Sig Sqn on promotion to WO2. We look forward to welcoming **SSgt (FofS) Skip Stephens** in June. Congratulations to **Richie**, with the Regt Shooting Team picking up a fistful of trophies at the Corps SAAM. Again, well done!

HEADQUARTERS (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SQUADRON

EXERCISE YEOMANRY CANTER - *by LCpl Polly Campbell RAMC*

The weekends focus on driver skills became apparent when the Friday night move to loc involved an orienteering flavour. Dvr and nav pairs were allocated to vehs, issued with a map and instructions. The part of the took longer than anticipated, with none of the pairs arriving until Saturday

Off-road driving was next, and we were all given some instruction on the hows, whys and wherefores before we were let loose on a really excellent course. For the first lap, the instructors gave a run down of the obstacles and how to tackle them. For the next lap, the instructors observed whilst giving input. I learned two lessons from this:

Firstly, don't fall into the trap of not following all procedures in the mistaken belief that you can bypass them using your memory of the course. Time in recce is always well spent. I did not test the waters before leaping in, and discovered that what looked like a shallow puddle was actually really rather a lot more!

Secondly, I learnt how important it is to familiarise myself with the vehicle before getting into difficulties. I got stuck in said puddle and after crawling out through the window onto the bonnet I sprawled inelegantly fumbling to find how to release the front tow hitch, which was now submerged. Trg value was doubled, as the REME had to come and rescue me (for a small fine of one crate of the proverbial).

Sgt Verrinder waiting for LCpl Polly Campbell to get her feet wet

5 (QUEENS OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Rich Belbin**
SSM	**WO2 Robbie Hall**

EXERCISE OXON DRAGON SLIDE 1 - *by Sig Anne Turnbull*

On 31 January, 25 personnel from our Sqn and 5 from other Bde units departed Banbury by coach for the Austrian Tyrol, with the aim of qualifying all members of the group (of ability ranging from novice to advance) to at least a basic proficiency. We arrived at our accommodation in the small alpine village of Hochfilzen. After getting our gear issued during bright sunshine, we were all a bit perturbed by the drop in temperature and looming grey clouds atop the mountain at the start of our first day on the slopes. Our ski-meister, **SSgt Phil Fluck**, made a speedy assessment of the group's wide-ranging (!) abilities and placed each team-member in one of four groups based upon their experience and capabilities.

For the intermediate and advanced groups, Day One allowed for re-familiarisation with the slopes and the practising of some basic techniques. We beginners spent many a happy hour side-stepping up the nursery slope, snow-ploughing back down again and falling over at the bottom! Given that the weather had taken a turn for the worse, it was little wonder that everyone's attention was particularly sharp at the evening lecture on safety in mountain areas. Interesting though it was, we were hoping we wouldn't need to put any of it into practice during the week.

On our second day of skiing, the advanced group moved on to tackle a new peak, that of St Jakob. The intermediate group were aiming at perfecting their technique, focussing on turns, and attempting some of the more difficult runs at the top of the mountain 1,000 metres above. The novices undertook their first shaky descent away from the introductory slopes.

The next few days saw a rapid improvement of skiers' abilities, progressing to parallel turns, and traversing the inclines comfortably at increasing speed. Ever watchful and not one to dawdle, **SSgt Fluck** was keen to forge ahead by issuing alpine equipment to do a cross-country run. The next day we were introduced to Snow Rafting (yes just like Water but on snow and off piste)

Depressingly, our final day arrived all too quickly. Stranger still, the snow clouds had finally admitted defeat, and the skills assessment was set against a stunning backdrop of dazzling snow and brilliant blue skies. Once every team-member had been graded on their overall skiing ability, the downhill racing began, with times being noted and positions calculated. After an afternoon of free skiing, we reluctantly returned our kit (is it normal to grow fond of boots so tight I wonder?) and returned to the accommodation to reap the rewards of the week.

Sig Kerry Butt received the Honorary Colonel John Bridgman's Award for the most improved skier, whilst **WO1 (SVWO) Ray Phillips** received the quickest injury sustained on a skiing trip, for twisting his knee within half an hour of getting off the coach on the first day.

THE REME LAD INFANTRY SKILLS AND LEADERSHIP WEEKEND

Cpl Andy Badman showed us all how to pack a Bergen and this was quickly followed with an informal PowerPoint presentation on patrolling skills. This is one of the things I really enjoy about the LAD - we know what to do, do what were told, and there is really good team spirit, where everyone can contribute and their opinions are valued.

Infantry skills were next. Recognition, with **LCpl Pete Rendall,** was imaginatively presented as an OP with binoculars. He had reduced everything to a1/300 scale diorama model with British and GENFORCE armour. Other activities were fire control orders and videos on the recce patrol. The afternoon was spent in the workshop to start converting an MJ into 'mother' mobile workshop and home. We learned new metal and woodworking skills, modification work on Bedfords and some work under the bonnet of the LAD CP to finally give it some 'ooomph' (a technical REME term…).

Leadership training was a lot of fun, with command tasks presented by **Capt Greenslade** (OC LAD), **AQMS Peet** and **SSgts Clarke** and **Ward**. This was followed by individual presentations and group discussions. After only 15 minutes prep time, I had to present for 5 minutes on 'Why I want to be a Christmas Tree!' It was an excellent weekend, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the camaraderie and team spirit that is the hallmark of the LAD.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Bill Ruthven**
SSM **SSgt Kath Addison-Scott**

There has been considerable movement of personalities over the last few months. As **WO2 (SSM) Phil Martin** deployed to Bosnia, **SSgt Kath Addison-Scott** has now two hats for the time being, that of YofS and SSM. Others on deployment to warmer climes include **Capt Jim Bloomer**, **SSgt Stu Fidler** and **LCpl Herbie Hyde**. We wish them a speedy and safe return. We welcome **SSgt Nick Marsh** as our new NRPS SQMS, following the retirement of **SSgt Alan Oakley**. **Alan** served a total of 40 years, mainly with the RA, serving as NRPS SQMS for his final 18 years. We wish him a happy retirement and send our sympathy to his wife, **Bridget**. She will have him under her feet all the time now - that is, unless Bristol Rovers are playing!

EXERCISE FAST STRIKE

EX FAST STRIKE was an inf-based exercise in Caewent Training Area. The Sqn worked in four-man patrols behind enemy lines, tasked with gaining int on a group of terrorists who were producing chemical weapons. Despite various PSIs praying for rain throughout the ex, the weather was amazing for the time of year. We built up a picture of enemy strengths, weapons, capabilities and future intentions (much to the surprise of **SSgt Stu Fidler**, who had organised the ex). This included their strategic use of women (**Cpls Emma Wells** and **Kim Hodges**) to carry out all menial tasks, especially carrying hazardous materials, washing up and being constantly shouted at.

We practised contact drills before our night-time patrol tasking. Later **Cpl Helen Winterson** and **OCdt Jo Godfrey** planned and carried out a night ambush, pleasing everyone by positioning both killing and cut-off groups in a comfortable bramble thicket. The final part of the ex was a first light assault on the railhead where the terrorists were intending to transport the chemical weapons they had produced. This gave **Sig Rachel Donegan** the chance to lead her patrol to destroy the sentry position, which cleared the way for the main assault on the railhead. Needless to say we were successful.

By rotating command appointments throughout the weekend, it gave everyone, whatever their experience, a chance to learn and develop their inf skills. It was a great success and enjoyed by all who took part. Our thanks go to **SSgt Stu Fidler**, who organised everything.

Relaxing at the end of EX FAST STRIKE

EXERCISE INTREPID COMMUNICATOR

EX INTREPID COMMUNICATOR took place in Hullavington Airfield training area. It was a chance for those new to the Sqn to get their hands on the equipt in slow time, and for constructive det maintenance to take place. Starting with an overview of how NCRS operates, lessons quickly moved on to the more practical aspects of selecting a comms site, setting up the dets on a dummy net, mast erection and generator siting. The weekend was about filling in knowledge gaps and ensuring that new members of the Sqn were up to speed with setting up and operating the kit before the next Regtl ex. This fairly relaxed weekend gave a good opportunity for the Sqn to build on teamwork and also celebrate the birthday of **Cpl Emma Wells** (age withheld). The planning, for what was a successful weekend, was down to **Sgt Inns**, our intrepid PSI Tech.

Under the Knife goes Cpl Emma Wells' birthday cake....

EXERCISE SNOW LION 2003

'There's a DCI here on EX SNOW LION 03. Do you fancy putting in a team RQ?' 'Let me see now. What have I got on in March? OK Sir, I'm your man...' And so it begins. How to advertise an event that is unknown to the people from the deepest darkest south of England. 'Just exactly where are the Cairngorm Mountains? Austria, Italy, France?' I asked... 'Well, you're on the right track that it is in Europe... They're in the highlands of Scotland...' 'Oh' was my quiet reply.

Not to be put off, the intrepid 6 decided that we should brave the journey and take on the rugged terrain of Scotland. Time appreciation being of extreme importance, we estimate 10 hrs with stops. **OCdt Jo Godfrey**, **Cpl Claire Goodwin and LCpl Sean Smith**, **Sigs Charlie Bonnet** and **Nick Milne** were confused. The RQ had said 6hrs... Ah, he is flying up – something about RHIP!

Saturday 1 March, we arrive at Rothimurchus Lodge, and no white fluffy stuff to be seen anywhere! Sunday 2 March, and the whole landscape was transformed to 8 inches deep overnight. The skiing was fantastic and the views magnificent. Surely it couldn't last? It didn't. The temperature dropped and beautiful snow turned to ice. It was going to prove an interesting week!

Of the 6 days planned, and to the credit of the mountain staff and persistence of organisers, we managed 4 days and were able to compete for all the trophies. Our haul consisted of trophies for **Sig Charlie Bonnet** and **OCdt Jo Godfrey**, and a second place for **Cpl Claire Goodwin**. The social (aprés ski) was much anticipated. How could Scotland compare with Austria? There was no need, given a bunch of young enthusiastic people and the odd not so young one. The social scene was electric. We were introduced to some wonderful new games, the most interesting of which was leg wrestling, at which **Cpl Claire** (following secret tutelage from her PSAO, **Capt Bob Sheldon**) was master!

WO2 (RQMS) Dave Hizzet and the 39 Sig Regt (V) team would like to thank the organisers for overcoming many difficulties and allowing the competition to succeed. We all enjoyed the event and look forward to competing again next year...sadly without the RQ. 'This is my last year of competition,' he was heard to remark. But a close source said that he says that every year.

The intrepid adventurers on the slopes

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **LtCol SCR Malik TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) SPJ White**

OPERATION TELIC

The Regt currently has a number of personnel deployed with Corps units on OP TELIC. These range from 16 Air Asslt Bde to 7 Armd Bde Sig Sqns. The CO and the Regt wish all personnel deployed a speedy and safe recovery back to the Regt.

OPERATION TELIC WELFARE DONATION

The Worshipful Company of Drapers, our Regtl affiliated Livery Company, have kindly donated £1000 to the Regt to assist with helping the families of deployed personnel from the Regiment. This is a generous donation, which has been greatly received.

68 (INNS OF COURT AND CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Jonathan Manley**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Terry Gardiner**

ICE, ICE BABY - *by LCpl Paul Broadbent*

One of the more unusual courses a soldier can attend must surely be the annual Army Ice Camp. This gives members the opportunity to sample bobsled, luge, or skeleton, under top-level coaches, on the Olympic course in Norway.

I arrived at silly o'clock at Heathrow to join about 40 other keen volunteers. After a short flight to Oslo, we transferred to Hunderfossen – it might have been autumn in England, but it was already winter in Norway. We then had a chance to unload our kit into the cabins, and get our first look at the course we would be 'sliding' for the next week.

The Olympic course is basically an ice slide a kilometre long, with 16 curves in it. For logistical reasons, the bobsleds start for the top, the luge and skeleton sliders start halfway down, and gradually move up the course, as skill develops.

Instruction is from world-class experienced coaches. My luge coach was a former GB Olympic coach, and the coaches in the other disciplines had similar backgrounds. Although the course is intensive, everyone has sufficient time to concentrate on what is after all, a potential adrenaline-inducing sport. As part of the safety element, no-one is asked to go beyond their own skill level – each person has the opportunity to say 'no' if they reach the point at which they are no longer comfortable with what they are doing.

On the second day, having drawn our 'kit' from stores, we were given some initial instructions and then had our first taste of luge. For those not familiar, luge is basically a sledge than you lie flat on your back on – the slope of the course allows you to see forward, and steering is done by applying pressure on two "paddles" using your thighs. Skeleton, on the other hand, is like a tea tray with runners, which you lie down on and go head first down the course (and they called the lugists mad!!)

It is hard to describe the first run – it is just like sledging, but on ice, and without brakes or snow banks. The speeds reached at this level are relatively slow (15-20 mph) but give a good impression of what lies ahead! After a couple of slides, it's back to the lodge.

Accommodation is in a fairly upmarket holiday camp, with breakfast and evening meal an all-you-can eat affair. Time off the course was our own, but with the nearest town (Lillehammer) 10 miles away, it was easier to rest and socialise on site.

The pattern was much the same for the week, with individuals starting further and further up the course as their skills developed. There were a few accidents (I was the first to prove that a luge will fit sideways on the course), but injuries were minor – the course, although challenging, is essentially a safe environment. Eventually, the best were doing runs at anything up to 50 mph. Additionally, various Olympic teams were holding their trials, so it was a great opportunity to see some real pros in action.

One purpose of the Ice Camp is to allow military and Olympic coaches to scout for new talent for their teams. The best performing people were subsequently invited to compete in the Army Championships at Igls (Austria), and to go on from there, if good enough.

In all, it was a rare opportunity to take part in an unusual and exciting sport, with people of all ranks (Sig to Col) across the Regular Army, TA, RAF, and Navy, in a picturesque part of the world. If extreme sports are for you, then this is the course for you. Notice usually come out around the end of August.

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Michael Wood**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Jim Swain**

The Sqn has been through another very busy period over the last few months, with the Regtl ECI, Regtl trg, Sqn Visitors' Day and the continuing Recruit Induction Weekends.

REGIMENTAL ECI

The Regt had its Annual ECI during the period 3-21 February 03.

One of the unsung heroes of the Sqn, Mrs Margaret Nutbeem, who has been with us as Admin Officer for 14 years.

The Sqn was put through its equipment paces by the REME. Our thanks go to **SSgt (SQMS) John Fensom** and his team for all their hard work in achieving a 'Green'.

REGIMENTAL TRAINING

The Regt organised a training weekend in January 03, where we all came together at Napier Barracks, part of the Cinque Ports trg area. The weekend consisted of Offr trg, SNCO trg and Trade trg and a sports competition with mess functions on the Saturday evening. Rumour has it that **SSgt Jason Barsley**, the Sqn SPSI, played his joker on the Sunday morning during the basketball competition by becoming a spectator rather than a player (a good night in the mess). The weekend was a resounding success, with a high attendance from the Sqn. The Regt went to St Martin Plains Camp during February 03 and concentrated on its shooting skills. The weekend concluded with a March and Shoot competition, in which the Sqn came a creditable third.

SQUADRON VISITORS' DAY

Lt Julian Picton put together a Visitors' Day programme in March 03 to coincide with Sqn training. Several VIP's, including **Cllr Maurice Hurrell**, the Mayor of Chelmsford; our Hon Col, **Col David Casstles TD DL**; and **Col Stephen Foakes TD DL**, a former Sqn OC, visited us during trg and were then invited to lunch in the field. The Sqn OC, **Maj Michael Wood**, briefed the visitors on the activities taking place during the visit and also informed them of the future plans of the Sqn.

RECRUIT INDUCTION WEEKENDS

The Sqn has three recruits attending the Regtl Induction weekends in January and February 03. Recruiting is going well and we already have 4 recruits for the Induction trg that commences in April.

FINALLY

We say farewell to **Cpl Joe Smith**, who leaves us to join a medical unit. Thanks **Joe** for all your time and work you have put into the Sqn and in particular, 881 Sig Tp. You will be missed by all ranks.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (AYIOS NIKOLAOS)

CO	**Lt Col R A Sharp MBE**
SSM	**WO1 (RSM) M R Neighbour**

2 SQUADRON

OC	**Lt Cdr DL Jones RN**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Jennings**

New arrivals into the Sqn are **Cpl Neil Smith** and wife **Michelle**, **Cpl Dave Hammond** and family and **SAC Ian Stanfield** and his new wife **Leanne**. Welcome.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SECTION

Sec SSgt **SSgt Tony Rosen**

Information Technology Support (ITS) is responsible for the day to day administration and upkeep of a very busy and challenging NT 4 system. This responsibility is split between IS Ops and MOD civilians and as you can imagine, the idle banter floating around an open plan office could almost be a full time job. It is easier to learn the system and all the applications than learning all the station abbreviations, different sections and personnel in this cacophony of communications.

Stalwart of the Sec is **Sgt Del Paz**, as he winds his way through the coming and going of all the other staff. He has had to bid farewell to **WO2 Vince Tipple**, who is hopefully on the road to a full recovery back in the UK and **SSgt Pete Howlett**, who is also back in the UK. Well done to **Sgt Chris Jacobs** on completion of his IS Ops course and good luck in 14 Sig Regt. Congratulations to **Sgt Fiona Whitty** and **SSgt John Whitty** on the birth of their new baby daughter.

The Sec's Bermuda triangle of illnesses has caused a near complete decimation of the staff. Between us we have notched up nearly three months bed time in TPMH Akrotiri. In fact at one point, **WO2 Vince Tipple** and **Sgt Del Paz** did a handover/ takeover of the en suite (lifers) room. The challenge goes out for anyone to come here and not get ill in the first six months. We guarantee you will have a thoroughly enjoyable and knowledge-increasing tour.

New arrivals include **SSgt Tony Rosen** from 1 (UK) ADSR and Sgt **Tony Hubbold**, our token blue job arrived on loan from the Tech pool.

Finally just a few words to say a belated welcome to **Mark Peglar** and **Stuart Johnson**, two of the MOD's finest, who would go down a storm if they entered *Stars in your Eyes* as Gareth Gates and Will Young. A quick hello to **Gary** our cleaner/tea boy who would be upset if he didn't get a mention. (We'll tell him about the crating later)

EXERCISE MOUFFLON MARCH - *by Capt Sarah Pittaway*

Despite rumours echoing around the Station that EX MOUFFLON MARCH was a 'real beasting', the ex was a resounding success and was enjoyed by almost all of the personnel who took part. Although labelled as an ex it did not involve crawling around in the mud or even running around with leaves in our hair. It was an IS ex that was split into two phases. The first phase was back to the classroom with lessons in basic (in some cases very basic!) map reading, followed by NBC training, VCPs and patrolling techniques. Thanks to the instructors, **WO2 (SSM) Hay**, **Sgt Tony Caprio** and of course those instructors from 2 Bn The Light Infantry.

Phase two was a little more serious as we moved on to the practical application of our new skills. This entailed the guarding of a site and defending it from journalists, suicide bombers and strange officers dressed in sheets. A notable performance was given by **LCpl Kelly**, whose war cry of 'D'Oh' (or something along those lines!) as the rioters opened the gate amused us all. **LCpl Tancock's** bravery at trying to rescue **Cpl Vincent** (RAF) from the gutter resulted in red faces all round as he fell in the gutter not once, but twice!

Without doubt the three weeks were good training with over 200 personnel exercised from 1 and 2 Sqns. Only a few weeks later their newly acquired IS skills were used for real. Thanks go to those personnel who added to the realism of the exercise by playing 'the enemy'.

EXERCISE HOT BEAR 2-16 MARCH 03 - *by Sgt Jerry Frayne RAF*

EX HOT BEAR was an adventure training expedition to Banff, Canada. The expedition was made up of 14 personnel from all 3 services, 2 Navy, 4 RAF and 8 RSigs.

We started skiing on Wednesday 5 March 03, and the party divided into 2 groups, beginners and intermediates. **Sgt Colin Paton** (APTC) took the beginners and **SSgt John Driver** (Exped Leader) took the intermediates. After 3 days of hard skiing and eating snow in Norquay Ski Village, the beginners had progressed well and the intermediate group were finishing off double diamond black runs, without falling over.

On Saturday the temperatures had dropped to about –32°C, with the wind chill taking it to –40°C to –50°C, so we had a much-needed day's rest. We were back on the slopes on Sunday feeling refreshed.

On Sunday and Monday we visited Sunshine Village, where it takes a 20-min gondola ride just to get to the slopes. But once there the three ski areas were ample to choose from, each one being on the large scale. By the end of Monday, the beginners had progressed into doing easy black runs.

On Tuesday we visited Norquay Ski Village, where there had been a large fall of snow, and after a morning session with the instructors, we had some free skiing time. During this period most people ended up on the half pipe trying to do jumps and acrobatics, **Sgt Sean Middleton** RSigs managed to crash into **Sgt Paton**, who was taking photos of his jump. That night we finished an hour early because **Sgt Jerry Frayne** RAF had organised a trip to see an Ice Hockey match between Calgary Flames and Edmonton Oilers.

On the Wednesday we went skidoo'ing, which was an experience for us all. There was carnage everywhere as people ploughed into the deep snow. We had to dig one or two of the skidoos out by hand!

On the Thursday, our last day, we visited Lake Louise Ski Village. By this time the beginners had moved up to join the intermediate group. After a morning skiing with the instructors we had the rest of the afternoon to free ski.

We flew back to the UK on the Friday/Saturday and completed the journey on Sunday back to Cyprus.

SSgt John Driver demonstrates powder skiing in the Rocky Mountains.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

98 (BALKANS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj C Edwards**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) N Dixon**

A NEW SQUADRON IS BORN

After conception over 2 years ago and a trawl for personnel last summer, the Corps' latest formed TA Sig Sqn is finally mobilised and ready to meet the challenge of the new Pan-Balkan Theatre of Operations. In a new initiative encompassing 11 UK units (both TA and regular) and 4 nationalities, 98 Sig Sqn has been tasked with providing the comms for OP OCULUS from May until November of this year. There will be 4 tps consisting of HQ Tp (Banja Luka), UK NSE Tp (Bosnia), UK NSE Tp (Kosovo) and the Multi-National Brigade (NW) Tp also based in Banja Luka. The Sqn will number around 90 personnel, with roughly one third each from the TA, Regular Army, and other Nationals. The TA personnel have been drawn almost entirely from 11 Sig Bde, and have been recently bolstered by soldiers from 16 Sig Regt, 7 Sig Regt, 3 Div (UK) Sig Regt and JHC, along with signallers from the Netherlands, Canada and New Zealand. This will enable the Sqn to fulfil the newly expanded role.

TA Sqn personnel had their first briefing in July 2002 and have since attended 4 training weekends held at Altcar, Leek, Swynnerton and Nescliff trg camps. These were all suitably bleak places during the winter months, including a memorable weekend in a disused ammo bunker with no heating and no showers. The trg was essentially of a military skills nature and focused particularly on weapons skills, driver trg and personal fitness. This prior training meant the Sqn performed well at the 2-week mobilisation course at RTMC Chilwell in March, impressing many of the instructors (a hard task) and losing only one member of the Sqn who was mobilised to OP TELIC instead. This was well above the usual 10% 'wastage' at RTMC. (We even managed to pick up a few extras as well.)

Members of the Sqn are now undergoing 3 weeks Special to Arms trg at either Imphal Barracks, Donnington, Aldershot, London District, Rugby or RSS Blandford to ensure all their trade skills are up to date before deployment. After that there is only the OPTAG training to complete before returning to Chilwell to await flights out to theatre at the end of April.

The soldiers of 98 (Balkans) Sig Sqn are involved in a new concept of operations that could have long-reaching implications on the way the Corps deploys in the future. This will be the first time the TA have commanded a mixed TA, Regular and Multi-National Sqn, making it a high profile deployment.

JOINING THE SQUADRON - *by Cpl Brierly*

I only joined the Sqn at Chilwell, but it has been fine fitting in, because I am quite outgoing and I knew some members from 33 Sig Regt who were here already. I didn't have to do all of the trg, as I have already done OP TELIC and NBC training focused towards the Gulf. The range days were useful, because I usually

98 (Balkans) Sig Sqn

end up teaching on an ITD weekend and don't get chance to go on the range as much as I would like. I will be here training at Donnington for the next 2 weeks and I have just found out to day that I will be doing IT support on the help desk and learning a bit of system admin on the network. I do IT support at work so it will have quite a bit of cross-over with my civilian job.

The accommodation here is fine, but there are no facilities and nowhere to sit with the group, which I miss a bit after Chilwell. I am looking forward to the tour because I have never been deployed before, so the whole experience and working as a team with the people out there should be really interesting and rewarding. Hopefully I will get out of camp to have a look about a bit as well.

NEW TRADE TRAINING - *by Cpl Norton*

After completing my trg at Chilwell, I'm at Imphal barracks in York for the next 3 weeks. I'm learning my new trade in the comcen, which will be mostly message handling. There's a team of civilian staff here that I will be working with. They have been very welcoming and are very organised. They have given us a programme of what will be happening over the next few weeks, so it is a very friendly and relaxed atmosphere. The programme is just basic message-handling skills, message formats and carrying on from there.

After the initial trg, we will be put on a shift and get chance to practise, so we should know all about what we are doing when we arrive in theatre. It is completely new to me as it is the equivalent to a class 2 in my trade and I am a class 3. The trg I have done before will probably be useful as a base, but I don't think there will be an awful lot of overlap. I have been put up in a hotel down the road, which is very nice and I have driven up here in my own car so I can get about a bit. I am really looking forward to getting out to Bosnia and getting the job done. It will be a new experience and hopefully stand me in good stead when I get back home.

MY NEXT STEPS - *by Sgt Rolls*

For me, the trg at Chilwell was mostly going over old ground again, but it is always useful, as people tend to forget what they have done before. It was good to go on the ranges and do some shooting. The instructors gave 110% and they were really great. It was good to get everyone together again after the initial 4 weekends trg, and for a longer duration this time.

I am now on my NT workstation NT server course, then next week I am on the exchange server 5.5. It is mostly old hat, as I have been working on the NT server for about 4 years now, but the exchange server 5.5 will be new ground, although I have had a bit of experience over the last 6 months. I am looking forward to getting out into theatre. It will be my first op tour for quite some time. I haven't got any concerns at all.

THE STORY SO FAR - *by Sig Dowling*

We have done quite a bit of trg for the mobilisation now and it has all been quite good. Some of the stuff we did at Chilwell I hadn't done before with my own Sqn, but the trg we did with 98 Sqn prior to mobilisation covered most of the programme. The instructors have been absolutely brilliant. They made us feel at ease and took the pressure off us. They were out to help and took away any of the worries I had about the tour. Spending 2 days on the ranges was good. I had never done a night shoot before, so that was quite a big learning session for me. I have never done any mines trg before either, so the mine awareness lessons were interesting for me with the different bits of kit from what we are used to. (And learning how the locals tamper with it.)

I am glad we were able to keep the Sqn together for all the trg, because we all met up as a team and knew each other from before. It's nice to have a few mates to go for a drink with at the end of the day.

TRADE TRAINING - *by Sig Walker*

Over the next few weeks I'm going to be doing PC repair and networking at Donnington. So far it is all stuff I have done before, so it is all fairly easy at the moment. The instructors are very straightforward and well trained. The programme for the next few weeks will basically be ripping PC's apart and putting them back together again. It's going to be very interesting, as we have got lots of stuff to look at.

The accommodation here is fantastic, better than I was expecting. We have got our own room with a key and lots of space and the cookhouse is good too. I am looking forward to getting out into the town and seeing what is out there, because we haven't been out yet so I guess we will go out at the end of the week and see what it is like.

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj A Blackwell**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) ACE Burdge**

INTRODUCTION

The Sqn has continued to perfect its firefighting skills on OP FRESCO over the past couple of months, as well as draw up plans for deployments to Canada (BATUS and WAINWRIGHT), UK, the Gulf and Poland. Like so many other units recently, we got on and off several boats, aircraft and buses over the period. We are now 'definitely' going to BATUS this summer and are looking forward to 3 months high quality warfighting training between May and July.

The Sqn also celebrated success on the recent A2 promotion board, with all three Tp SSgts being selected for promotion to WO2. Congratulations to **SSgts Buzz Burrows** (A Tp), **Tom Gibbins** (B Tp) and **Fred Fensom** (Sp Tp) on well deserved selections.

On the sporting front the Sqn continues its victorious tradition. We won the BA (G) Rugby Championships for minor units and went back to UK to play the Army Final against ATR Lichfield (a very large 'minor' unit!) to whom we came second in a well fought match. The Sqn shooting team is currently at the Corps SAAM at Bisley. More news next issue.

CIVILIAN STAFF GET CALLED UP FOR FIELD EXERCISE – *by Gareth Jones*

One cold and frosty morning the civilian staff of 200 Sig Sqn were invited by the OC, **Maj Alan Blackwell**, to visit the deployed Bde HQ. The aim of the visit was to enlighten all the civilian staff (be they dependants or German employees) of the role of the Unit, in accordance with Investing in People (IIP) requirements. I am reading for a BA (Hons) in media and photography at the University of Portsmouth and happened to be home on study leave, so I was delighted to be included.

The morning started with a Health and Safety brief from the QM, **Capt Kev Jones** (my Dad!) All signed up and thoroughly briefed on what not to touch, we boarded the minibus and departed for the field. Over a cup of tea and compo chocolate, **Maj Alan Blackwell** explained the role of the Unit and invited **Lt Hannah Stoy** to take this civilian group around the main complexes. **Pauline Gilbert** from the welfare office was 'Mrs Competitive Mother'. Nothing stopped her! She clambered over the ageing armoured vehicles, tried the Personal Role Radio (PRR) for size and interrogated the sigs in the back of the vehs! The visit came to an end and we departed for Talbot Bks to get warm and wash the mud off our boots (I wish I had listened to my Dad and not worn my white trainers. Cleaning them was interesting!)

The visit was excellent and very informative. Hopefully this familiarization exercise will enhance the performance of the support services the civilians offer and will be a talking point for many months to come.

DRIVER COMMANDERS COURSE, AFV 43 SERIES *by Sig Harmer*

After the initial introduction to the course, we settled down and got straight into the first two weeks of theory work. Throughout this, we learned to understand the different systems, such as lubrication and fuel systems. We also learned the oil types and capacities to ensure that we conduct our first works correctly. All in all, by the end of the two weeks, we had learned the entire theory behind a 43 series vehicle. The two weeks culminated in a nervewracking theory test, then we all moved on to the driving.

The driving consisted of an initial cross-country phase, during which we drove a 432 into an ice filled lake and we had to run in and conduct a casevac. This was not much fun due to the water being freezing cold. After this we then did a track bash in the same lake! The next week we were all annoyed when they had to put the course on hold due to an ex. However during the quiet moments of the ex, we were able to get some more driving hours in.

Just as we had settled back into the course, OP FRESCO was called, and we all departed for that. On our return we continued with the course as normal, and got on with the road-driving phase, with a few laughs. The DMIs seemed to go from 20 cigarettes a day to 100, and with a little Prozac, the course finally came to an end with a 100% pass rate.

EXERCISE FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET 4 – *by Sig Echelon*

EX FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET 4 was designed to bring the Sqn up to CP4 prior to becoming the high readiness bde. This trg would normally be carried out in Poland, but due to the current climate, the loc was changed to Sennelager, the Sqn's home.

Ech in the bde comprises: REME Spt, Catering Spt, Tech Wksps, Power Spt, QM Spt, Bulk Fuel and finally the Unit Spares Account.

The main aim of this ex was to ensure that Ech could move quickly, and also to perfect our rolling replen skills. The ex started well, with numerous moves around the wet and boggy woods. The OC even booked some snow for Tuesday night! To perfect the rolling replen, all vehs came via the replen whenever they moved. **SSgt Fred Fensom** and his crew had the replen tied down. Our new PRRs proved extremely useful. No more shouting at armd veh crews - you simply called them forward by radio.

Endex came and everyone returned to Talbot Barracks very tired, but had learned a lot about their job in the field. They will get to

The Brigade Headquarters being set up during Ex Flexible Gauntlet 4

test their skills during the 14week summer deployment to BATUS.

FROM QARANC TO THE ROYAL SIGNALS - *by Sig Lane*

Sig Lane having swapped her nurses uniform for DPM

It was on a night shift taking someone's blood pressure that I realized that I wanted to change my stethoscope for a headset.

My trg to become a Rad Sys Op was really interesting. I was learning loads of things that I had never heard of before. I got really excited when I found out that one of the lessons was A&P, thinking that it was anatomy and physiology soon to be told that it was nothing like that.

Since being at 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (200) I have been on 2 exs, both very different from each other. The first, a sqn ex, was more hands-on, and quite physical. It was really good as you got to put everything that you had learned into practice. This was one of the reasons why I changed, as I wanted a bit more of the military life - and I think that I found it.

The second was a CAST ex for the staff officers. I was working in the CAST building, which was quite relaxed, and very different from the first ex, as I was monitoring the radios most nights.

After 7 months in Sigs, I have not regretted my decision about leaving QARANCs. I have enjoyed every minute at 200 Sig Sqn, and I am looking forward to spending the rest of my career in the Sigs, where my aim is to become a Yeoman. I would like to go back to a phase 1 trg regt some time in the future.

OP FRESCO 8/9 FEBRUARY 2003 – *by Cpl Lister*

The word was out. The Sqn had been tasked with providing Green Goddess crews. It soon became reality, and after being designated to crews, we were all eager to get trained and deploy back to the UK to cover the strike.

The first hurdle was to get trained. All crews gathered on the Bde HQ car park, where the Bde Defence Fire Offr put us through our paces. The trg was constructive, but provided a lot of humorous moments. The car park will never be the same again.

Trg completed, we flew to UK. I had been designated as crew comd, and my young lineman **Sig Sweeney** had the pleasure of driving the beast (the GG).

We were attached to RRW, and we eventually arrived at the TAC in West Bromwhich, 2 hours before the strike started. I was born in Walsall, just 15 minutes away (or 30 by GG) so it was just like going on leave!

Op FRESCO training

Within 30 mins of the strike starting, the alarm sounded. The crew ran to the GG, and I went to get briefed by the Ops Room. To our disappointment, the RRW Ops Team stood us down and sent the more experienced RRW crews! This continual standing up and being stood down happened for the next 47 hours. Were my crew going to return to Sennelager as OP FRESCO virgins? An hour to go and yes, the alarm went off again, and the Ops Team sent us to my hometown of Walsall, where the incident was in a school.

Knowing the importance of getting there quickly, we departed immediately, blue lights and siren on full. The Police escort took us through the town and we were going along the dual carriageway at 10-15 mph! Suddenly **Sig Sweeney** had to change gear as we approached a small hill. Disaster! It would not go into second gear, and we came to an abrupt halt in the middle of the dual carriageway. Luckily we managed to start straight away and continue towards our long-awaited 'shout.' (But, not before the public had the opportunity to stop and stare at a GG in its glory stranded on a dual carriageway!) When we eventually got there, we found that a light had set off the alarm!

Overall it was a good experience. The feedback from the public was very positive and they were pleased to see us. I'm going to miss the next OP FRESCO deployment, as I will be in BATUS for the summer.

Happy faces all round – fire fighting is better than no fighting!

MY FIRST UNIT *by LCPl David Clark*

I joined the Army in November 2001 and spent 15 months undergoing Phase One and Phase Two trg at Bassingborn and Blandford respectively. At the end of my trade trg I posted to Germany to 200 Sig Sqn. Both my wife and I found this quite a daunting thought, but looked forward to our impending trip abroad, especially as I had never been to a working unit before.

I have been at the Sqn for a month now and have had a very hectic time. We have been taking on extra duties to cover for

other units deployed on OP TELIC and we have commitments on OP FRESCO. Add all this to various Sqn and Bde exs, and the days away from home mount up quickly. The Sqn certainly likes to keep itself busy!

I was quite surprised at the amount of PT the unit organises and I found this an excellent form of continuation trg to keep my fitness up after my time at Blandford.

So far I haven't found living in Germany a problem. The natives are friendly and finding my way around has been painless. As far as orientating myself within the Unit lines goes, I haven't had any difficulties since it is quite a small sqn.

As to the future, I am looking forward to getting on with my trade. There is a lot to learn, and the recent CAST ex put me in the thick of it, having to deal with problems in the dead of night having had little sleep, and the Bde Staff Offrs breathing down my neck. I have no idea what the next 3 years have in store for me but I am looking forward to whatever challenges are thrown at me.

19 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj GW Wilson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) SA Gorton**

EXERCISE SILVER LINK 03 - 07 MARCH - *by WO2 (YofS) Parkins*

EX SILVER LINK was a Sqn-level tac HF/VHF comms ex conducted primarily in North Yorkshire, with additional dets deployed to Kirton-in-Lindsey and Bramcote to allow skywave propagation trg. Initially dets deployed in Catterick Training Area (CTA) and provided voice and data comms back to a control station located in Gaza Bks. A manoeuvre phase saw the dets moving progressively south to sites along the A1 as far south as York. The ex proved a success and identified some key lessons for our development of comms skills.

All dets now appear to have grasped the tac briefing format (seeing as they did it about 6 times a day for the first 3 days) due to the numerous visits from the Squadron OC, Ops Offr, Tp Comds and Tp Sgts.

Lifesaving duties were afforded to **LCpl** 'Willie' **Whitelaw** and his crew at Sutton Bank, when a civilian who had been robbed and beaten stumbled into the det and was given first aid. Police/Ambulance crews were called and the young man was taken away shaken, concussed and, for some unknown reason, considering a career in RSigs.

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE – *by Lt Gavin Darke, Tp Comd, Bravo Tp*

This year's contribution to UOTC, EX LIGHTNING STRIKE, came from Bravo Tp, who put on a fantastic display for the young OCdts. The Sqn's stand put the cadets through a challenging comd task (the aim being to retrieve a box from a minefield), and an adrenaline packed 'cabby' in some of the Sqn's armoured vehicles.

The OCdts came in various guises, from cowboys and injuns, through to a rather cold Glasgow UOTC. The effort that all the UOTCs put into the stands left all members of the Sqn surprised and impressed.

A special thanks must go to **Cpl** 'Mary' **Anderson** for her control of the OCdts during the Comd Task, a test in itself, and the Sqn's own 'Green Helmet' display team, **Sgt Giddens** and **Cpl Lyon**.

EXERCISE SILVER CHARGE 1 - *by Lt Will Taylor, Tp Comd, Alpha Tp*

EX SILVER CHARGE was a Sqn-level simulation ex that sought to prepare Alpha and Bravo Tps for a possible deployment later in the year. The ten-day period was divided into phases, similar to what would occur prior to deploying on ops. The two Tps carried out a full ET and CES check of their holdings, followed by simulated OPTAG trg, where ITDs were completed. The Sqn has now completed 75% of the ITDs for 2003.

Establishing both HQ within Gaza Bks proved invaluable, for it allowed the younger, less experienced soldiers a chance to see the HQ in all its glory, while the more experienced could fine tune their skills. The light HQ, comprising of nine FFRs, was

Casualty being treated during EX SILVER CHARGE. Sgt Giddens and Cpl Maxwell tend to Sig Peckover during very realistic ITD training

established with its internal ICS structure for the first time. This is a crucial asset to the Bde Comd, as it offers the flexibility required of a modern Mech Bde. The finale of this hugely successful ex was a Sqn function in the new Sqn Bar at the Gaza Club.

OPERATION KEELING - *by SSgt Sullivan, Supt Tp*

On 21 February 03 seven members of 209 Sig Sqn deployed with Joint Task Force 2 on OP KEELING, Sierra Leone, to provide life support for 19 Mech Bde HQ Staff. The JTF2 mission was to 'deploy forces to Sierra Leone and through military activity, demonstrate the UK's commitment to the government of Sierra Leone'. JTFHQ2 consisted of 19 Mech Bde HQ, a det from 30 Sig Regt, 2 RGR, *HMS Iron Duke* and a Field Surgical Team.

On arrival in to theatre, one of our many tasks was to provide Bde Staff with local transport, which became our white fleet, of 46 vehs. After a short while, our team required the expertise of **Cpl Chris Kilbride,** who was attached to us from the REME to carry out veh inspections. For those of you who have never deployed

to Sierra Leone, the local car hire companies are difficult to find, and if a veh has four wheels, you could be onto a winner! **Cpl Steve Walsh** and his team of two other chefs provided excellent food for the duration. After a busy 4fi weeks in Sierra Leone, we were on our way back to Catterick to re-join the remainder of the Sqn. An excellent time was had by all.

CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEET - *by LCpl Whitelaw, Alpha Tp*

209 Sig Sqn had a very successful time at this year's Corps SAAM. **SSgt Taff Williams**, and **Lt Will Taylor** started the preparation for the competition by bringing the team together for two days of coaching and zeroing. The team consisted of **Lt Taylor**, **Cpl Mac McMullen**, **LCpl Street**, **Sig Mike Galyer**, and **Sig Reg Holdsworth**; with a rabble of individuals, **LCpl** 'Willie' **Whitelaw**, **Sig Kennedy**, **Sig Cooper** and **Sig Cath Mitchinson**.

The team accomplished quite a lot, winning the bingo in the NAAFI, coming second in the Minor Units, and a very close second in the falling plate competition. **Lt Taylor** managed to perform admirably, even though he was coming to terms with the death of his cat. The boss managed to get the coveted best RSigs Offr Trophy and the best Young Officer award.

But sadly **LCpl Whitelaw**, although a great marksman and possible sniper, came last in the individuals with an uninspiring 88th place. However, he came first in the NAAFI disco competition, closely followed by a fellow sharp shooter, **Sig Kennedy**, who came in at a whopping 87th place.

12 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj Chris Paterson**
RSM **WO1Carter**

This will be the final missive from 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) in Kosovo. By the time you read this, we should all be home in Aldershot ready for all the challenges that BOWMAN is going to set us. Being the last UK-led Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in Kosovo, our return is slightly more complicated than that of previous units. In particular, the Techs and the QM's Dept will be in theatre for about 3 weeks after the Sqn Main body flies out, dismantling the Polygon radio and Cleo phone networks and packing them all off to the places where this kit is now required.

Off course we couldn't leave be the last Bde HQ and Sig Sqn to leave Kosovo and not go out in style. So to mark our return, a small but dedicated team of 12 runners will undertake a non-stop relay run from Pristina to Aldershot via Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Belgium and France. This is about 1,800 miles, and it is expected to take them 15 days. Hopefully the runners will raise 10,000 for the two Sqn charities, Mutual Support and the Aldershot branch of MENCAP. Anyone who wishes to sponsor them should send their donations to the Sqn Rear Party in Aldershot, cheques made payable to PRI 228 Sig Sqn.

WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS PLACE THE MT SECTION ON TOUR – *by Cpl Scott*

As the end of the tour approaches, the MT are able to reflect on an eventful and varied past six months in Kosovo. Weather conditions have ranged from blinding sunshine to snow blizzards, and have kept drivers skills sharp as they'd ever been, especially in the case of **Sig Evans**, who has finally overcome her fear of narrow mountain roads.

Despite a massive workload and a severely undermanned dept (half the size of our predecessors), transport requests were always met. Real congratulations must go to the drivers, who managed to keep the RTA stats at an all-time low. Even **Sig Singh** managed to go three months without so much as a cracked indicator lens. Well done. Morale has been kept up by the antics of the MT's resident Laurel and Hardy (or is it the Krankies?), **Sig Murray** and **Sig Collins.** The said pairs' voice procedure remains the envy of operators across the Corps.

Maint and prep have had to be of the highest order to keep the vehs roadworthy, a task that would have been impossible without the hard work the MT storeman **LCpl Layton** RLC. God only knows what work he could have produced if only we had taken mah-jongg off his computer.

The admin front of the MT also proved to be a world-beater. **Sgt Brown** and **Cpl TM Scott** will be leaving theatre as undisputed karaoke champions (Elton John and Kikki Dee would be proud) and **WO2 Croxon** who leads the world (well the British Army anyway) in job titles. held; PMC, TSM and MTWO being just a few of the many.

Last but not least a huge thanks to all the augmentees, a notable member of these being **Pte Smith** RLC, who has just completed his 14th month in theatre. Big thanks to **LCpl Binns,** 14 Sig Regt, and to all the RAF who, despite coming from planet civvy, have worked hard to support us in testing times.

SUPPORT TROOP FAREWELL PARTY – *by Sig Byrne*

Whilst on OP OCULUS (Kosovo) 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) have just endured a harsh winter tour (well not that harsh) based in Slim Lines (Jubilee Bks) just outside Pristina. We had local employed civilians (LECs) working with us all around the bks. They worked hard all across the board doing a very good job, working in all the different depts and a whole lot of other jobs. But on our handover to the Finns, fewer locals will be required, so unfortunately most of them will shortly be made unemployed. But we did throw a party for them as a gesture for all their hard work. It was a cosmic evening held in the QM's area of the camp with a barbecue and live music. The night kicked off at about 19.00hrs on the Saturday 30 April. The band consisted of **LCpl John Fatiaki**, 7 Sig Regt, **Spr John Motson**, 26 Engr Regt and **Sgt Paul Bennett**, RAF. The band was super, playing a range of music, the food was great and spirits where higher than high. The band was followed by karaoke (oh my God). There where some perfect renditions, and some renditions perfectly ruined (**Cpl Scott**, **LCpl Watson**). After the threat of violence by the QM, **Maj Payet**, nobody was brave enough to ask him to sing, so he was left to do what he does best, burn things. About 8 storage pallets to be precise, much to the distress of the RQMS, **WO2 Gillies.** The fire service nearly had to work that night (but the FBU wouldn't allow it). Around eleven o'clock the locals staggered home and

WO2 (RAMS) Brian Gillies practising both of his cords

the soldiers went up the wooden hill to Bedfordshire. The night went off without a hitch and the LECs were very grateful for a great bash. A good night all round.

THE TIM HENMANS OF 228 SQUADRON – *by Sig Lewis*

On 12 February the TriService Army Tennis and Rackets Championships were held at the Queen's Club in London. Each year this event is dominated by the Army Air Corps, but this year was a different story. They hadn't counted on the 12 Mech Bde pair of **Lt Chris Barker** and myself, **Sig Dan Lewis**! This was only my first and **Lt Barker's** second time at the Championships, so feeling energetic, we had entered all of the six events. While the draw was being made we were both on ops in Kosovo, but were kindly allowed (by our OC, **Maj Paterson**) to fly back to the UK for the week to take part in the event. We arrived in UK only two days before the competition. This was my first time playing either of the two sports, but after a few hours' practice, I had managed to pick them up fast. Having to commute from Aldershot to the Queen's Club each morning meant early starts. After playing game after game for the three days of the event, we came away with four out of the six cups, including the impressive TriService Rackets Doubles Cup, which was nearly the same size as me. Then just to top off the great week, there was a cocktail party on the final night and we received our cups from **HRH Prince Edward**. So after a great week and an even better night, **Lt Barker** and I went to our respective homes for the weekend off before flying back Kosovo. We hope we can return next year and win the two that got away! *See story on Page 268 in the colour section - Editor*

FIVE-A-SIDE FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT - *By Cpl Edgell*

A fiveaside football tournament held on 6 April was, amongst others, one of the great events set to raise money for MENCAP and MUTUAL SUPPORT charities. The tournament, which consisted of 12 teams (two pools of 6) proved very entertaining for both players and spectators. The teams consisted of all ranks, male and female.

Brig Shaw had his eye firmly set on the title with his team, including the Sqn's OC, **Maj Paterson** and RSM, **WO1Carter.** There was an excellent turn out at the HLS. Not even the freezing wind chill could keep people away from the tournament. The first game was a fine start to the day, as **Sig Spotswood**, a member of the CPO team scored what was possibly the goal of the tournament for 'The Techs'. In the second game, **Sigs Gray** and **Hide** attacked relentlessly, but were frustratingly denied by **Spr Motson** in goal for the opposing team. The action continued throughout the tournament as spectators watched goal after goal. The team 'Thrills, Skills and Belly Aches' captained by **Sig Byrne**, battled hard throughout, earning themselves a place in the final, thanks to vital saves by their goalkeeper, **Sig Murray** and outstanding defending by **Cpl Scott**. 'The Techs' also battled hard to win themselves a place in the final, thanks to **Sig Sturdy**, who saved three of the 'Waterloo Warriors' penalties in the shootout! 'The Techs', who had the title from the previous tournament, played a very skilful game equally matched by the 'Thrills, Skills and Belly Aches', who clinched the winner just before the final whistle. At the other end of the table there was a gallant performance by the 'Barking Ballers', captained by **Lt Barker**, who were to win the wooden spoon after conceding an unbelievable 20 goals in 5 games.

The tournament was organised by **Cpl Edgell** of 7 Sig Regt, who managed to raise an excellent £200 for the charities selected. There was a high standard of football played from starting kick-off to the final whistle; aggression was kept to a minimum whilst determination was set to a high. Roughly seven hours of nonstop football was played in what turned out to be a very entertaining and enjoyable day! Well done.

DEFENCE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES AGENCY (GERMANY) 252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Pickersgill**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) DW Stewart**

STRATEGIC AND TECHNICAL DEVELOPFMENT

As the recent past and current members of the Sqn will be aware, its establishment was targeted for scrutiny in the late 90's, and as a result of the Non-Deployayble Establishment Review (NDER), it was identified that substantial field deployable manpower savings could be made for the Corps through substitution of Military incumbents in a number of static comms posts by civilian members of DCSA(G) 'The Agency'. The preparation of various Job Opportunity Bulletins (JOBs), the advertising, lengthy conversion into civilian speak of the associated job specs, filter processes and final selection boards are now set to provide the main focus this year for the Military Admin personnel in the Strategic and Tech Development and HR Depts. The full change process is to be completed by 31 March 2005. However, this does not simply involve a case of turning off the tap controlling military posting into the Sqn and posting the surplus out. All individual careers will still require very careful management, and personnel will continue to come and go as part of the natural posting cycle as the establishment is reduced. That said, it is now clearly obvious that we are all set for busier times in the very near future, especially until the resultant effects of the proposed reductions are noted by reduced admin responsibilities.

CHARITY FUND RAISING EVENT HORSERACING NIGHT 2002 - *by Sgt Taff O'Connor*

The Sqn held a horseracing night with the sole intention of donating all of the profits raised to support the efforts of a local organisation in Rhine Garrison, the Honey Pot Crèche, which is located in JIIQ military complex and is run by **Mrs Jan Booth** and

Presentation of the cheque by DCSA(G) 252 Sig Sqn to the Honey Pot Crèche. L-R SSgt Stroudley, Mrs Jan Booth, Maj Pickersgill, Sig Halliwell and Sgt Oconnor

her merry band of workers. The crèche is maintained purely by a number of outside activities, including sponsored events and local donations. Following a most successful night, the total cash profit was an impressive 311.47. The honour of delivering the presentation cheque was given to **Sig Gerry Halliwell**, who was extremely pleased to do his bit to assist the crèche. The Sqn OC and all ranks would like to thank **Jan** and all personnel involved in keeping this facility afloat. We hope our assistance will help you to maintain this much-appreciated asset to the Rheindahlen community.

ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT HUMAN RESOURSES

VISIT BY THE EDITOR OF THE WIRE

Over the period 18 21 February 2003, 16 Sig Regt hosted the visit to Germany of the Editor of *The WIRE*, **Maj (Retd) Bernard Redshaw** ex RNZSigs. 16 Sig Regt were kind enough to include the Sqn in their programme. **Maj Redshaw** was given an overview to the Sqn's previous, current and future establishment and our ongoing integration process into the Agency. He also had the opportunity of face-to-face time with a number of our Sqn personalities in an information passing and gathering ex to spread the word of the magazine and gain feedback from the readership. **Maj Redshaw** was also acquainted with the well-known Corps-wide fact that every mention in his magazine will invariably commit the subject to purchase a crate of beer for the lads. Cheers **Bernard**!

ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT LOGISTIC SUPPORT

EXERCISE SNOW WARRIOR 2003 - *by LCpl Mac McRoberts*

Over the period 17 28 February 03, five 5 members of the Sqn deployed to Obersdorf in Bavaria for a 10 day ski adventure training package under the guise of EX SNOW WARRIOR 2003. The lucky five venturing out onto the ski slopes were: **SSgt Phil Stroudley** (Group Instructor), **LCpl Mac McRoberts**, **Sigs Pete Shaw**, **JP Patrick** and **Richie Johnston**. Accommodation for the duration was the ski lodge Houbertous Haus, which provided all the requisite facilities, including Sky TV, pool table, fitness suite and the all-important social bar. Upon arrival we were divided into alleged skiing ability groups, and later that evening we attending a briefing package and were introduced to the respective ski instructors. The main aim of the ex was to gain our Alpine BSP (Basic Ski Proficiency), or for those with previous ski experience, ASP (Advanced Ski Proficiency). Our time spent on skis would be split between 2-resort location Fellhorn, situated on the border of Austria and Bavaria and Nabelhorn situated just outside Obersdorf. When we hit the slopes, the first day was spent introducing the BSP groups to the art of skiing, and for the ASP groups an opportunity to reestablish their ski legs and to top up their tans. Day 2 saw the start of practical lessons during the morning, followed by afternoon sessions of practice to perfect the newly attained skiing skills. After 3 days of practising and honing our alpine skiing techniques, we moved onto the ski touring phase. The first day was spent with an introduction to the various types of equipment available for use, followed by lessons and practical demonstrations of snow holing and avalanche drills, these lessons being followed by a short tour. Day 2 included a tour covering 3 peaks and lessons on emergency shelters. The last day the tour covered 5 peaks, with each member of the group being given the opportunity to lead a section of the tour. As Endex drew nearer, the opportunity for everyone to hit the slopes again in a controlled free-for-all skiing extravaganza seemed like a good Idea at the time. **SSgt Phil Stroudley** unfortunately managed to get himself knocked over during one of his instructional periods, and later that evening he took medicinal comfort from a few pints of Guinness - supposedly in order to get over the pain, more likely the humiliation. All too soon, it was time to return our borrowed kit as our 2 weeks in Bavaria had reached an end. The final evening saw an obligatory gathering for the taking of farewell drinks, and before we knew it, we were back in sunny JHQ. EX SNOW WARRIOR 2003 was a complete success and was thoroughly enjoyed by all those fortunate enough to take part. Until next year...

Exercise Snow Warrior 2003 – Matching Jackets & Shades Optional

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj MJ Fensom**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) KRJ Smith**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

On the bus off the bus! Having had morale dented after Christmas leave when the focus of Op planning changed, the Sqn has been on the Ops seesaw for the last few months. However, as this is being written frantic (but composed) final preparations are being made for our imminent deployment on OP TELIC.....

As ever the Sqn has been busy with a multitude of tasks ranging from our outstanding Battle Camp (more of which later), support to SORLS in several different events, EX SAMMY BUILD, EX LOG FLAKE and more besides.

We would like to take this opportunity to offer congratulations to **WO1 (RSM) KRJ Smith**, on his selection for a commission, **WO2 (RQMS) Jim Alger**, who has been selected for promotion to WO1, and to **WO2 (FofS) Sue King**, who picks up promotion to WO1 when she moves to Corsham in April. We would also like to welcome **WO2 (FofS) Rob Campbell** who Joins us from 16 Sig Regt.

EXERCISE HORNED VIPER – BATTLECAMP – *By Cpl Jenny Ingram*

EX HORNED VIPER is the annual Sqn Battle Camp, which this year was held on Dartmoor Training Area. The exercise was the brainchild of the RSM, and over a period of months leading up to the event, we were drip fed intelligence updates and snippets of the scenario via an information board and our regular Sqn Updates. We were briefed that there was an ongoing Civil War in the state of Dartmoor where a terrorist group by the name of The Widdecombe Fair (WF) were trying to lay claim to Dartmoor by the use of ethnic cleansing. The 3 main leaders of the group were **Pieman Bill**, **Uncle Tom Cobley** and **Loopy Lou Davey**, (**Uncle Tom's** Moll)! 261 Sig Sqn in Aldershot were tasked with supporting 43 (Wessex) Bde in supporting a coalition force to suppress the WF. The Sqn were aided by a group of friendly freedom fighters called The Northern Pasty Alliance (NPA).

On Tuesday, 11 February 03 we deployed out from Aldershot to Okehampton Camp, North Dartmoor to start the concentration phase prior to operations against the WF. This included a lot of revision on subjects such as map reading, noise and light discipline and duties of a sentry. Practical training was also

LCpl Barker practices room clearance

carried out with sec and pl battle drills, occupation of a harbour area, RV drills, ambush/anti ambush drills, searching of a prisoner, room clearance and model making, so it would run smoothly the following week. One thing that we found particularly new was the orders process, especially the sec comds, who would be writing and issuing them regularly on the operation phase.

Introduction to GPMG was also included in the training week, which **Sig Smith** found particularly uncomfortable to deal with as she accidentally did a leopard crawl back onto the muzzle of one gun during a demo. Map reading was put into practice during a night navex on Okehampton training area. Thanks go to good moonlight, which was probably the reason for the safe return of everyone.

Towards the end of the concentration phase, we spent an evening at Cdo Trg Centre, RM Lympstone in their swimming pool carrying out the Battle Swimming test in Uniform with CEFO and weapons. Not everyone enjoyed this, especially **Sig** 'Stevie' **Durose** who was finally fished out by **LCpl Cole** when someone actually realised he was drowning. Another day was spent at Foggin Tor with 4 RM Mountain Leaders, who taught us cliff assault techniques, including abseiling and climbing with full CEFO, using a caving ladder, traversing between the top of two cliffs, and the dreaded All Arms Cdo Confidence Jump. The confidence jump consisted of lowering yourself over the lip of the abseil and applying the brake. We then had to trust the RM ML at the bottom to act as our brakeman, as we placed our hands on our head, and jumped away from the rock face. Once the ML's thought we were jumping out far enough, they would release the brake and allow us to freefall, only applying the brake at the last safe moment (people were stopping literally inches from the ground). This definitely bought out disco legs in a few of us, but it was a great day.

After spending Tuesday to Saturday preparing and training, we deployed into the field early Sunday morning where we liaised with an NPA agent, who showed us to our harbour areas and briefed us on the current situation. Recce patrols were sent out from both platoons to gather any intelligence possible on the WF presence at Gutter Tor. From this intelligence, a Warning Order was given for an ambush early next morning. This was probably one of the coldest mornings possible, as the temperature was down to minus 6 degrees plus a wind of about 20 mph giving a wind-chill factor of a lovely minus 26 degrees. Most of us found it difficult laying in an ambush for one hour that morning, a fraction of the time spent in a real ambush. On arriving back at the harbour area, yet another patrol was sent out to Gutter Tor - this time a fighting patrol. From this the following morning, Tuesday 18 February, we broke harbour loc for a deliberate attack on Gutter Tor. It was a brilliant sight to watch from the base of the Tor, firepower raining down whilst people (who basically looked like little ants) could be seen making their way up the sides of the Tor. It looked like a re-enactment of the Battle for Mount Harriet. After a successful attack, we quickly conducted a re-org, left the loc in 4 tonners and were dropped at our next harbour area, which was in the rear, to resup and get briefed on subsequent ops.

This day was a much easier day for all the guys. We made a deal with the NPA, since one of the agents' wives worked in the Ivor Dewdney Pasty factory. We supplied them with sufficient money and they supplied us with sufficient pasties, which went down an absolute treat! The sec comds and 2ICs took a tactical recce flight in a Gazelle to recce the next possible target that we were to attack, which was Ditsworthy Warren house. The objective was to catch **Uncle Tom Cobley**.

Early next morning we broke harbour and were dropped in our assault teams by Sea King Helicopter to our FUPs, to a position near to the house. Both pls had different positions to assault on the house and surrounding area. Unfortunately, after a successful attack, **Uncle Tom** was found to be at a funeral of one of the terrorists we killed on the ambush earlier that week.

Bags of smoke; Straight down the middle!

After searching the dead, we moved to our pick up point and moved by 4 tonners to the NPA forward operating base, which was really 539 Asslt Sqn RM at Turnchapel in Plymouth. From here we received boat safety drills, as one pl would be inserted into Cornwall by Rigid Raider to establish a harbour area and then call forward the second pl by road. Here is where all the final preparation was taken care of. Orders were given from pl comds to sec comds then down through the secs for the first light attack the following morning on Screasdon Fort, the WF Main HQ. Everything we had learned and put into practice for the last two weeks was all to come together for the 'Final Attack.' From about 17.00hrs, we started to move by road and sea to our final harbour at Whacker Quay, where an NPA agent met us to show us into our locs. And what a fantastic loc it was! We had been very lucky with the weather over Battle Camp this year - no rain whatsoever except for this last night before the final attack. Not that it particularly bothered anyone, as we only had one last attack to do. That night we harboured up on what I would call a mudslide. This made it very hard to manoeuvre the next morning.

Thursday was the morning of the final attack where we were determined to catch **Pieman Bill**! Everyone was magged up, bombed up, full of smoke, schermuleys and grenades ready to go. Asslt Gp 1 jumped into the moat and made their way through the fort using windows and corridors and waited for H hour on the stacks of stairs leading into the main part of the Fort. At the same time Asslt Gp 2 made their way to their Agent contact (A RM Mountain Leader) who had set up an abseil into the fort moat, where they waded through chest deep cold water, climbed in through the windows and took up position on another stairwell. The Fire Support team also met their agent and had to climb caving ladders onto the roof of the fort, carrying their GPMG's and 15,000 links. Everyone was absolutely silent, stood waiting for H hour, when Fire Support was to open fire down into the fort. We were there for about ten minutes and then all of a sudden they let rip! It was quite a buzz; the fire support was enormous as everyone ran to assault each of their positions. Smoke, schermuleys and grenades were going off everywhere. But it was 1 Pl, 3 Sec that came across **Pieman Bill** and **Loopy Lou** in one of the many rooms in the corridor that were being cleared. Everything we had learned was used in the final assault, including searching of a prisoner, which was nicely done by **LCpl Brian**

searching of a prisoner, which was nicely done by **LCpl Brian Chambers**, and **Sig Liam Frater**.

That was it. A whole week of trg and practising all put in to one big final assault. I'm sure some of us at 261 were sometimes wishing we were back in Aldershot in *Cheeks* throughout some of Battle Camp, especially during the ambush. But the final assault was worth it. It also gave us a lot to laugh about later that night in *The Goose* down town. Thanks must go to **WO2 (SSM) Butler** as **Pieman Bill** and the Officer Cadets from Exeter UOTC who provided us with the WF enemy.

EXERCISE LOG FLAKE

EX LOG FLAKE is the annual Bde HQ and Sig Sqn ski trip to Courchevel, in the extensive 3 Valleys skiing area in France. The exercise is conducted over 3 weeks, with a group of 15 people of mixed ability attending each week being accommodated in a self catering chalet. Those of us who deployed on week 3 had the pleasure, not only of outstanding piste conditions and weather (beautiful sunshine), but also the company of the Bde Comd!

Once the 14-hr overnight minibus journey was over, the group made the most of the first day by catching up on lost sleep and getting kitted out with skis, boots, clothing, and collecting ski passes and beer!

The following morning, ably led by our instructors, **Cpl Ady Mortimor** and **Cpl Jo Hammick**, we set off for the slopes. We were split into two groups, advanced and beginner and each duly headed off for their trg. What followed were 6 days of outstanding instruction in excellent conditions. The beginner group had the luxury of one-on-one tuition, when it transpired that both **Brig Dale** and **Maj Richard Tipler**, from 27 Regt RLC were also qualified instructors, and as a result made fantastic progress. The advanced group concentrated on their 'carving' as well as finding some 'variable terrain' and plenty of jumps – something **LCpl Neil 'Jumper' Marshall** was delighted about.

The week seemed to be going too smoothly. It was no surprise when, on the Wednesday, **Capt Jamie Noble** and **Cpl Ady Mortimor** decided to partake in some formation dobbing, in a chain of events that included a game of cat and mouse, a misunderstanding of the rules, a 'do not ski' area, and some huge icy moguls. You can imagine the outcome, but every cloud has a silver lining, and in the name of recovery (once we had established everybody was still alive), we headed off for huge bacon butties and pots of tea (followed by lunch!).

As the week progressed, the standard of skiing improved dramatically, and everybody's technique improved no end. As well as the ski trg, several cultural trips were made to Courchevel 1650 and 1850 (two different resorts linked to the same ski area). Indeed, at times it seemed surreal to finish a good day's skiing, only to see news reports of the start of hostilities in Iraq. This showed just how diverse an organisation the British Army is.

The ex proved to be a great success, both on and off the slope, and integration between the Staff and Sig Sqn can only have improved as a result. There can't be many Brigadiers willing to sit down and play drink while you think with the bulk of the Sig Sqn MT and power bay!

EXERCISE SAMMY'S BUILD

On the 3 March, five hard working volunteers from 101 Log Bde and Sig Sqn (261) ventured down to St Leonards, Dorset, for what we thought was going to be a strenuous week building a new paintball site.

When we arrived, we were informed by **Sgt Elsdon** that our accommodation at West Moors Camp was no longer needed and we had to slum it in the owner's summer house, which unfortunately came with four free crates of beer in payment for the week ahead.

At around 11.00hrs we were tasked with our first job, test driving his brand new Bombardier quad bikes, a decision he would later regret due to some deep sea quad biking performed by **Sig Foster**, who seemed to have difficulty grasping the idea of steering.

The following day, which we were told would be hard building the track for the quads, turned into a day's clay pigeon shooting which rivalled any range day I've ever had in the Army. **Cpl Stevens** took on the nickname of Elmer after resembling Elmer Fudd behind the shotgun. After we had run up a bill of nearly £300, we went for a run on the go-karts to end the day.

Wednesday turned out to be our only day of any real work, when we had to carry a lot of tractor tyres to line out the quad bike track, whilst **Cfn Parkinson** fixed the Saracen ready for when the site opens in the summer.

On Thursday the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Jamie Noble**, Supt Tp Comd, **Lt John Keith**, **WO1 (RSM) Kevin Smith**, and **WO2 (RQMS) Jim Alger** decided to pay a visit to see what the ex was all about. It was our last day, so we had organised an all-expenses-paid day of paintballing. We split ourselves into two teams, junior ranks versus the senior ranks and officers. Junior ranks were eager to inflict some pain on the ageing opposition, which we did with no mercy, winning the first battle with ease. The second conflict was not so one-sided, and the seniors managed to claim their first victory. But **LCpl Davies** was still happy, because he managed to let some rounds off into the back of the unsuspecting Tp Comd as he left the field whimpering like a girl. The next two games saw victories from both sides and some of the seniors decided to call it a day, because they had 'more important things to do' (though we knew they couldn't handle the pain any longer). It was just as well, as **LCpl Davies** was struggling to carry his rather large frame round the battlefield. The week was rounded off with a hog-roast and a few beers; the perfect ending to a brilliant week.

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC — **Maj Mark Everill RLC**
RSM

262 Sig Sqn is at last beginning to take shape. After a prolonged period of 'stagging on' the Rear Party is now sufficiently large to begin some useful work. Under the direction of **Sgt Royle**, the new radio Tp (Alpha Troop) is taking its first steps. It remains to be seen how **WO2 (YofS) Thomas** reacts to being evicted from his office in his absence! Alpha Tp is getting busy with the unenviable task of trying to convert a fleet of rust bucket LRs to serviceable FFRs. Good luck lads. May the force be with you! Meanwhile, QM Tp are busy chasing up all the equipt that has been lost in the ether on its way to us from issuing units. Again this task is proving less than easy!

The bulk of 262 Sig Sqn remains deployed on OP TELIC as part of 2 Sig Regt, supporting 102 Log Bde HQ. By all accounts they are having a successful tour and are performing to the expected high standard. Our thoughts are with those deployed and we are looking forward to seeing them sooner rather than later.

CULTURAL VISIT TO WEWELSBERG CASTLE, WESTPHALIA – *by Cpl Scott McDonald*

Unlike the Sqn's previous and less official 'cultural' visits to the indoor kart track, the local Finnish Sauna and the American PX, there was actually a degree of cultural interest to this visit. It was the second time we had visited the site, but this time we were back in force, with 10 of the Sqn setting off on a sunny March day to visit the castle that was the spiritual and ideological centre of Hienrich Himmler's SS.

Lead scout, **Cpl** 'Mac' **McFarland**, soon had our driver, **Cpl** 'Monty' **Montgomery**, heading to the castle. Built on the site of a Saxon Fort with a commanding grip over the surrounding countryside, it was originally completed in 1609. Himmler bought the castle in 1934, and reconstruction began shortly afterwards. The massive amount of labour required was provided by the opening of an associated concentration camp, sited on the outskirts of the town at Niederhagen.

The Visitor Centre is situated in the former SS Guard Station at the castle entrance, and commemorates the victims of the concentration camp, who were forced to work in insufferable conditions to complete Himmler's vision of the castle. The plans saw an entire city centred on the site with the surrounding village and population to be relocated outside. All the exhibits were in German, but a bit of intervention by our most accomplished interpreter, **Cpl** 'Axel' **Foley**, led to a revealing 30-minute documentary in English being screened for our benefit.

After learning more of the history of the castle we went out to explore the grounds and view the famous North Tower, with its underground chamber named 'Valhalla'. The viewing of the tower and its approach seemed a bit too familiar to our resident gamers, with **Cpl Mark Griffin** and **Sig Oli Tuite** arguing over where exactly the med pack and RPG were located in 'Medal of Honour'. The castle bears a striking resemblance to a certain location in the aforementioned game.

After a quick tour of the castle areas that are open to the public, we vacated the area to leave it to the party of excitable German Kindergarten members who had turned up. The castle is now used as a Youth Hostel and, after many years of suppression and denial of events, the town is beginning to come to terms with Wewelsberg's past. It is definitely one thing to read about the SS and the atrocities that took place, but to actually see the locs and hear the testimonies of those that were there brings it vividly into focus. With such a wealth of historic locations within a day's easy journey of Gutersloh, we look forward to more such visits.

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

OC — **Major M Billingham**
SSM — **WO2 (SSM) D Scott**

The Sqn has hit its most hectic period for a long time. With some people already deployed, all the Regular (and most of the TA) operators have been volunteering to depart for any form of duty in Middle East. Our regards to **Sgt MacGillivray**, **Cpl Clarke** and **Sig Yates**, happily mobilised to sand castle building duties. While this, and regular trg continued, the SC course was approaching it's inevitable end. The end of course ex changed loc at the last minute, but was a massive success for all involved. We welcome into the fold a nearly new tech, **LCpl Chris Lyle**, from Digby. A lucky escape, we feel.

EXERCISE GLOBAL LYNX 3

EX GLOBAL LYNX 3 is an annual OTX held by the Sqn once a year at the end of the SC Ops course. It is essentially an end of course assessment. Traditionally it is set in an OOA environment to test the students in harsh conditions. The days of sitting on a beach in Bermuda have long gone. This year's ex was originally planned for three countries in Africa, however with the political turmoil going on there, it slowly shrank to Kenya. No problem, thought **WO2 (FofS)** 'Monty' **Farrow**, as he then busied himself conducting recces (10 days in a five star hotel) and planning a testing ex.

Then the inevitable happened, and the powers that be put Kenya off limits 8 days prior to Startex. This left approximately 5 working days to find a new country, get staff clearance, conduct a recce and liase with the local military. To cut a long story short, Denmark was chosen and the ex cracked on (we won't mention that all the equipt had been pre-positioned in Kenya).

Soon after the dets departed by ferry to Denmark, all ideas of a booze cruise quickly vanished, firstly when they saw the 'ferry' and secondly when they bought their first drink at £2.60 for a half-pint. On arriving in Denmark, the three dets deployed to their respective locs. It was when Det One realised how thoroughly the FofS had organised this ex. On reporting to the Danish guardroom, they were greeted with 'Who are you? One Sqn? Never heard of you'. This spurred **Sgt Fawcett** and **Cpl Dine** into action, or should I say waffle mode (this is obviously what the SC pay is for).

Whilst the dets were deploying, Base were flying out to Cyprus, via the usual torturous route of Brize Norton, Gateway House and flight delays. On arrival in Cyprus, feeling rather smug and thinking 'at least we'll get some sun', we were horrified to find a stormy chilly night. Once we had met up with our permanent Sqn member in Cyprus, he promptly went sick, earning himself the name **Cpl** 'Elephant Man' **Samuels**. There is no truth in the rumour that it was a reaction to wearing uniform and actually working.

The ex then progressed at a rate with the dets being set a number of tasks by Base to ensure each student was tested on all they had learned in the previous 16 weeks. Simple things, like POL, the Det hire car. However for some this proved too difficult, and thus **Sig (now LCpl)** 'Diesel' **Green** was born when he filled the diesel car with petrol, giving **LCpl Walker** REME some work she was not expecting.

Whilst being at Base is usually considered the easier of the two options, you do have **Maj Miller** and his ever-growing scenario to contend with. **Sgt Lumsden-Gordon** managed to slow his racing mind by introducing him to *Outbreak*, a shoot-them-up computer game.

Once Endex was called, all three Dets merged on Varde for three days stand-down (not to be confused with R&R, as we're not entitled to any). The hardened SC crew, **Sgt Wes Wesseldine**, **Cpls Gaz Wolley**, **Dave Marshall**, **J Dine**, **Pete Stainforth** and **LCpl Andy Stephen** then went on a sighting seeing trip of Denmark, taking in all the local Brit/Irish bars, whilst the remainder did the same in Varde.

However, Base had to curtail its planned activities because of restrictions imposed as a result of world events. But we had more than made up for this already, with **SSgt Churchward** informing **LCpl Read** she would be rock climbing daily, **Sgt Gray** throwing himself from serviceable planes, whilst **WO2 (FofS) Farrow, Sgt Hill** and **LCpl Taylor** made up for the lack of skiing by visiting some of the seedier joints in town.

Congratulations must go to **Sgt Walsh**, **Cpl Burrows**, **LCpls Reeve**, **Mathews** and **Green** for passing the SC course. Also making SC history **Sgt** Wesseldine and **Cpl Dine**, both Sqn techs, who have passed the course as SC Ops.

As a final note there is no truth in the rumour that **Maj Billingham** and **Capt Davis** were merely collecting air miles.

ITD WEEKEND MARCH

With much of the Sqn otherwise engaged, the long-planned ITD weekend looked in danger of becoming a 'lead-into-brass' ex.

Some last minute re-shuffling of instructors, accommodation, etc, and it soon got back on course. **LCpl Dan Perdue** took over the NBC stand, and the First Aid testing was enhanced with the presence of **Sgt Ken Wainwright** providing a convincing casualty (or corpse!).

The weather was true to form at Lydd-Hythe (blowing a gale and honking with rain), and the scores reflected the atrocious conditions. The Range Officer, **Capt Matherson**, was heard muttering 'cow's arse and banjo springs to mind' on numerous occasions. For once the low numbers helped and everyone re-shot to pass...eventually!

Sunday started too early with the CFT. No problems though, except **Sgt Lawrence** confirming his promise to do some 'phys'. Yeah later! Back to Bletchley, and two lectures from the AO, **Capt Houghton**, highlighting as far as the ORs are concerned, their 'human rights'. A good weekend in all!

SERVICE WITH SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS

During the next 12 months, the Sqn will have vacancies for Regular RadSysOps (LCpl – Sgt), RSigs Dvr (LCpl), ISOps (Cpl) and RSigs Elec (LCpl). Volunteers of all trades are required to attend the 5-day SC Assessment Course. The next one will be held 29 September -03 October 03. Successful Ops are then required to complete the 18-week SC Course. Regular volunteers should contact their unit Training Wing.

The Sqn also has TA vacancies in RadSysOp, SysEngTech, TechSupSpec, ISOp and REME trades (up to WO2) in addition to a Lt-Capt vacancy. Volunteers should contact PSAO 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) on 94240 8512.

CYPRUS COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (CCU)

OC **Maj Matt Hanson**
USM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Smith**

CCU KEEPS AKROTIRI TALKING!

Never mind the Desert Rats - the Cyprus Rats are on the advance. Only Cyprus Communications Unit (CCU) can save us from these rodents now! OC CCU Airfield Section, **Capt Ben Psaila** explains all.

CCU is barely six months old, but it is already playing a major part in supporting current operations in the Gulf. We have establishments spread all over the island, but Akrotiri Sec, comprising of an airfield det, a contingent at the Salt Lake Site and support from the CCU HQ, have had to up the tempo most of all. Airfield Det, in particular, which is just 24 strong, has been working solidly during all daylight hours since early January.

Getting in some Lanyard Trophy training, a CCU team put their backs into a cable haul

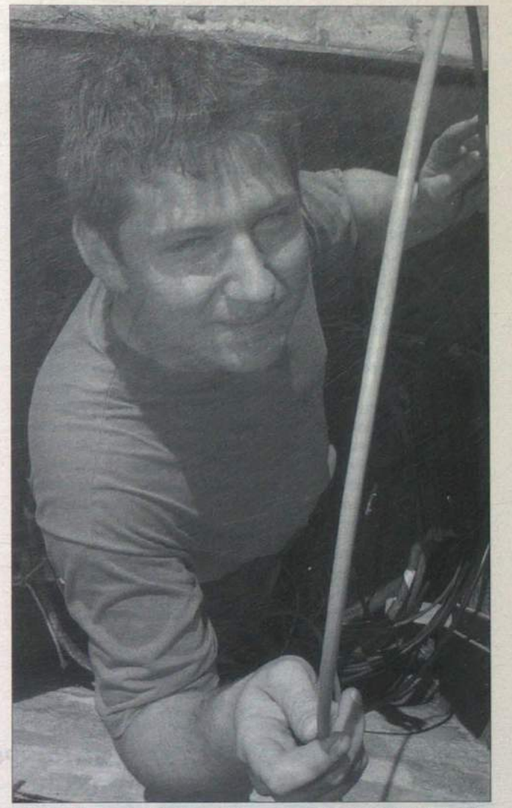
As more is being asked of Akrotiri, CCU has been tasked with providing the Station with the required increase in comms capability. This has often proved very challenging, as comms lines are generally required to be installed into previously unoccupied locations with limited or no facilities at all. A formidable task when you realise how big Akrotiri is. In the first instance, Airfield Det has had to upgrade the comms links to the general area before supplying specific requirements to the actual buildings themselves. This is no easy task, as all comms lines are underground and this requires CCU techs to work in purpose-built pits installed at regular intervals along the comms lines. Often filled with water and even rats, this is not a pleasant job!

These additional tasks are very manpower intensive and not something CCU would normally be expected to do. However, over the past three months this extra work has become the norm. To help with the workload, CCU has supplemented the teams with personnel from Dhekelia Det to cover some of the remaining duties.

You may have seen some of this work in progress, not realising exactly what was going on. A lot of the time is spent jumping in and out of the 1200 cable pits dotted around RAF Akrotiri, pulling large drums of cable through the 400 km of underground ducting. And all the work is done manually – come rain or shine.

As well as upgrading the ageing RAF Akrotiri cable infrastructure (some of which was laid in the 1960s) CCU has also had to undertake some extensive repair work caused by accidental construction damage or (more frequently) by rats that find fibre-optic cables a delicacy. The repair of all of these cables has been further hampered by the heavy rainfall experienced over the past few weeks. Several of the pits and working spaces have been completely submerged, making it almost impossible to conduct immediate repairs.

To keep a watchful eye, both the OC and 2IC regularly check in to inspect the progress. 'I am very pleased with the troops' efforts over recent weeks' 2IC **Flt Lt Darren Scales** said. 'The mood is exceptionally professional. Everyone is clear about the mission and that they are making a valued and unique contribution.' Notwithstanding the increased workload, life must go on as CCU facilitates the arrival of troops into theatre, ensuring that they are immediately ready to start work. This is an important role that CCU must fulfil throughout this operation, and when it all finishes, CCU will still be here maintaining the comms infrastructure across the island.



Blinking like a mole, Sig Simon Thomas emerges from MIddle Earth

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT, FALKLAND ISLANDS

THE ROYAL SIGNALS MEMORIALS AT MOUNT PLEASANT PEAK - *By Capt (Tfc) Marc Ewart and Capt (TOT) Dean Briers*

Those of you who have served with JCU in the Falkland Islands will know that there are two war memorials that are looked after by the Unit. One, on the summit of Mount Pleasant Peak, is the memorial to those lost in the helicopter crash, **Maj ML Forge**, **SSgt JI Baker**, both RSigs, and the crew of **SSgt C Griffin** and **LCpl S Cockton**, both AAC. The second one, at the Southern foot of Pleasant Peak, is the memorial to all RSigs personnel who died in the campaign (**SSgt JI Baker**; **Lt JA Barry**; **Cpl RA Burns**; **Maj ML Forge**; **LCpl PN Lightfoot**; **Cpl DF McCormack**; **Cpl MV McHugh**; and **Cpl SJG Sykes**) and over looks Mount Pleasant Airfield (MPA).

Earlier in my career I served as a YofS with a former member of the Corps, a then **Capt (Tfc) Martin Corcoran**, who was 205 Sig Sqn YofS during the Falklands conflict. I remember his telling me the events that led up to the placing of those memorials. I recently made contact with **Martin**, and here with his kind permission is his recollection of the events.

*'I sent a RRB det up to the highest point on Mount Pleasant during the conflict. On being informed that if the RRB was not re-supplied with more batteries it would lose comms with 3 Para, **Maj Mike Forge** decided that he would go up there by helicopter. I said 'OK, off we go Boss' but he said 'No you are not going.' As I was the YofS and we did not have a Comms Officer, one of us had to stay. **Mike Forge** said he wanted to go up to 3 Para anyway to see **Sgt Wily Granitza**, their Rear Link Sgt. A great guy I remember; hard as nails and hands like shovels. 'I will take **Joe**,'(the troop SSgt) said **Mike**, and off in the helicopter they went, (As is now known, the helicopter was shot down by one of our destroyers). The RRB reported a bright orange flash in the sky some way south from their loc. The HQ assumed the worst, that the helicopter had been shot down by someone or something. The RRB det could not actually see their hand in front of their nose. Anybody who has been to the Falklands will tell you, that with no ambient light around, when it is night it is black, and I mean black.*

*'I had taken **Joe's** duty in comms Ops until he returned. He never did, and I stayed on duty for the next 56 hours or so. It was the next morning at around 11.00 hrs (this is all in Goose Green with 3 Para having just gone forward to the Fitzroy settlement) when I went into the Ops room that the staff got a bit of a shock. That morning (whilst I was still on duty in Comms Ops) HQ had sent out another helicopter, which found the wreckage and reported back that all were dead. When I walked into the Ops cell,the Brigade Major nearly died. They had already sent a signal with the names of the dead in it. The night before, I had told the staff that I was going with **Mike Forge** to replen the RRB. The staff did not know that **Mike** had told me to stay put and had taken **Joe**. The staff action had kicked in and they had sent the 'Notice of Death' signal back to the Sqn via the Navy and asked for a*

replacement of a new OC and YofS. ***Maj Keith Butler*** *took over as OC a day later, and they managed to quickly send another signal and stop the Padre informing my next-of-kin.*

In the post conflict copy of The WIRE, I am still reported as dead. Even a couple of issues of The WIRE ago I read that in MPA they had gone up to the memorial on Mount Pleasant peak to remember and pay respect to ***YofS Joe Baker****. So I was reported as being dead and yet it was poor* ***Joe****. I have always felt guilty.* ***Mike*** *made the decision, I do remember begging him not to go but to let me, he said 'no'.*

So, when I went to the Falklands in 1988 doing my 'Green Traffic Officer' stint I vowed that I would go up to MPA and pay my respects. Before we left the Falklands in 1982 we had, under the 2IC ***Capt Matt Helm*** *and the RSM Paddy Hunt, built the 205 stone memorial on the ground below Mount Pleasant. It is not on the spot they died. The helicopter went down some 300 yards further towards what is now the MPA base. I asked my* ***Flight Sergeant Alan McKay*** *to drive me up there when I first arrived. We then walked along the ridge. We came to the cross on the ridge, which I know had been erected and I remarked to* ***Alan*** *that it was a shame that it was dirty and we had no cleaning material. It was then that I made up my mind that while I was in the Falklands I would ensure the cross glowed brightly. So out of respect, I would run every Sunday from MPA up to the cross on MP carrying a rag and some polish in my shorts pockets and I would make sure the cross shone.*

The footnote to this is that during my tour in the Falklands, **Capt Dean Briers** and I also went to pay our respects to those who have gone before us. And for those who do want to remember those comrades, they will now find one ammo box at each location with all the necessary cleaning material presented from those members of the Mafioso both past and present who were serving in the Falklands from Oct 02 to May 03.

Capt (TOT) Dean Briers and Capt (Tfc) Marc Ewart, having cleaned up the memorial at Mount Pleasant peak and placed an ammo box containing cleaning kit for others to do likewise

BRITISH ARMY TRAINING SUPPORT UNIT BELIZE (BATSUB)

BRITISH ARMY TRAINING SUPPORT UNIT BELIZE (BATSUB)

- by SSgt Gary Shuck, Communications SNCO

Many readers may well wish to know what a member of the Corps is actually doing in Belize. 633 Sig Tp left these shores back in 1994, together with the majority of the Garrison that used to live at Airport Camp (now known as Price Barracks). Since then the unit had undertaken a new mission in life and now gives support (in many forms) to the Panther Cub exercises. This ex is an infantry company level exercise and gives valuable jungle trg to units in the light role.

As the Comms SNCO, I undertake many tasks, including running the Commcen here in Belize. However, I am ably assisted by my JNCO, **LCpl Kev Mason,** who volunteered for 6 months of sun tanning and Mexico trips, as opposed to the day-to-day life at 16 Sig Regt.

THE LA RUTA MAYA CANOE RACE

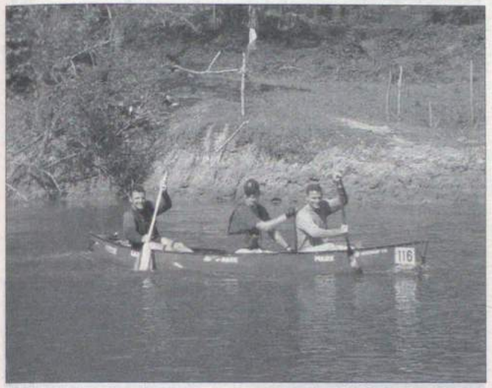
One of the major events of the year for BATSUB is the La Ruta Maya Canoe Race. This event is very well known in the canoeing world, and is a key event here in Belize for soldiers and civilians. It consists of 175 miles paddling down the Makal/Belize River. It starts in San Ignacio near the Guatemalan Border and finishes 4 days later in Belize City. Any of you with a large-scale map of Belize or experience of the country, will know that the route the river takes is through some beautiful and breath-taking jungle. This year the race took place over 7-10 March, and this is my version of events.

November 02 – Training starts. 06.00hrs and this is the first training session. The last thing anyone wants to do is climb into a boat and zigzag up a river for 2 hours. The old and bold members of BATSUB give encouragement, stating it will get worse before it gets better. They were correct, we finish the training session aching from head to toe, the blisters on my hands are the least of my worries. We carry on training 3 mornings a week solid up to early February. Some sessions are short; some much longer.

While we were in preparation for the race, BATSUB was visited by the crocodile hunter, **Steve Irwin**. The reason for his visit to Belize was to shoot footage of **Steve** and some poor crocodiles in action. He agreed to have a photograph with us.

L- R SSgt Gaz Shuck, Steve, SSgt Mark Nottingham(RLC), Cpl Mark Rumney(RLC)

Day One, 7 March, was over a distance of 48 miles from San Ignacio to Banana Bank. The race began at 06.00hrs with some 82 boats lining up on the start line. As if completing the race itself were not bad enough, there were several cash prizes en route for the first boat to reach a specific point after the start of each day's racing. After paddling for about 8 hours non-stop save for water and food, we eventually arrived at Banana Bank, where, faced with the prospect of sleeping under canvass and being bitten to death by mosquitoes, we took the easy option and elected to return to Price Bks for the night.



Pleased to be home!

On Day Two, 8 March, Reveille was at 03.30hrs, followed by an hour's drive back to Banana Bank. We were then treated to a cooked breakfast, courtesy of the RLC, before starting the second day, a massive 72-mile paddle from Banana Bank to Bermudian Landing. We decided to start slightly further back in the rat-race, so as to not get involved with the more serious competitors, who are only too happy to ram you, without so much as a 'sorry mate'. Before setting off, we knew that this stage of the race would take approximately 10 hours, so why on earth we got in the boat in the first place is beyond me! Nevertheless, we paddled on regardless, and finished in a very creditable time of 9 hours 12 mins.

On Day Three, 9 March, having overcome what we all believed to be the most arduous day, we were almost looking forward to this day three, a mere 29 miles from Bermudian Landing to Burrell Boom. Having already completed this stage of the race during one of our training sessions, we knew that the water was like treacle and that, despite the shorter distance, it would take somewhere in the region of 6 hours - a testament to just how 'sticky' the water was. What we didn't count on, was the incessant head wind that made a difficult day's paddling all the more so. Once again, we overcame the elements (eventually) and finished in another creditable time of 6 hrs 21 mins.

Day Four, 10 March was the final day's paddling, from Burrell Boom to Belize City - another mere stone's throw of 29 miles. Once again we made a fine start and managed to avoid capsizing. This was by far the most enjoyable of the four days, not only because it was the final day, but also because we had completed almost all of our training on this stretch of the river and, unlike previous days, knew just what to expect. Having agreed before the start of the race to pull to the side and wait for the 3 remaining BATSUB pleasure craft, we then crossed the line together, in a time of just over 4 hrs, to cheers and applause from the Belizean crowds.

The event was extremely demanding and, at times, a mind-numbingly boring experience - but well worth the effort. En route, although one part of the river was pretty much like all others, we were treated to the sights of numerous birds, howler monkeys, snakes and stray dogs, who seemed to make far more noise than many of their Belizean counterparts standing on the banks. Although it has to be said that there were plenty of spectators, the Belizeans unfortunately haven't quite grasped the concept of clapping and cheering.

Having crossed the line, everyone vowed that this was their last La Ruta Maya, but only time will tell. Special mention must be made to **LCpl Kev Mason** RSigs, who, after completing no training, stepped into the helm and became the third member of a REME boat successfully finishing the race without a problem. Well done to everyone.

The best feeling in the world!

ARMY CADET FORCE

CLEVELAND ARMY CADET FORCE

CLEVELAND GIRLS RACE INTO THE LEAD

120 army cadets from Cleveland, Durham, Northumbria, Humberside & South Yorkshire and Yorkshire North & West Army Cadet Forces moved in on Otterburn Camp on Sunday 2 March 03 for the Annual Regional Cross-Country over six kilometres. And what a challenging and exciting race it turned out to be. The weather was a nippy 3°C, but bright and sunny. But the still boggy ground caused several runners to lose their shoes. Despite this, Cleveland Senior Girls beat the extremely strong field to gain the trophy in their class, with excellent performances from 2nd placed **LCpl Ashleigh Readman** from Thornaby Green Howards Det and 3rd placed **Cpl Louise Boulton** from Skelton Green Howards Det. The Junior Girls came a gallant third place despite an amazing 2nd place performance by young Cadet **Tracy Hall** of Safburn Green Howards Det.

The final result for Cleveland was an overall 2nd place, being pipped by Durham cadets. Placing for Cleveland: Junior Boys 5th place, Senior Boys 2nd place, Junior girls 3rd place and Senior girls 1st place.

Maj Mike Twinn the Trg Maj of Cleveland ACF said, 'What a brilliant effort by these youngsters from Cleveland. They raced against formidable opposition and they triumphed. The result means we have Cleveland Cadets representing the area in another National Event, The National Cross Country Championships to be held at Warcop on 22nd March.'

Cleveland ACF is already looking for cadets to train for next year's competition and the adults (male of female) to train them. No experience necessary, as full on the job training will be given. Details ring **Maj Andy Shaw** (01642) 242414 Ext 21.

MIDDLESEX & NORTH WEST LONDON ARMY CADET FORCE

DIPLOMA FOR UXBRIDGE ARMY CADET

Twenty-five senior Army Cadets from all over NorthWest London,

including Uxbridge, came together for a study weekend at their Hammersmith Training Centre for the final part of their BTEC Diploma in Public Service. Over three quarters of what cadets learn in their Cadet Training syllabus (map reading, adventure training, first aid and community service) counts towards the BTEC Diploma, equivalent to 4 GCSE grades A*-C or a two year study course. This weekend of concentrated study set them up to complete the remaining modules covering nutrition, public service and team-working. **Cpl Louise Dean** of Uxbridge ACF Detachment was one of the Diploma recipients.

RSM Richard Wooley, who is responsible for the development of senior cadets in NW London ACF, said 'This is a marvellous opportunity to convert much of what the cadets do anyway, into a very real and valuable academic qualification that they can call on and add to their personal CVs'

Edexcel is the national examination body which marks and awards the Diploma. The ACF has undertaken a great deal of work over the last few years successfully to map its Army Proficiency Training Syllabus against the requirements of the BTEC Diploma.

'Many cadets are already in full-time education and this simply adds another string to their bow ' said Dep Comd, **Lt Col Ian Denison**, 'and it credits them with what they have already achieved through their own efforts in the cadet movement.'

TOP BRASS VISITS DURHAM CADETS AT CAMP

Brig David Shaw, Comd 15 Bde based at York, visited cadets from C Coy Durham ACF at their weekend training centre at Stainton Camp, Barnard Castle. The cadets from Coxhoe, Durham, Horden, Houghton le Spring, Seaham, Shiney Row, and Ushaw Moor Light Infantry Dets, and Wingate Light Dragoons were involved in a challenging and exciting weekend of military training.

Brig Shaw was met by the Comd of Durham, **Col William Gracie** and **Maj Brian Kitching**, OC C Coy. He saw the cadets exercising in various aspects of military training including; fieldcraft, shooting, drill, skill-at-arms, and other self-reliance aspects, and spoke to many of them about their stimulating pastime. He then met all the Offrs and adult instructors over a working lunch.

The senior cadets carried out a tactical ex at Warcop Trg Area and six of the most senior were successful in the weapon handling assessments.

Sgt Paul Fullard, an adult instructor at Ushaw Moor det said, 'The cadets really enjoyed the opportunity to speak to such a high-ranking officer and the entire Coy benefited from such a comprehensive trg weekend.'

Durham ACF is looking for enthusiastic cadets to train for this year's annual camp to be held at Otterburn and adults (male of female) to join our team of dedicated instructors. No experience necessary as full on the job training will be given. For details ring **Maj Steve Ramsey** on (0191) 388 2351.

'BIG BROTHER' VOLUNTEERS SUPPORT CADETS

Two Merseyside Combined Cadet Force Colleges would like to express their thanks and appreciation to 59 Sig Sqn, 33 Sig Regt (V), for their valued support. Firstly Merchant Tailors School, who parade 250 cadets and they have a long-standing association with the Regt. Over the many years a number have joined RSigs as Regulars or TA, including the previous CO of 33 Sig Regt (V), **LtCol Elton Davis**. Their recent Annual Inspection Day was also supported by 59 sig Sqn with sigs trg by their volunteers, and their new CO, **LtCol Dave Summerville**, was one of the VIP guests at lunch, hosted by the Contingent Comd, **LtCol Paul Irvine**. Secondly, St Mary's College would also like to express their thanks to **Cap Jeff Downey**, for arranging the help of Volunteers from 59 Sig Sqn (V), to support their pre Easter camp at Altcar and giving sigs trg to the senior cadets. **LtCol Ken Sullivan**, who has a cadet strength of 150 at the College said, 'Thanks to the RSigs volunteers. They contributed greatly to the success of our camp'.

Thanks are also expressed to Sgt Peter Ramejkis of 2 Sig Regt for his support in training cadets who are all potential recruits as R Sigs regulars or volunteers

SPORT

SQUASH

ROYAL SIGNALS SQUASH 2002 ARMY FOUNDATION COLLEGE HARROGATE

It was an interesting return to Harrogate for those who trained at the Army Apprentice College many years ago. There is little or nothing remaining of the old college except for an old tree across the football fields that young apprentices used to run to, and collect a leaf for his ever entertaining Tp Sgt. The Army Foundation College has a superb sports complex and boasts 6 excellent squash courts. The accommodation was also excellent and the college staff looked after us very well. Despite the usual travel and availability problems, the competition produced some very close and exciting matches. Disappointingly the Women's competition did not have any entries and the Under 25's only had 2 entries.

The final of the Over 40's final was fiercely fought between **SSgt Ray Williams** and **WO1 Sean Carey** (APTC), both from Blandford. This match went all the way to a deciding 5th game, with **Ray Williams** the eventual winner. The Plate competition was won by **Sgt Dhir** of 30 Sig Regt, one of the surprise players of the tournament. He won in straight games against **Sgt Lofthouse** of 16 Sig Regt, 9-2 9-5 10-9. The Open competition and the Over 35's went according to the seedings. **Capt Dean Richardson** and **Capt Steve Bason** had their usual battle in the semi-finals, with **Dean** narrowly losing 9-7 8-10 8-10, and about time too. **SSgt Dave Gallagher** met **WO2 Ian Nears** in the other semi-final, winning 9-6 10-8 9-4. **Capt Steve Bason** and **SSgt Dave Gallagher** also reached the final of the over 35 competition, and a double-header match was played for the Open and the over 35 final. With **Dave Gallagher** having had much easier draws to both finals, he was obviously very much less tired than the far older **Steve Bason**. This was evident in the final, with **Dave** winning in straight games 9-5 9-4 9-0. Congratulations go to **Dave Gallagher** and to all the other competitors who took part.

With so many entries dropping out at the last minute or just not turning up, the team competition had a few mixed teams to make up the numbers. 2 Sig Regt, the favourites, came a disappointing joint 3rd with a very good 16 Sig Regt. This was probably because many of the 2 Sig Regt players did not turn up. However the winning Unit team was once again Blandford.

The Player of the Tournament and receiver of a squash racket, was a new face on the scene, **LCpl Rudra** from 30 Sig Regt. He beat some very credible players and showed tremendous determination and enthusiasm. If he continues to play regular squash, it will not be long before **LCpl Rudra** will be playing in the Corps team.

ARMY INTER-CORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS ALDERSHOT

With so many good players in the Corps, the opportunity was there to enter a second credible team in the Army Inter Corps competition. The players selected were:

RSigs A	RSigs B
SSgt Gallagher	**SSgt Williams**
Capt Bason	**Capt Woodley**
W02 Piears	**WO I Findon**
Capt Nirmal	**Sgt Pengelly**
Capt Yam	**Sgt Dhir**
SSgt Amrit	

As a new entrant to the Inter-Corps, the B Team had to start out in Div 3. Two teams could gain promotion from Div 3, with two teams going down from Div 2. They began well by winning both matches on the first day against Int Corps and Army Medical Services, 4-1 and 5-0 respectively. The second day saw their most difficult match against RAC. This was always going to be tight match, with it finally being decided between the number 3 seeds. With the match at 22, **WO1 Marc Findon** unfortunately lost 9-7 7-9 6-9 9-6 1-9, which gave RAC an overall match win of 32.

However the B Team went on to win against Inf B, 4-1 later on that day, putting themselves in a very good position to play for the second promotion place on Day 3. The team played very well on the final day, beating a very strong Army Women's team 5-0 and securing promotion to Div 2 by beating RA, 4-1 and coming runnerup to the Div winners, RAC. This was an excellent performance from the team in their first appearance at the Inter-Corps Championships. They now have the prospect of Div 2 squash to look forward to next year.

With just one team being promoted from Div 1, the A Team, having only just missed out last year to AGC, were looking to gain promotion this time. The matches during the first 2 days went very well, with wins over RLC B 4-1, APTC B 5-0, AGC B 5-0 and RE B 5-0. The final day saw the team beat REME B 5-0, leaving the most difficult match to play until last against Inf A, which would decide promotion to Div 1 for either team. Surprisingly the A team did not play as well as they had been during the competition and we eventually lost the match 3-2. This gave Inf A promotion to Div 1, with 113 points and R Sigs A Team coming second, with 107 points. Interestingly, both R Sigs teams will now play each other next year in Div 2. Congratulations go to both teams for their fine performances during the Inter-Corps Championships.

ARMY SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIPS ALDERSHOT

This year's Army Squash Championships had a reduced entry from all Corps, and RSigs had 3 entries. **Capt Bason** lost to the No I seed (and eventual winner) in the second round of the Open, but went on to win the second round plate competition. **SSgt Gallagher** also met the top seed but in the semi-final, eventually losing 3-1, having played very well to take a game off the Army's current No I player. In the Over 35's, **Capt Dean Richardson** met **Capt Steve Bason** in the quarter-finals. This match went all the way to a fifth and final game, with **Capt Richardson** at long last taking the honours, 8-0 10-9 9-7 9-7 6-9. He then went on to lose in the semi-final the next day 3-1. Overall a very good performance at the Army Championships from the Corps.

FOOTBALL

CORPS FOOTBALL - *by Capt 'Tommy' Steele*

The season is well under way now, and judging by many of the comments I have received from members of the Corps, there seems to be some concern as to how the Corps are currently doing in the Massey Trophy league. The main reason for this lies with the tables and results that are printed in the *Soldier* magazine showing that the Corps are languishing at the bottom end of the league, having played only 1 or 2 games. The main reason for this is due to a number of fixtures having to be cancelled at short notice due to op commitments.

It is now the first week in April, and I am happy to report that the season is now back on track, our having played 5 matches, winning four and losing once. The results are as follows:

Corps side against the Army School of Music

RSigs v RLC (A): Lost 1:2. Scorer: **Sgt Alford**.
RSigs v Corps of Army Music (H): Won 6-1. Scorers: **LCpl Daniels** x 3, **Cpl Moffat**, **Sgt Alford**, **Capt Steele**.
RSigs v RAC (A): Won 7-1. Scorers: **Sig Bates** x 4, **Cpl Moffat**, **Cpl Stevenson**, **LCpl Harris**.
RSigs v APTC (H): Won 3-0. Scorers: **Cpl O'Connor** x 2, **Capt Steele**.
RSigs v Infantry (H): Won 4-2 Scorers: **Cpl Stevenson** x 2, **Cpl O'Connor**, **Sig Wood**.

The first game of the season is traditionally against RLC, and this year was no different.

Unfortunately we were beaten by the odd goal in three in a very tight match, a game that could have gone either way. With the wind in our faces we got off to the worst possible start conceding in the first 10 minutes with poor marking at a corner kick. The remainder of the first half saw the Corps side struggle to contain the opposition and get the ball under control. As the half progressed, the Corps started to improve and it was a relief to get to half time at only 1 nil down. With the wind at our backs, we got off to a perfect start. **Sgt Alford** picked the ball up just inside his own half and went on a run, beating two players to drive the ball low and hard into the far corner, with the RLC keeper well and truly beaten. From that moment, it really looked as if the Corps would go on and take the game by the scruff of the neck and win the game, but it wasn't to be! The RLC regained the lead shortly after through another defensive error at a set piece, when **Cpl Ross** failed to clear the ball. From that moment on it was all one-way traffic, with the Corps desperately trying to equalize. Alas the RLC defence was too strong and they managed to hold on to their lead until the final whistle for a well-earned victory.

The next two games saw comfortable victories for the Corps over the Corps of Army Music and the RAC. Notable performances

from **LCpl Daniels**, scoring three on his debut against Corps of Army Music and **Sig Bates**, going one better and scoring 4 against RAC on a fine Tidworth Oval pitch.

The next game was against APTC and the Corps came out on top with a fine 3 nil victory, our first clean sheet of the season! Of note here were the two goals scored by **Cpl O'Connor**, both bullets straight from corner kicks. They had to be seen to be believed. During this game **Sig Rizza** sustained a nasty leg injury, which will put him out of action for at least a couple of months. We all wish him a speedy recovery and hope that he is fit it time for the Quadrangular tournament in May.

And so on to the next game against Infantry, played on a fine spring day at Blandford in front of a sparse crowd. Having fallen behind twice in the game to a hard working team, the Corps showed a tremendous amount of character and team spirit, eventually over-running the opposition to win by 4 goals to 2. The corps has 7 remaining fixtures as follows:

AMS	11 Apr 03	(A) Ash Vale
AAC	25 Apr 03	(A) Middle Wallop
Int Corps	2 May 03	(H) Blandford
AGC	9 May 03	(H) Worthy Down
RE	12 May 03	(H) Blandford
RA	14 May 03	(H) Blandford
REME	16 May 03	(H) Blandford

There is still a lot to play for, and we will be doing everything possible to finish as high as we can in the Massey Trophy League. And there is a small matter of the Quadrangular Tournament, an event the Corps has not won since 1986! Please support your Corps side by turning out to support them in the above fixtures.

ARMY FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR, SEASON 2002/03 - SERGEANT PAUL ALFORD

Sgt Paul Alford of 7 Sig Regt was voted the Army Player of the Year for the season 2002/03 at the culmination of the Inter-Services Championship. **Sgt Alford** has been a Corps player since 1991 and has represented the Army and the Combined Services since 1995. His dedication and commitment to representative football has been nothing short of outstanding and this, coupled with his ability and fitness, is reflected in this Award. The Army Footballer of the Year is decided by the management of the Army Football Team, and **Sgt Alford** has thoroughly deserved their recognition. He has 102 caps for the Army and has many more appearances in front of him. He is seen here in action for the Corps against Army School of Music last year.

Sgt Paul Alford in total control, as usual!

SWIMMING AND WATER POLO

INTER CORPS SWIMMING AND WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS - ROYAL SIGNALS VICTORIOUS AGAIN! – *by Maj Tim Langford*

The 14th InterCorps Championships were contested at Aldershot on 26 - 27 November 02. The format this year changed dramatically, with an Individual Swimming Championship and a Female Water Polo Championship being added to the male and female sprint relays and the male water polo. RSigs yet again proved the depth of talent we possess in the Corps and achieved some magnificent results throughout the Championships.

ROYAL SIGNALS INTERNAL COMPETITION

Following impressive victories last year in the Inter-Corps Swimming and Water Polo Championships, RSigs were keen to start the new season on the same note. Selections for the new team were made at the Corps Internal Swimming and Water Polo Competition, which took place on Tuesday 19 November at 21 Sig Regt (AS). Unfortunately trg was slightly limited for the swimmers at 21 Sig Regt (AS) as repairs to the swimming pool were finished only a few days before the competition! My thanks to 21 for ensuring the pool was 'on the road'! The Swimming competition was certainly close between the three teams; BA(G), ITO and UK, with each of the teams winning two of the six relay races. The morning's events saw some outstanding individual swims, with **LCpl Stacy Fayers** (UK), **Sig Sara Parker** (UK), and **Cpl Bev Thornton** (BA(G)) producing races with the clearest victories. Overall, however, the UK team triumphed, with BA(G) narrowly beating ITO into third place.

The tension escalated during the course of the afternoon as it became clear that the three teams were, without doubt, trying to dismantle the swimming pool during the Water Polo Competition (the ball knocked the clock off the wall 5 times and it was even sent through the roof at one point!). However, it all came down to the final game, a decisive 5:1 victory over BA(G) left the UK team victorious once again. Congratulations to **Sgt Robbie Love**, who was top scorer of the day. **Brig JE Thomas MBE** (Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde) kindly presented the prizes.

Brig JE Thomas MBE presents the Swimming Trophy to SSgt Paul Beattie, UK Captain

INTER CORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS

With the teams selected and expectations high, trg soon began for the Inter Corps Championships. This was a week of trg in preparation for the Inter Corps to be held on 26-27 November 02. The Inter-Corps were to take a new format this year, incorporating individual events and female water polo, as well as the relays and male water polo. The individuals were not to count towards the Championship results this year, but they will in the future. After a period of trg, and a crash course in water polo for the girls with the able assistance of Coach, **Capt Pete Griffiths**, the teams were chosen. The male water polo squad again managed to enter two teams and still have players left over to lend to other Corps (demonstrating the superb support of units to this Championship. Many thanks) The B Team lost to the A Team in the semifinals, but they gave an extremely credible performance which, had they not met the A Team so early, may well have seen an all RSigs final! The A Team convincingly beat REME 5:1 in the final, to be crowned once again as the Champions. It must be said that the coaching received from **Mr Mick Flaherty** from the Blandford gym paid dividends as always. Thanks **Mick**. Overall the A Team scored 33 goals and conceded 5, the scorers being:

Sgt Robbie Love	9	**W02 Graham Weavers**	6
Cpl Ollie Olver	3	**Maj Tim Langford**	3
Sgt Abbo Abbott	3	**Capt Ben Psaila**	3
Sgt Andy Carneigne	2	**LCpl Ollie Smith**	2
SSgt Paul Beattie	1	**SSgt Pete Taylor**	1

The men won the Relay competition in a tight battle against REME, the freestyle relay team, proving the point with a credible average time of 27 secs over 50m. They also won the 4 X 50M Medley and Breaststroke relays with ease.

The females played water polo for the first time in the Championship, with RSigs mustering the minimum amount of players for a team. The girls played excellently against AGC to win 6-1, but were unlucky to be beaten in the final by REME 62. Never the less, the aggression showed. In particular, **Sig** (soon to be LCpl) **Helen Stanyer**, and **Lt** (soon to be Capt) **Catherine Jardine** had a few of the lads unwilling to mess with them! In the swimming, the girls won all of the events, but an unlucky disqualification (robbery) meant they lost out on the title, coming second once again to REME. Well, they had to win something!

Overall, **SSgt Marshall** was voted Best RSigs Water Polo Player of the Championships, for both his contribution in goal and as a high speed washing machine when let loose as an out field player!

This October will see the Corps Swimming and Water polo teams tour the west coast of the USA in preparation for this year's Inter-Corps Championships, which will be held on 25 - 26 November, again at Aldershot. The Internal Competition will be held on 18 November. Anyone who thinks they are Corps standard and have either been forgotten about or missed off the mailing list, please contact **Maj Tim Langford** (Ops Officer 10 Sig Regt) on 94382 4284.

Sig Tony Davies being presented the Inter Corps Male Swimming Trophy

ORIENTEERING

4/5 DIV ORIENTEERING RELAY CHAMPIONSHIPS 19 MAR 03

On Wednesday 19 March teams from across the 4 and 5 Div area congregated at Harewood Forest near Andover to compete in the Div Orienteering Relay Championships.

The concept of the Orienteering Relay is much the same as any other kind of relay, but it involves orienteering rather than just pure running! Each team comprises 3 members (2 teams of 3 comprise a major unit team). Once the first runner has completed his/her course, they complete a very public run in down the home straight to 'tag' the next runner, who is then given his/her map and disappears into the wood line towards the first check point.

The weather at Harewood was fantastic and regardless of how well the teams performed, it was generally agreed that this had to be better than a day in the office or on the veh park!

11 Sig Regt and Blandford Garrison managed to enter both a male and female team. Both teams ran exceptionally well and won their respective classes.

Congratulations go to both teams. We now look forward to the Army Relay Champs up in Catterick in May.

The winning teams: Back Row: SSgt Openshaw, Maj Benson, SSgt Lee, Cpl Hill, Front Row: Sig Fox, Maj Rayner, 2Lt Clifford (Absent from photo, SSgt Emmerson & SSgt (FofS) Crowther)

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING (CORPSAM) 2003

INTRODUCTION

RSigs CORPSAM took place between 29 March and 4 April and ran concurrently with Joint CORPSAM involving RE, RSigs, RLC, REME and AGC. The TA Meeting was on the weekend 29 30 March and the Regular Meeting from 31 March to 4 April.

RSigs TA numbers were again very high, with 116 soldiers competing from 10 out of 11 Regts. Regular numbers were predictably hit by current op deployments, but the number of units competing was the same as 2002. 90 Regular soldiers competed from 16 units. (Prior to OP TELIC, 170 soldiers were expected from 22 units).

SUPPORT

32 Sig Regt (V) provided an exceptionally high standard of range and admin support for the meeting. Some of their key personnel involved were: **Capt Keith Anderson**, as Joint CORPSAM QM; **W02 (SSM) Norma Sproul**, as Camp Sgt Major (who together with a small admin team ran the accn and feeding for 5 Corps); **Capt Terry McVey**, as Senior Range Officer, with **Capts Davey Crocket** and **Mick Granitza** running Ash 4 Range; **Capt Jeph Jephcote,** with **Sgt Heidi Peebles** and **Cpl Mundy**, in charge of RSigs stats. Together with their teams working in the background, they ran a very successful CORPSAM and the CO of 32 Sig Regt

(V) is thanked for his Unit's continuing high level of support for this major Corps event.

PRIZE GIVING AND VIP LUNCH

VIPs for TA prize giving on Sunday, 30 March were: **Brig JE Thomas MBE**, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde; **Brig (Retd) AP Verey QVRM TD**, Hon Col 94 (BY) Sig Sqn and **Col AC Cunningham TD**, Hon Col 32 Sig Regt (V).

Regular prizes were presented by **Maj Gen IOJ Sprackling OBE**, Master of Signals and **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC**, SOinC(A) who is President of Royal Signals Rifle Association. Also attending were **Brig CJ Burton OBE**, Director Manning Army and **Col M Lithgow MBE**, Chairman of both the OA&S Shooting Committee and Royal Signals Rifle Association. VIPs joined COs, RSMs and Team Captains for a curry lunch after both prize giving events.

The Master of Signals was delighted and very moved to receive an engraved decanter and crystal tankard from **Brig McDowall** on behalf of all members of the Royal Signals Rifle Association in appreciation for his support to CORPSAM over many years.

PRIZE WINNERS

The RSigs TA and Regular CORPSAM prizewinners and Unit Championship results are listed below. The following are selected main prizes:

TERRITORIAL

Champion Unit Team	31 Sig Regt (V) (Team A)
Best Young Soldier and Overall Champion Rifle Shot	**Sig Devlin**, 39 Sig Regt (V)
Champion at Arms	**Maj Bewsher**, (HQ 2(NC) Sig Bde

REGULAR

Champion Unit Team	30 Sig Regt (Team B)
Champion Minor Unit Team	280 Sig Sqn
Best Young Soldier	**Sig Shiva**, 30 Sig Regt
Champion at Arms	**SSgt Copley**, 280 Sig Sqn

All COs are thanked for releasing personnel and their support to CORPSAM 2003. Dates for CORPSAM 2004 are 27 March - 2 April 04.

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

OFFSHORE SECTION

With the summer well and truly approaching, it's time to get out on the water again. The Offshore Club has a few dates for your diaries, and all of the info listed below is available on our very own website http://www.rsignalsyc.info You can also register on the website your interest in sailing, and details of future events will be emailed to you.

EXERCISE MERCURIAL DIAMOND/DRAGON

This is the RSigs Sail Training Week and will be run by the British Kiel Yacht Club in Denmark from 1222 July. The week aims to introduce novices to offshore sailing and improve the skills of more experienced sailors. There are eight yachts available, each of which can hold a crew of six. Anyone interested in taking part should contact **Maj R Appleton**, Tel 01952 672880 or Mil: 94480 2880.

UK SAIL TRAINING WEEK 13 20 OCTOBER

If you've never sailed before, why not apply for a place on board one of the six Victoria 34s, which have been booked for the week? During the week you will be able to attend a Competent Crew Course, which is a fantastic introduction into Offshore Sailing in and around the Solent. For more experienced sailors, why not apply for a place on a Day Skipper's Course, which will also be running throughout the week? For more details on how to reserve your place, contact **Capt Charles Roberts** on 94371 2260 or by email on charles.roberts@orange.net Alternatively, contact **Sgt Windy Gale** on 9380 65668 for more details.

TALL SHIPS 4 JULY - 7 SEPTEMBER

This is a Joint Service event, where the Services enter two 55ft boats to race against each other and the rest of the fleet. This year, the fleet will race to Poland, Finland, Latvia and Germany before returning to UK. It is an excellent opportunity for all those who take part, but as 50% of the crew need to be under the age of 25, the event focuses around young people. Even if you are a complete beginner, you can still apply! For details and entry forms contact **Capt Charles Roberts** on the number above.

If you fancy going somewhere more exotic, there is a whole host of sailing expeds taking place all over the world, from sailing on the West Coast of Scotland, to cruising around the Caribbean. To find out more log on to the Royal Signals Website at http://www.rsignalsyc.info.

CARIBBEAN ENDEAVOUR

This Joint Service Exercise takes place between 15 September 03 – 11 July 04 and is based in Antigua. The expedition is on a 67ft Challenge yacht, which is able to take 14 people of mixed ability. There are 13 legs based in the Caribbean, each of 2 weeks duration. Any one interested should visit the web site at http://www.rsignalsyc.info and look under the Offshore, Expeditions section.

CANARY GOLD

This Joint Service Expedition is based in the Canaries between 01 September 03 and 23 April 04. It comprises 10 legs of 2 weeks duration each. There are two boats available, these being a Nicholson 55, which can sleep 12 of mixed ability, or a Victoria 34, which is available for units to use for the period allocated. Details on the expedition can be found on the web site or at DCI JS 36/03. The POC is **LtCdr PC Maidment** on 0117 9132466 or 935232466, email ilsst-ppl@dpa.mod.uk.

AFRICAN HACKLE

This is Joint Service Expedition, which aims to circumnavigate Africa. It is taking place between 26 September 03 and 29 July 04 and comprises 21 legs. The exped is using a Challenge 67, which sleeps 14 of mixed ability, including beginners. The POC is **Maj PS Clarke**, 01780 727746 or 95361 7746; email psclarke@oceancruising.com . Further information available on the web site or in JS DCI 07/03.

FASTNET RACE DRAGON 2003

EX FASTNET DRAGON 2003 is the Joint Service Adventurous Sail Training Centre (JSASTC) entry for the Fastnet Race, starting on Sunday 10 August, with selection and trg from Friday 27 June to Sunday 5 July and Friday 1 to Saturday 10 August. The ex will be conducted aboard a JSASTC Challenge 67 sail training craft (STC). The STC will make passage from Gosport to conduct two periods of trg before the race. Further information can be found on the web site or in DCI JS 45/03.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: MajGen A H Boyle CB

Vice Chairman: Brig N F Wood Area1; 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 F Carter MBE
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick

Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C Conlan
Membership: Mr P J Cuckow

Association Office, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone: Military System (9) 4371 2090 or Civilian 01258 48 2090. Welfare Secretary Telephone: Military System (9) 4371 2089 or Civilian 01258 48 2089.

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 MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

BRANCH NEWS

David Warner has been elected as the new Secretary of the Shropshire Branch and can be contacted at 23 Willows Rd, St Georges, Telford, Salop TF2 9AE; Tel: 01952-613938. **Dennis Croot** has succeeded **Geoff Waddoups** as Secretary of the Chesterfield Branch, and can be contacted at 12 St Margaret's Drive, Chesterfield, Derbys S40 4SX; Tel: 01246-271089. **Leslie Perrier**, Secretary of the Jersey Branch, has moved to 25 Berkshire Court, St Helier, Jersey JE2 3BF. He retains the same phone no. **Colin Spencer** is the new Secretary of the 3 Div Sigs Reunion Club, and can be contacted at 94 Mousehold Ave, Norwich NR3 3RS; Tel: 01603-407471. **Lt Col (Retd) Hugh Nealon** is the new Secretary of the Reading Branch, and can be contact at 10 Balliol Rd, Caversham, Reading RG4 7OT; Tel: 0118-9481136. **Alan Foot** continues as Treasurer/Membership Secretary. **Roy Andrews** has handed over the Secretary's reins of the 260 Sig Sqn (SAM) Assn to **Geoff Scott**. **Geoff** is also the Secretary of the Hartlepool Branch.

Branch Secretaries are asked to note the following changes to Issue 2 of the Branch Secretaries List:

Winchester Branch: new e-mail address for Hon Sec – garrygillings@aol.com. Edinburgh Branch: new address for **Ian McKay** – 22/6 Wardieburn Place West, Edinburgh EH5 1ND.

All members who enjoy the Saturday evening in the Sgts Mess during the Annual Reunion, will be saddened to learn of the sudden death in March of **Sid Soqo**. **Sid** worked as the Mess barman for many years and was highly respected and loved by our members. His warm Fijian nature and friendly smile will be missed by us all.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2003.

148 members representing 59 branches attended the 2003 RSA AGM, which was held in the Victory Services Club, London on 5 April. The meeting, Chaired by **MajGen AH Boyle CB**, enjoyed an update on Corps matters from **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC**, SO in C(A), who took questions from members. Many such questions related to the welfare of Corps members serving in the Gulf conflict. In his report, **Maj Gen Boyle**, announced the results of responses to his 'RSA – the Future' Paper and expressed his desire to set up panels to take forward the issues of: Officer

MajGen Boyle addressing the meeting

SOinC(A), The Master of Signals and the Editor of The WIRE were among those in the Dress Circle

Recruiting, Soldier Recruiting, New Branches based on unit titles and Advertising. The meeting approved the appointment of **Ron Taylor** (Manchester Branch) as Area 1 Representative, to succeed **Maj (Retd) Brian Ivison** and **Harry Hawke** (Bournemouth Branch) as Area 5 Representative, to succeed **Lt Col (Retd) Bob Peake BEM**. The Chairman thanked **Brian** and **Bob** for their valuable contribution over the past 5 years.

Under 'routine matters', **Col AF Carter MBE** (Treasurer), gave a report on the Association's finances. In the absence of the Welfare Secretary, **Lt Col (Retd) CP Conlon** gave a report on benevolence and the Membership Secretary gave his report on branch and membership affairs.

Maj Gen IOJ Sprackling OBE gave his last address as President of the Association. He highlighted how fortunate the Corps is in having the **Princess Royal** as our Colonel-in-Chief, the outstanding work done by SOinC(A), the RSI and the RSA. Our thanks goes to **Dave Walker** and **Tom Ditch** (Dorset Branch) for donating the prizes and running the traditional raffle, which raised £169.00 for the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund.

A copy of the minutes of the meeting should, by now, be with all branch secretaries.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2004

Branches and Members should note the date for the next AGM/Branch Representatives Meeting: Saturday 27 March 2004 in the Victory Services Club, London. This is a change to the date given out at the AGM in April of this year.

ULSTER ASH GROVE

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is not now available to lead the Act of Dedication of the Ulster Ash Grove at the National Arboretum on Thursday 19 June 2003. As a result, the event has been postponed until a later date, possibly in the period 23-25 September 2003.

NEW LIFE MEMEBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following recently enrolled Life Members. We hope that those who do not belong to a branch of the Association will consider doing do.

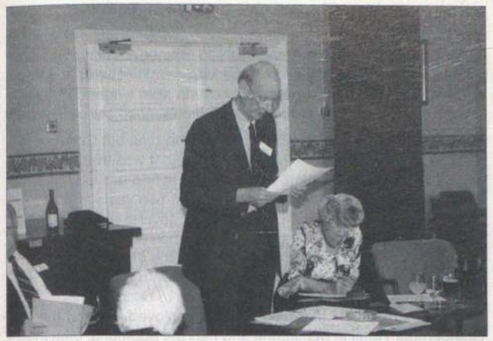
Name	*Branch*	*Service*
Capt Pete Skinner	Dorset	1959-96
Sgt Chris Geelan		1972-96
Sig Fred Lanham		1946-48
Cpl Anthony Moritz	Sale	1959-67
Sgt Andy Purdy		1981-98
Sig John Reynolds	Poole	1952-54
LCpl Mark Taylor		1992-00
WO2 Nigel Samm		1971-95
Sgt Mac McCoubrey		1940-46
LCpl Derek Manning	East London	1955-57
Sig Malcolm Langwith	East London	1955-58
SSgt Ashley Doe	Aldershot	1986-date
Sig Henry Wynne	Liverpool	1973-77
Sig Tony Green		1972-77
Cpl Roger Handley		1954-56
Cpl Steve Wright		1964-73
Cpl Michael Marsden	Rotherham	1954-56
Sig Terry Blakemore	Rotherham	1959-61
Sig Peter Smith	Beverley Ex-Boys Assn	1953-58
Sig Maurice Bayes	AFSR Assn	1943-47
LCpl Darren Rudman		1988-96
Sig Darren Roughneen		1992-96
WO2 Jock Robertson		1972-96
Sgt Dave Purnell		1972-96
Sig Derek Piercy		1992-96
LCpl Stewart Norton		1988-96
Cpl John Miles		1974-96
Sgt Tom McLaughlan		1964-96
Sgt Peter Mallard		1970-96
Sgt Simon Hodgson		1981-96
Sig Peter Mattick		1950-52
Cpl Rob Treeby		1979-87
Sig Simon Westwood		1987-92
Sig Gerard Reynolds		1976-78
Cpl Graham Hughes		1967-89
LCpl Rob Nelson		1983-89
WO2 Bill Wingate		1969-93
Cpl Cliff Beardsell		1955-63
Sig Stan Swain	AFSR Assn	1955-57
LCpl Chris Pogson		1990-96
Sig Sean Burke		1990-96
Sig Darren Swift		1982-87
Sig Grahame Knight		1991-96
Cpl Russ Marston		1987-96
WO1 Steve Bailes		1966-90
Lt Peter Riles		1942-45
Sig Alan Brown		1959-68
Cpl Peter Lindsay		1959-77
LCpl Mike Smith		1994-00
Cpl David Sawkins	East London	1953-62
Sig Matthew Smith	AFSR Assn	1944-47
Sig Ken White	AFSR Assn	1946-48
Sig Kevin Mounsey		1989-96
Sig Paul Bambridge		1990-96
Sig Peter Hunt		1992-96
Sgt Peter Green		1955-67
Sgt Ian Perry		1965-80
LCpl John Phelps		1986-91
Cpl Jeff Glenn		1961-70
Sgt Roy Hemmingway		1970-86
Maj Les Wood MBE		1972-03
Cpl Alan Auckland	Beverley Ex-Boys Assn	1950-71
Sig Tony Collins	York	1982-89
Sgt Robert Jennings		1988-02
Sig Paul Donegan	Derby	2002-date
Sig Becky Holmes	Derby	2002-date
Sig John Sanders	Derby	2000-date
Cpl Gerald Dear		1983-96
Sig Sam Parker		1961-71
LCpl Mark Fulton	N Ireland	1986-date
LCpl Danny Carter	Manchester	1998-date
Sig Mark Beesley		1991-96
Sig John Sinclair	Beverley Ex-Boys Assn	1950-53
Sgt George Thorburn	Beverley Ex-Boys Assn	1954-77
LCpl Robin Ellis	Norfolk	1968-74
Cpl Leo Youell	Norfolk	1953-83
Cpl Andy Dewar		1961-71
SSgt Steve Simpson		1981-03
Sgt Mike Power		1978-87
LCpl George Robertson	Tayside & Fife	1952-57
Cpl Ken Eatwell	AFSR Assn	1943-47

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Jane Knight**

Following our very enjoyable evening with the WOs and Sgts in Buller Barracks, we again enjoyed the hospitality of their Mess for our March meeting. This took the form of a talk presented by **Joan Tubbs**, an accomplished photographer who had been engaged professionally in recording by camera the flora and fauna of the countryside surrounding a village in the Spanish Pyrenees. This colourful presentation, accompanied by **Joan's** equally colourful commentary, was followed by an excellent buffet, for which we thank **Kev Smith**, the staff and other Members of his Mess.

Our Spring Luncheon and AGM was held in April in the Garrison WOs & Sgts Mess, which has hosted us for the past few years. We were delighted once more to sit down with **Joe** and **Jane Fairbairn**, who have returned from a tour in Cyprus and we welcome them 'home.' Also warmly welcomed were **Frank** and **Olive Pedley**, who were attending this function for the first time. The day was fine and the company convivial and we look forward to many such occasions in the future.



AGM and Spring Lunch, Sun 13 Apr 03. Branch President Brig Noel Moss conducting proceedings with Jane Knight, Secretary & Capt Peter Sharpe, Treasurer

AGM & Spring Lunch Sun 13 Apr 03. The 'top table' obviously enjoying their time together. L-R Lt Peter Hoare (part hidden), Mrs June Hoare, Brig Noel Moss, Mrs Carole Thomas, Mrs Ray Oakley, Lt Col Denis Oakley, Maj Hywel Thomas, Mrs Edelgard Moss, Col Neville Lyons

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr K Brown**
Secretary **Mr P West**

The Branch continues to maintain a membership of about 100, some of whom live a long way from Brighton, but all are kept in contact with a monthly newsletter. The AGM was held in February, at which the existing committee was reelected. **Ken Brown** has been reappointed as Chairman of the Committee, having been a member of the Branch for many years and also a member of the Burma Star Association.

L-R, Chairman, Ken Brown, and his wife Alice, Branch President, Brig Colin Brown, and his wife Heather

The revised pattern of activities seems generally to provide a programme to cater for the diverse membership. We now have an evening meeting some six times a year, a coffee morning also about six times annually and about four lunches. These events are well supported. A successful Annual Dinner was held last October and attended by some 80 members and guests. The Chairman of RSA, **MajGen Tony Boyle** and his wife, **Ann**, were guests and our President, **Brig Colin Brown** and his wife **Heather** attended.

The Branch continues to sponsor a Gurkha pensioner, and the fund raising for this is very well supported. Sadly each year sees the loss of some valued members and a separate notice has been sent for the 'Last Post' column. Welfare for members is organised within our resources and this work is greatly appreciated.

The branch is fortunate to be able to meet in a TAC which has a Sig Tp, providing a useful link with the serving Corps. The Tp provided an excellent colour party and escort at the Remembrance Sunday parade at Brighton and the Branch was well represented.

DARLINGTON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr R Botham**
Secretary **Mr C Cooke**

After a couple of false starts, here are long awaited notes of recent events from Darlington. From a book strength of 122 at the start of 2002, we transferred members who had not attended for three years or more to RHQ, leaving us with a good firm strength of 45. Much easier to administer and accommodate.

Our report starts with an outing for a get-together with Middlesbrough Branch in November 2002, together with members from Hartlepool, Spennymoor, Hull and York. An excellent day out with curry lunch and socialising coming to the forefront. Both Middlesbrough and ourselves have done this in the past but on a much smaller scale and the outcome has encouraged us to attempt it on a larger scale.

Secretary, President, Bob Todd and Chairman, Ron Botham present Cyril Cooke with his Honour Badge and Address

At our December meeting there was a surprise presentation. Our Secretary, **Cyril Cooke**, was presented with his honour badge, an illuminated address and a personal letter from the Chairman of the RSA. The presentation was made by our President, **Maj Bob Todd**, supported by our Chairman, **Ron Botham**. **Cyril**, who has been our Secretary for 28 years and a Branch member for 32 years, was, for once, speechless.

Other members are also very active and assist other welfare and charitable organizations. One member in particular, who never seems able to say 'No' is **Fred Alexandre**. His most recent role was as Santa Claus at a local Nursery School in Darlington. No doubt some readers amongst you will remember him and his time with the White Helmets.

At Christmas we had a most excellent party and disco, with great grub, prizes and Christmas spirit. According to all who attended, it was a great success and credit goes to **Mick McMain**, our Social

Fred Alexandre's latest role, Santa

Manager and his team. Our thanks and appreciation to all who assisted.

Sadly however, happiness is sometimes tinged with sadness and on 29 December 2002, member **John Pryor** died. An ex TA NCO, **John** was one of our regular attenders. He spread himself about a bit and his funeral was attended by many friends from the Association, the fellowship of the Services and the Order of Buffaloes. We have also had our walking wounded recently, with both **Dai Rees** and **Brian Jolley** having had hip replacements. Happy to say both have recovered well and are back in circulation, albeit a little restricted. Time will tell.

Our most recent and largest social event has been our very own 'Northern Get-Together', held on 23 February 2003, with members from Catterick, Hartlelpool, Hull, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Spennymoor and York attending. Including our own Branch, it was a grand total of 138. We were pleased to see our Area Representative, **Bob Cook**, amongst them. Assembling at midday, our guests were entertained with a surprise musical concert (courtesy of the NRPS, **WO2 Jim Robinson**) by the TA Band of the Royal Corps of Signals, conducted by **BSM Bob Howitt**, prior to enjoying an excellent roast Sunday lunch or cold meat buffet. After lunch a super raffle and several games of Tombola, along with a well-stocked bar, kept our guests and members well supplied with bonhomie until we started to drift away to our homes around late afternoon.

Early reports indicate that everyone thoroughly enjoyed their day out, and that all the hard work and support was justified. We now know that something of this stature is difficult and expensive to organise and also requires the support, hard work and co-operation of all Branch members and of everyone connected with us. Thanks also to all of the Branches who came along and made our 'Northern Get-Together' a huge success. A forerunner of many others, we hope.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs J Barrett**
Secretary **MajGen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

In the April edition of *The WIRE*, we had the sad duty to report the death of **Jim Hehir**, who passed away just before Christmas. At the subsequent Cremation service **Jim's** son, a serving SNCO in the RA attached to the RM Cdo Bde, spoke proudly and emotionally of his father. It is with the greatest regret that we must now report that he himself has now died, being one of the eight British personnel going forward in Iraq in a US helicopter which crashed shortly after takeoff. To say that we were lost for words of comfort to his mother is no exaggeration, but the Hon Sec sent our heartfelt thoughts to her, which she will receive when she returns from Poole, where she is in turn consoling her daughter-in-law and family.

We also have to report the death of **Mrs Pam Hand** who, after a long illness, passed away on 23 February, almost two years after her husband **Jimmy**. **Jimmy** was a Branch character and the acknowledged unofficial recruiter who could sniff out a Corps tie at twenty paces and bully the wearer into joining the Branch.

February's social scene opened with 30 Members attending a performance of *Calamity Jane* at the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury and much woopin' and hollerin' was evident from the Branch posse who gave **Miss Toyah Wilcox** much support.

It is customary for this Branch Committee to dine out Committee Members who have 'done their time', and so it was that we did just that to **John Ballantyne** on 6 March. He had fulfilled his duties as Chairman right royally for the past two years after serving 'in the ranks' of the Committee for several years beforehand. Much joviality ensued, accompanied by good food and wines provided by the trainee chefs of the Thanet College in Broadstairs. **Donald Crisp** presented **John** with a suitably rude but appropriate framed cartoon with which to decorate his smallest room. On 9 March, 60 Members enjoyed lunch at the Grangemoor Hotel in Maidstone and had the additional pleasure of a most interesting talk by **Bob Ogley**, a Kentish historian and author who regaled us with stories of the air war over Kent during 'the Battle'.

5 April saw the Branch Committee represented at the Association AGM at the Victory Club in London, where we heard much interesting news of the Serving Corps in an entertaining talk by SOinC(A), and an update on the proposed changes within the RSA. During the following delicious lunch there was much irreverent laughter at the news that the official cars of both the SOinC(A) and the Master had been towed away by the Metropolitan Police. However, we subsequently found that our own vehicle had been issued with a 6 point penalty notice demanding a £60 fine ....or else!

On Sunday 13 April, 50 or so Members and Guests attended an Easter Lunch at the Chapter Arms at Chartham Hatch, a delightful watering hole on the outskirts of Canterbury. Again, much jollification with an Easter Egg Hunt in the grounds and, of course, an Easter Bonnet Competition.

We announce two new Members. **David Banks BEM** served as a Regular Sig with the RA in Aden from 1955-58, whilst **Capt Martyn Downs** served as a National Serviceman in 16 Sig Regt, then as a Sgt in Kure, Japan. He joined the TA on the completion of Service and was commissioned in Western Command Sig Regt. He retired in 1961.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) Paul Burton**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) JB Greenwood**

Early in the New Year, to kick start our monthly meeting, we invited a guest speaker, **Col Alan Hall TD**, Rep Deputy Lieutenant for the London Borough of Redbridge and former Hon Col of 36(E) Sig Regt (V). He provided an illuminating presentation on the intricacies of the Deputy Lieutenant's role and how it has evolved over the years. This was a first for our Branch and was very well received by our members, and we are looking to schedule guest speakers for some of our future Branch meetings.

On 8 March we had our Annual Dinner and Dance, which most of our members see, as one of the highlights of the year. It was held in Ilford at HQ 36(E) Sig Regt (V), with whom we are closely associated. Nearly 150 people attended, including 51 members, partners, friends and invited guests.

The meal commenced after our Padre, **Rev David Eaton** had said Grace. Following the meal and loyal toasts, which were proposed by **Stan Emmett**, there were short speeches from our Chairman, **Maj (Retd) Paul Burton** and **Maj Paul Fredericks,** 2IC 36(E) Sig Regt (V). The Social Committee and helpers then speedily created space for dancing to live music provided by the duo *Two's Company*. A keyboard player and saxophonist, both doing vocal spots, seemed an unusual combination but it worked very well. Everyone was impressed with their repertoire which covered all types of music ranging from light jazz while we were eating, and afterwards Ballroom, Rock n' Roll, Disco and everything else in between. The evening was over all too quickly, and ended in the traditional way with our Standard being paraded off by **Roy Bilby** during the Last Post, The Queen and finally the Corps March Off.

The Social Committee, **Ted Head**, **Anita Keen**, **Neill Keen** and **Sgt Linda Cooper** are to be congratulated for organising such a splendid event. When the date was set early last year, they had no way of foreseeing the obstacles that would impede them. Our Disco and Supper night in November had to be cancelled because of the Fireman's dispute, and it was assumed that this would be settled by the time March came along. With the date fast approaching, it looked like we could have a repeat problem as the TA Centre was still being used as a base for Green Goddesses, with the Sgts Mess set up as a dormitory for the troops manning the appliances. However no new strike dates were set and we were kindly given permission to use the Offrs Mess bar. Next, our main contact, resident TA Centre caretaker **Caroline Evans**, was called up for service in the Gulf and then with 2 weeks to go before the Dinner, our chef, **Shirley Anderson** also a serving TA member, received her call-up papers. The committee and especially **Anita**, refused to be beaten, and on the recommendation of the Padre, succeeded in getting a first class replacement chef, along with waiters and waitresses. So it all came together on the night, the proceedings ran very smoothly, with no indication of the problems that had been encountered along the way, and everybody thoroughly enjoyed a first class evening.

However, there had been two other difficult and worrying events on the day. **Linda Cooper**, who had been involved in the preparations, was unable to attend because her parents, who had been forcefully burgled a couple of weeks previously, were victims again that afternoon. On this second occasion a very cold calculating approach was taken by a couple who pretended to be from Victim Support to gain entry. A collection was made for **Linda's** parents, raising £380 from members and guests. Secondly, **Caroline Evans'** mother, **Joan**, who had been acting as caretaker in **Caroline's** absence, slipped and fell during the day, fracturing her wrist. Luckily the gallant and very helpful TA member, **Johnny Walker** (Head Barman for the function) was on hand and escorted her to hospital, returning in time to set up the bar! Our best wishes go to **Linda's** parents and to **Joan** for a speedy recovery from the traumas they have suffered.

On Sunday 23 March, around 25 of our members and their partners arrived at the Queens Theatre, Hornchurch expecting a concert by the RA Band in aid of SSAFA Forces Help. However, we found that the Fireman's dispute had struck yet again, and the band were now training for fire fighting duties to replace servicemen sent to the Gulf and had therefore reluctantly withdrawn. Fortunately, our own Chairman, **Paul Burton**, wearing his SSAFA hat, had at very short notice, managed to get the RAF Squadronaires Big Band, whose performance was excellent and the evening's entertainment was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

While we enjoy our social activities, we never forget that one of the functions of the Association is to help members and ex-members of the Corps, in times of need. During March we were able to assist and offer sympathy to the family of a former member of our local TA Sig Regt, whose sixteen-year old stepdaughter was tragically killed in a road accident. Whilst still trying to come to terms with their loss, the ex-soldier and his wife were having difficulty in meeting the funeral costs of around £2,000. Our Branch members organised a raffle and, along with other funds from HQ RSA, Royal British Legion and SSAFA Forces Help, combined together to come up with a sum of £1,375. While that in no way compensates for their loss, it does go towards easing the unexpected financial burden that was imposed upon them.

In the next few months, the Branch is looking to organising trips to Blandford for the Annual Reunion, a visit to Westminster Abbey and a coach trip to Chatham Docks, along with our normal Disco & Dance in November.

Although we have a thriving Branch here in East London, we always welcome more members and would encourage any potential members living in the East London, South and East Essex area to join us. Serving TA members are also very welcome. Our meetings are normally held in the Sgts Mess of 36(E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 8pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month (except December). Details can also be seen on our web site at www.royalsignals.org.uk/rsa/eastlondon

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Mr JM Keegan**
Secretary **Miss I Muir**

A dance was held on 15 March, and although the numbers were a little disappointing, the evening went with a swing to **Tommy Sweeney** and his band. Tea and coffee were available, and a bar was manned for drinks. All members and guests present received a piece of the large cake produced by his friends, to celebrate **Tommy Rhodie's** 50th birthday. The cake was decorated in icing with the Corps colours and Jimmy badge.

The AO of 32 Sig Regt, **Captain John Lynch** with his partner **Dianne** and **WO1 RSM Steve Russell**, were welcome guests. The Branch Chairman, **Joe Keegan** and Branch Treasurer **Eric McWaters**, supervised an event by placing a bottle of whisky at the end of the dance floor, inviting members and guests to slide one pound coins along the floor towards the bottle. The coin finishing nearest the bottle won the whisky. A sum of £45 was raised from this event and a further £109 was raised from the raffle. The total amount of £154 was to be sent to Erskine Hospital. Everyone attending considered it was an excellent effort, and the band was so good it has been booked for the annual dinner dance on 29 November.

The Branch AGM will take place on 20 May this year.

MIDDLESBROUGH BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs A Grainge**
Secretary **Mrs M Dadson**

Once again we have staged a mini-reunion in the form of a Sunday lunchtime social event and, as usual, we invited neighbouring Branches who have links with 34 (N) Sig Regt (V) to join us at Brambles Farm TAC on 17 November 2002. It proved to be a highly successful event and was attended by 120 members and associates from Hull, York, Darlington, Newcastle, Spennymore and Middlesbrough.

As on previous occasions, the Regtl Cook, **WO2 Neil Berry** prepared an excellent cold/hot lunch, followed by a choice of sweets, assisted by **Pte Warner**. The quality and variety of the food, and the way in which it was presented, impressed everyone who attended. Following the meal we retired to the bar, where **Bruce Bassett** was almost run off his feet in his efforts to cope with the sudden demand. Later, things became more relaxed and we enjoyed a few games of Bingo, called very professionally by **Dick Grainge**. We had a very good raffle, and of course, a good natter.

Our thanks to the CO and RSM for the use of the WOs and Sgts Mess, to the ladies who sold raffle tickets and Bingo cards, to **Margaret Dadson** our Secretary, and to **Audrey Grainge** our Chairperson, who compered the event.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Secretary **S/Sgt (YofS) I Wolfe**

We had rather a shock when our Hon Secretary, **Ian Wolfe** announced that he had been called up for deployment to Iraq. What a relief it was when it was cancelled, especially as he was in the middle of organising a number of things, not least our annual Formal Dinner. I am sure it was an even greater relief to his wife, **Debbie** (our Hon Treasurer) and their three little girls.

The Branch AGM on 19 February produced few surprises in the election or reelection of Branch Officers. New Life Member Branch subscription cards (produced by RSA HQ, thanks to **Peter Cuckow**) were issued. We also hope to have a new card for our Associate Members shortly. We are glad to welcome back as a Life Member, **Mark Fulton** who had been a lapsed Annual Member. We wondered who the odd looking stranger was behind the bar at our AGM, but a closer look found it to be our Branch ViceChairman, **Jim Reilly** with not a hair on his head. He had bravely allowed his head to be shaved in aid of the charity 'Shine a light'. One could say it was a hairy thing to do.

The Branch meeting was followed by a speaker, **Mr Peter Paul**

Rea on the life of **LtCol Robert Blair Mayne DSO** (3 bars) of Newtownards, Co Down and of SAS fame, whose many heroic exploits in WW2 have been well documented. It was tragic that his life had to end in a traffic accident.

By the time you read this article (on 22 April) our oldest, Foundation and 50 Year Badge Member, **Harry Stanley** will have celebrated his 90th birthday and we hope to help him to celebrate at our Formal Dinner. Our Area Rep, **Lt Col (Retd) Terry Lightfoot** and Hon Sec, **Ian Wolfe** attended the recent RSA AGM. We will have a report on this from **Ian** at our next meeting.

Best wishes go again to Past Chair, **Anna McClean**, and Branch President **Maj (Retd) Bill Douglas**, who are both still recuperating from illness.

Our next Branch meeting will be on Wednesday 16 April, followed on 18 April by our Annual Formal Dinner in Clonaver TAC, Belfast. A welcome awaits any serving or exSig at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the 3rd Wednesday of each month.

SALE BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Deas**
Secretary **Mr M J Quinn**

It has been an indifferent year for the Sale Branch, with a small decrease membership numbers. After the sudden passing away of our Chairman, **John Riley** last year, the Chairmanship was taken over by **John Deas** and with the resignation of our Treasurer, **Tony Mortimer**, **Gary Robertson** took his place. But Secretary **Martin Quinn** is still going strong, having clocked up 18 years in the job. We said cheerio to **Brian McDonald**, who went to live in the warmer climes of Spain, **Jack Peers** disappeared for 6 months to Australia for a holiday, **Bob Bill** had a few weeks in Cuba and **Ken Gleave** is on one of his usual 5 holidays a year around the Mediterranean. Lucky lads!

All the Branch activities seemed to centre around the latter part of the year, with 30 members and guests having a long weekend in Ireland in September. Our base this year was at the Creggin Court Hotel on the outskirts of Athlone. With trips to Galway and a pub-crawl in Athlone, the weekend went pretty quickly for those who could remember any of it (Guinness is good for you). There was something to do for all our members. Whether you are into old buildings, churches, boating, fishing or golf, all is catered for in this beautiful country. If you are looking for a long weekend trip, Ireland is highly recommended.

Our annual October Social was once again held at the Ashton-on-Mersey Golf Club, who seem to pull all the stops out to give us an enjoyable evening. The entertainment was given by **Steve Rivers**, Vocalist/Comic and the usual superb buffet was served up by **Sue**, the Club's chef (or is that chefess?) 80 members and guests attended this one and a few pounds were rated for Branch Funds.

The annual Remembrance Sunday Parade was cancelled at the Sale Cenotaph due, we were told, to the restructuring and re-building of the Town Hall. We found out that the real reason was because the dignitaries had nowhere to shelter if the weather was bad. But did that stop us? Not at all. We organised ourselves with the United Services Club committee and went ahead, although makeshift, with a recorded Last Post and National Anthem. The roads were packed with spectators and ex-servicemen alike. We gave our two minutes and bowed our heads in memory of those who gave their lives in conflict. Not even the building of a new Town Hall was going to stop us on that day. Many thanks to all those who turned out and to 'Doubler' **Doubleday**, who turned out at the last minute to carry the Branch Standard.

In December, our pre-Christmas get-together, the annual Pie, Peas & a Pint night, was once more well attended. After three helpings of pie and mushy peas, Chairman **John Deas** found wind a problem the next day, and night, and into the into the next day (Waste not, want not. Was this Catterick in the fifties again?)

Late January saw the members and wives and friends attend the branch dinner at the Lennox Lea Hotel in Sale where 'Jimmy' took pride of place at the top table and the Chairman **John Deas'** special guest for the evening was the Branch Reverend, **Ray Rossiter** and his wife **Joyce**. The Chairman also presented a personal gift of a crystal vase to Secretary, **Martin Quinn** and his wife **Margaret** for his services to the Branch over the last 18 years.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr SL Smith**
Secretary **Mr AAT Dear**

Yet another comrade has passed away. Long serving member, **Ken Short** died at the age of 78 on 4 March 2003. See Last Post for details.

The Branch AGM was held on Tuesday 4 March 2003. The Chairman, **Sid Smith**, paid tribute to all Branch Officers and the Committee for their work throughout the year and the ladies for their help. He reported that he had paid visits to members who were unable to attend meetings through illness etc. He said that he had offered transport but all offers had been declined. Two welfare cases in the year had been referred to SSAFA. He had visited an exSig (DR), **Richard Percy**, who resides in a nursing home in Mudeford. He has been put forward for honorary membership of the Branch. Our Treasurer, **Claire Littlecott** reported that the Branch Funds were healthy.

All Officers were returned unanimously, with the exception of **Maj Peter Loveless**, who tendered his resignation from the position of Branch Auditor after long and faithful service. **Mr Norman Davies**, the Newsletter Editor, volunteered as replacement Auditor and was accepted by the Branch.

The Branch has finally raised enough funds for the purchase of a new Standard and this is now in hand. The Padre of 11 Sig Regt said he would be pleased to carry out the dedication in the Garrison Church. The date is to be confirmed, but it could be early Saturday morning of this year's Reunion, prior to the main parade. The fate of the old Standard has yet to be decided by the Branch.

The general feeling of the meeting was that the Branch already carries out a lot of the recommendations in **Maj Gen Tony Boyle's** 'Plan for Change'. **Mr Wayne Broadhurst** has volunteered and has been accepted as the Branch Information Manager for our website.

Top Table, with Claire Littlecott, Tony Dear, Sid Smith, Johnny Clinch and Peter Loveless

Branch Membership now stands at 57 Life Members and 18 Associate Members. Over the year 2002/2003 3 LM and 1 Wife of a LM have passed away. We welcomed new LM, **Mr Keith Brewer** and Associate Member, **Mrs Doris Bevington**.

No increase in the numbers attending the monthly Thursday evening meeting but those that do, are pretty consistent even if it is only for an hour.

TORBAY BRANCH

Chairman **Mr RP Thompson**

The Torbay Branch of the RSA hold their meetings at 8pm on the first Wednesday of each month at the Crown and Sceptre Inn, St Marychurch, Torquay.

Each month, as well as Branch business and the Treasurer's report (currently showing a healthy balance and maintained for branch commitments and emergencies) an interesting evening ensues with visiting speakers covering a variety of subjects. A recent social event was a dinner attended by members and their guests at the Belgrave Hotel on Torquay's seafront.

New members are assured of a very warm welcome. Please note that the 'hand of friendship' is not solely confined to RSigs.

The Old and The Bold of Torbay Branch

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Ret'd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

One of the most eagerly awaited events of our year is our AGM, for this is the occasion of our great Fish 'n Chip Supper, courtesy of the Branch. The formalities are followed by modest social indulgence, afforded by the hospitality of the RBL Richmond Club, while **Sheila Ruff** speeds off like a winged messenger to collect the delicate repast anticipated throughout the long winter months. The evening always is a convivial one, and tributes were paid to those who have served us faithfully on our Committee and to the great contribution made by our Ladies Section, who with their many buffet suppers gave the Branch so much support before their admission as 'Associate Members' even entered the Rule Book.

254 OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman/Secretary **George Severs**

SOUTHERN CHAPTER DINNER

Friday, 14 April and by 2.30pm the first ex-boys had started to arrive at the Uplands Park Hotel for the annual gathering of those living in the south. Once more the weather could only be described as 'magnificent' and small clusters were espied standing in the sunshine and catching up on events of the last six months. Others, cradling jugs of sparkling ale from mine host's extensive range, got down to serious business. Among the first to arrive were **Norman Faulkner** from Wimborne, who was attending his first Droxford Dinner, as was **Jackie**, daughter of **Clive** and **Jane Thompson**, who, with her husband **Tony**, had travelled down from London. Among the long distance travellers were **Brian** and **Dot Fisher** from Warrington. On the previous day, **Brian** had travelled to Redcar to attend **Jack Allison's** funeral. **Ted Mellor** travelled from Milton Keynes for his second Droxford Dinner but **Claire**, due to family commitments, was unable to be with him.

Ken Wood, who organised the first of these gatherings and who discovered the Uplands Park Hotel, was accompanied by his daughter and son-in-law who thoroughly enjoyed themselves and vowed to 'look after Dad again next year'!

Pat Soward, very relieved that the anticipated 41 ex-boys, their wives and invited guests, had arrived - no more, no less! - noted that last year's dinner had coincided with the 60th anniversary of the formation of Boys' Training Company and that **Norman Faulkner** had been one of those to join 61 years ago. He continued by observing that this year's dinner was taking place on day 15 of the Gulf War. He listed the RSigs units engaged on OP TELIC and suggested that ex-boys would be well represented in these units. He then read some short extracts from reports received from **Lt Col Ivan Hooper**, CO 21 Sig Regt (AS) one of the first British Units to enter Iraq. These re-kindled recollections among those who had been there, seen it and done it in previous times - but for 'laptop computers' read 'Fullerphones'!

As always, the chef excelled himself with a choice of dishes from which it was difficult to make a choice. All the dishes were well prepared, beautifully presented and of adequate proportions to satisfy the trencherman appetites of ex-boys! **Brian Lay**, ex RSM Boy (Harrogate) and mine host was unable to be with us, but he had arranged for Port to be broken out and a toast was drunk to 'Our comrades in the Gulf. May they enjoy success and return home safely'.

Those staying overnight enjoyed a leisurely and generous full English breakfast before setting off for home with promises to 'See you at Derby'.

RETURN TO LABUAN

- by Terry Davey, ex 23849344 RSigs

In 1963, while serving with 2 Div HQ & Sig Regt in Bünde, Germany, I was informed that I was being sent to Borneo on a 6-month posting. Borneo? Where on earth is that? Consulting a copy of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* told me two things: it was a long way away and there were poisonous toads there. That was the extent of my research, and as far as I can remember, the Army gave no indication of either the geographical or political nature of the area. Thus in August 1963 as a member of the newly formed 606 Sig Tp, I found myself in Singapore for a period of acclimatisation. We were to relieve personnel of 249 Sig Sqn in Borneo and were to be transferred in ones and twos rather than en bloc.

After about five weeks, I boarded an RAF Hastings at Changi and was transported to a distant airfield. On arrival, I was pointed in the direction of a bungalow near the main gate and told to report there. Thus I found myself at 'The Pink House' in the company of three more Tp members and a room full of radio relay equipment. All I knew was that this was the island of Labuan, in the South China Sea, fifteen miles or so off the coast of Brunei. I had no idea how big the island was, or what was on it. At the time, it never worried me but in later years I realised what an opportunity I had wasted and that a return for a 'proper' look might be a good idea.

The opportunity of the return visit finally arrived when I received the 2002 British Legion Pilgrimage brochure and saw that a trip to Malaysia/Labuan was included in it. My aim was to try to locate what might exist from 1963; if nothing, then to enjoy the holiday in the sun. Thus a booking was made for me and my brother, **Tony**, but I had no particular expectations.

Firstly, I had to see what I could remember, namely that I was in a wooden bungalow, painted pink, located near a bend in a road just outside the airport main gate. The runway was behind the bungalow, with jungle-type undergrowth separating us. The road led down to where other army units were located and where we had our meals. Further on, the road led past the airfield and the runway end, and on to the town past the War Cemetery. I remembered nothing of the town, having been only taken directly to the docks for the ferry to Brunei. Not a lot to go on!

Secondly, a map was a priority. On a map of Malaysia, the island of Labuan appears as a small dot on the extreme right-hand side, far too small to be any use. Calls to map shops generally resulted in 'Eh? Where? No, sorry'! So to try and obtain a large scale one (preferably both 1963 and present versions), I tried RHQ RSigs, who suggested 42 Engineer Regt (Mapping), who suggested The Defence Geographic and Imagery Intelligence Agency, who suggested The Directorate of National Mapping, Malaysia! Perhaps in 1963 I was not the only one not to know where he was! Surely, someone must have had a map back then! Eventually I had an address in Labuan, sent off 20 Ringgits (about £4, so worth the risk), and promptly heard nothing more! It looked like a case of following my nose when we arrived.

Four weeks before the journey, I happened to see a message on the Service Pals teletext page, which changed the whole nature of the trip. A request was being made by island historian, **Willie Teo** on behalf of two ex-RAF personnel for photos and anecdotes referring to RAF Labuan in 1963. There was no answer from the telephone number given. So, on a whim, I entered **Willie's** name

'The Pink House', 606 Sig Tp's Radio Relay Det, Labuan 1963

into an internet search engine and, somewhat to my surprise, up came an e-mail and mailing address in Labuan, from where he ran a travel agency. He had had dealings with Australians who wanted to visit the War Cemetery there. Off went an e-mail to establish contact and to see if he had any connection with the British Legion trips. (At this stage he had not, but he was confirmed as the official tour guide for us in the following week.)

Willie expressed his willingness to help me locate any remnants of '63, so I sent out what few photos I had, together with a description of the area as I remembered it. He felt sure he could find the exact location, and as he thought that he recognised a local boy in one of the photos, he would try to locate him as well. One difficulty was that the airfield was now part of the Malaysian Air Force, and was thus a restricted area. However, he promised to make some enquiries about access. When I mentioned sending off for a map, he replied that he knew the office concerned. Obviously, he was a useful man to have found, and I was looking forward to meeting him.

We landed at Labuan on Wednesday 4 December 2002, the female flight attendants of Malaysia Airlines being a lot more decorative than the RAF FltSgts of old! **Willie** met our group at the airport and escorted us to The Sheraton Hotel, where we were to stay for three nights. After we had settled in, he took **Tony** and I in his 4x4 for a short tour.

After first explaining that a lot of roads around the old airfield had changed, he took us to the perimeter guard house, where we picked up an armed guard who was to accompany us. Our first stop was the site of the bungalow. This was now the location of a comms school and within the inner fence, so we couldn't get right up to it. However, poking the camera through the wire gave a clear picture of the school and the original bend in the road, which identified the spot. With thoughts of tourists and Greek airfields at the back of my mind, I was a bit worried when taking the photo!

The road towards the town had been blocked off, being bisected by a new road. All the bungalows had long disappeared, but we went down to the beach, where a particular shaped rock outline in one of my old photos helped to confirm that it was our old swimming place. Another guard came down to see what was going on at the beach. I had made copies of my old photos and both guards, and subsequent locals who saw them, were very interested in looking at them. But they hadn't been born when I first took them! So, not much to see, but I was quite happy having seen the bend in the road, which identified the place. Without the knowledge of **Willie**, it would have been an impossible task, so my grateful thanks go out to him for his unstinting help.

On the way back to town, I mentioned the map that I had sent for. It transpired that the office was opposite the hotel, so we called in. After some conversation in Malay from **Willie** and on being shown a copy of the original e-mail, they said they knew of me but said that the postage would have been a lot more than the map itself. Being a government department, they were unable to process it. However they provided it for me then, so I nursed the A1 size roll all the way back to the UK. At this time, I am still trying to get it reduced down to A3 for copying & scanning.

One more surprise awaited. On the second day, **Willie** handed me a message. The local boy photographed in 1963 had e-mailed from New Zealand, where he has a grown up family and is now retired. His name is **Horace Ng**. I probably knew his name originally, but I didn't have it on the photo. His mother did the dhobi, and I am so glad I didn't leave owing money. You never know when the past might catch up with you!

Of course, although I was walking down my memory lane, and brother **Tony** was along for the ride, the rest of our party had a more serious and emotional purpose in making such a long and costly journey. They were making a very personal pilgrimage to the War Cemetery to visit graves of family members, the reason why such trips are organised by The Royal British Legion.

A TALE OF TWO UNITS

10 AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENT - FEBRUARY 1943 TO MARCH 1945

- by Lt Col (Retd) P F Soward (See letter on page 310)

10 AF Sig Regt was formed on 26 February 1943, on the authority of 112/Signals/2230 AG11 of 25 February 1943. **Lt Col S Scott, MC**, arrived at Lisburn on that date to take command and moved to a brand new camp at Cherry Valley, Crumlin, County Antrim on 1 March.

Stanley Scott had joined 1 AF Sig Regt in France as a Lt in February 1940, and was awarded the MC for his work during those difficult times. When the unit returned from France it spent some time in NI, where **Stanley Scott** earned rapid promotion to Capt (8 August 1940) and Maj (May 1941) to command 2 Coy. He was a Post Office manager in civilian life and returned to the Post Office at the end of the war, finally retiring as Director, South West Region (Note 2).

Cherry Valley Camp was not in a good state and representations were made to QMG and CRE requesting alterations. There were, for example, no footpaths and no Sgts Mess. It was eventually agreed that stores would be supplied and that the unit would build roads and construct a Sgts Mess building etc. By 9 March, 219 trainees had arrived and were promptly employed on 'camp reconstruction'!

By 27 March, the unit strength had grown to 5 Offrs, 17 WOs & Sgts and 341 ORs. 1 Coy had been formed under the command of **Cap EGJ Cox** and 3 Coy under **Maj G Gee**. By 1 May the unit had grown to full strength at 22 Offrs, 17 WOs & Sgts and 804 ORs. Training was well under way and after late May this started to include major exercises.

On 12 July the Unit was ordered to Oakleigh Park South at Whetstone, and three days later the whole Unit had moved and the first party had been dispatched on embarkation leave.

As an aside, the next unit to move into Cherry Valley Camp was 15 AF Sig Regt, who reported that the 'paths were firm, solid and dry but in a matter of weeks were to become 'not a little slushy"! A prolific rat population shared the camp with them, but in spite of the best efforts of rat catchers and willing ferrets, they could not be dislodged. The water supply came from a dirty stream and was filtered by a plant just outside the camp. The MO condemned the camp as unfit for habitation - but to no avail!

In August the unit embarked on the *HT Indrapoera* at Glasgow and disembarked at Algiers two weeks later on 25 August. On 27 August, after a short stay in a tented camp at Fort de l'Eau ('Y' Reception Area), advance parties moved out to BONE, BIZERTA, SEBELA and KAIRAOUAN. **Brig JH Cameron-Webb** (CAFSO) addressed all Offrs and SNCO's on the work of AF Sigs in North Africa.

OP TORCH, the allied landings at Casablanca, Oran and Algiers, started on 8 November 1942. By 13 May 1943, all Axis resistance in North Africa had ceased and by 17 August all Axis forces had been driven from Sicily. The invasion of mainland Italy commenced on 8 September. 1, 2 and 7 AF Sig Regts were already in North Africa when 10 AF Sig Regt arrived and they, together with 4 AF Sig Regt (supporting the Desert Air Force), were urgently needed in support of the invasion of Italy. 10 AF Sig Regt was tasked to assume responsibility for the diminishing (but never-the-less substantial) RAF comms requirements in North Africa, eventually having sections scattered between Oran and Kairouan, a distance approaching 700 miles.

Initially Unit HQ set up in the Hotel Britannic in Algiers. There was an interchange of personnel and sections between 10 AF Sig Regt and the units already in place, presumably to provide the new unit with a stiffening of experienced soldiers and to provide a more appropriate balance of tradesmen. HQ 4 Coy (ex 2 AF Sig Regt), 14 & 44 Telegraph Op Secs and 122 DR (Light Car) Secs (ex 7 AF Sig Regt), were transferred to 10 AF Sig Regt and formed into a new 4 Coy. By 7 September, 10 AF Sig Regt had assumed responsibility for all of the commitments previously met by 2 & 7 AF Sig Regts. At this time, HQ 1 Coy (**Major ES Ellis**) was based at Bizerta with four sections in the La Sebela area; HQ 2 Coy (**Major RA Hatcher**) was based at the Hotel Britannic with sections nearby; HQ 3 Coy (**Major G Gee**) was based at Bone with sections in the Kairaouan area; and HQ 4 Coy and all its sections was based at La Marsa.

The work of the Unit was possibly not very exciting, maintaining existing circuits, providing new ones and generally clearing up after the turmoil of earlier times. Op Order 15 of 15 January 1944, noted that 'A considerable amount of new construction and rebuilding of existing routes is now in hand in the Taher, Bone and Sidi Amour areas'. By January 1944, HQ 1 Coy had moved to Oran.

During the period July to October 1944, a number of secs were transferred to other units (Note 3) and on 14 October, **Lt Col Scott** was posted to command 8 AF Sig Regt, now supporting the Desert Air Force in Northern Italy. The 2IC, **Major HJ Waters**, assumed command and the Unit was warned that (with the exception of HQ 3 Coy and two secs) it was 'to move to CMF'.

Did that happen? There are no war diaries for December 1944 or January 1945 and when it restarted in February 1945, the Unit was commanded by **Lt Col JP North, MBE**, and had returned to the UK, to Huddersfield (Note 4). It was ordered to mobilise for movement overseas (tropical climate), and during February and March personnel took embarkation leave and generally made ready to move. The war diary finishes abruptly at the end of March 1945.

It is interesting to note that a DG of S paper of 18 July, 1945, has an appendix listing the Order of Battle for all AF Sig Units, British and Indian The only unit missing from that list is 10 AF Sig Regt! We can only assume that by this time the secs from 10 AF Sig Regt had been dispatched to other units and the Unit HQ disbanded.

Notes:

1. The flash illustrated at the beginning of this article was introduced for AF Sig Units in the UK during 1941 but only the badges of 1, 2, 7 and 10 AF Sig Regts had the unit number incorporated. All of these units were engaged in OP TORCH. When 11 to 18 Regts were formed, (for OP OVERLORD) they adopted the badge without a unit number. Badges for 1, 2 & 7 AF Sig Regts are on display in the RSigs Museum. That of 10 AF Sig Regt possibly has a 'scarcity value', as the unit had such a short life.

2. Whilst with 1 AF Sig Regt in NI, **Stanley Scott** presented The Scott Cup to the Unit to be awarded to the best sec in the Sec Drill Competition. This cup was placed in a bank vault for safekeeping when the unit embarked for North Africa and is now held by 81 Sig Sqn (V).

3. Amongst the units transferred was 55 Wing Sig Sec, bound for Marseilles to support 340 Wing in Southern France. The Sec Comd was **2Lt PR King**, who retired in the rank of Maj and whose medals are on display in the RSigs Museum.

4. **Colonel John North** was regular soldier with a very colourful service record. He was awarded the MBE for gallantry on the North West Frontier in 1937 and was promoted CBE in 1958 for distinguished services in Malaya. On one drop whilst training to be a parachutist, his parachute failed to open and he landed heavily in a ploughed field, broke both legs and was pronounced 'dead'. He made a miraculous recovery! His (real) obituary states that he commanded 10 AF Sig Regt in North Africa and Italy, so he possibly assumed command in October/November, moved with his unit to Italy for a few short weeks before returning to the UK. He was posted back to India in May 1945. His records are available in the archives of the RSigs Museum.

10 AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENT, 1954 TO NOVEMBER 1961

Unlike the earlier unit of the same name, this unit had a totally different history and, in the whole period covered by these notes, does not appear to have submitted a Unit Historical Return. The following brief history has therefore been culled from notes in *The WIRE* (where the unit was a regular contributor) and from **Gen Nalder's** entry in *The Royal Corps of Signals*. This is therefore a very 'shadowy' unit with, no complete details on the order-of-battle, unit commanders or unit operations. What follows, therefore, is an amalgam of information from various sources.

The Unit can trace its history back to North Midlands Corps Sig Regt (TA) which
became 3 Corps Sig Regt with the BEF in France. After its return from France it became 10 Corps Sig Regt and saw service in the Middle East. In August 1941, 3 Coy, 10 Corps Sig Regt, moved to Mena as part of Mobile Corps Sig Regt and, as such, served with 13 Corps in the Western Desert, Sicily and Italy. From 1945 to 1947 13 Corps had the task of occupying Trieste, possession of which was subject to dispute between Yugoslavia and Italy. When the bulk of 13 Corps was withdrawn to Padua, part remained, together with 24 Guards Bde Sig Sqn, forming a new regt, known as the British Element, Trieste Force (BETFOR) Sig Regt.

The Regt remained in Trieste until agreement on the future of Trieste was reached at a meeting in London on 5 October 1954. It was re-formed as 10 AF Sig Regt under **Lt Col G Mellor**, moving to RAF Goch (Laarbruch) (possibly later in October when all US and British occupation troops left the city) to provide comms for HQ 2 TAF and 'units directly administered by that HQ on non-flying stations'. The regt had detachments at Rheindahlen, Gütersloh & Bückeberg. RHQ moved to RAF Bützweilerhof (near Cologne) in early 1957.

Re-organisation of 2 TAF in 1957 resulted in a re-distribution of duties between the three AF Sig Units in BAOR and, on 23 March 1958, 10 AF Sig Regt reduced to sqn strength to become HQ 2 TAF AF Sig Sqn and moved to RAF Wildenrath.

Although the Unit's role remained the same, it suffered six changes of name over 3fi years:
10 AF Sig Regt until 23 March 1958
HQ 2 TAF (Indep) AF Sig Sqn until 1 July 1958
1 Sqn, 11 AF Sig Regt until September 1958
HQ 2 TAF (Indep) AF Sig Sqn until September 1959
221 Sig Sqn (AF) until November 1961
1 Sqn, 21 Sig Regt (AF)

Further research will refine the following list of Unit Comds, which has been culled from **General Nalder's** book and unit *WIRE* notes:

1954 **Lt Col G Mellor**
1955 **Lt Col AJ Blower, TD**
1958 **Maj Chapman**
1958 **Maj RR Morrison, MBE**
1959 **Maj BC Skelly, TD**
1960 **Maj CB Masser**
1961 **Maj KF Lloyd**

Major Chapman was possibly 2IC10 AF Sig Regt and apparently assumed command for a short period following the departure of **Lt Col Blower** (possibly in March when the Regt reduced to sqn strength). **Maj RR Morrison** assumed command in late May 1958.

References:

The WIRE June 1957 (p.176)
August 1957 (p.244) – **Lt Col Blower**, CO
February 1958 (p.44)
July 1958 (p.217) – HQ 2 TAF (Indep) AF Sig Sqn
March 1959 (p.74) – HQ 2 TAF (Indep) AF Sig Sqn
November 1959 (p.286) – 221 Sig Sqn (AF)
December 1961 – 221 Sig Sqn (History – Now 1 Sqn, 21 Sig Regt (AF))

REUNIONS

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REUNION

Saturday, 4 October 2003
at
Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Watford
Contact Tony Hull on 01202-770261
E-mail: beba.tonyhull@lineone.net

BIRGELEN VETERANS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REUNION

The BVA third annual reunion will be held at the Ramada Hotel, Loughborough 1314 September 2003, at 1930 hrs. Members wishing to attend should contact the Secretary on 01873 856021 or book via the website www.birgelenvets.org

OLD WELBEXIAN ASSOCIATION 50TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND, 28/29 JUNE 03

2003 is the 50th Anniversary of Welbeck College and it is intended to hold a weekend of activities that will include an Anniversary Dinner on the evening of 28 June 2003.

Dress for the dinner is Mess Kit for serving officers and Black Tie for retired officers. The cost will be £30. Timings are 19.00 for 19.30 hours.

Anyone interested in receiving further information on this event should contact the Adjutant:

Capt P B Hughes REME
Adjutant Welbeck College
WORKSOP
Notts S80 3LN
Tel: 01909 476326
E-mail: adjutant@welbexian.co.uk

DENBURY JLR ASSOCIATION RE-UNION
(Denbury Junior Leaders Regiment Association)
To be held in the Sgts' Mess, Blandford.
Saturday 28 June, RSA Weekend, 1800hrs until late
All members & ex-Denbury boys/staff welcome.
For further information please contact:-
John Dixon, Tel: 01935 474733

EATON HALL - PROPOSED REUNION DINNER FOR NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICERS WHO SERVED IN KOREA 1950 – 53

The Eaton Hall Reunion Dinners commenced in 1983 as an opportunity for those who attended Eaton Hall OCS to meet again.

This year being the 50th anniversary of the conclusion of the Korean campaign, it has been decided that there will be a Reunion Lunch for National Service Officers who served there. It will be held at 12.30 for 13.00 on Friday 12 September 03 at the Institute of Directors 116 Pall Mall, London SW1.

Gen Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley will attend, and the Korean Ambassador has bee invited.

Anyone wishing to attend is invited to contact the Dinner Secretary, Eaton Hall Reunion, PO Box 100, London W6 0ZJ, Tel: 020 8741 7789

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

74 OPERATING SECTION, 1943

Daniel Margolis has sent a photograph taken of 74 Operating Section taken in 1943 on the outskirts of Tunbridge Wells in Kent. Unfortunately we could not print the photograph, as by the time it was reduced to fit the pages of *The WIRE*, the images of those in it were too small to be recognised. We therefore list the names of those in the shot and ask if anyone recognises themselves or anyone else, to make contact with him:

JWE Parfitt, A Wimaylon, KW Clinch, BR Curtis, CH Mayes, AC Edmonds, S Cattell, DF Jones, GRJ Kersey, W Wishart, A Farrow, NH Spour, J Middlemiss, BV Clark, P Faulkner, BAM Haslehurst, G Winstanley, IA Mackie, W Snart, J Rigby, WS Farrand, WH Marriott, SR Left, CA Keogh, HB Snider, R Mowbray, FR Ford, JH Hearman, S Hall, RH Anderson, LR Smith, W Pearce, J Taylor, LD Gay, TL Linfoot, LSgt JR Harries, SF England, Lt JR Clayton, LP Pike, G Strutt, GW Wooderson, AT Dixon and **WJ Rowell.**

Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Daniel** on: 01621 816507.

SIR KINGSLEY AMIS

From: **Zachary Leader**
z.leader@roehampton.ac.uk

Dear Sir,

I am writing an authorised biography of the novelist **Sir Kingsley Amis** and would like to hear from anyone who knew **Amis** during his army years, from 1942-5. **KW Amis**, known as 'Bill' in the army, took basic training at Catterick Camp in Yorkshire in July/August 1942, then was posted to a RSigs Unit for officer cadets, 152 OCTU, also at Catterick. After 26 weeks' training, **Amis** was commissioned as a 2Lt. His subsequent postings were to Southern Comd Signals at West Farnham; to High Wycombe; back to Catterick for an advanced wireless course (by August 1943); to Headington Hall in Oxford, where in November 1943 he joined Second Army HQ Signals; to Normandy (on 30 June 1944) with Second Army HQ signals; through France with Rear HQ (in Banville, Vaux sur Seulkles, Bazouches), Belgium (Pepingen, Holsbeek, and Sonnis, where he spent five months). In November 1944 he was promoted to Lt. After the war ended he was sent to an RHU at Minden in Westphalia and in August 1945 to a second RHU in Bruges. He was demobilised in October 1945. Sometime in or just before 1976, **Amis** attended a reunion of fellow signallers and wrote a poem about it called 'A Reunion.' Among the army comrades he mentions in correspondence are **E Frank Coles, G Urquhart, Bill Yorke, GFH Walker, J Reeves, RSM Fryer,** and **Eric Milner.**

If you knew **Amis** in the army (or any of his friends and fellow soldiers) I would be grateful if you'd contact me. My email address is z.leader@roehampton.ac.uk. Until 1 September 2003 my address is c/o The Huntington Library, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, Calif. 91108; after 1 September my address is 11 Brooksville Ave, London, NW6 6TH. All help gratefully acknowledged.

Yours.....

2594500 SGT J CROSSLAND

From: **Peter Leek**
3 Keats Close
Royston
Hertfordshire, SG8 5AU
Tel: 01763 220258

Dear Sir

I recently purchased a medal group and Soldier's Service Pay Book to **2594500 Sgt J Crossland**, Royal Corps of Signals. His Pay Book shows he received an MID on 22 October 1942 with a London Gazette date of 22 June 1943, and confirming his medal entitlement as 1939-45 Star, Africa Star with 8th Army clasp, Defence Medal and War Medal with MID emblem.

Tim Stankus, the Museum Archivist, cannot help, as there is no record of what **Sgt Crossland's** MID was for. I am enquiring whether you would consider placing an item in your magazine requesting if any party has information relating to the MID or knowledge of the whereabouts of any next-of-kin. Not being a relative, having neither a copy of a Death Certificate, nor the permission of the next-of-kin, I have no means of having a request to the MOD for his war record being accepted.

Thanking you in advance for any assistance you may be able to render with this matter.

Yours....

PS The Group was purchased in Saffron Walden, Essex.

PADDY WHELAN AND BARRY DOWSE

Gerry Doherty was attached to 15 Sig Regt in Aden in 1967 when they had a radio link from Singapore Lines to the British Consul there. He wants to know if his old pals from Al Mukalla, **Paddy Whelan** and **Barry Dowse** are still around. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Gerry** on vidmul@catchean.freeserve.co.uk

MARK WYLIE

John Campbell is looking for **Mark Wylie**, a service pal from Harrogate 89a intake, Rawson Sqn. His nickname was 'Spic' and his last known address was Campbell Drive, Nottingham. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **John** at jc.Campbell@btinternet.com or john_3869@yahoo.co.uk or john.Campbell@three.co.uk or by mobile phone 017866 738393.

MAX YOUNG, INTAKE 33 RMA SANDHURST

From: **David R Southwood**
87 Cadogan Gardens
Chelsea
LONDON SW3 2RD
Tel: 020 7584 9347

Dear Sir

It is intended to hold a reunion of all those members of Intake 33 who attended RMA Sandhurst 1962 1964. We will hold this next year to celebrate 40 years after our graduation.

One of these, **MJ (Max) Young**, was commissioned into RSigs and we are trying to trace him in order to invite him.

If anyone has any contact details for him, could they kindly fax them to me on 020 7234 4177 in my office or send them to the above address.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours.....

PHILIP MOSLEY

George Herbert is seeking his wife's nephew **Philip Mosley**. **George** last met **Philip** on a miniaturisation course at Catterick in 1973. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **George** at george@herbert4216.fsnet.co.uk

NEVILLE FLINTHAM'S WEDDING GUESTS, 1978

From: **Mr Neville Flintham** (Ex SSgt, RSigs)
3 Maple Close
Burbage
Hinckley
Leicestershire
LE1 0 2JZ
Tel: 01455 633673
E-mail: nflintham@aol.com

Dear Sir

I am trying to locate those former members of 16 Sig Regt who attended my wedding in 1978.

My Best Man, **Cpl Roy D Smith 080, Sgt Bob Branson, Sgt Bob King, Sgt Ken Murray, Sgt Gordon Bennett** (yes real name), **Cpl Chris Naylor, Cpl Steve Meachin, Cpl Ted Taylor, Cpl** 'Haggis' **Copeland, Cpl Terry Inman, Cpl Russ Moren, Cpl Tom Morris,** and **Cpl Jeff Baldry**. My apologies to anyone I have missed.

Sorry I do not have any further information except that most of us were technicians, generally working in Mike Tp and the ranks quoted are as 31 March 1978. I know many continued to serve with the Corps for many years.

I can be contacted as above and hope you will be able to help me with this request.

Yours .....

MRS ANN PETHERHAM

Mrs Mary Beal is seeking the present whereabouts of **Mrs Ann Petherham**, formerly of Wem in Shropshire. **Mary** was a pupil of Mrs Petherham (then Miss Smith) at Croydon High School in 1960. **Mrs Petherham** was married to an officer of the Corps, who commanded 28 Sig Regt at one stage. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Mary** at: 16 St Andrews Rd, Caversham Heights, Reading RG4 7PH.

2574751 LCPL MANN H BEM

From: **Doug Hildebrand**
Curator
Military Communications and Electronics Museum
Box 17000
Station Forces
Kingston
Ontario K7K 7B4
CANADA
Tel +1 613 541-5130
Fax: +1 613 540-8111

Dear Sir

Tim Stankus, Archivist for the RSigs Museum, has given me your address. He suggested you might be able to assist us in locating information concerning **2574751 LCpl Mann H BEM** possibly of RSigs.

As to background for this request, a family here in Canada purchased his BEM at a flea market in Ottawa and would like to return it to the family or donate it to an appropriate museum. They believed because the engraved edge of the medal contained the letters RCS that **LCpl Mann** was at one time a member of the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals. After checking our records of Signal's BEMs, we contacted **Mr Stankus** in the hope that the RCS stood for the Royal Corps of Signals.

Any assistance you can provide in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

I can be reached at the address and telephone numbers above or by e-mail at hildebrand.dr@forces.gc.ca

Yours.....

RADIO TROOP 208 (COMWEL) SIGNAL SQUADRON 1966 - 68

From: **Maj (Retd) Ken A Mackenzie OAM**
E-mail: kenamac@bigpond.com

Dear Sir,

As a young and green Oz Sig, I had the great pleasure many years ago (Feb 66 through Feb 68) to serve with the 208 (COMWEL) Sig Sqn (Radio Tp). We were part of 28 (COMWEL) Inf Bde, based at Terendak Garrison, northeast of Malacca, on the Malay Peninsula.

Our unit was an eclectic mix (around 55/45%) of Brits and Aussies. It was a fabulous unit full of great characters. We worked hard and played harder. Suffice to say, I regard those two formative years as probably the best of, what went on to become, a 39-year military career.

During my time in Radio Tp at 208, our Brit Sgts were **Don Adams, Sam Rollings** (a real character – is there really a pier at Wigan?) and **Ken Sixsmith** (a top basketballer).

Some of the other guys in the Tp were: **Soapy Hudson, Geordie Howe, Mick Davidson-French, Charles Mckinlay-Kemp** (Tp Comd), "Dit Dit" **Elson, Cpl? Waring, Mal Swain, Ken Sixsmith's** brother, **Sig** ? **Sixsmith**, just to name a few.

Anyway, before I send you to sleep, I send this e-mail to the Editor, in the hope that some of these guys are still around and might like to get in touch and say G'Day.

Yours.....

BRIAN SOUTHALL

E-mail from Chris Lasseter – lassie4loz@yahoo.co.uk

My name is **Chris Lasseter**. My granddad is trying to find someone called **Brian Southall** who used to be in Royal Signals. At the age of about 21, he was stationed in Birmingham, and now should be about 67. The last time my granddad saw him was at his wedding in 1965 I think. My granddad is called **Edward Lasseter** and I would be grateful if you could e-mail me back with any information on how I could try and find this person.

ADRIAN RUSSELL

Ed Boskey is trying to make contact with **LCpl Adrian Russell**. **Adrian** served with 2 Sig Regt from 1991 to 1996 before moving to 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt. He is a Driver Electrician and passed his Class 1 in 1997. He was medically downgraded after a skiing accident in Cyprus. Anyone who can help is asked to e-mail **Ed Boskey** at ed.boskey@btinternet.com or telephone 01923 212533 (home), 07736 667373 (mobile).

ESPIONAGE BEHIND THE WIRE

RSA Life Member, **Howard Greville**, has written a book entitled *Espionage Behind The Wire*. It tells of his experiences as a POW during WW2 in passing information via secret channels to British Military Intelligence in England. The book is available from Woodfield Publishing on 01243-821234.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **Col PD Randall MBE TD**
Kerilee West St
Corfe Castle
DORSET

Dear Sir,

It occurs to me as I approach my 92nd year that this bit of Signals History might appeal to you: -

8th Army HQ Signals Office started its life in a tent in the Egyptian sands and never closed until it reached the Imperial Palace of Sconbrunn in Vienna five years later. I was in for four years as Signalmaster and Chief Signalmaster.

During the African Campaign, the Sicilian Campaign and in Italy it continued in tented accommodation (EPIP pattern) until the winter of 1943, when it moved to a building in Vasto. As we went up the peninsula it was obvious that things had to be improved, so we designed a mobile signal office consisting of a specially constructed centre onto which six 3-ton trucks could be quickly backed containing teleprinters, radio terminals, cipher office, my office etc. We had this done in duplicate, so that on our frequent moves (usually monthly) we could close down in one location and open at once in the new one.

In the winter of 1944 we moved into a building in Cesena which was unfortunately bombed by the Luftwaffe with the loss of eight lives. Thereafter we stayed in the field until the end of the Campaign.

The illustration is from a painting I had done from an original photograph. Before very long I hope to bequeath the original to the Museum.

Yours.....

Unfortunately the picture wouldn't reproduce well enough to publish. It is an impressive scene that wouldn't look much out of place on OP TELIC. I look forward to seeing it in the Museum - Bernard Redshaw, Editor

From: **Lt Col (Retd) P F Soward**
Air Formation Signal Regiments' Association (Historical Officer)
'Shipton', The Hollow
Child Okeford
BLANDFORD FORUM
Dorset DT11 8EX
Tel: 01258-860647

Dear Sir

I was very pleased to read the article by **Mr Norman Davies** on 10 AF Sig Regt in the February edition of *The WIRE* (pp 97/98). Articles like his not only put flesh on the bare bones of official written records, they frequently replace records that have been lost with the passage of time.

Attached are short histories of two very different units, the only factors in common being their shared name and function. The first unit was unable to submit notes for *The WIRE*, because it was not published from January 1942 to October 1946, but it did complete its War Diaries conscientiously, and these may be viewed in the Public Record Office (PRO) at Kew. From these records we know the unit's Order of Battle, the names of the officers and their responsibilities in the unit, and we know of the work that the various sections performed. The records include copies of the various op orders, often with diagrams of the cable routes and circuit allocation lists. This Unit was in existence for only two years. What happened to it after that is still something of a mystery.

The second unit operated in peacetime and had an obligation to submit regular Historical Returns which would have given similar information. However the PRO holds Historical Returns from only a very few RSigs units, and there is no record of this independent unit ever having submitted such a return during its seven-year life. However, on seven occasions it did submit notes for *The WIRE* and a little can be gleaned from these. The very last article, in December 1961, included a very valuable review of the unit's history up to the time when it was absorbed into 21 Sig Regt.

I would echo **Mr Norman Davies'** plea. If any reader served in either of the 10 AF Sig Regts, would they please get in touch and tell us what they can remember.

Yours.....

I thank Pat Soward for his painstaking research to produce this most interesting story, which has been placed on page 306 - Editor

From: **J F Wilkins**
48 Tuck Mill
Clevedon
BS21 7XQ

Dear Sir

Having read the article by **Cpl Darren Clough** on Parachuting, I thought you might be interested in an ex-para, qualified in 1959 (Sigs Para). I was in a sig sqn attached to 2 Para at Aldershot.

I carried on jumping at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus, and was on board a Hastings aircraft when **FltSgt Card** completed his 1000th jump, the first other rank to do so.

After retiring from the Army in 1967 and BT in 1992, I took up road running for *Cancer Research*. Then in 1998, after a lapse of 34 years I started parachuting for charity namely *The Grand Appeal*, a charity that has helped the building of a new Children's Hospital in Bristol.

I had to complete eight hours training with the Silver Stars formed by 29 RLC, based at the Duke of Gloucester barracks, South Cerney near Cirencester. After the eight-hour course, I qualified and completed 3 jumps over the weekend with six other people.

So, after jumping with the new square rig, I was hooked and started the Wallace and Grommet Parachute Team in 1999. My target was £30,000, which was reached in November 2001. By January 2003, £40,000 was achieved. I now intend to go on until I reach £50,000 - this year I hope.

During this 5 year period, over fifty people from porters, doctors, nurses, matrons, policemen and students from the local university have joined me, and I am now busy recruiting many more so that I can reach £50,000. In between jumps I do abseiling, which I learnt to do in the mountains of Cyprus on weekends.

Apart from the Children's Hospital I do all the abseils for the *Anthony Nolan Trust*. To name a few Avon Gorge (200 ft), Cannoteign Water Falls, near Exeter (210 ft) and Guys Tower at 500ft, the highest from a building in the country. For this abseil I was dressed as Eric the Viking and I will complete the abseil again this year dressed as Spiderman. The Cannoteign Water Falls the highest falls in England near Exeter is quite challenging and extremely wet.

Other notable events, which I completed in Snowdonia, were

South Cerney, Cirencester. John Wilkins, Chris Jackson and Karen Stacey

white water rafting and two bungee jumps (without the bungee), the Suspended Catch Air Device (SCAD), for which you are suspended 190 ft high on a crane and then dropped into a net below.

Another event we do is a zip wire slide from *The Bristol and West* building. This is from the top of a crane and you slide 700 ft down the wire to a floating pontoon in Bristol Docks. Similarly, two other zip wires were from *HMS Belfast* and from the Army Citadel in Plymouth.

I shall complete all these events again this year and complete some more parachute jumps. If anyone knows of any high abseils, I would be keen to know; and perhaps if anyone would like to join me on Guys Tower (*Guys Hospital*), the view is magnificent and the descent outstanding.

I may be 72 in April but I'm still good for a few more years yet.

Yours....

From: **Harry Orton**
(ex Tp Sgt, 28 Comwel Inf Bde Sig Tp in Korea)
43 Greno View Road,
Highgreen,
Sheffield S35 4GX.
Tel: 0114 2847598

Dear Sir

Might I add to **Mr Ron Larby's** obituary for **Sgt G Eynon** (*The WIRE* April 2003)

I knew **George** as Sig, Cpl, Sgt, WOII and, as he himself told me, Flt Lt ATC - whichever? As a self-made millionaire of my own Tp often tells me 'We are all the same now Harry'. I myself wonder why it was considered to be any different, other than the responsibility of command. And I am sure this individual didn't become a self-made millionaire other than by exercising that principle of command.

What matters most is that **George** was lucky enough to find he had old comrades from 27 and 28 Comwel Inf Bde Sig Tp and K Tp from the Korean War 1950-1953 (and I believe **George** covered the whole span of these years) who were desirous of meeting up with him and knowing of his present day well-being, before leaving us.

As one of the Tp Sgts of 28 Comwel Inf Bde Sig Tp (OC, **Capt EMT Crump**), I know there are still a few more around today who served with this Tp in Korea, no doubt now held together by needle and cotton or whatever magic our respective pills do for us. Many more of the Tp (good lads all) have long since passed on to a higher command, without so much as a mention in the regimental magazine.

Having myself written to *The WIRE*, on more than one occasion to try and locate the whereabouts of those of us who are lucky enough to be alive today, I find such pity in the fact that a response to this has been a big DAH! DAH! DAH! DAH! DAH!

Come on lads, forget the stigma of my being your Tp Sgt. I know for well that many went on to heights greater than this, and they didn't get there without exercising their authority! I well recall the two Welsh lads of the Tp, who in Christmas '51 offered me a piece of their Christmas Cake mum had sent them. After eating it, I went on to give them a good bollocking for not having completed the digging of their personal slit-trench. It isn't the joy of being Tp Sgt; it's the responsibility that goes with it.

If noone else wants to know of your existence and present day circumstances I do! So please give me a ring on 0114 2847598 or write to my home address above, and I promise that, if in my time, there is a chance for us to have a Tp Reunion (even if I have to travel in 'Disabled Transportation'), it will be a reunion I won't miss!

Yours.....

INFORMATION REQUEST, BAMPTON CASTLE SITE

From: **Cpl D J Duncan**
Assistant Duty Communications Controller
Royal Air Force
Bampton Castle
Weald
Oxfordshire, OX18 2HU
Tel: 01993 850396 ext 7310

Dear Sir

I am currently compiling a history of the Bampton Castle site for the Unit and a local museum display. The site is currently home to 81 Signals Unit Detachment South. Before the RAF took over the site, it was home to various Army Communications Units including: 1 and 2 War Office Sig Regts, United Kingdom Commonwealth Communications Army Network Sig Regt (UK COMCAN Sig Regt) and 14 Sig Regt.

I am looking for anyone who may have been stationed at Bampton or The Weald with any of these, or other units. I would be interested in hearing from anyone who has any information about these units or submitting stories or anecdotes about their time at Bampton for use in the exhibit.

Yours....

DONATIONS

Eric Baxendine	£100.00
Sheffield Branch in memory of Ernest Taylor	£75.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of In-Pensioner **George Higgins**	£10.00
certacito.net	£100.00
Huddersfield Branch in memory of **Kenneth Annas**	£25.00
Cotswold Branch	£20.00
Mr M Tecter	£5.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£20.00
15 members of the Aldershot Branch	£399.00
238 Sig Sqn	£241.74
Mr A Reginald Ayres	£20.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of **Mr H Wilkinson**	£10.00
Guernsey Branch	£100.00
Mr Cornelius Coward	£300.00
Col MC Spence	£100.00
Tayside & Fife Branch	£40.00
19th Sig Regt Assn	£250.00
Loughborough Branch	£150.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of **Stan Perkin**	£10.00
In memory of **Capt James Acton**	£996.52
In memory of **Capt James Acton**	£200.00
East London Branch	£200.00
Rotary and Inner Wheel Clubs of Boscombe and Southbourne	£100.00

LAST POST

Allison - SSgt JG Allison	Served 1945/71	Died 29/03/03
Annas - Capt KP Annas	Served 1940/46	Died Mar '03
Bamber - Maj LS Bamber	Served 1939/72	2003
Barr - LCpl BE Barr	Served 1935/46	Died 2000
Barton - Sgt J Barton	Served 1980/03	Died 22/03/03
Blackmore - Cpl R Blackmore	Served 1939/??	Died 05/03/03
Binks - Sgt H Binks	Served 1939/46	Died 18/03/03
Boynton - WO2 AL Boynton	Served 1936/59	Died 09/03/03
Burrough - Capt P Burrough	Served 1939/45	Died 2003
Campbell - SSgt R Campbell	Served 1939/65	Died 14/02/03
Cox - LCpl E Cox	Served 1940/45	Died 15/03/03
Cummings - Cpl JE Cummings	Served 1938/48	Died 25/06/01
Evans - Cpl K Evans	Served 1945/49	Died 16/04/03
Flook - Cpl FT Flook	Served 1938/44	Died 1992
Hardiman - Sgt GA Hardiman	Served 1950/78	Died 18/02/02
Haylock - Maj DWJ Haylock	Served 1939/60	Died Mar '03
Hill - WO2 RS Hill	Served 1940/46	Died Nov '02
Hogg - LCpl WC Hogg	Served 1944/47	Died 01/12/02
Jewell - Sgt SG Jewell	Served 1942/56	Died 01/03/03
Legge - Maj PD Legge DCM	Served 1932/67	Died 23/03/03
Maydon - Col GSK Maydon	Served 1932/61	Died 21/04/03
McGillicuddy - Sgt DJ McGillicuddy	Served 1964/78	Died 04/04/03
Morten - Sgt SG Morten	Served 1940/45	Died 28/02/03
Perkin - Sgt GS Perkin	Served 1948/62	Died 13/04/03
Perrin - Capt FH Perrin	Served 1943/46	Died 22/03/03
Perry - WO2 HJ Perry	Served 1942/66	Died 05/04/03
Richards - LCpl MD Richards	Served 1992/03	Died 22/03/03
Roberts - Maj RC Roberts	Served 1949/69	Died 05/05/03
Robinson - Cpt A Robinson	Served 1942/47	Died 03/04/03
Robinson - Sig G Robinson	Served 1958/67	Died 25/08/02
Roscoe - Capt W Roscoe	Served 1939/73	Died 21/01/03
Rouse - Dvr GH Rouse	Served 1939/46	Died 08/01/03
Spence - Maj D Spence	Served 1939/76	Died 26/04/03
Tilley - Sgt A Tilley	Served 1939/45	Died 10/02/03
Turnbull - Maj RJ Turnbull	Served 1973/90	Died 2000
Wilson - Lt Col HS Wilson	Served 1955/87	Died 24/03/03
Wilkinson - LCpl H Wilkinson	Served 1940/46	Died May '02
Worley - LCpl BH Worley	Served 1946/49	Died 12/11/02

LEAHY - W02 Joseph Leahy (Joe) died, aged 67, on Friday 25 April 2003 after a long illness.

It is with great regret that the Glasgow Branch announces the death of a founder member of the Branch. **Joseph Leahy** was an Electrician/Driver and served as a regular in the Corps from 1952 to 1960. As a WO2, he then served in the TA/TAVR with 32 Scottish Sig Regt (V) from 1964 to 1981 as SSM of 52 Sig Sqn. He saw service in UK and in BAOR.

As a founder member of the Glasgow Branch, **Joe** acted as Entertainment Convener, initiating a variety of fund-raising projects to enhance the Branch funds. By this important contribution, **Joe** was instrumental in supporting the establishment of the new Branch in 1991.

His contribution was vital to the newly fledged branch. As **Joe** had been a member of the TA at Jardine Street after serving with the Corps as a regular, he knew quite a few of the founder members of the Branch, having served with them for over 15 years. He is sadly missed.

A Requiem Mass, conducted by **Rev Fr John Muldoon**, took place in St Paul's RC Church, Shettleston, Glasgow. The coffin was draped with the Corps colours and **Joe's** glengarry placed on top when taken to the cemetery in the hearse. The Branch President, **LtCol Alastair Petrie CStJ TD JP**, twenty one branch members, three members of the 32 Sig Regt (V), and two others connected with the Branch, attended the church and the cemetery, with a large number of relatives, friends and parishioners who knew **Joe**.

The burial took place in Dalbeattie Cemetery, London Road, Glasgow, **Fr Muldoon**, giving a short service at the graveside.

Standard Bearer, **Bill McNamara**, paraded the Branch Standard in the church and at the graveside. **Pipe Maj Bill Cleezy** played the tunes *Dark Island* at the church, and *The Green Hills of Tyrol*, *Flowers of the Forest* and *Pipe Maj Bill Cleezy's Lament* (his own composition) at the graveside.

Joe leaves a wife, **Catherine** (also a founder member of the Glasgow Branch) and sons, **Michael**, **Kevin**, **Mark** and **Joseph**. All Branch members extend their deepest sympathy to **Cathie**, sons and their families.

TAYLOR – Ernest Taylor died on 21 February 2003.

Ernest Taylor served with the Royal Corps of Signals from June 1942 until June 1946. He was a founder member of the Sheffield Branch of the RSA when it was formed in 1968, and served as Deputy Chairman until his death.

He will be sadly missed.

The funeral service was held on Wednesday 5 March at the Hutcliffe Wood Crematorium, Sheffield.

ROSCOE - Wilfred Roscoe (Wilf) died on 21 January 2003.

Wilfred Roscoe was born on 15 August 1921. In 1937, aged sixteen, he joined 55/1 West Lancs Div Sig Regt (TA) (boy service). He trained as a wireless operator.

On 16 August 1939, aged eighteen, he transferred from boy service to man service and, on the outbreak of war in September 1939, he was called up for regular service. He was stationed at Backford Hall, Chester.

Later in 1939 he was transferred to the RSigs Trg Depot at Prestatyn, where he was promoted to LCpl and became a drill and weapon trg instructor. He was then promoted to Sgt.

Wilf was posted to the Gold Coast, West Africa in 1943, after which he was posted to 81 (WA) Div in India. He served with this Div in Burma until 1946.

He was demobilised in the rank of RSM and then joined the Army Emergency Reserve. He was discharged from the AER on 18 October 1962 and re-enlisted in the TA, where he received the Territorial Decoration. He left the TA in 1973 in the rank of Capt QM.

Wilf was a member of the RSA (Liverpool), where he served as Vice Chairman and Secretary in the 1950s. All those who knew him send their sincere condolences to his family.

SHORT – LCpl Kenneth Short died 4th March 2003.

It is with sadness that we report the death of **Kenneth Short** at the age of 78. His death was sudden while on annual holiday in Spain with his wife, **Mary**.

Under Spanish law, funerals are arranged very quickly and **Ken** was cremated the following day. His son and daughter flew from the UK in time to join their mother at the funeral. **Jim Walsh**, **Ken's** friend from service days and also a member of the Southampton Branch, attended the funeral.

Ken joined the Corps early 1945 and did his initial training at Maryhill Bks, Glasgow. He was then posted to India as a Sig (Linesman).

He transferred to Fd Sig Sec, 2 Indian Airborne Div, attached to 159 Para Light Regt RA. He moved to Palestine at the end of 1946 and joined 6 Airborne Div until his demob as a LCpl in 1948. **Ken** was also a member of the Indian Signals Association of Great Britain.

PETTENER - Sgt James Pettener (Jim) died February 2003.

James Pettener joined the TA in 1938 and trained as a Driver in the RSigs. He was posted to France with the BEF in November 1939. He retreated from Belgium to Dunkirk and was badly wounded on the beaches. He was discharged in 1941 after 14 weeks in hospital.

Jim passed away in February after a long illness. A quiet man, he had served the Sale Branch for many years and had supported his colleagues in many functions.
Our sympathies are extended to his wife, **Margery** and to his son and daughter, **Dave** and **Lynn**, and their families.

HEADQUARTERS SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

RHQ TRAINING DAY – *by Linda Rowley*

Blandford's RHQ ROs are sometimes not available on a Wednesday afternoon, many having deployed to the golf course. Feeling a bit left out, the 'juniors' decided to arrange a sports afternoon of their own under the guise of 'Team Building'.

Lethal Linda Rowley

And so, on Wednesday, 26 February, 16 fully-kitted (or nearly) warriors from RHQ and the Museum were hosted by TM Tp at the Small Arms Training Ranges for an afternoon of shooting. **Sgt Dear**, normally used to an audience of serious recruits, eager to learn, was met by a predominantly female team who were unable to ignore the double-entendre and innuendoes of his instructions of how to use their weapons. Having separated a couple of troublemakers, he put the four teams to task.

In the first scenario, we had to wait for the enemy to appear in the distance as tiny figures. The concentration and silence was almost too much to bear. Normally peaceful, gentle office workers turned into Rambos with attitude. Unfortunately, in each scenario the surrounding flora and fauna took a bigger beating than the enemy. But hey! they shot with feeling!

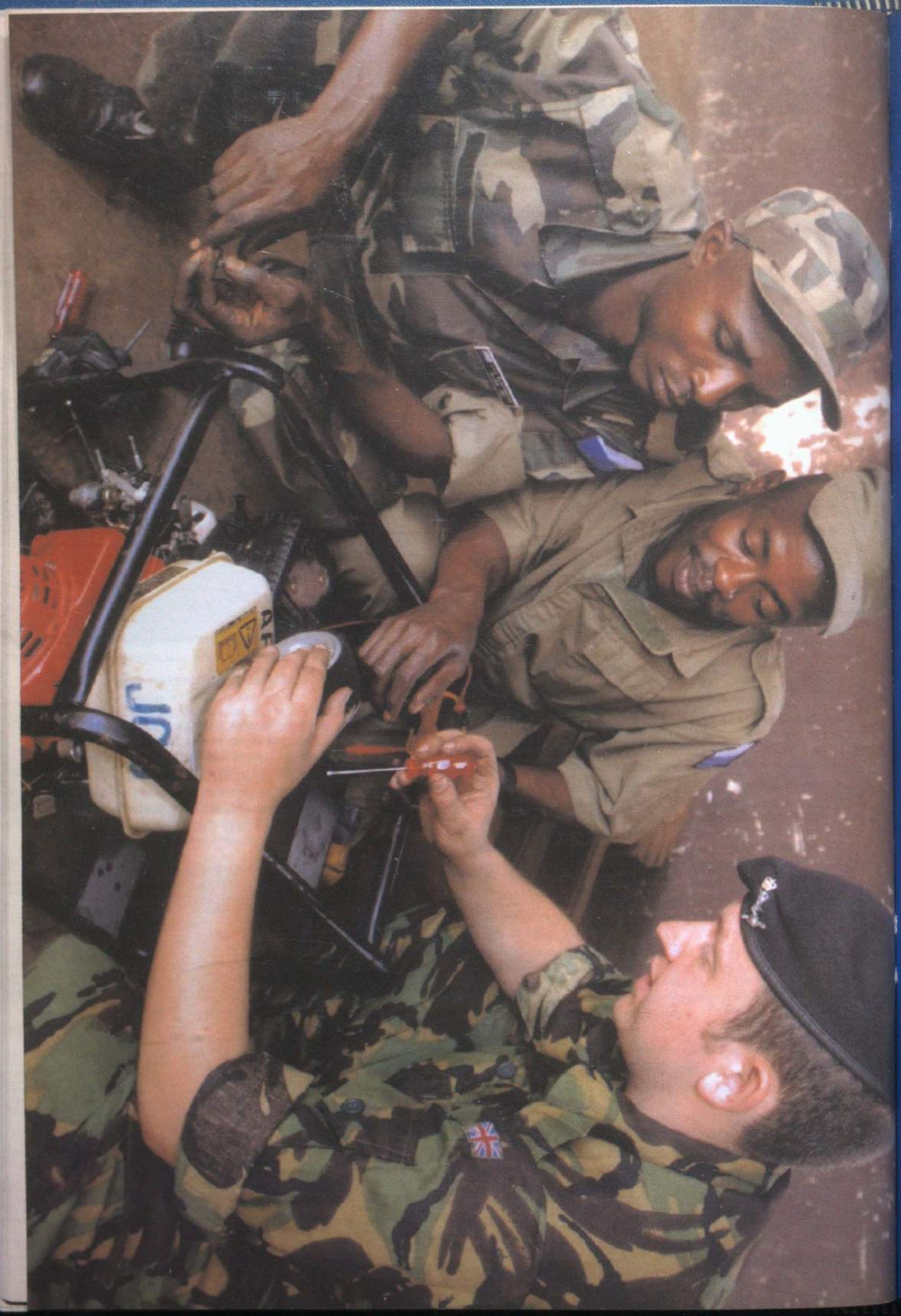
The poor lads from TM Tp were by now wondering what on earth they had let themselves in for. Half way through, **SSgt Ek** did a runner and is believed to still be running, probably half way to Nepal. **Cpl Eaves** took on a look of wide-eyed fear, but kept his cool. Surprising really, as he was mentoring **Ericka Hunt**, who shot at anything with gusto, never managed to hit a single target in two scenarios, and gained the award for Worst Shot of the Day. Her lack of aim was explained as being due to the tears of laughter obscuring her sight.

WO1 Frank Cowan was looking after **Margie Gilbride**, who managed not only to shoot the highest number of rounds, but was so uncharacteristically aggressive and vocal in doing so, that **Frank** is now undergoing therapy. Top Scorer was **Lianne Simpson** – or should that be **Cpl Kelly**? Surprising what goes on when the lights are out!

The final scores were:

Team 1	Shots Fired	Hits	%	Team Score
Linda Rowley	432	18	4.0	
Maria Field	273	2	0.7	
Ericka Hunt	370	1	0.37	
Bernard Redshaw	207	17	8.0	3.26%
Team 2				
Louise Taylor	387	17	4.5	
Lianne Simpson	368	48	13.0	
Jolene Shearing	430	13	3.0	
Margaret Bowditch	306	6	2.0	5.6% (the winners)
Team 3				
Margie Gilbride	659	12	2.00	
Maz Yates	468	15	3.00	
Donna Shepherd	430	8	2.00	
Kelly Pitt	459	51	11.00	4.5%
Team 4				
Peter Cuckow	193	8	4.0	
Judy Bruce	430	17	4.0	
Alison Yetman	496	23	4.5	
Adam Forty	539	52	10.0	5.5%

The RHQ Shooting Team. Next stop, Bisley?

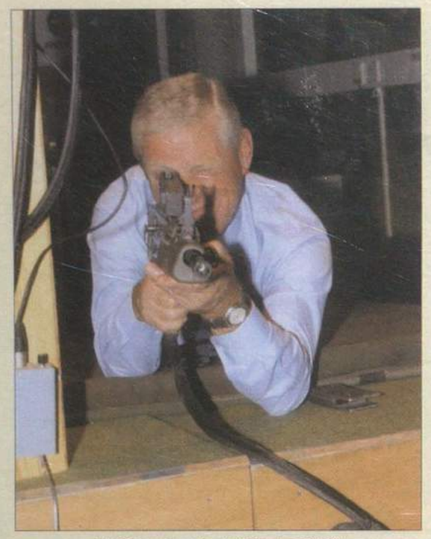


THE wire

August 2003

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE 2003 BLANDFORD REUNION WEEKEND, SATURDAY



MajGen Tony Boyle tries the SA80

LtCol Paul Hudson leads the March Past

The salute is taken by the Master of Signals and SOinC(A)

Maj Tony Crilly flies the Corps flag

The Master of Signals presents Barry Moody (Scarborough Branch) with the Standard Bearer's Trophy

Ten riders, one bike. The White Helmets perform 'The Tableau'

August 2003 Vol. 57 No: 4

All correspondence and material for publication in The Wire should be addressed to:
The Head of Publications,
The Wire, RHQ Royal Signals,
Blandford Camp,
Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 8RH
Tel: 01258 482079 (civ)
94371 2079 (mil)

Contributors
Deadline for October issue is 15 Aug.
Please refer to Guidelines for Contributors.

All enquiries regarding subscriptions/ despatch should be made to:
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The Wire

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FRONT COVER

The White Helmets Opening Display

On Friday 9 May The White Helmets did their opening display for the 2003 season. The purpose of this event was for the SOinC(A) to approve the for the summer season. Here Cpl Duncan Marsh is seen jumping a Honda quad bike through the flame hoop. See story on page 370.

BACK COVER

A clean sweep for the Royal Signals in Inter-Corps Football

Smiles all round as the Corps Team poses with their winnings, the Quadrangular Trophy, the Cowan Cup, the Boyne Trophy and the Massey Trophy. Despite the rain, there was good support from the sideline. See story on page 372.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE....

REMEMBERING KOREA

27 July marks the 50th anniversary of the end of the Korean conflict, a campaign often referred to (particularly by the veterans themselves) as 'The Forgotten War.' We haven't forgotten. We remember the event with a special 6-page feature on the Campaign, devoted mostly to recollections of some of the many Corps members who served there. See 'Special Feature – Korea 1950-53' on page 315.

DRs IN THE DESERT

Retired Corps members often ask, 'Do we still have DRs?' The answer is 'Yes.' 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn reports that 'DRs became ever more important to move data around the battle space.' See their report on page 361

A NEAT LITTLE JOB IN TURKEY

At the beginning of OP TELIC, it was considered that there could be a threat to Turkey from Iraq. So, at very short notice, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn with their 12 vehs, 5 trailers and most of their personnel were rushed off to Turkey in two giant Antonov transport aircraft to deploy on OP DISPLAY DETERRENCE. With the only delay coming from the check-in by Turkish Customs when they arrived, the Sqn was up and running in 24 hrs. After 5 weeks, with the threat over, the extraction was just as neat. See 280 (UK) Sig Sqn's report on page 390.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE CORONATION PARADE IN JUNE 1953?

Half a century on, **Alison Schofield** gives a participant's recollection of one of London's, the Commonwealth's and the Services' greatest shows immediately after WW2. With our Armed Forces stretched with commitments all over the world (Korea, Malaya, Cyprus, Palestine, and BAOR), with rationing still on and with everything in short supply, this event was a major achievement. **Alison** vividly brings to life many of the minor hardships, problems and amusements experienced by those who took part. Many of us who have taken part in later marches will see parallels. See her story on page 406.

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Corps of Signals or the Ministry of Defence.

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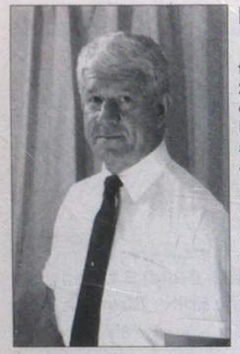


EDITORIAL

'A parade of great quality. An unmistakable statement of commitment to the profession of Arms' was how the Master of Signals described the Parade on Hawke Square for Princess Royal Day Parade on Saturday, 28 June. It was a cracking weekend. The weather was kind to us, the formal events on Hawke Square went off with precision, and the gatherings in all messes ensured that retired and serving members of the Corps Family could come together to share their experiences. It was a privilege for me to meet so many of you, and I was delighted at the many favourable comments you made on what we are doing with *The WIRE*.

Whilst on that subject, it is with much regret that I have to announce that my Deputy Editor, **Maria Field** is leaving us. She has done so much to help me realise all the improvements you have noticed. Not only that, but she constantly works on improving the improvements! **Maria** is following her husband, who has been posted too far away from Blandford for her to continue. I am sure that all readers will join me in wishing her and **Clive** every success for the future.

In this issue, we remember those of 'The Forgotten War', Korea. I know that there are many other 'forgotten wars' (I served in one myself) but this was one where we lost the most people and deserves to be remembered. I have devoted six pages to memories of Korea in this issue. I believe that these recollections tell us quite a bit more than the historians have told us.

Closer to the present time, it is a relief to find most of our people safely back from the Gulf. As many unit reports in this issue indicate, our lads and lasses, both Regular and TA, did a great job, as these two quotes demonstrate:- *'In the initial stages, the Bde Comd was extremely concerned about the provision of robust comms to facilitate complex ops. As the op for the Bde draws to a close, his doubts and concerns have been allayed and comms no longer feature in his 'top ten'. The Sqn has again demonstrated its ability to deploy rapidly and at short notice.'*

'The Sqns of 1 (UK) ADSR were soon amalgamated to become the Force HQ Sig Sqn and elements of 201, 211 and 212 began to redeploy back to Herford.'

The latter quote clearly indicates that, having done the business in the Gulf, all units involved are now gearing up for their next task, whatever and wherever it may be. We should all be proud of them.

Finally, I note some clever re-interpreting codenames and acronyms. 16 Air Asslt Bde & Sig Sqn (216) interpret TELIC as Tell Everyone Leave Is Cancelled, whilst 21 Sig Regt (AS) thinks it stands for Tell Everyone Lunch Is Chicken. 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt renames FIBUA as FISH (Fighting In Somebody's Hoose).

GUEST EDITORIAL – *By Brig JE Thomas MBE, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde*

During the latter months of 2002, there were many units within the Corps frantically preparing for future ops in the early part of 2003. Simultaneously CVHQ R Signals in Corsham were waiting for a Ministerial announcement that it was the Government's intent to use the TA and Reserves in support of the Regular Army on what was to become known as OP TELIC.

The Ministerial announcement on the use of the Reserves was duly made just a few days before Christmas, with a deadline for nominating soldiers for mobilisation by 15 February 03. This meant that the Christmas and New Year break could go ahead as normal. And this was the case - until the deadline was brought forward to 7 January 03. Now the planning could start - if only someone knew what the plan was! The options varied from a complete radio sqn (94 Sig Sqn (V)) to Individual Reinforcements. ACOS Commitments at HQ Land stated that the plan changed more than 50 times in the later stages.

Once the Plan was firm and the full requirement listed in Force Element Table (FET), real planning could start on fulfilling the requirement for Individual Reinforcements from the TA. Finding suitable officers and soldiers required an 'intelligent selection' process to be implemented. CVHQ then sprang into action to coordinate R Signals TA from both 2 and 11 Sig Bde's TA elements. This entailed finding the correct ranks and trades (not always possible), enquiring about personal circumstances and many meetings and phone calls with COs, Trg Majs and Permanent Staff. The introduction of a 'deployability score' was put in place for every R Signals TA officer and soldier, which would help enormously in the 'intelligent selection' process. The call-out rate was set by HQ Land at a ratio of 1.5:1 to ensure that adequate numbers passed through the system and the Regular unit requirement was met.

The whole process involved many agencies. An Integrated Mobilisation Cell was set up at HQ Land, manned by personnel from HQ AG and HQ Land. The Army Personnel Centre at Glasgow and the Individual Reinforcement Planning Team in Worthy Down were also key players, and this was only to get the call-out notices in the post! On the dates indicated, the reserves reported to the Reserves Trg and Mobilisation Centre (RTMC) at Chilwell for a day and a half and then on to Grantham for 5 day's ITD training.

The whole process did not go without incident. At a very early stage it was found that the data held at the Unit level UNICOM was vastly different from that held on the Army Main Frame. UNICOM proved to be much more up to date and accurate. This meant that some soldiers who had left the TA were called up for war! Because of the short time frames involved, some soldiers received very little notice of call-out. We have to remember that the reserves suddenly have to re-organise their lives and their employers have to find replacements. Half way through the process, APC Glasgow decided to trawl randomly for people. This meant the Army Main Frame was selecting people who had already been rejected by the Cap Badge Champion. Confusion reigned and it was agreed that this process would never be used again.

One difficult area to assess was the number of employers who might appeal against the call-out. These appeals took some time to process, and there were instances of personnel actually deployed into theatre, only to be sent home when the appeal was successful.

This was the first mass mobilisation of all cap badges and the largest mobilisation effort since the Suez crisis in the fifties. The cooperation and responsiveness of all R Signals TA units was first class. By the time the second tranche of mobilisation is complete, every unit will have contributed manpower to the Op and nearly all Regular units deployed will have received TA Individual Reinforcements. There was even a small team of our specialists from LIAG (V) attached to the Americans in Baghdad. A total of 350 officers and soldiers from R Signals TA units have deployed on OP TELIC. This is in addition to the 125 personnel currently serving on FTRS, some of whom will have deployed on ops with their units. There are also 77 personnel who are mobilised and serving on ops elsewhere in the world (including 98 (BRITFOR) Sig Sqn (V), a composite sqn formed from 11 Sig Bde units and serving in the Balkans). Our TA units, officers and soldiers should be justifiably proud of their substantial contribution to the generation of capability in support of our Regular counterparts.

SPECIAL FEATURE - KOREA 1950-53

KOREA, AN OVERVIEW – *by Brig (Retd) Tony Bohannan*

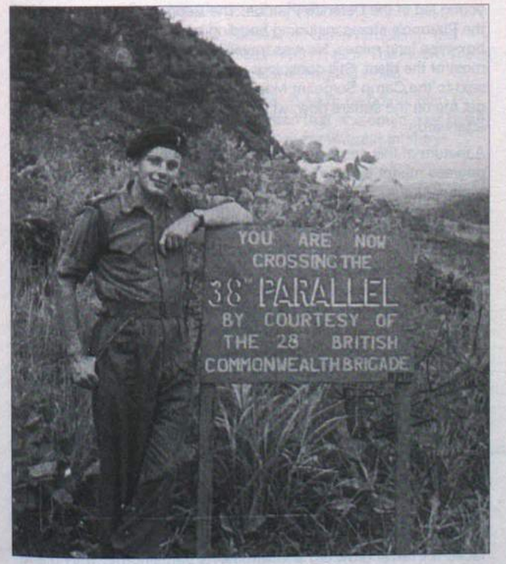
The Korean War. Was it really 50 years ago? Names and dates increasingly hazy, but certain memories and faces remaining crystal clear. **Ron Larby**, **Harry Orton** (our Tp Sgt we still correspond), **George Loudoun** and **Reg Briggs** tell it all so well (sadly there are hundreds more with unrecorded memories). **Harry** mentions **Cpl Kitson**, a great, larger than life character - old (35?), scruffy, bush hatted, pipe in mouth, seeking any excuse to get far forward with his line det. Did he not hit a landmine once?

After three years in 48 Gurkha Bde Sig Sqn during the emergency in Malaya, I went by troopship direct to Korea - via the UK! I arrived at Kimpo (K14) Airbase near Seoul by RAAF transport in May 1951, to take over the Sig Tp of 28 COMWEL Bde (British, Australian, NZ, Indian and South African). Later **Stephen Finch** (my best man in 1954) took over, followed by **Pat Webb**. In those days before 1 COMWEL Div was formed, the two Bdes were independent under US command. Why did 29 Bde have a Sig Sqn (**Maj** 'Tubby' **Marshall**) but the others only a Tp?

By then things had settled down just south of the Imjin river, close to the 38th parallel - the border between North and South Korea and the cause of it all. Having cleared the enemy from south of the river, notably Hill 355, the Bde built an impenetrable barrier of wire, mines and emplacements, against which the Chinese battered themselves most nights at great loss. The British Bdes stayed in the line almost continuously then because politically, there had to be a British presence upfront.

Memories Korea, then a very sad and dirty country. Locals were banned within 20 miles of the front line and the few we saw were the poorest of farming peasants. We had a pioneer platoon of them. We called them 'gooks', but at least we kept them well fed and clothed and had the inevitable Korean orphan as Tp Mascot.

The Weather Hot, dry and dust-ridden in summer and arctic-cold during the long winter. At first we had no winter clothing, only battledress and greatcoat. Later there was excellent Canadian kit - parkas and sleeping-bags. They made all the difference. We lived in pup-tents or holes dug in a hillside ('hoochies'). We bought small Japanese meths-fired hand warmers but why no hot-water bottles?



Lt Tony Bohannan, 1951

Sgt Harry Orton, summer 1951

The Americans 1 US Marine Div on our left and 1 US Cav Div on our right. They did not speak to each other, but they did us well. They were 'dry' and would sell their souls for some of our drinks ration - or if not their souls, at least US issue gear. Every Friday (ration day) they would descend on us. A bottle of gin bought a generator. I bartered for a superb .30 carbine. They liked our rations (especially steak and kidney). A pack of compo got a huge carton of ice cream. Our soldiers despised their rations: turkey, turkey, turkey and turkey. 'Always bloody Xmas'.

Communications Field cable everywhere - huge cats-cradles of it, US and British. Any vehicle going off the track took it all out. Fault-finding was a nightmare. Instead, we would lay a new line and add to the mess. Radio was, to say the least, difficult. WS19 and 53 and the much better Canadian WS52. The staff preferred and insisted upon the telephone. Our rear link to the US Div HQ was ANTRAC, an early radio relay system.

Petrol Our sole means of cooking and heating. Accidents galore. Tents and vehicles (including our 3-ton CV) often went up in flames. More men were killed by it than by anything else.

R & R Leave Just 5 days in 18 months - in Tokyo. Plenty of recuperation (sight-seeing and the like) but why waste precious time in resting?

Entertainment We had a few open-air film shows - and 2 or 3 gramophone records. Frankie Laine with *Jezebel* incessantly blaring out; and visits from Bob Hope, Danny Kay, Jack Benny and Paula Marshall (British). It was not all bad, far from it.

Our Blokes And of course, all-important, the comradeship of a fine bunch of blokes of many nations (Regulars, Reservists and National Service) and friendships made that have lasted. Many were long-term veterans from the recent WW2. Some poor devils were POWs in both wars.

Postscript Some years later when in the War Office, I was rung by a Treasury Official who had just received an invoice from the Americans for some millions of dollars worth of field cable. Was I not the senior officer at the time - and where was my 'authority'? I hastily passed him on to **Maj** 'Tubby' **Marshall**, then at the School of Signals, and put the phone down quickly.

KOREA - THE FORGOTTEN WAR – *by George Loudoun, ex 27 Comwel Bde Sig Tp*

Korea for me, started before anyone else in Hong Kong had the slightest idea that troops from the garrison were to leave at very short notice. They were to become the response to America's **General Douglas MacArthur's** plea to our government for help. His exact words were: 'For God's sake send us something. A battalion today is worth a brigade tomorrow.'

I had been in Hong Kong just a year. Just one of several thousand sent to defend the Colony from a possible attack by the Chinese Communist People's Liberation Army. In fact they halted at the SinoBritish border and as history was to show, they patiently waited for the lease term to finalise.

I led a very busy role as a cipher operator when the fastest system was an electromechanical time consuming affair which, at full speed, by experienced operators, would be judged primitive in today's superior technical wizardry systems. Today's signallers wouldn't believe the lengths we had to go to, to ensure some degree of secure communication.

It was on a hot sticky day in early August 1950 that I was to receive the most significant signal of my entire R Signals experience. The weather was making conditions difficult for our CW link to GHQ FARELF. Attempts to receive a FLASH, PART ONE OF FOUR signal of more than 400 cipher groups were abandoned in favour of an offer of one of similar precedence, but just 50 groups. Its text was highly classified and gave the code name of the immediately preceding signal. This was of course the one which was causing a problem.

When this short signal was received in LFHK HQ, there was considerable consternation and for the first time in my experience there, I received a number of enquiries from very senior officers regarding the missing message. I explained that I had a certain amount of the message and would try to make some sense of it while the signal centre operators would do their best to produce a good crypt. Fortunately, communications did improve enough to produce the complete four part, 1600 plus message, and the headquarters staff followed me in learning that we had to send help to the American and South Korean troops, who were being pushed quickly to the southern tip of the peninsula.

The field strength in cipher operators for the formation, which was to be joined by Australian and New Zealand units as a Brigade, was two. I knew that there was only one. Such was my opinion of the quality of the Sig Sqn I was with, that I welcomed a chance to leave. I joined 27 Bde Sig Tp on HMS *Unicorn*. We left Hong Kong and arrived in Pusan some three days later. Apart from the bustle on board, which included such essentials as becoming familiar with every soldier's best friend (the trusty bolt action .303), we actually did quite a lot of zigzag sailing. Needless to say this focused the minds of the 'Pongoes' on board more so than 'Les Matelots.' (RN Speak)

My initial reaction on arrival, was one of dismay. By comparison to Singapore and Hong Kong the port was a dilapidated affair. At this particular time in international politics we had been despatched to take part in a 'Police Action', not an acknowledged 'War', but war it obviously was. My first night was spent on the banks of a dried up river bed. In the following morning I woke up from what little sleep I could manage, following a night on something that felt like concrete bubble wrap. After breakfast, it was time for us all to get into the spirit of the thing and accept that this was not going to be another boring exercise.

Travelling on a train without a single glass window through many long tunnels at slow speed was an asphyxiating experience. Fortunately it was to prove the only occasion on which we travelled by rail. Up to this point I suppose we had all thought that primitive though Korea appeared to be, we could cope. Our somewhat elderly QL type command vehicles seemed to cope with the rutted roads, and our drivers coped with the dust clouds, which at times made navigation as much guesswork as confident full vision control.

Not long after our arrival we were part of a successful counter-offensive, during which 27 Bde led for most of the advance to the northernmost point of the Korean Peninsula. Such was the

North Korea, Christmas 1950. Lt PAC Baldwin, extreme left; OC, Capt Nigel Pidsley, extreme right; author, next left

bellicose attitude of **General MacArthur** at this stage, that when we should have been relieved by 29 Inf Bde and returned to Hong Kong Garrison duties, the Chinese PLA entered the arena in extremely large numbers. This happened so quickly, that before we had chance to withdraw to reserve status, the unit who actually relieved us, withdrew through our lines. The whole pattern of the war then changed. It was no longer a 'hare and hound' chase in our favour. It was in fact a role reversal. It stabilised in scenes reminiscent of WWI, with tremendous Chinese casualties, until 1953 and the Armistice.

We had casualties of course. Perhaps the most poignant of these in my mind, was that of my fellow cipher operator. He was an ex boy who had been unhappy with army life for some time. He had been saving to purchase his discharge. He was killed during incoming shellfire not long after we had started the original advance northwards. One other case, which was not untypical of the stoicism of the British Tommy wherever he serves, was the young lad in the Defence Platoon. The Bedford 15 cwt carrying the Platoon's stores including bedding and ammunition hit two box-type land mines. He was travelling in the front and caught most of the blast. Still conscious and with his leg in ribbons, he said to the Camp Sergeant Major who was close by, 'You won't get me on the square now, will you Sir?' He died not long afterwards.

A feature of this campaign was the bitterly cold winter. Minus 40 degrees meant that we were fighting two wars, the second being Mother Nature. The Infantry of course took the brunt of everything and my thoughts were very much with them. Having served three years in The Worcestershire Regt, I knew something of their problems. The columns of refugees who followed the tide of the war were pitiful to witness. The whole period taught me what war really meant. Throughout the time I was there and since, there was constant proof of the sterling qualities of our National Servicemen.

Of all the ground forces committed by many UN allies, it was a fact that British and Commonwealth units who always proved to be leaders in combat quality. I shall always be proud of having served in Korea and being a small part of the overall success which gave the South Korean people the freedom that they have so convincingly proved was worth all the effort.

Now, as a longterm exserviceman, I have come to fully realise and understand the depth of the bond which draws those who have shared the often painful business of service life. It is this that brings them to services dedicated to the memory of those whose faces will never grow old and who never came home. They made the supreme sacrifice.

CAMEOS OF KOREA, 19511952 – *by Ron Larby, ex 28 Comwel Bde Sig Tp*

Arriving by troopship in Pusan… An American Army band playing *The Saint Louis Blues March*. A pristine white hospital ship moored along side . Pulling out by train as a hospital train full of wounded comes in. Walking wounded GI's call out 'Your turn next, buddy!' 'You in six weeks, pal!' waving bandaged limbs.

The impoverished countryside, mined towns and vices, hordes of dirty, grimy refugee children flock along side the train whenever you stop. Seoul, a complete ruin, one bridge remaining over the River Han, passing an industrial suburb, factories raised to the ground, only their chimney stacks remain intact.

The railhead, wrecked engines and rolling stock. Onto trucks for our journey to the front, and then the smell hits you. It catches at your throat and stings your nostrils. It's the smell of Korea, human manure on the paddy fields. The smell of Korea is always present.

Distant gunfire, getting closer. Crossing the Imjin River, a treacherous current running between spectacular rocky gorges, and then into the hills beyond the river. Every way you look in Korea you will see hills.

Digging in, always digging. 'I thought I was an operator wireless and line,' I say. 'Did you now,' replies an unsympathetic sergeant. 'Everyone's an operator pick and shovel from now on!' The climate, autumn, sticky days. Mud that freezes at night, reverts to a morass by day.

Winter, a permafrost, icy winds blow from the north. Everything freezes you - your vehicles, your clothes, your weapons. Night duty in a CV is hell, fighting to keep warm, fighting to stay awake when sleep seems the only relief, cursing roundly if you have to answer a call, the atmospherics scream in your headset.

Spring, a welcome relief, then summer, hot and dusty, torrential rain which turns the Imjin into a raging torrent. It always rained when you moved location. We called it 'Move Weather'.

'Pom,' dehydrated potato that no cook could make palatable. Rats as big as cats, absolutely fearless of man, run over you when you were asleep, eat anything not put into tins. We gassed them using our Johnson Chore Horse!

Mosquitoes, ants, snakes, all manner of other insects, but no birds.

F86 Sabre jets wheeling in the sky, diving down, releasing canisters of napalm onto the enemy hills on the far side of Purple Heart Valley. The whirl of helicopters bringing out wounded. A still, blanket-covered form lying beside the RAP.

Names, numbers: Gloster Hill, Castle Hill, Ulster Crossing, Teal Bridge, Pintail, The Mad Mile, 355, 217, 317, 227, The Hook, The Samichon, The Bowling Alley, The Camelflagued Road.

Then that blessed day, orders to RHE. Glad to be going, glad I came, for I had a year with the best men that one could ever hope to meet, the men of the 28th British Commonwealth Infantry Brigade.

KOREA REMEMBERED - A TRIP TO WAR THROUGH POEMS
- by Reg Briggs

I joined as a boy soldier in 1949 and trained at the Army Apprentices School, Harrogate and Catterick as an Operator, Wireless and Line (OWL). My first posting overseas was Tripoli – the Second World War had not been over that many years. Several months later, the CO asked for volunteers to go to Korea. We would be known as Nan Tp, attached to 28 Fd Regt RE. After more training in Cyrenaicia, we sailed from Tobruk in HMT *Empire Orwell*.

A TRIP TO WAR

Service in North Africa, Tripoli and Tobruk;
As boys our uncles fought here, they ran out of luck.
Soon in a troopship I sailed from here
Bound for a country that's called Korea.

Through the Suez down the Red Sea,
Called in at Aden, not a lot to see

Reg Briggs, 1950

Then to Ceylon, now called Sri Lanka
The troopship stops out goes the anchor.

Few hours ashore - we all go wild;
Plenty of tea, no bloody mild.
Indian Ocean then Singapore;
You'll do a route march - we did in, a downpour.

On to Hong Kong, oh what a port.
It's ready and waiting, our armed escort.
Then on to Korea to a port called Pusan;
Wait for equipment, then up to the Han

Over the Han, all bridges are blown;
Refugees in thousands, with nothing to own.
It's summer, it's getting uncomfortably hot;
We hear later that some were shot

Up to the Imjin, I think of Blighty;
'Dig in,' says the sergeant. Who's he? God almighty!
Again and again I think of home,
Though as a boy, I'd wanted to roam

Here I am for maybe two years;
There'll be laughter, joy and a lot of tears,
Fear and terror, I'll often see red,
But if I go home I'll remember the dead.

There would be death, suicides, heartaches, sleepless nights, we would be dirty, unwashed, a long way from home. Nice to get mail - or was it. Seeing your first casualties, the first dead - a stark reminder that you may not go home. This stops with you for life. This is something you never forget. You lived, they died. You have a guilt feeling.

GOT YOUR MAIL

Cold tonight, maybe thirty below;
Shivering…teeth chattering…hope there's no snow.
Feet stuck in ice in this terrible trench;
No smell of death, but I remember its stench.

It's still, so still, the moon's coming out;
We're on standby; whisper, don't shout.
A look at my mate, makes me feel better;
'Oh John, did you get your letter?'

Mail got through, came from HQ;
One for your mate, none for you.
Mate looks pale and really glum.
Be months before we get warm sun.

Full kit on we try and sleep;
Guns and ammo all in a heap.
Mate's gone outside with gun, tin hat on.
Bang! Shot through the head; he'd read his 'Dear John'.

Remember the combat clothing we wore? What a performance when one was taken short.

THE CRAPPER

It has many names that box on the hill;
In summer the smell can make you feel ill.
Called the bog, thunder box or crapper,
I believe the hole was dug by a sapper.

Made of camouflage netting, canvas, and a pole,
In the middle of the box is a small hole.
Sit there long and you get a numb bum;
Strange place I think, to remember your mum.

Look down at your boots, search for some paper,
Drag on a fag, fasten your gaiter.
These combat pants are split at the rear.
What's that din and noise I hear?

Is it a plane? No it's a shout:
'Reg, shift your arse, we're bugging out!'
No peace today, we're sallying forth.
On once again, we're heading up north.

LINE LAYING KOREA 1951 – *by Harry Orton, ex Sgt, 28 Comwel Bde Sig Tp*

I had often heard other Signals trades referring to linemen as 'DR's with their heads kicked in.' But in my view, they were the most scruffy/undisciplined body of men it has been my privilege to (try) to control. Throughout the Corps, you would never find a more close-knit, happy-go-lucky bunch of lads. The anecdote I recall here not only showed me what they had to face in their trade, but also revealed the particular type of *esprit de corps* they possessed to see them through.

It was in those early days, having just arrived in Korea 1951. To say my line parties were pushed above and beyond all human effort, was to put it mildly. Things being what they were at the time, they seldom had time to rest. 'We must have a line to here and here' or 'The line is down to this unit or that unit, so get a line party out now, and get it fixed, now!'

On this occasion the Bde had just moved up to a forward position and lines had to be laid to all four battalions and other supporting units under command. And our OC lived up to his code-name. When he said 'Pronto' he meant Pronto!

All of my four line parties were out, and had taken with them all the cable we had. The only remaining lineman at Bde HQ was our indoor lineman, **Cpl Kitson**. His responsibility was to await the line parties' arrival with the individual lines they had laid and attach them to the main switchboard - quite a responsibility in itself.

At this moment the OC dashed up to the LCV Signal Office saying, '**Sgt Orton**, the Brigade Major wants a line through to KOSB's 'B' Echelon.' When I explained that all my line parties were out, he replied, 'Look Sgt, when I say the BM wants a through to KOSB's 'B' Ech, I mean he wants a line and he wants it now!'

I knew immediately that there was no point in arguing over such a minor technicality of having no linemen, so I quickly chose the only solution left.

'I saw the KOSB's Rear Ech Tac Sign on the way up. It is a bit down the road, so I will get myself together a makeshift line party and head off down the road and lay from there back to Bde HQ, Sir.'

'Well do that now and let me know when the line is through!' With that, he was gone.

Getting myself a jeep and driver and one other, a radio op who had just finished a four-hour stint (one **Sig Platt**), I set about the impossible task of finding some cable to lay. Who better to turn to but my good friend (and Tp Scrounger for all unsupplied equipments and materials) our SQMS, **George Chandler**?

'Ten miles, Harry? We haven't got ten feet!' I thought, well that's solved my problem right away. That is until he said, 'Not unless you want to use up this D3 training cable I have been carrying around with me, that you brought from Hong Kong. I reckon there's about ten miles of it in quarter-mile drums.'

One look at the heap lying there was suffice to tell me that it wouldn't all fit into the jeep, so I told the driver to go hitch up his trailer and help **Sig Platt** to load it right away whilst I reported to the OC that I was on my way.

Having got myself a 'wireless battery securing bolt' from one of the CVs, I told **Sig Platt** to sit on the front wing of the jeep, to load each drum on this makeshift spindle and to pay out the line while I followed on foot, joining each section and laying the line securely on the roadside as we went along. This, I thought, would be a simple job. After all, I had been trained to join one telephone to another telephone during my training as an OWL. Same principle, but on a bigger scale. No problem. How stupid could one get?

So, off we went looking for the Tac Sign that would bring us to KOSB Rear Ech. Some five miles on and still no sign, I was convinced we had taken the wrong fork, when eventually we spotted it. Locating the 15cwt they were using for HQ was no problem. A brawny Scot manning their 10-line switchboard, was busy darning his socks whilst answering the calls that were coming in.

'I'm laying you a line to Bde HQ, Jock, so keep a sharp ear for my calling you at intervals. I've only got quarter-mile drums, so I will be calling you pretty regularly.'

'Oche aye! No problem Sergeant. I shall be on duty all night anyway, and will be glad of your company. All the best and take care. There've been reports of marauding enemy troops in the rear areas.'

'Thanks a lot for telling me!' So with the line connected safely to the switchboard and with the assurance of his full attention from the operator, it was only a matter of time now before the job was done, so to speak.

Having first rigged up a road crossing to get to the side of the wood we wanted to be on, we were on our way, with **Sig Hutchinson** slowly driving along and giving me the time to lay the line back securely into the side of the road. It wasn't long before the first drum had run out and it was time make a test call to the KOSB's switchboard. Ring! Ring! Ring! 'OK Jock, its me making my first test. Will call you again soon.'

Then, remembering what I'd been taught so long ago, I joined the second drum up, using the proper joint and taping it as should be done. Easy! And so it was quarter mile after quarter mile, until I realised it was getting dark and I couldn't see what I was doing.

Despite his protests about being in a forward area, I got **Sig Hutchinson** to turn on his lights. Another drum. Ring! Ring! Ring!

A lineman of 28 Bde Sig Tp using his 'butinsky'

'Rear Echelon KOSB' 'Just testing Jock.' 'Aye, line's OK!' (Where did those niceties between operator and lineman go?) and we continued into the night.

Suddenly I was conscious of voices in the darkness beyond. I got **Hutchinson** to switch off his engine and cut his lights. All three of us listened and agreed that they weren't speaking English! There were shouts, there were many of them, and they were getting ever closer. Something like, 'Long sing ting ping pong now cow me chow hung dung chow mein see tow fue un dung dong plink plonk!' which I figured meant, 'I've seen their headlights and their vehicle is in that direction.'

'Right! Grab your weapons and get on the top of that knoll on the other side of the road. Keep quiet and don't shoot until I tell you to!' We made the top of that knoll a lot quicker than I would have thought possible.

More shouts and voices, definitely Chinese, I thought, and surely saying something like, 'Now you have found the vehicle go and find the men. Kill them for the sake of our glorious leader and wish them a last farewell!'

As we listened, we became conscious of another sound, that of the drone of an aeroplane, and getting closer - possibly coming to our aid. Or so we hoped.

Then mixed with the sound of the engines there seemed to be a mumbling voice from the skies above, something like, 'Ung Tow me fow lung Sigman Rhee Mao Tse Tung dropee guns ding long!' Suddenly the penny dropped. It was one of those American planes flying the night shift with a message to the enemy troops behind our lines to lay down their arms.

As soon as we had realised that this was where our 'hostile enemy voices' had been coming from, we were off again to complete the job in hand.

Ring! Ring! Ring! 'Rear Echelon KOSB.' 'It's only me Jock, testing again.'

'Aye! Lines through alright, Sergeant. Where've you been? I was beginning to get a bit worried about you.'

I didn't like telling him we had been busy fighting off a band of marauding enemy troops.

'We're OK Jock! Will give you another ring later. Keep awake for us.'

'**Hutchinson**! Switch off those bloody lights!'

'But you said you couldn't see what you was doing, Sergeant.'

'Never mind what I bloody said. I will just have to feel. Let's get cracking.'

We are nearing home base by now. The last time I looked in the trailer it certainly looked near enough empty.

'Sergeant! Sergeant!'

'What's the matter now, **Platt**?'

'The remainder of these drums have all got single wire on them!'

'Well you stupid pillock, put two drums on the spindle at a time. That will serve the same purpose.'

Two drums? By now I was sure the poor lad's arms were numb from even the one drum he had been trying to feed the cable from, and with the precarious position in which he was sitting on the wing of the jeep, I was getting concerned. Just wait until I come face to face with that SQMS. He'll get a piece of my mind regarding the D3 that, according to him, was in good nick!

Dawn was now breaking, and by now we must be within reach of Bde HQ. Sure enough, there was our Tac Sign. A big sigh of relief home at last.

Ring! Ring! Ring! A long pause. No reply. Oh no, please God, don't let the line be broken not now!

Ring! Ring! Ring! 'Rear Echelon KOSB.' There wasn't a bollocking left in me as I found myself more than grateful to inform the operator that I had arrived at Bde HQ, and the next call he got would be from our switchboard op at Bde Signal Office. 'OK Sergeant.'

Passing the line over to the indoor lineman, **Cpl Kitson** and telling him to connect it to the incoming lines frame, I then asked the exchange op to inform the OC that the line to KOSB's 'B' Ech was through and working, and that I was away to get some sleep.

I hadn't got but a couple of yards from the Signal Office, when the operator popped his head out of the window of the CV.

'Sergeant! Sergeant!' Please God, don't let him tell me the line's not working!

'What's up now?' I asked with bated breath.

'That line to KOSB's B Ech. It's through and working OK, but they have just rung up to say they don't need it any more, because they are now on the move!'

Was that a massive roar of laughter I heard coming from the Signal Office as I disappeared in disbelief?

Ah well! Win some, lose some. I thought I would never again volunteer to do such a 'simple' job of laying line. Instead, I would leave such an 'easy' job to the lads 'with their heads kicked in.' But seriously, I take my hat off to each and every one of them. Bless 'em all!

50 YEARS ON – COMMEMORATING THE CEASEFIRE OF THE KOREAN WAR - *Report by Ron Larby*

A Parade and Service to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the ceasefire of the Korean War took place in London on 9 July 2003. The parade was at Horse Guards and the Service, attended by **HM The Queen**, was in Westminster Abbey.

The weather was warm and sticky as over 800 veterans mainly from the British Korean Veterans Association, but including groups from other Associations with connections to the Korean War, assembled on Horse Guards Parade under the supervision of the Garrison Sergeant Major, London District.

The veterans were formed into six divisions, each one commanded by a Korean War Veteran of senior rank. All three services were represented in these divisional commanders and Northern Ireland was also represented.

The parade, commanded by BKVA Patron, **MajGen Sir Peter Downward KCVO CD DSO DFC**, was headed by the band of the Scots Guards and the BKVA National, Union and South Korean Standards. 39 Branch Standards were also on parade.

The six divisions were grouped by Branches and Associations in alphabetical order, (not by Regt, Corps or Ship) so it was difficult to say exactly how many ex Royal Signals members were present. But the Corps was well represented throughout the ranks by veterans proudly wearing their blazers and/or berets with 'Jimmy' badges.

The parade marched off at 10.30hrs, passing the saluting base, where the Salute was taken by **HRH, The Duke of Edinburgh**. He was accompanied on the dais by **Gen Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley GBE KCB DSO MC**. En route to the Abbey, the parade was joined by a number of veterans in wheelchairs.

On arrival at the Abbey, the parade was halted whilst the Branch Standards formed an avenue up to the doors for guests to pass through. Ten standards were positioned inside the Abbey itself. The parade was dismissed for veterans to join their families and friends for the Service, security being of the highest order. No pass – no entry!

On her arrival, **HM The Queen** was greeted by The Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey, who introduced her to some prominent guests.

During the service the music was supplied by the Band of the Royal Artillery, and taking part in the service itself was the **Rev Sam Davies**, Chaplain to the Glosters who was awarded the BEM for courage displayed both in the battle of the Imjin River and as a POW. He was joined by **John Stacpoole**, ex Duke of Wellington's Regt, now a monk at Ambleforth. A wreath was laid on the

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by **MajGen Downward** and the Ambassador for the Republic of Korea.

The poem, *Absent Veterans* by **David Lidstone** (ex Glosters) was read by **Barry Tunnicliffe** (ex RA).

In the congregation were Defence Attachés from many of the nations who sent forces to the Korean War, representatives of our own Armed Forces and Government Ministers. An observer described the hats of the veterans' ladies as 'stunning'!

After the service a small reception was held in the Jerusalem Room, where she was introduced to members of the BKVA National Executive, one of whom, National Overseas Co-ordinating Officer is ex Royal Signals, **Frank Fellows**.

A second, larger reception was hosted by the MoD, the organisers of the event. Because of the numbers, attendance at this had to be restricted to 140 people. However, as the service finished and broke up, many veterans sought out old friends and found alternative places of refreshment in which to slake their thirsts and swap stories of old friends and old times.

At last we of the 'Forgotten War' feel that this day had been a fitting memorial to our fallen comrades.

BOOK REVIEWS

A NATIONAL SERVICEMAN IN KOREA - by George Pagan
Reviewed by Bernard Redshaw

A while back a colleague (a Regular soldier) made a joking remark when one of the unofficial medal makers announced that they were issuing a National Service Medal. He quickly changed his position when I reminded him that many National Servicemen had given their lives in conflicts, such as Palestine, Cyprus, Suez, Malaya and particularly in Korea. George Pagan's *A National Serviceman in Korea* is particularly timely as we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the end of that conflict and remember those (many of whom were National Servicemen) who died there.

After briefly describing his basic and trade training in Catterick and his first posting in BAOR, Pagan takes us quickly aboard *TSS Empire Orwell* for the long voyage to Pusan. After a short familiarisation period he was, '5 days and 300 miles later' on the 38th Parallel working a rear link from a REME recovery unit.

He vividly describes the conditions they had to work under: old WW2 comms equipment and weapons; often inadequate washing and toilet facilities; soaring temperatures in summer and freezing conditions in winter; the wondering if they would ever get home alive; and the longing for it all to finish. But through it all comes the typical British humour and grit to stick it out, and above all to look after one's mates.

There are a few errors and repetitions and the syntax sometimes isn't perfect, but the writing style is soldierly and keeps the reader's attention well. It leaves those who weren't in Korea with a good impression of how it was. For those who were there, it is bound to bring back many memories.

Among the official documents reproduced at the end of the book is George Pagan's Discharge Booklet (AB 111). In this document, there is section for a Testimonial the soldier's CO was required to write. The entry in George's document suggests an attitude towards National Servicemen that many believe was around at the time. It reads: *Sig Pagan has been employed on various duties within a wireless troop. He has performed these duties with mediocre efficiency. Given more experience in a job with supervision he should eventually show himself to be a useful employee to any prospective employer.* Since National Service, George has had a successful managerial career in the textiles trade, ending up with his own business!

A National Serviceman in Korea, ISBN1-900467-16-X, is published by Finial Publishing, 15 Hoburne Road, Swanage, Dorset, BH19 2SL, and is available from the Royal Signals Museum Bookshop, Tel: 01258 482 248 at £9.99.

RED WINDS FROM THE NORTH – by Norman Davies
Reviewed by Bernard Redshaw

Knowing the author makes reviewing his book both difficult and easy. It's difficult because, if you like the bloke (and I do), then you're conscious that biases may creep into your review. But it's easier because when you read about him doing something or describing something, you can see him there doing it for real and you can think what he is thinking.

In 1950 **Norman Davies** is a very young regular soldier proud to have his first stripe so soon. He is informed that he is going to Korea, but like many others in the same situation, he hasn't a clue where it is, nor why he's going there. At 19 years of age, all he knows about war is from films and books.

He joins 29 Bde Sig Sqn and after a rushed programme of 'jabs, equipt issue and lectures', he soon finds himself on board *HMT Empress of Australia* waving farewells to his tearful parents on the dock. After innocently exploring exotic foreign ports en route, he is soon disembarking at Pusan, overwhelmed at the stench and utter poverty he sees there.

Very soon the Bde is on the 38th Parallel and pushing the North Korean invaders over it. A doddle, everyone thought, 'It'll be over by Christmas.' But it is not to be. Chinese forces join in, and it becomes a hard, bitter war, lasting almost three years. We get the feelings of frustration, uncertainty and utter fear, as **Davies** and his comrades battle with the summer heat and freezing winter temperatures. In between this there are moments of doubt about the futility of war, such as when he witnesses a Korean woman struggling to break a hole in a frozen river. From the folds of her dress, she produces a newborn infant, kisses it tenderly and pushes it through the ice to perish in the freezing water below.

Eventually his tour comes to an end and late in 1952, after an uneventful voyage home, he arrives back in UK. With two medal ribbons on his chest, **Davies** still can't believe he's been to war. And he still isn't sure why.

Written 49 years after the event, this book shows a good balance of the fresh innocence of youth (evidenced by his thoughts and actions at the time) and the quiet reflection of age (sometimes called 'wisdom').

In the introduction to the book, **Taff** acknowledges the support his wife, **Meg** gave him in writing it. She bought him a word processor and told him to 'bloody well get on with it.' Sadly, **Meg** died in May this year.

Red Winds From The North is published by Able Publishing.

AIRBORNE OFFICERS DINNER
24 October 2003
Goojerat Barracks
Colchester
For further info contact
Captain Mark Rouse
Tel: Mil (94651) 2990
Civ: (01206) 782990
Mobile: 07799 477363
E Mail: welfare216@fsmail.net

THE ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM

D-DAY AND DORSET - CALLING ALL D-DAY VETS!

The Royal Signals Museum is to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of D-Day next year with a new exhibition entitled 'D-Day and Dorset'.

We are looking for memorabilia linked with the Corps' role in OP OVERLORD and are seeking any surviving ex-members of the Corps (of any rank) who were there on the day.

If you can help in any way or know of someone who has memories of the day please contact Stella McIntyre, the Museum Curator on 01258 482160, or email stella@royalsignalsmuseum.com

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS

JUNE 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col MP Llewellyn OBE	HQ DCSA
Col PJ Oldfield	DOMA
Col JA Terrington	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col SG Hutchinson MBE	31 Sig Regt (V)
Lt Col RA Sharpe MBE	Army Exchange Posts (NBDS(W)
Maj SJ Baldwin	Defence Academy
Maj PJ Doherty	RHQ AFNORTH
Maj WJ Drain	16 Sig Regt
Maj HJ Bardell	Inf Div
Maj RH King	Overseas CS & NDC
Maj CWS Miller	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Maj RJ Parkinson	JSSU(AN)
Maj LJ Plumb	DEC (SP)
Maj AM White	G6 Branch HQ UKSC(G)
Maj P Whitehouse	71 Sig Regt (V)
Maj AJ Wood	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/Maj MA Wright-Jones	15 Sig Regt
Capt DJ Ashton	218 Sig Sqn 8 Inf Bde
Capt PD Ashworth	G6 HQ Land
Capt JS Balfour	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (216)
Capt BM Bingham	164 Sig Sqn
Capt RD Cowan	38 Sig Regt (V)
Capt DW Craig	MTO 2 Sig Regt
Capt TW Day	HQ Sqn 21 Sig Regt
Capt NP Fanning	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt KJ Grice	ATR Bassingbourn
Capt PJ Hale	HQNI
Capt A Higgins	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Capt P Kendrick	71 Sig Regt (V)
Capt T Malley	Logs Suport Branch HQ Land
Capt GG Moody	7 Sig Regt
Capt LG Pim	215 Sig Sqn
Capt DA Sacree	JSSU (AN)
Capt G Shakespeare	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Capt SW Slater	DCSA Svc Plans & Requirements
Capt SA Smoothy	31 (City of London) Sig Regt (V)
Capt AT Steele	JSSU Oakley
Capt FAW Stewart	Exchange Officers - Australia
Capt CJ Udell	252 Sig Sqn DCSA(G)
Capt J Williams	203 Sig Sqn 3 Inf Bde
Capt GMA Wills	15 Sig Regt
Capt AGA Woolaston	SANGCOM
Lt JWA Docherty	2 Sig Regt
Lt AS Foote	ATR Lichfield
Lt DP Spencer	222 Sig Sqn 3 (UK) Div
Lt JM Wadia	15 Sig Regt

JULY 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
A/Col I Cameron-Mowat	Spec Projects Procurement IPT
Lt Col PW Glibbery	Overseas SC & NDC
Lt Col JP Hudson	SANGCOM
Lt Col SP Hunt	Shape NACOSA
Lt Col SG Hutchinson	31 Sig Regt (V)
Lt Col Hryhoruk	HQ 145 (HC) Bde
Lt Col SC Johns	HQ 4 Div
Lt Col SA Leigh	Royal School of Signals
Lt Col RJ Steed MBE	R Sigs/Int Div
Lt Col SP Wallis	Shape Staff (BAe)
Maj TJS Allen	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Maj GE Blythe	Infrastructure HQ SOinC(A)
Maj RJ Carter MBE	IMATT (Freetown) Sierra Leone
Maj AP Ferris MBE	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Maj T Hill	10 Sig Regt (242 Sig Sqn)
Maj JM Hodges	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Maj RJ Lovett	1 (AS) Sig Sqn (244) 21 Sig Regt
Maj S Roden	2 (CofD) Sig Sqn (V)
Maj M Smith MBE	16 Sig Regt
Maj JJ Torrell	36 Sig Regt
Maj KG Wilson	IS & Comms Sys Suport IPT
Maj P Wilson BEM	DEI Info Systems Branch Henlow
A/Maj DI Smith	Systems HQ SOinC(A)
A/Maj PJ Stoddart	63 Sig Sqn (V)
A/Maj DTH Wilson	40 Sig Regt (V)
Capt AC Aylward	33 Sig Regt (V)
Capt SA Bason	259 Sig Sqn
Capt M Brooks	ADMIS Project ACGS
Capt EJ Bruce	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Capt NR Coatsworth	Jungle Warfare Wing
Capt N Donohue	HQ 5 Div

Capt JMW Ewart	... ...	Joint Staff Div J6 HQ BF Cyprus
Capt KVFowler	... ...	LSP Oman
Capt VE Hemmings	... ...	HQ Sig Sqn 7 Armd Bde
Capt NR Henly	... ...	252 Sig Sqn DCSA(G)
Capt TJ Keates	... ...	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Capt MJ Morton	... ...	BMATT (Freetown) Sierra Leone
Capt SE Pittaway	... ...	30 Sig Regt
Capt Y Rana	... ...	CIS 241 Sig Sqn
Capt ES Warhurst	... ...	Y List MCM Div
Capt BG White	... ...	G6 HQ Land
Capt SW Whittley	... ...	JCU(NI)
Lt HC Cairns	... ...	ATR Lichfield
Lt GJ Clarke	... ...	600 Signal Troop 10 Sig Regt
Lt JC Higginson	... ...	ATR Lichfield
Lt SM Smith	... ...	Royal School of Signals

WOS AND SNCOS

JUNE 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
A/WO1 FofS S Moore	... ... RHQ AFNORTH
A/WO1 FofS MA Paveley	... 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD G Cole	... ... 11 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD MA Ginty	... ... JSSU Digby
A/WO1 RD K Marsh	... ... 12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO1 KJ O'Neill	... ... 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO2 FofS AD Amies	... ... Jt St Div Cyprus
WO2 FofS S Brown	... ... HQ SOinC(A)
WO2 FofS RG Edge	.. ... 35 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 FofS PJ Hubble	... ... SHAPE Regional Sp Gp
WO2 FofS OD Leyland	... Royal School of Signals
WO2 FofS NA McGregor	... 7 Sig Regt
WO2 FofS IR Outterson	... HQ 1 Sig Bde
WO2 FofS GJ Pearson	... 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
WO2 FofS MP Riley	... ... DEI Info Sys Branch
WO2 RD LS Crossing	... ... 11 Sig Regt
WO2 RD G Steel	... ... 252 Sig Sqn
A/WO2 FofS RA Dickinson	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
A/WO2 FofS GS Walton	... 252 Sig Sqn
A/WO2 RD MA Brown	... ... 21 Sig Regt (AS)
A/WO2 RD RD Burrows	... 14 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD AV Gill	... ... 15 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD S Mayell	... ... 1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD AM Maylett	... 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO2 RD DW Peters	... ... 16 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD AJ Storey	... ... 16 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD TJ Ward	... ... 11 Sig Regt
SSgt YofS SJ Boase	... ... 37 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt YofS P Emsen	... ... 16 Sig Regt
SSgt YofS AS George	... ... RMAS
SSgt YofS CA Green	... ... 38 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt YofS SJ Milne	... ... 1 (RBY) Sig Regt (V)
SSgt YofS DG Monger	... ... 31 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt FofS RD Allen	... ... 15 Sig Regt
SSgt FofS PR Stevens	... ... 39 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt TRJ Austin	... ... Royal School of Signals
SSgt AP Ball	... ... JSSU Digby
SSgt J Barsley	... ... 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt MA Brown	... ... 21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt RD Burrows	... ... 14 Sig Regt
SSgt G Campbell	... ... DI (SI)
SSgt AV Gill	... ... 15 Sig Regt
SSgt SV Hamblin	... ... Royal School of Signals
SSgt TEE Hodgskins	... ... 7 Sig Regt
SSgt JF Lyons	... ... BMM Kuwait
SSgt BP Matthews	... ... MOD A Block
SSgt SV Mayell	... ... 1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt MS Morgan	... ... 21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt MF Patterson	... ... 20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
SSgt DW Peters	... ... 16 Sig Regt
SSgt P Storey	... ... 16 Sig Regt
SSgt P Stroudley	... ... 20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
SSgt TJ Ward	... ... Royal School of Signals
A/SSgt AS Caprio	... ... 1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/SSgt MC Laughton	... ... 15 Sig Regt
A/SSgt KW MacPherson	... 1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/SSgt WPD Quinn	... ... RHQ AFSOUTH
Sgt S Avis	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt DI Carter	... ... 15 Sig Regt
Sgt DG Dix	... ... 600 Sig Tp
Sgt AM Eardley	... ... 1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt JW Fawcett	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt DG Leach	... ... 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt PD Lester	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt LM Mason	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt AD Murphy	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt HL Nolan	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt AC Patrick	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt GA Paver	... ... RHQ AFNORTH
Sgt SE Perry	... ... 2 Sig Regt
Sgt MJ Pollitt	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt BD Rawlings	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt CM Richardson	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt RD Rudd	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt G Smith	... ... 259 Sig Sqn
Sgt S Sweeney	... ... 21 Sig Regt (AS)
Sgt R Thubron	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt NJ Turney	... ... 30 Sig Regt
Sgt CT Wrenn	... ... Royal School of Signals
A/Sgt AG Johnson	... ... HQ DSSS
A/Sgt GM Rhoades	... ... 30 Sig Regt
A/Sgt G Fisher	... ... 21 Sig Regt (AS)
A/Sgt RE Rouchy	... ... 30 Sig Regt
Sgt PA Selby	... ... JSSU (FI)
Sgt JL Steel	... ... 225 Sig Sqn

JULY 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 RD MA Giles	... ... 36 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 FofS MR Flather	... 21 Sig Regt (AS)
A/WO1 FofS N Hendry	... ... 30 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD C Davies	... ... 11 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD RC Douglas	... 102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO1 RD PM Downie	... 39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn
A/WO1 RD JC Duncan	... ... 11 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD KP Innes	... ... 38 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 RD DA Mitchell	... 15 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD J Renshaw	... ... 16 Sig Regt
WO2 FofS MA Oliver	... ... 30 Sig Regt
WO2 FofS KR Peters	... ... 252 Sig Sqn
WO2 FofS JK Sutton	... ... ATRA Bowman Manpower
WO2 RD MD Lambert	... ... 35 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 RD MP Townley	... ... 7 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD NL Cain	... ... DCSA
A/WO2 RD I Conlan	... ... 40 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 RD J McNeill	... ... 1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt MR Brooksbank	... ... 31 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt DR Covey	... ... 2 Sig Regt
SSgt S J Fardy	... ... 30 Sig Regt
SSgt IM Giles	... ... 30 Sig Regt
SSgt RI Hawkins	... ... 600 Sig Tp
SSgt C Hindson	... ... 16 Sig Regt
SSgt D Kilgallon	... ... RHQ AFNORTH
SSgt AL Korchell	... ... 40 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt A Lloyd	... ... 15 Sig Regt
SSgt IA Middlemiss	... ... 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt S Page	... ... 16 Air Aslt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt IJ Taylor	... ... 30 Sig Regt
A/SSgt JA Burnham	... ... 3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/SSgt LS Ford	... ... HQ 1 Sig Bde
A/SSgt AJ Hartley	... ... HQ 11 Sig Bde
A/SSgt MA Jobson	... ... 14 Sig Regt
A/SSgt CKI Kielty	... ... 40 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt MA McNamara	... 15 Sig Regt
A/SSgt CJ O'Neill	... ... 7 Sig Regt
A/SSgt LG Tosh	... ... 2 Sig Regt
A/SSgt JL White	... ... RHQ AFNORTH
Sgt BR Baynham	... ... 16 Sig Regt
Sgt M Butler	... ... Royal School of Signals
Sgt A Fisher	... ... 16 Sig Regt
Sgt DC Fitton	... ... 11 Sig Regt
Sgt JP Gronn	... ... 31 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt CA Hook	... ... 21 Sig Regt (AS)
Sgt DJ Langridge	... ... 39 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt JG Pollock	... ... 16 Sig Regt
Sgt N Ruff	... ... 21 Sig Regt (AS)
Sgt G Shilton	... ... 7 Sig Regt
Sgt AN Smith	... ... 33 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt S Spink	... ... 14 Sig Regt
Sgt DJ Wilson	... ... HQ Brunei
Sgt J Wood	... ... 38 Sig Regt (V)

RETIREMENTS

JUNE 2003

Maj SJ Boyne	... ...	09 Jun 03
Capt RQ Lifton	... ...	19 Jun 03
Maj TW Pender-Johns	... ...	30 Jun 03

JULY 2003

Capt BGW Johnson	... ...	7 Jul 03
Capt GM Spinney	... ...	7 Jul 03
Lt Col IA Noble	... ...	10 Jul 03
Brig PA Pratley MBE	... ...	11 Jul 03
Capt TE Grey	... ...	11 Jul 03
Lt Col PWJ Whitehead	... ...	22 Jul 03
Lt Col TR Craven	... ...	31 Jul 03

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

We congratulate the following Royal Signals personnel who were awarded honours in the Queen's Birthday List 2003:

OFFICER OF THE MOST EXCELLENT ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE (OBE)

Lt Col Peter William John Whitehead OBE formerly 11 Sig Regt

MEMBER OF THE MOST EXCELLENT ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE (MBE)

WO1 Terence Michael Brown MBE Bde FofS 1 Sig Bde

WO1 George Alfred Coffin MBE formerly 11 Sig Regt

Capt Christopher Douglas Drew MBE 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt

Sgt Michael Richard Anthony Jackson MBE 7 Sig Regt

Capt Peter John Stoddart MBE MOD London

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF'S RECRUITING AND LIAISON STAFF

ROYAL SIGNALS MOBILE PRESENTATION TEAM

OC **Lt Eddie Maskell-Pedersen**
2IC **Sgt Billy Wishart**

LONDON VISIT - by *LCpl Emma Brown*

No rest for the MPT team. My last event with the team took me to London during the week 12-16 May 03 for an IT/Comms surge. It was to be a change from the norm. We set of on the Monday afternoon, leaving in plenty of time to get to Croydon for the cadets. On the way the plans changed (that's a shock). After dropping off all our kit, **Cpl Dave Shepherd** and I had to head off to Woolwich. An hour later, after fighting London traffic we were ready to help 11 Sig Regt's RRT. The rest of the team kept to the original plan.

The first three days turned out to be a different from previous weeks. Instead of indoor activities, we set up two different comd tasks (outside so the boss, **Lt Eddie M-P** could top up his tan) **LCpl Tel Frank** took charge of one of the tasks, but he managed to do anything but talk about the task. He tried to impress the students with his mockney (fake cockney) accent. **Cpl Shepherd** headed the main comd task, which gave him the opportunity to test the fitness of the students. He had them running round like headless chickens!

LCpl Ayesha Muhammad had to do all the presentations with **LCpl Frank**, as we thought no one would be able understand **LCpl Emma Brown**.

For the last two days, the Team attended Countryside Fair, where one of good things was the free BBQ and drinks! **Lt M-P**, the London boy, couldn't hide his excitement when we arrived into loc to find a sheep-shearing road show. He had to have a go, but what he hadn't banked on was shearing the rear end of the sheep. After a busy week, the Team moved back to Blandford for a well-deserved weekend off before beginning the prep for the Army Exhibitions for Schools.

MY FIREMAN FLING - *by LCpl Ayesha Muhammad*

Who says the teams never go anywhere good! While in London we attended an event in Upton Park, West Ham's football ground. I was trying to star spot, but unfortunately there were no footballers around. However, I got a chance to see some other men in uniform (and girls, you'll know what I'm talking about).

A bit of excitement occurred when the fire alarms went off. I'm not quite sure if it was intentional, but the usual emergency drills kicked in, including a fire engine filled with lots of firemen. I'd always liked firemen, so I took this opportunity to check them out and chat to them. They even let me try on their uniform and asked if I wanted a go with their hoses! I felt about 10 years old again. It was the highlight of the day and enjoyed it.

LCpl Ayesha fancies herself as a fireman

S TROOP, HEADQUARTERS SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

OC **Capt Nick Shenow**
Foreman **SSgt (FofS) Steve Robinson**

Since our last entry, S Troop has been working very hard, with a great deal of man-hour intensive trials and a lot of travelling around the country.

There have been a number of comings and goings. We say farewell to **Sgt Tim Vanandel**, who departed on promotion to start and finish his Yeoman's course. Congratulations Yeoman.

Cpl Jay Hunter has finally managed to get his posting to the green unit he wanted. **LCpl Tim Brigden** is now a Mr. Good luck Tim. **Sig Sean Knight** is eventually posted to Ireland after serving with both teams. Maybe they will get some work from him. **Cpl Martin Essam** is soon to become a civvy. Good luck to him. We wish them all well.

Welcome goes to our new OC, **Capt Nick Shenow**, who needs to keep up with the rest and buy a new car. To **SSgt (FofS) Steve Robinson** and his wife, **Vicky**, congratulations on the birth of their third son, **Leon**. Welcome to **Cpl Wicks**, from 660 Sig Tp (EOD), our new cool MT man (who has a huge task ahead of him); to **Cpl McCarthy**, our new storeman, who after only 3 weeks in the Tp had organised 4 tp outings; to **Cpl Nick Watson**, our new tech who is only at home at 3,000 feet or hanging from a climbing rope (Well done on your Class 1 entrance exam); to **Sig Jim Hewson** fresh from 30 Sig Regt, who has amazed us all with his ability to sleep at any time, regardless of weather conditions; to **Cpl Lloyd Morgan** (if only texting was the entrance paper. Better luck next time) and to **LCpl Emma McDonald** our new demon racing driver.

As for the rest, **SSgt Jim Hamill** has just been extended again (Never mind, Jim. You will eventually get back home); **Sgt Paul Faizey** was unlucky on just missing out on his FofS entrance exam; for **Sgt Bev Bevan**, Las Vegas will never be the same; **Sgt John Guy** (Dad) will forever be here; and **Cpl Daz Offord** passed his RSJCC, eventually. Congratulations go to **LCpl Paxton** and **Gemma** on their new baby girl, **Elizabeth Lidia**. Finally we must mention our AO, **Mrs Marilyn Gibbons** our resident quiz mistress.

S Troop History If any ex members have any information, please contact **Sgt John Guy** on Blandford Military 5787, or CASH e-mail CSD SP ADMIN SGT.

NEWS OF TRAINING

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AP Hudson MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) DM Forrester**

WARRANT OFFICERS' AND OFFICERS' TRAINING DAY - *by Capt DR Atkinson*

Fourteen members of Regt's cadre proceeded to the South Coast for a day of walking followed by a sociable evening meal. With blue skies and April sun shining, the minibus departed Blandford Camp in a happy mood until the organiser, **Capt Dean Atkinson**, expanded his earlier route description of 'relatively flat'. The grumbling that ensued lasted throughout the day, with a general consensus that 'Had we known we'd have made sure we were too busy!' The drinks at the end were certainly well earned. It was a good day, but be sure, the Blandford LE fraternity will carefully vet the next organiser's route choice!

REGIMENTAL SPORTSMAN'S DINNER 24 APR 03

The Regt held a Sportsman's Dinner on Thursday 24 April 03 to mark the end of the winter season. The dinner was well attended, with 14 different sports represented. We were pleased to welcome as Guest of Honour, **LtCol Andy Hickling MBE**, who talked to the audience about the importance of managing an Army career along with a successful sporting career.

The dinner was a complete success and Regtl Sports Colours were awarded for 9 sports, Shooting, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Swimming, Orienteering, Football, CrossCountry, Golf and Hockey. The highlight of the dinner was the award of Sportsman of the Season to **Sig Michel** and Sportswoman of the Season to **Sig Scott**. Congratulations to all who were awarded their colours and awards, and good luck to everyone for the summer season.

A relieved group of Officers and WOs rest after conquering another hill

REGIMENTAL FOOTBALL SEASON SUMMARY - *by Capt Ian Rutherford*

Another season of achievement and progress is almost complete, during which around 30 players have represented the 1st team at one point or another. Under the management of **Capt Ian Rutherford** and **SSgt Chris Hood**, they reached heights not experienced since RSS made it to the final of the Army Challenge Cup in 1988/89. They were the first Corps team to make the Army final since 2 Sig Regt in 1995. However in the final, a more experienced 6 Bn REME team, with many Corps standard players become worthy winners. For the record, the Army Challenge Cup run was:

1st Round	Home to 32 Regt RA	102
2nd Round	Away to 2 PWRR	42
3rd Round	Home to 17 Port & Mar RLC	51
Quarter Final	Away to SEAE Arborfield	10
Semi Final	Home to 1 Scots Gds	10
Final	6 Bn REME	04

As the league season draws to a close, the Regt is currently 8 points clear of 6 Bn REME and should be crowned 5th Div Premier League Champions by the end of May. The highlight of the league season has to be the 42 defeat of 6 Bn REME, a result that gave immense satisfaction to both management and players alike. The 5th Div Major Units Cup is still ongoing. We are due to play 6 Bn REME (yet again) in the quarter-final sometime in June. The 2nd Team ably managed by **Cpl Leigh Necrews**, are placed 2nd in the 5th Div –1st Div.

SSgt Chris Hood has recently departed for the sunshine of Cyprus. On behalf of all footballers in Blandford, we wish him and **Sarah** the very best for the future, and we look forward to meeting up again at the Corps 7's in Blandford in September. As for next season, it all starts again with 50 new faces at preseason training in August!

11 Sig Regt's Football Squad

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JGJ Howes CD RCSigs**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) N J Roberts**

THE HARROGATE CUP SWIMMING COMPETITION MAY 2003 *- by Sig Mcgrane 1 Sqn Team Capt*

This year's 1 Sqn swimming team had swimmers with various levels of experience, but everyone put in the 100% effort expected of them. The team was successful in the individual events, with **Sig Mcgrane** in the 100m Breaststroke and 4x25m Individual Medley, **Sig Pearce** in the 50m Butterfly and **Sig Phillips-Noble** in the 100m Freestyle. We also won the male relays with the above swimmers and **Sigs Gill**, **Finch**, **McGee**, **Jacques** and **Phillipson**. The female swimmers were up against more experienced swimmers and narrowly missed the all important 1st places. All in all it was a gutsy performance from the 1 Sqn 'volunteers'. Despite tight competition and a very close-fought battle, overall 3 (Harrogate) Sqn were the winners with 1 (Ouston) Sqn and 2 (Catterick) Sqn sharing second place.

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON CHARITY BIKE RIDE 0102 MAY 03

On the 1 May 03, 1 (Ouston) Sqn embarked on a 24-hour bike ride with the aim of raising money for a local charity, the Blandford Opportunity Group, which supports preschool children with severe learning deficiencies and physical disabilities in the North Dorset area.

The event began in style at 12.00hrs, with the first three riders being escorted onto Hawke Square by the White Helmets. The motorbikes achieved the aim of bringing the event to the attention of all, but unfortunately, after 15 mins they departed, leaving the old-fashioned push-bikes to it. The Sqn Cadre, including **Cpls Jay Allen**, **Gord Dunderdale**, **John Greenwood** and **Bob Lovett**, with other members of 1 Sqn took turns to ride, while collecting teams visited offices and houses for donations. The collecting continued in Blandford Town centre, focussing near the market.

At 17.00hrs we returned to camp, and the riders, **WO1 Neil Furnival** and **Lt Dean Atkinson**, certainly suffered on the hill on the way. For good measure, we then patrolled the area outside the soldiers' cookhouse and the NAAFI once again. Once we had exhausted the patience of the soldiers, we turned our attention to the Tesco Supermarket in Blandford. Here **Sigs Fenwick**, **Culliford**, **Nicholls**, **Piggott**, **Daniels**, **Booth**, **Min** and **Pawan** were doing lots of pedaling and the public were moved to give generously, so a big thank you to all who dug deep. After 2 more hours it was OC, **Maj Jeff Howes's** and **SSgt John Morley's** turn to endure Black Lane. It's all characterbuilding, chaps. Honest! We moved to the gym, at 22.00hrs, to continue our efforts on the gym bikes. Three teams tackled the night. 03.00hrs was not a good time of day for either the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Venessa Galloway** or the SSM, **WO2 Nigel Roberts**. After nine very long hours and some very tasty stew (thanks to the GCWO) later, we moved to the main gate in time to lure more money from people coming into work. **Sigs Durga**, **Corke**, **Dmanesh**, **Rutledge**, **James**, **O'Leary**, **Portwain** and **Mawbey** took over here. The Cadre completed the final leg of the event finishing outside RHQ at 12.00hrs exactly.

A big thank you to all who donated, and a special mention to the MT who donated £95.00 (the largest donation for the event). Over £2,100.00 was raised. Notwithstanding our sore behinds the next day, everyone can be thankful it was not a 24-hr run like last year!

Escorted to the start. Maj Jeff Howes, SSM Nigel Roberts, Sgt Place with the White Helmets

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj Rob Gibson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Eric Williams**

There have been some changes in the Sqn over the past months. We say farewell to **WO2 (SSM)** 'Spike' **Haynes**, wishing him all the best and a speedy recovery, and we welcome **WO2 (SSM) Eric Williams**. It has been an expensive month for 2 Sqn, as three of the Cadre Staff decided to get married! Congratulations go to **Capt Sofia Hughes**, on her marriage to **Maj Fred Hargreaves**; to **Cpl Matt Lee**, on his marriage to **LCpl Helen Coupe** and to **Cpl Sean Ablott**, on his marriage to **Samantha** and for the birth of their son **Keiron**.

HARROGATE CUP CRICKET - *by Sig Cowell*

The 2 Sqn cricket team went into the InterSqn Harrogate Cup Competition with high hopes of a victory. Our first game was against the trainee techs from 3 Sqn, whom we were very keen to beat. After winning the toss, we decided to put 3 Sqn into bat, as we were quite confident of our bowling ability. Wickets were taken and very few runs scored off the bat, byes being the top score. **Sig Min** bowled excellently, taking 4 wickets for just 9 runs and 3 Sqn finished with a total of 88 runs for 7 wickets. This was not considered a high score, as we opened our batting with **Sig**

Jackson and **Sig Deepak**. Both found the going tough: 3 Sqn bowlers kept the bowling tight. In the first 10 overs, we made only 27 runs - and then the wickets began to fall. The job was therefore left to the lower-order batsmen who, unfortunately collapsed. We finished 22 short, with 66. The following day we played 1 Sqn, and having seen 3 Sqn totally demolish them, we were confident of victory. For this game we decided to change our wicket keeper, so the gloves were passed to **Sig Chin**. It was a good decision: the number of extras given away was greatly reduced. 1 Sqn won the toss and decided to bat but, with deteriorating weather, the game was reduced from 20 to 10 overs for each side. **Sig Cowell** and **Sig Niekie** opened the bowling and a wicket fell on the first ball, with **Sig Chin** taking a great catch behind the stumps. Both bowlers kept line and length, taking 2 wickets each in their 3 overs. **Sig Min** also took a wicket, and 1 Sqn were restricted to 55 runs. Once again faith was put in **Sig Jackson** and **Sig Deepak** to make the runs and this was not misplaced, although **Sig Jackson** managed to throw his wicket away with only 4 runs needed to win. **Sig Chin** came in to take his place and the game was won after just 7 overs, with **Sig Deepak** top-scoring with 21 not out. This resulted in 2 Sqn finishing in second place behind the winners of the Harrogate Cup Cricket, 3 Sqn. It was disappointing for the team not to win, but it was a good opener to the cricket season and certainly gave great entertainment to all those who turned out to support the teams.

THE ARMY TARGET SHOOTING CLUB TARGET RIFLE OPEN MATCH - *by Sig Etienne*

The Army Rifle Association's open event is an annual shooting match hosted by the Army Target Shooting Club at the Bisley HQ. ATSC is a club for serving and retired personal of all ranks. I joined the club two months ago after a regular army team development shoot. The Army Open was my first major shoot since joining the club and the match took place over the May Bank Holiday weekend. Firing started at 09.00hrs on the Saturday at 300m, with each competitor having 2 siting shots and 10 scoring shots with a HPS of 50. I was firing reasonably well, but not as well as I wanted. Match 2 started at 10.45hrs and the day was warming up nicely. This shoot was 2 siting shots and 15 to count. Again, I had a steady shoot, but the wind was a problem.

It was an early start on Sunday, meeting at the clubhouse then down to Tickledown Long Range. Again, the wind got the better of me, but it also affected others (which made me feel a lot better). Then it was back to the clubhouse for the prize giving. When all the prizes had been awarded and rifles cleaned it was time for the journey back to camp. Despite not winning, I enjoyed the weekend. It helped me learn a lot about the art of judging wind strength, direction and sight adjustment. I cannot wait to get back out on the range to improve my shooting and enter more competitions. I would recommend it to anybody.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Alan Hoensch**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Chris Davies**

Welcome to **Cpl Aaron Nessling**, who has arrived from 4 Mil Training Sqn. There have been several births amongst the Cadre. Congratulations to **Cpl Dave Dodds** and **Zoe** on the birth of their son, **Ethan**; and to **Cpl Dave Worsfold** and his wife **Clare** on the birth of **Declen**, who arrived weighing in at healthy 9lb 6fioz. We say goodbye to **Cpl Brotherston** and his wife, and wish them good luck in their next posting.

EXERCISE HARROGATE FOLLY 01/03 - *by SSgt J Crowton*

This military trg ex was organised by the 2IC, **Capt Cas Wootten**, over the last weekend in April. The main aim of the ex was to take the Phase 2 and 3 trainees out of the trade training environment for the weekend and revise them on some basic military and skills subjects, such as tac withdrawal with a casualty, anti-ambush drills and patrolling.

The secs were all headed up by willing volunteers (yes volunteers) of NCOs on upgrading courses, with soldiers in the roles of sec comds, enemy and instructors for the different subjects. On the orienteering side, **Cpl Tony Livesy** was heard to say that he was not lost, he was just following orders!

WO2 (SSM) Chris Davies expertly oversaw the whole thing, with great admin back up from my team, **Cpl Limb** and **LCpl Bainbridge RAMC**. Then it was back to Blandford and back into classroom mode. Great!

INTERNATIONAL TOUGHGUY COMPETITION 2003 - *by Cpl 'Duggie' Douglas*

Ulster Tp's finest, **Steve Baulch**, **Steve Read**, **Andrea Smith**, **Geordie Davis**, **Tom Earl**, **Dave Lloyd**, **Gill Gittins**, **Si Wellstead** and **James Douglas**, took on the 2003 Tough Guy Competition on Sunday 26 January in aid of Multiple Sclerosis.

It had all started as a bit of a laugh at the beginning of the T1 Upgrader's Course in July. All too quickly January came around and, having put off our superman or women training 'till tomorrow', we arrived at the start, ready or not. The gun sounded and, with a quick prayer and a war cry, we were off. The huge number of competitors was quite disconcerting. We hadn't realised there were so many other mad people!

The first 8 miles consisted of farmer's fields, 6ft walls, endless hill reps and a mile-long, calfdeep water ditch that we had to keep zigzagging across. Then the fun really began. The 2 mile assault course (complete with electric fencing) consisted of 'A' Frames and postman's walks, leaps of faith, numerous ice-cold dunkings, low barbed wire, Vietcong tunnels of terror, flaming straw pits and mud!

Finally the shivering and swearing stopped, and we were safe on the minibus. Everyone decided 'never again! ' ....Well, not till next year anyway! A big thank you to **Richie Hill** for driving, and to **Rosie** and **Nicky** for cheering and photo taking!

4 (MILITARY TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Colin Russell**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) R Dyer**

ROYAL SIGNALS JUNIOR COMMANDERS COURSE - *by Cpl Bickfords*

It was a normal day, when into the office of 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn, walked the OC, who took great pleasure to inform me that I would be on the next JCC. The term 'poacher termed gamekeeper' sprang to mind, as I knew that a good performance was expected. The course was soon upon me and as with everybody else, nerves began to jangle. I started doubting if I was prepared enough for next 4 weeks to follow.

The first week concerned leadership, coming in the form of comd tasks. It was a cracking week and as our individual sections (lead by their relevant DS) started bonding, characters began to appear. I was part of 2 Sec, headed up by the legendary **Sgt Paul Belcher**. I couldn't have asked for a better group of mates.

Week Two took the form of battle skills and the orders process. For many of us, this was new and took some getting our heads round. And with the ex phase looming and our comd appointments just around the corner, we knew we had to get to grips with it. The PT had stepped up a notch and, it being linked with the inter-sec competition, some close races were run. A special mention must go out to **Cpl Eddie Longford**, who put in an outstanding performance.

In the third week it was off to Brecon for our well-organised and realistic range package. For me, was the most enjoyable part of the whole course, and I'm sure a lot of the others would agree with me. And all the rumours you hear about Brecon are totally true. It does have its own weather system - basically it's wet.

After the range package, we moved on to the 4day final ex. What can I say? It was a joy? No it wasn't. It was horrible - by far the most challenging thing I've ever done in my career, with the full range of military tasks: digging, patrolling, stagging on or giving/receiving orders. **Cpl Karen Gunn**, must take a mention, as I have never seen anybody pull so many guards and still keep smiling. Her ability to guard shall never be questioned. But at least it's over now and looking back, we all had some laughs and learned a great deal about ourselves and leading others.

Thanks to all the DS for the work and time they put into the course. A big well done goes out to Top Student, **Cpl Mat Coverley** and to Top Field Soldier, **Cpl** 'Stu' **Welton**. 3 Section might have taken the Best Section award, but in the eyes of 12 there was only one winner, 2 Section.

LAST TA RECRUIT COURSE AT THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

TA TRAINING TEAM

Tp Comd	**WO1 Gary Waters**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Trev Austin**

In the spring this year the final RSigs Recruit Course 02/009 took place in Blandford. As before, the trg was conducted around the Blandford area and SPTA. Out of a total of 32 Students who arrived, 25 passed out on Friday 11 April. The course was again very demanding and a shock for some of the students who expected a 2week Club 1830 holiday. Unfortunately, throughout this 2 weeks the course lost a few students with injuries due to lack of fitness. The staff wishes them all well, and hope they return to ATR for their Phase 1 Trg.

Congratulations to all who passed out and welcome to the Corps from the TA Trg Team! Congratulations to those given accolades, in particular: Top Student, **Sig Hudson**, 71 Sig Regt and Best Endeavor, **Sig Keeves**, 1 Sig Sqn.

Thanks go to the Reviewing Officer **Col NC Beacom**, Dep Comd, 2(NC) Sig Bde, and **PipeMaj Mick Elder**, for his fine performance of pipe tunes throughout the soldiers' pass off parade and to Kohima Tp for their admin support throughout.

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC	**Maj Don Macaulay**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Neil Roome**

BATTLEAXE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt (Tfc) Mark Harris**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mick Openshaw**

TROOP RAMBLE - 23 APRIL 03 - by *Sgt Wright*

Battleaxe Tp managed to escape from the whiteboards and 'sausage factory' line of students to enjoy a mini adv trg excursion over the Easter break. We planned to walk along the South West coastal path from the picturesque Lulworth Cove heading westwards and ending in the quaint village of Osmington Mills. The weather had been booked well in advance and could not have been better - glorious sunshine for the whole day.

The Tp split into two groups of walkers. The lead group intended to move at a steady pace, whilst still taking time at the viewpoints. The second group were taking things at such a leisurely stroll that wheelchair users and mothers with pushchairs could have passed them on the uphill sections of the 'undulating' route. After the first kilometre of uphill stroll, the view was quite stunning, enabling us to see what was in store for us for the rest of the walk – perhaps not such a good thing? At the front, **Sgt Justin Gill** set off at lightning pace as if it was a BCFT and was destined to take gold at the finishing point. Or did he just want a pint of the golden stuff? The OC, **Maj Don Macaulay**, used the day to get to chat to all the members of the group. This would have been ideal if half of them had enough breath left to talk ... no names mentioned (**Sgt Lee** and **Sgt Sanj Sanjeev**).

It wasn't too long before there was a scattered line of tired teddies strewn along the coastal path trying to blend in as local Dorset folk. Still, the opportunity to get and enjoy an ice-cream en route boosted morale, and it wasn't long before several small groups of walkers ambled into the finishing point. The old boys, **SSgt Mark Barrass** and **Sgt John Sullivan**, did a grand job of bringing up the rear. All in all, an enjoyable day was had by everyone and we're all looking forward to the next trg break.

Congratulations to **SSgt** 'Adie' **Dear**, **Sgt Steve Pengelly** and **Sgt Chris White** on their promotion to SSgt. Also **Sgt White** on his passing selection for FofS.

The Tp welcomes **Sgt Bhola**, **Sgt Neil Davis** and **Cpl Rebecca Anderson**, farewells **Capt Harris**, **Sgt Ambar** and **Cpl Kate Anderson**.

SYSEX TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Mahendra Limbu**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Neil Pollit**

First of all, welcome to **SSgt (YofS)** 'Tommy' **Tucker**, **LCpl Tracie Ardron** and **LCpl Steve Iddon**, and a fond farewell and best wishes to **Cpl Billy Watt**, on his posting to 7 Sig Regt and to **Cpl Paddy McFarland** and **Cpl Sam Richards**, on their posting to 15 Sig Regt. Congratulations to **Cpl Dharma** for his selection for promotion to Sgt.

Yet again, Sysex Tp had fun with the constant stream of Phase 2 soldiers 'enjoying' the new ASBR course programme. It's full of a mix of 'enriching' activities to make up for all the tac TOs that were officially removed some time ago. Hopefully units will reap the benefit of better prepared/tactically aware Ops and Techs in future! These activities include all aspects of 'Defence of a Comms site, SOPs in Hide locs, Occupying a Comms Site and Vehicle Anti-ambush drills as well as general TN SOPs (and you thought it was only 4 Sqn that did this!) We would also like to complement **LCpl Tracie Ardron** on her first ex instructing and award the infamous Golden Blanket for her contribution on the ex.

SSgt Neil Pollitt and **LCpl Tracie Ardron** managed to get away on EX GLACIER DRAGON during March. This was a week long Alpine skiing exercise in Zel Am Zee, Austria that brought individual skiers up to their next level. With sunny weather all week and excellent snow conditions, they returned having improved on their skiing ability and with excellent tans! Congratulations to **SSgt Neil Pollitt** on his selection for the Garrison team. We look forward to a weeklong adv trg ex in Wales in July!

We lost the annual football match to RADEX Tp recently. However, the score line did not truly reflect the commitment and hard work put into this hard fought match. A big thanks to **Sgt Dave Berry** and **LCpl Steve Boon** on keeping us in the game. **Sgt Berry** deserves a special mention for his superb cross that went directly into the back of the net!

We have just completed EX FINAL FLIGHT, fully practising and testing the Tp Comds in their AS knowledge and skills, whilst also brushing up on the basics, e.g. map reading and vehicle guiding! To watch a full TN Packet attempting to turn around on these extremely narrow country lanes is a joy to watch, and we will follow their careers with interest in the future. **LCpl Phil Price** just now needs to have a little more patience when he gets guided into loc. Twenty minutes to guide his Bedford back 20 yds is not really that bad!

INFORMATION SYSTEMS GROUP

OC	**Maj Andy Tuson**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Mark Sherwood**

INFORMATION ASSURANCE WING

OC	**Maj Ian Parry**
YofS	**WO1 (YofS) Pete Goodliffe**

CHANGE OF NAME

Data and Security Wing has been renamed **Information Assurance Wing**. When you first hear the term Information Assurance you tend to conjure up an image of a balanced set of reasonable measures that have been taken to protect the information after an assessment has been made of the risks that are posed to it. In truth this is the Holy Grail all organisations that value their information should strive to achieve, but which few understand. Information Assurance is ensuring that your information is where you want it, when you want it, in the condition that you need it and available to those that you want to have access to it – but only to them. Information Assurance 'surviving the information environment' is the term that has come into common use and is defined as: 'Actions taken that protect and defend information by ensuring their availability, authentication, confidentiality and non-repudiation' and therefore describes best the function of the wing.

FMVT Section within IA Wing has also undergone a change of name. Only a handful of the 'old and bold' know what FMVT stands for and it no longer describes the functionality of the

section. It has now been renamed **Message Procedures Section** which more accurately describes what the section teaches.

IA Wing has recently had two new arrivals – both babies! Congratulations to **Sgt King** and his wife on the birth of their baby boy, **Harrison**; and to **Sgt Alexander** and his wife on the birth of their baby girl, **Robyn**. We bid a fond farewell to **WO1 (YofS) Andy Drummond**, who is leaving the army after 22 years of dedicated service. **Andy** will be missed by the wing and is thanked for all his hard work and his vital part in YofS courses. We wish him, **Carrie** and the family all the very best for the future.

YofS COURSE 56 GRADUATION

The YofS Course 56 Final Presentations were a huge success. The theme for the presentations was BOWMAN with a diverse range of subjects from BOWMAN Systems Co-ordination in the System of Systems Environment to BOWMAN System Management at Unit level, all of which were sponsored by the Comd Support Development Centre. What was especially pleasing was the large audience in Princess Mary Hall throughout the day. The audience was made up from all ranks across the 3 Services, overseas visitors from the Dutch Royal Marine Corps and retired officers now employed by commercial companies that had a vested interest in the BOWMAN Presentations. Feedback from all the sponsors and senior members of the audience indicated that YofS Course 56 had delivered their presentations with style and in a logical, clear and concise manner. A special mention of praise was made to **SSgt (YofS) Ian Fowler** and **SSgt (YofS) Laura Shaw**, for displaying an intricate understanding of their respective projects when put on the spot and questioned by a large and knowledgeable audience. At the graduation ceremony **Col Mike Dyer** (Comd RSS) presented the Top Student Award to **SSgt (YofS) Bart Simpson**; **Col Meyer** (Col CSD) presented the best Academic Student Award to **SSgt (YofS) Ian Fowler** and **WO (YofS) Ben Pronk** (Dutch RM) received the equivalent of a GOC's Commendation for his outstanding efforts during the course from **Maj Schaap** (Dutch RM).

SSgt (YofS) Simpson receives his Top Student Award from Col Dyer

CIS WING

Work within CIS Wing remains as busy as usual. On top of all the ongoing development projects and delivery of trg, members of the wing have been doing their bit for charity. This month staff and course members will be participating in the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists (WCIT) charity walk in London, to assist them in raising money for such things as IT equipt and trg for children around the country.

One of the Wing Burnham Lecturers, **Mr Martyn Hastings** recently returned from leading another expedition to Kenya. Over the last 4 years **Martyn's** expedition groups have funded and built a 12-room health centre in the Meru South District, close to Mount Kenya.

We would like to say farewell to **Sgt Billy Budgen**, who is to become a student of Law and to **Mrs Jo Emmerson** from IT Management Sec, who is moving on to bigger things in Colchester with her husband, **Mark** on his promotion to WO2.

Also to **Mr Charlie Cook**, who is moving sideways from HIO ATacCS Sec to a new post in Trg Sp Div. We would also like to congratulate **Sgt** 'Ged' **Baines** on his marriage to **Emma** and hope that they have many happy years together.

CABLE SYSTEMS SECTION

As a gesture of goodwill and demonstration of the long running association between Krone (UK) Technique and the Corps, 7 May saw the official opening of the 'Krone Structured Cabling Room' in Ouston Building. A generous donation of the latest hardware and consumables has not only doubled in size the original facility, but ensured that Cable Systems Sec can continue to deliver structured cabling courses (Krone Accredited) to include the latest Cat 6 standard. The room was opened in the presence of Comd RSS, by Krone Director of Operations, **Giles Richell**; Trg Manager, **Lee Funnell** and UK Sales Director, **John Nightingale**.

HIO CSS, **Al Brooks** was very pleased with the additional facility and said that the credit was down to hardworking members of his team who completed the transformation of the old exchange wiring room to accommodate the donated equipment.

Mr Allan Brooks (second left) explaining the operation of the new training facility to Comd RSS

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

HEADQUARTERS

OC	**Maj Guy Benson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Rob Melotte**

The last 3 months in the Group has been hectic. Soldier Trg continue to spend most of their spare time deployed in the field, while Comd Sec have reconstituted in preparation for the next Tp Comds course. In Pwr Sec the new Field Electrical Power Supply (FEPS) genes, which have stealth technology, have now arrived and Eqpt Sec have been heavily involved in re-writing the new course software for tech courses. The Head Shed have spent most of their time staffing BOWMAN and look forward to the day when we can see real eqpt. Finally we would like to say a fond farewell to **WO1 (FofS) Richie Conway**, who joined the Group in January 2000 and departed in April 2003. Not only was he the Group FofS, he was also the Corps FofS. Thanks very much for all the work you have done during your tour. We wish you and your family all the best for the future.

OPERATOR SECTION

HIO	**Mr Mick Altham**
2IC	**Sgt Vikki Hawtree**

Life at the cutting edge of Operator Sec begins with **Sgt Bob Morton** passing his RSSC and gaining silver, with 1 point in it for the big Gold. **Sgt Charlie Henson** has raided his wardrobe for the flares and hippie beads to start his tree hugging career with successfully passing the Introduction to Environmental Protection. Well done.

Sgt Scouse Lloyd represented the Corps at the Inter-Corps Hockey Competition. He also had a skiing holiday break, where whilst representing RSS, he was selected to represent the Corps. He is now known as **Sgt** 'Sports for All' **Lloyd**.

On to the important issue of trg, Rad Sys Basic Regular 02/014 course finished at the end of March. **LCpl Powell** RRW came top of the course, was selected for the Outstanding Student Award and re-badged to RSigs that afternoon. Welcome to the Corps and jolly well done.

Maj Guy Benson presenting LCpl Powell with the Outstanding Student award and informing him that he was wearing the wrong badge!

EQUIPMENT SECTION

HIO	**Mr Peter Braithwaite**
2IC	**SSgt Smuj Smith**

We say farewell to **Sgt Scotty Thomas**, who has departed the Sec on posting, albeit only 2 miles away, to HQ SOinC(A). The only problem is we can still hear those drums.

Instruction continues on a high note. **SSgt Smuj Smith** is currently planning Adventure Training in the form of the 3 Peaks Challenge (EX MECURY DRAGON), which will take place in June. A full report with photographs will follow.

SSgt Smith also recently carried out a comms recce in the area of Cumbria with OC RSG, **Maj Guy Benson**. This was followed by an evening PT session up Scafell Pike, which just happened to be nearby. After the 18km tab, the pair retired to the warmth of the hotel. The OC then went for a light run and **SSgt Smith** went to bed!

POWER SECTION

SNCO IC **SSgt Graham**

During the past two months, Power Sec has swapped roles, and we're in the students' seats for FEPS Train the Trainer trg. During 2003-2004, the FEPS gene variants will replace Corps-wide the 40KW, 16/24KW and 8/12 KW currently in service. Two reps from Genistics and Powerfield came to Blandford to pass on their extensive knowledge of the equipt, and to ensure the when it came to Power Sec teaching the equipment, we had all the underpinning knowledge firmly in our heads. The Sec were quite impressed by the increase in technology, and felt that the equipt is definitely a step in the right direction for field power. The warm fuzzy feeling was increased even further, when **Maj Guy Benson** agreed to be in a photograph taken with the gene and the motley crew!

Mr Jin O'Connor, Mr Rab Haggart, Sgt Pete Stidwell, Mr Dave Balderson, Sgt Amrit, SSgt Phil Graham, Maj Guy Benson and Sgt Andy Bremner standing next to the FEPS Stealth gene.

The Sec also managed to fit in a farewell bash for **Mr** (ex SSgt) **Ray Williams** and **Mr** (ex Sgt) **Shawn Serephin**. This included a bit of bowling (**Sgt Craig Bowman** showed how much of his youth had been wasted, by well and truly trouncing everybody) and a curry, interspersed with copious amounts of alcohol. All the best guys. We wish you every success in the future.

QUARTERMASTERS' CONVENTION AND DINNER, 2003

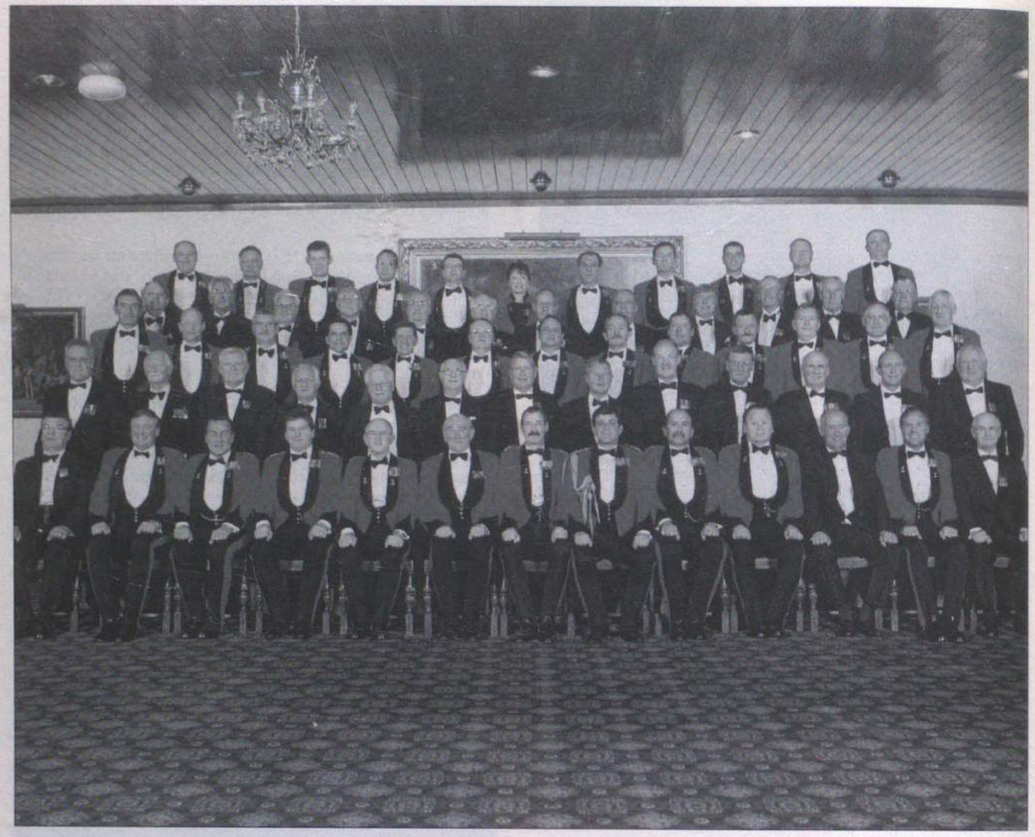
- By Lt Col Bob O'Hara. (Senior Quartermaster)

The 21st annual Quartermasters' Convention was held in Blandford on the 1-2 May 03. **Capt Steve Jackson** (**Capt Bob Stanton's** replacement) and I had been in our respective appointments for approx 6 weeks and hit the ground running. Serving QMs started arriving on Wednesday 30 April to carry our pre trg and ensure all was in order for the Convention on Friday morning. On Thursday morning a round of Golf was arranged for 6 members, where they met up with **Maj (Retd) Frank Roberts**, who immediately challenged the serving fraternity to a match against the retired members. Next year, **Maj Ray Cory** has volunteered to captain the serving members, team.

The Thursday evening commenced with a 'Meet and Greet' in the bar for an informal drink and chance to re-acquaint old friendships. The retired brethren then planned the Friday agenda (more Golf), whilst the serving members discussed the programme that awaited their input in the morning.

With only 27 serving QMs in the audience, it was a very disappointing turnout for the Convention this year. After the opening remarks from the Senior QM, the SOinC(A) **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC** gave us a passionate address on his vision for the Corps and where he sees the QM doing his bit for the future of the soldiers and officers of the Corps. There were then updates on 'Pay as You Dine' and the BOWMAN project. In the afternoon we had the 'State of the Nation' from **Col JE Richardson MBE** and **Lt Col John Mullender**, from MCM Div. Then HQ SOinC(A) TDT gave short presentation on trg before getting feedback on what trg is required for the Tech Sup Spec in this age of electronic accounting. This was followed by 4 questions for syndicate work. This was to give TDT the QM view on the trg required, not only by our soldiers, but for the Tp Comds or any Corps pre-trg that could be carried out in Blandford. The day ended with the open forum, where issues that could effect the community were discussed.

The evening dinner, with guests: The Master of Signals, SOinC(A), Col MCM Div and CI RSS (standing in for the Comd RSS, who fell ill that day) began with the normal mêlée of the photograph, then the call to dinner from the Corps Band. The dinner was also poorly attended, with only 59 serving or retired QMs sitting down to table. There was the sad occasion of bidding farewell to 3 retiring QMs after full careers: **Maj Don Holmes, Maj Les Wood MBE** and **Lt Col Peter Whitehead**. Each received the appropriate gift and a short historical summary was read out before each was asked to respond. All 3 gave a short account of their service as they seen it, and thanked everyone for the friendship and assistance throughout their long and successful careers. **Lt Col Peter Whitehead** made the final presentation, from serving and retired QMs, to the Master of Signals. It was a silver salver inscribed with *'From the Serving and Retired Quartermasters of your Corps'*. The Master responded with a short recollection of stories of QMs with whom he had served, and about the first ever Convention in Catterick in 1982, which **Lt Col (Retd) Fred Orr** (who was present this year) had organised.



The Quartermasters' Convention Dinner, 2003

Most participants left after breakfast on the Saturday, but before he left, **Lt Col (Retd) Peter McNaughton** presented me with the first QMs' Convention photograph from BAOR. I am still trying to locate the Convention photographs from 1982-85, 1987-89 and 1991. If anyone has any of these photos, I would be grateful for a loan so that we can have them reproduced to make my corridor complete.

The dates for next year's Convention are 22-23 April 2004. I look forward to greeting a greater number of serving and retired QMs at both the Convention and dinner.

DEFENCE SPECIAL SIGNALS SCHOOL

CO	**LtCol G Fairclough** Int Corps
SWO	**WO2 (SSM) R Poulton** Int Corps (Ex RSigs)

Y WING DSSS

Wing OC	**Maj (Tfc Offr R) J Honeyman**
Wing SI	**WO1 (Supvr R) G Cuthbertson**

DEFENCE SPECIAL SIGNALS SCHOOL (DSSS)

DSSS is a fully integrated school of the Defence Intelligence & Security Centre (DISC) Chicksands and situated just south of Bedford. DISC is a Joint Service environment with RN, Army, RAF and MOD civilian representatives. It provides the entire specialist military intelligence and security trg to authorised personnel, both inside and outside UK Defence.

DSSS trains personnel in int, security and IS disciplines. Signals Int (SIGINT) trg is provided for the three services and certain NATO and Commonwealth countries. Special Op and Supvr Radio courses are taught at DSSS Y Wing, which is a Phase Two, SIGINT teaching platform within DSSS. It makes several awards to students who have produced outstanding contributions during the trg year.

DSSS AWARDS

The awards ceremony for the past year's achievements by the students and staff was conducted on 11 April. One of the main awards presented was The Arthur Britton Trophy, donated by **Mrs Joy Britton**, in September 1965, in memory of her husband, an ex- Royal Signals Special Operator. It is awarded to the Y Wing student who has demonstrated outstanding all-round qualities of performance in trade trg and contribution to extra-curricular life at Chicksands. This year's the award was won by **LCpl Alp** of Basic Collection Course (BCC) 4/02. **LCpl Alp** also won The Armed Forces Communications and Electronic Association Award (AFCEA), which is given for the best overall student on the BCC and Advanced Collection Course (ACC) during the 2002/2003 training year. With this award comes £100.00 and three years' membership of AFCEA.

Both awards were presented by **Air Vice Marshal (Retd) BC McCandless CB CBE** who maintains very strong links with the services through his work with AFCEA.

AVM (Retd) BC McCandless CB CBE presenting LCpl Alp with the Arthur Britton trophy

LCpl Alp continuously produced work and exam results of the highest standards throughout the course. She is an excellent team player, regularly assisting the weaker members of the course, thereby helping them to ensure success as well. Her commitment towards the course, her colleagues and the service are commendable. She is to be congratulated.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

During their 27-week BCC, students of all 3 Services from DSSS undertake a week of Resource and Initiative (R&I) trg. They have to select a project, produce an action plan, contact companies for materials and equipt, carry out reconnaissance and complete their project within the allotted week.

BCC 4A of 2000's project was to re-furbish the 'Y' Services (Signals Intelligence) plot at the National Memorial Arboretum. The students and their instructors laid and edged the 'Y'-shaped path, positioned and concreted in 4 benches, and transplanted a circle of small yew saplings around the central plinth supporting the 'Y' Services commemorative plaque. The Arboretum was officially opened by **HRH the Duchess of Kent** on 16 May 2001.

DSSS has continued to provide students during the spring and winter months for work at the Arboretum for their R & I weeks, some courses having been invited back for special events.

BCC 09 of 2001 were introduced to **HRH the Prince of Wales** on the occasion of his private visit to the site to plant a tree commemorating HMS Kelly, the ship commanded by his uncle, **Lord Louis Mountbatten**. Another DSSS course was invited to attend the visit of **HM the Queen** on the occasion of her Golden Jubilee visit in June of 2002. The most recent course to visit the Arboretum was BCC 12 of 2002, who were there in May 2003.

For those who are unaware of what and where the National Memorial Arboretum is, there is a Website at: www.nationalmemorialarboretum.co.uk for further information on opening times, prices, special events, etc. It is certainly worth a visit!

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT (LICHFIELD)

The trg of RSigs soldiers at ATR Lichfield continues at a pace for both 1 and C Trg Sqns. All tps are now training to full capacity working to the updated Common Military Syllabus (Recruit) CMS(R) Single Entry. This is a twelve-week course designed to turn the civilian into a soldier. Underpinning all of these activities is an enhanced fitness programme designed to align the requirements of Phase 1 trg to the test standards required of the soldier entering Phase 2 trg at RSS and subsequently the field Army. All recruits now undergoing trg at ATR Lichfield will undertake a BPFA and BCFT.

The major development in the new CMS (R) is the introduction of a week-long final ex in Sennybridge. The new ex doubles the amount of time recruits spend in the field during Phase 1 trg. It is a demanding ex designed to improve self-reliance and self-confidence, developing tactical awareness and enhancing map reading and field-craft skills.

EX FINAL FLING - *by Lt Graham Clarke, OC Townsend Tp*

Being the first Tp in the Sqn to conduct the new ex, we departed (on Easter Sunday) for Sennybridge with mixed emotions. We the instructors, were enthusiastic and impatient, whilst the recruits were just a tad apprehensive.

Arriving at Flag 1 at about 16.00hrs, we decided to execute Phase 2, driving anti-clockwise around the RDA road to a DOP in the North East of the area. The road is long, winding and significantly exaggerates the vastness of the trg area.

After a relatively tough insertion march and with light fading fast, the decision was made to go into sec lay-ups. This offered each sec comd time to recap on skills and drills before moving off to establish sec OPs in the early hours of the morning. Next day each sec moved to an AA just short of the intended pl harbour. In harbour by mid morning, the Tp were in routine all day, giving time

to carry out personal admin and to write patrol reports which would inform the next phase of the ex. From then on this was the general pattern of the ex, with all activity and movement taking place at night, and daytime reserved for routine, reports, orders and rehearsals.

As the ex progressed, the NBC threat rose, so sec attacks were launched onto specific targets to neutralise the threat. After comprehensive orders (in torrential rain) and thorough rehearsals for the final attack, we set out at dusk on the last night, a wet and misty journey to our FUP on a small tributary just NE of Farm 2. H-hr was 00.30hrs and, after fighting spectacularly against a small but miraculously bullet-proof enemy, ENDEX was declared at approx 01.00hrs. Everyone was then de-bombed, cleared, fed and watered, before a well-earned couple of hours' shuteye. All that remained was to carry out full ENDEX procedure, tip our hats to SENTA for enriching our ex with four seasons worth of weather, and board the battle-bus for the long slog home.

VISIT OF MAJOR GENERAL JM SHAW MBE

The CO and all at ATR Lichfield were delighted to welcome **MajGen JM Shaw MBE**, GOC Th Tps on his visit to ATR Lichfield on 12 June. The visit began with his watching the recruits showing off some of the skills they had learned over the preceding 12 weeks. This included a gymnasium display, a weapons display and an NBC display. They then gave a demonstration of fire and movement by attacking an enemy position.

Maj Gen JM Shaw MBE accompanied by Lt Graham Clarke is informed by Spr Scott RE that he was the only Engineer good enough to join Cook Tp

The General then reviewed the passing out parade of Digby-Jones Tp 28 Sqn RE and Cook Tp 1 Sqn RSigs. **Maj Jon Townsend** commanded the parade and The Corps Band put on yet another fine performance to accompany it. **MajGen Shaw** later took the opportunity to meet some of the families and some of the Corps personnel stationed over lunch.

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

98 (BALKANS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Edwards**
SSM	**WO2 Dixon**

After many revisions and final revisions of manning and naming, 98 (Balkans) Sig Sqn has taken shape. 117 soldiers from 4 countries in 3 locations are providing SFOR CIS to MNB (NW) as well as UK National comms.

Maj Edwards presents the outgoing Dutch OC with a framed picture depicting R Sigs on operations in the Balkans in 1995

After the initial 'bedding in' period things are starting to fall in to place. The Dutch CIS tp have handed over the Sqn lines and made off home. Fortunately we have 11 Dutch soldiers in the Sqn who are able to translate the paper legacy (and graffiti) and give us some recipes for the raw herring strips that were helpfully left behind the bar for us. We are happy to be able to report that the Sqn 'Geek of the Week' award has been won for 2 weeks in a row by the OC. He is now banned from being nominated in order to give everyone else a chance at winning this coveted trophy. We think it should be a Canadian to win next, especially as none of them has yet tried out the newly-installed Sqn paddling pool.

Dutch SSM de Gusson hands over to our SSM, WO2 Dixon

The Sqn lines-warming BBQ went well, despite the absence of any alcohol. (Ahem...) Special mention must go to the OC and the 2IC for their dreadful Karaoke attempts – we have the tapes – and to **LCpl Parry-Hall**, with his rather splendid pink thong-a-thing. Also commiseration to **Sgt Downer**, who unfortunately had his apples pulverized by **Cpl Young** in an enthusiastic bobbing session.

MNB (NW) TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Bronson**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Peeters**

British personnel have long been aware of the professionalism and expertise of their Canadian, Dutch and Kiwi colleagues, but have been particularly impressed by the willingness to get along and get the job done that has been displayed over the initial period. (This sentence has been dictated to me by the Canadian OC) Seriously, a lot of hard work has gone into the first month of the tour from personnel of all nationalities. The signs are looking good, and long may our harmonious and productive working relationship flourish.

Cpl Hall wins the 'Cheek of the Week' award for gate crashing a BBQ and Band evening in the Offrs Mess. (Accident?) She managed a few dances with a likely looking Lt Col before being busted, ejected, and sent to bed with no supper.

Good luck is extended to **Cpl Simmonds**, who is attempting to organise a rugby match with the Bosnian National side. We all hope he pulls it off, but are less sure of his attempts to take over the world with his one-man media campaign and domination designs on the ISIS/CRISIS workshops!

We are particularly proud of 2 members of the Tp who have been awarded the MNB(NW) Comd's Commendation for exceptional service in support of the Bde. This was for their part in breaking up a violent roadside incident and administering first aid to the injured. Well done **MCpl Graham** and **LCpl Dixon**. Also getting a mention this issue is **MCpl Yeo** and his team, who were reminded how dangerous Bosnia can still be when they encountered anti-vehicle mines whist attempting carry out repairs to a deployed Dagger det. Correct drills were professionally followed and we are glad to see everyone safely home in BLMF.

Finally, welcome back to **SSgt Corrie**, who is one of the first Tp members to make it out on a 96-hr pass. Whist staying in a certain resort, he was single-handedly responsible for the rescue of 3 orphan children from a burning play school, before going back in to rescue the glamorous and curiously unattached schoolmistress. Unfortunately during this daring escapade, he suffered an injured wrist. This is the way he tells the story anyway. A true version of events can be had from the SSM for the price of a can of his favourite fizzy.

UK NSE (BOSNIA) TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Wedgwood-Jones**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Green**

Having taken over the delights of the TSCP and Comcen, the Tp is settling in nicely to dry routine, despite the efforts of **LCpl Measey**. When is that guy ever off the Internet?

Particularly worthy of mention is **Sgt Bland**, who is near to completing a theatre-wide directory. There is light at the end of the tunnel. **Sgt Jacobs** has also proved his lasting popularity by removing 2Gb of entertainment, jokes and games from the ISIS network. If we can't play, then neither can you! Bets are still being taken over that beautiful duo, **Sgt Booth** and **Cpl Young**. Who is John and who is Olivia? We need to know. Rumour of the week: **Sgt F-R** was seen cracking a smile. Finally, if anyone has seen a lattice sat phone, please let us know.

UK NSE (KOSOVO) TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Jacques**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Stebbing**

The Tp of 23 personnel, comprises a mixture from HQ, 202 & 206 Sig Sqn, 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt, including the new-promoted Tp Comd, **Capt Jacques**, plus two Inst Techs on loan from 16 Sig Regt. We deployed to Kosovo in April and took over from 12 Mech Bde Sig Sqn (228) on 22 April 03.

Within a short period of time of arriving in-theatre, we were involved in the Transfer of Authority (TOA) Parade, where command of MNB (C) was handed over to a Finnish led bde on 01 May 03.

During the short period of time from arriving we have managed to get two Tp functions organised. Making use of the excellent weather, the first, a BBQ was arranged in April and a Wacky Races Racing night in May. On both occasions fun was had by all.

The Tp is now set into its routine and the first few personnel have managed to escape to R&R. The Tp Comd, **Capt Beckie Jacques**, finding it very hard to fit in all her social commitments to which she gets invited, now has to use two diaries, one for work and the other for social events. She has been overheard telling the Tp SSgt 'Oh to be popular…' He knows otherwise.

The award to the saddest Tp person has two contenders so far. Both are techs working in Syscon, **Cpl Stu Milnes** and **LCpl Jim Steward**. They have placed themselves on the Internet site 'Hot or Not' and both are apparently disillusioned in the lack of votes as to being hot. I wonder why….

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col NP Metcalfe MBE QGM**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) J McNaught**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DTH Wilson**
SSM	**WO2 G Steel**

EXERCISE WHITE TYROLEAN FINN - *by LCpl Cameron*

EX WHITE TYROLEN FINN was a Regtl Adventurous Trg exped for 18 members of HQNI and 15 Sig Regt. So on the 16 March, 18 highly trained skiers (well to be honest - total beginners), departed Belfast Airport on their way to Austria for a week.

We stayed in the small skiing town of Hochfilzen - situated in the Pillerseetal region of Austria, where we enjoyed a week of excellent weather and good food.

On a good day the group skied from 09.00hrs to 16.00hrs with very few breaks, acquiring the skills to pass their Basic Ski Proficiency (Alpine). A number of evening activities were provided throughout the week, thanks to our lodge host 'Admin' **Phil**. We thoroughly enjoyed the night of sledging down the mountain on inflatable rings. Other nights included karaoke, led by **LCpl Johnson**. Later, at the nightclub, **LCpl Cameron** and **LCpl Jenkins** provided break dancing lessons.

Unfortunately, not all the ex participants saw it through to the end. **Cpl Merrick** had an unfortunate accident on the slopes during the first day. **Sig McAulay** and **Sig Stratton** first equal for the title of IC Team Plough. **Sgt Robson** showed everyone his outstanding acrobatic skills by not only flying off a jump but also achieving a full summersault in the process.

The week was a great success, with good skiing and great fun. Now that we're all back at work and in one piece, we can look forward to it all again next year.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SJ McConnell**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Lappin**

CORPSAAM 2003 - *by Cpl Hubble*

The culmination of the shooting year is the CORPSAAM and this year HQNI & 15 Sig Regt was represented by a 5-person team and 2 individual firers. Trg commenced 10 days prior to the competition at Pirbright ranges. Scores increased as trg progressed, in part thanks to the association with our friends from 280 Sig Sqn, as arranged by our **SSMs WO2 Lappin** and **WO2 Hogg**.

Our hard trg paid off, yielding good results in the final competition.

The Rifle Team came in 3rd position overall. **Cpl Hubble** won Best B Class in the Association, FIBUA matches and Best Female Firer overall (rifle). The Pistol Tiles competition was between our A and B teams. **Cpl Hubble** made a stunning start, but could not keep it up against the B team, who won it on the day. The team's youngest soldier, **Sig Newstead** carried off the trophy.

This fairly successful start to the year of competition shooting was of great benefit to all who took part, as well as being an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Watch this space for further improvements at NISAAM and CENTSAAM later this year.

225 SIGNAL SQN

OC	**Maj G Inglis**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Hogg**

ARMY ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS – *by LCpl Johnny Morris*

The Regimental orienteering team

Two teams of 8 volunteers, led by **WO2 (RQMS) Griffiths** and **Capt Morris** left Thiepval Barracks on Monday 19 May to take part in the Army Orienteering Championships at Feldom Ranges, Catterick. The group, all of varying abilities, faced a tough and demanding challenge, taking on different Regtl teams from all over Great Britain, and one from Sweden.

Tuesday saw the start of the Competition with the Harris event, which involved each individual collecting 8 compulsory checkpoints (the Spine) and a number of other markers. Failure to miss even one would result in team disqualification for the rest of the competition which the RQ relentlessly mentioned, ordering us 'not to return unless all our markers were found!' The end of the event saw 7 runners looking across the barren wilderness knowing that out there somewhere was none other than their own RQ! After an apprehensive wait, a lone figure resembling a Pigmy warrior was seen flying over the moorland towards them. The RQ reported 'I accidentally missed checkpoint 13 and had to run back to get it!' Later that evening the results were published. A qualified last place was all that was expected, so when fourth place was achieved, the team required peeling from the ceiling.

Wednesday brought a harsh relay event in the heart of a steep sided valley where long and medium routes were split within each team. An observation point at the start gave a prime view of the courses, where the progress of the runners could be followed.

After an extreme effort, the two teams came a collective fourth place, which was more than had been hoped for. Quietly confident, happy and very proud, the Army athletes departed back to Lisburn with a well-earned result and the knowledge of being a team to be reckoned with.

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CUP CRICKET – *by LCpl Slater/Capt Morris*

On a beautiful sunny afternoon the great cricketing Sqns of 15 Sig Regt walked onto the hallowed turf to commence battle for this prestigious event in the CO's Cup calendar. Spirits were high among 225 Sig Sqn as the week before, we had represented the Regt against JSG.

The first game was between 233 and HQ Sqns. HQ Sqn were the firm favourites but, in a surprise result, 233 Sqn won by a considerable margin. The next game was 233 versus 225 Sqn. This grudge match started difficulty when 233 scored an impressive 116 off 20 overs. Fortunately **WO2 Robson** was more than up to the challenge and victory was ours (but only just!).

The next game seemed as if it would be a walk over. 225 versus HQ Sqn. HQ opened the batting and lost 3 wickets for only 2 runs. The euphoria among 225 was electric. This was until HQ Sqn pulled out their secret weapon, **Sgt Drewitt**. The runs were piled on and by the time we eventually got them out (well done to **LCpl Collins** for dropping him three times!) they were at 101 all out. Our team came into bat, and things seemed to go well at first. The runs crept up with **WO2 Robson** but he soon fell to an awkward ball. Soon we had in two class players, **Cpl Lancaster** and **Cpl Nash**. Although their batting technique was flawless, they seemed to be of the opinion that this was a test match rather than limited overs. Some beautiful play was seen, but very few runs and eventually HQ Sqn earned a well-deserved victory.

With the result tied it came down to runs scored. The eventual deserved winners were 233 Sig Sqn with 225 second and HQ propping up the table. An excellent day all round. Hopefully we have some future talent for the Regtl team.

3 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

OC	**Maj TJ Charmichael**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D Buckingham**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

It has been a busy period of comings and goings in the SHQ world. We have seen the following arrivals: **WO1 (RSM) Dave Buckingham**, **SSgt Shaun Skeldon**, (FSA) and **Cpl Terry Liddiard**. We welcome you all to the Sqn and Portadown. Sad farewells to **WO1 (RSM) Rob Hood**, who leaves us for Civvy Street after 22 years in the Corps and **SSgt Vince Francis**, who moves only as far as Ballykelly to join 1 Green Howards.

Most of the SHQ were able to participate in the Unit Adventure Trg in Newquay, where they learned new and useful skills such as Boat Racing, Beetle Betting and Turtle Watching. A very good time was had by all and a big thanks to the organisers.

RSM's Handover

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt F Loxton**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt K McIntosh**

Farewells to **LCpl George Lucas**, who has decided to start afresh in Civvy Street, **Sig Nick Hill**, who left the Army one day only to join the RAF the next and to **Sig Martin Pearce**, who is off to 12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn in Colchester. We wish them all the best for the future. Congratulations to **Cpls Belshaw** and **Cooke** and to **LCpl Coy** on there recent promotions.

ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS - *by SSgt Kenny McIntosh*

The above competition took place at Ashley Wood Golf Club over the period 29-30 May. The team comprised **WO2 (YOS) Steve White**, **SSgt Kenny McIntosh**, **Sgts McKenna** and **Setchfield**, **Cpl Thompson** and **Sig Topping**. Team Captain, **Steve White** was to use the practice round to make his final selection of 4 for the team, but this proved quite difficult, because all played well. The first day of the competition produced some excellent golf from **Sgt McKenna**, who scored a net 67 in the morning and a net 66 in the afternoon. Not bad for someone who plays off 19!

The second day saw some good golf from the rest of the field. **WO2 (YOS) Steve White** managed to complete 6 rounds with a bad back; **Sgt Setchfield** was relieved that his repaired driver made it to the club house in one piece and **Sig Topping** stated he was giving up the game after the competition. Bang goes your sports afternoon. The prize giving was held and **Sgt McKenna** was crowned the new Corps Golf Handicap Champion.

SUPPORT TROOP

QM	**Maj M Wright-Jones**
RQMS(A)	**WO2 A Buckle**
RQMS(M)	**WO2 I Wyllie**

EXERCISE CORNISH FINN - *by SSgt Coles - QCB RLC*

We left the rain-drenched Emerald Isle, headed across the water to Liverpool and then south to the English Rivera. When we arrived at Penhale, on the North Cornish coast ! checked the load manifest, to see if the glorious Ulster weather was logged, and to my surprise it was. The advance party were issued beds and then we headed into Newquay to sample the local culture. The culture sampled, bags unpacked, the instructors set off for final recces and planning for the arrival of Main Body 1.

Main Body 1 arrived just before FA Cup Final Kick Off and after a camp orientation, and we managed to make the second half in the *Hollywell Bay Inn*. All then sampled the culinary delights of contract catering and then it was, in the words of **Cpl G**, 'fingers starched, elbows waxed and down town.' Morning came too soon for most. In particular, the walkers who had to endure not only an hour's drive, but also the effect of the night before's kebabs before they set off on a 10-mile walk around Princetown. Luckily the walkers had taken the weather with them (thank heavens for storm shelters).

Back in Penhale, **Sgt Geoff Hirst** was organising his kayaking group. All kit was issued (well nearly all) and they set off. Thank God for big hands (he had forgotten the paddles - but don't tell anyone!). Meanwhile **Sgt Wilson** was explaining in some detail to his group the equipment to be used on a day's climbing and abseiling. The first week activities passed off with a few memorable moments, some of which include: the OC's impression of a belisha beacon, the QM's request to join the APTC, and the fact that, yes, I lost my bottle on the climbing wall. In fact I hadn't, as **Cpl Zoe Thompson** had bought it back down for me.

It seemed that within no time the second group was with us. The walkers didn't heed the DS warning about the night before and were subsequently punished the next day on Dartmoor by both **Sgt Dave Owen** and **LCpl Ginge Owens**. The weather improved so dramatically in the second week, that even **LCpl Stevie Leye** got a tan. We are all pretty sure he used chip fat as sun cream. The Sqn boat was a huge success, so much so **Sig Young** was ready to give his left hand for another go.

The unit managed to send a total of 48 all ranks on EX CORNISH FINN with 10 DS to ensure the ex was a success. And it was. All who took part gave it their all, the instructors were energetic and enthusiastic, and the admin completed the package. I would like to thank all those who had a part to play, and I am sure all at 3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn are looking forward to EX CORNISH FINN 2.

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC **Maj DC Gaul**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) K J Simmons**

EX AUSTRIAN FINN - *by Cpl Edwards*

In the early hours of 29 March, 20 members of 8IBSS departed from Londonderry for a week of skiing in Austria. **Sgt Mark Hobson** organised the expedition, which was aimed to teach novice members of the Unit to ski and to provide those already proficient with the opportunity to practise.

After landing at Salzburg, we travelled by coach to Sol, where we stayed in the *Hotel Austria*. The first day's skiing was to be spent in Sol. After collecting ski equipment, the party was split into two groups, each with their own instructor. One group was taken by **Cpl Si Barker** of the LAD, and the other by **Cpl Paul Calvert**. However, the quality of the snow was poor and difficult to learn and practise on, so from then on we travelled by coach to two other resorts.

The first of these was Westendorf, where, with better conditions, good progress was made by the beginners. The conditions on the Hintertux Glacier were different again. There was none of the sunshine we were used to and the heavy snowfall and greatly reduced visibility meant that we had the glacier almost to ourselves. This gave the beginners plenty of room to negotiate the slopes (often on skis).

On the final day the party exchanged skis for snowblades (short skis used without poles) for a fun day back in Westendorf. Despite a number of impressive falls and some colourful language, there were only a couple of injuries over the whole week. **Cpl Barker** broke his collarbone and **Maj Wilkinson** injured his leg. Mention must also go to **LCpl Ian Pauley** for his attempt at the downhill speed record followed by a very bloody face-plant. Everyone enjoyed the expedition and thanks must go to **Sgt Hobson** and **Cpls Calvert** and **Barker**.

NISAAM 2003 - *by Pte Rob Locking*

About 4 weeks before the NISAAM took place, **Sgt Andy Doyle** and his sidekick **LCpl Quarry** decided to find the best shots in the Bde and Sig Sqn. A few names were put forward for the team, including me, **Pte Locking**, and my fellow Pioneer, **Pte Jarvis**. Before going to the week long NISAAM, we conducted three days trg at Magilligan Ranges.

On our first days trg Magilligan, there were more range staff than people shooting. **Pte Jarvis** and I assumed we were the elite in the Sqn until two unknown members of the team, **LCpl Davies** and **LCpl Wilson** arrived.

By the third day's trg, we could feel the big tournament day getting near and hoped for some top class shoots. Unfortunately, we were still zeroing with a little bit of FIBUA thrown in. This was our last day of trg before the event, so we did as much as possible, which was still mainly zeroing, which **Pte Jarvis** finally got the hang of. On returning back to Ebrington Barracks, we had more news that the Master Driver was joining us as the fifth and final member of the team.

The first day of the tournament arrived, and we began the long drive down to Ballykinler, listening to the Master Driver telling how good a shot he was. After 2 hours of this he was known as 'Sharpe'. At the start of the competition we were all in high spirits, believing that we might well come away with some silverware for the Sqn Trophy cabinet. As the week went on, we were mid table of the Minor Units. For the 2-mile march and shoot our team consisted of, 'Sharpe', **LCpl Davies**, **LCpl Wilson** and **Pte Jarvis**. Someone had to be left out and that person was me. The lads did well, putting in a good time and a good shoot.

The final day was soon upon us and, with aching limbs all round, we went off to complete the last two events: Pistol Tiles and the Falling Plate. The pistol tiles went a bit wrong to say the least. Dropping **Pte Jarvis** to give what we thought were our best shots more bullets, didn't really work as a tactic. Our last chance to win some silver was upon us: the falling plates. 'Sharpe' was sure as can be that we could do it, but like all the other shoots, we failed. However, all in all, we had a good time and as a team we would like to thank **Sgt Doyle** and **LCpl Quarry** for all their help before the competition.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt RN Wilson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt S Mayell**

Comms Tp continues to be a hive of activity with what seems like endless taskings, from stone throwing for public order trg to comms support in Scotland. It is nice to see people are still getting away on adventure trg and leave, despite the high workload.

The Tp has continued to turn over is personnel, and we welcome **Cpl Wilkie**, **Sig Walker** and **Pte Locking** and hope they enjoy their time with us. We also say a fond farewell to **SSgt Mayell**, who has left us on promotion to 1 Div, and we take this opportunity to publish the result of the Tp Karting Day...**SSgt Mayell** – 2nd place.

MT SECTION

MTWO **WO2 A Stronach RLC**
MT Sgt **Sgt S Williams RLC**

- by LCpl 'Mo' Morrison

Considering that it is only a couple of months since we put in the last article, things are still as hectic as ever. The most notorious of these events was the combined leaving function that we held to say a fond farewell to the 1st Bn CG and to our ever-helpful friends in the LAD.

This night was split into horse racing and a charity auction. While there was much merriment to be had, the highlight of a long night was the bidding war that erupted over **Capt Piggott's** socks, which were a very fetching blue and yellow (typical officer fashion sense!) The lucky winner of the socks was **Pte Butterfield**, who paraded them around the bar for the rest of the evening. In total £210.00 was raised towards Leukaemia Research, which was very important to **RSM WO1** 'Kev' **Simmons**.

With the function a dim memory, **WO2 Tony Stronach** and **Cpl Bob Wilson** decided that the wives needed some fun. So it was decided to hold a driving ex for them. This gave the wives an opportunity to drive some of the vehs that their partners take for granted. The vehs that were made available were a skid car, a Saxon, a small coach and a normal 4 WD veh.

All the participants were given instruction by qualified instructors, who gained a few grey hairs and plenty of worry lines by the end of the day! On the whole, it turned out to be a very enjoyable day.

Recently arrived in the MT Sec from Comms Tp is **LCpl McLoughlin**, who decided that the grass was greener! Also **Pte Jones**, Royal Anglian, who is staying with us for a short time until his Bn arrives back in NI.

This leaves us with farewells to **LCpl Daniel Bishop** and his wife **Kelly**, who are going to AFNORTH in Holland. We wish you both all the best for the future. And not to forget **Pte Rob Locking**, who has decided to defect to Comms Tp. Who knows the method in his madness?

RQMS DEPARTMENT

RQMS **WO2 D Inman**
Tp Sgt **Sgt C McCabe RLC**

ARMY VS NAVY - *by Cpl Munslow*

Thanks to our QM, **Capt Gordon**, the Dept closed for the weekend and off we went to London for the Army vs Navy Rugby game. In tow were **Sgt Chris McCabe**, **Cpl Paul Munslow**, **Cpl O'Reilly**, **LCpl Quarry**, and as tag-along, **Lt Wilson**. After a slow start due to some dodgy officer giving us some dubious directions, we arrived at the Union Jack Club in Waterloo.

The match went according to plan and of course, Army thrashed Navy. The match however did seem a bit of a blur to **Sgt Chris McCabe**, who constantly needed to be reassured that Army was playing in red. He also found it difficult to understand why there were 30 players on each team, but we just put this down to his double vision. All in all, a well deserved break for the QM's Dept and **Lt Wilson**.

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

HEADQUARTERS 2 (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

ARMY

Comd **Brig J E Thomas MBE**
COS **Maj J D Forrest**

EXERCISE HORSESHOE EAGLE 3

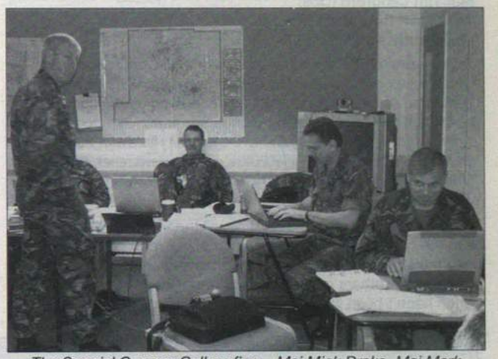
The Bde held its annual CPX in April, building on the knowledge of SDR(NC) that was seeded at the Study Period in January. With a nearly-all-new Plans Team in the HQ, there were good intentions to start planning earlier than ever. Somehow it still required last minute work to pull the details together, so the Plans Team will be starting real soon on next year's CPX. Sheer hard work by the day shift (**Maj Tom Dean**, **Capt Grant Peden**, **WO2 (YofS) Clint Barker** and **WO2 (Staff Asst) Matt Church**), delivered a fully functioning ops suite and supporting admin.

COS Maj Jim Forrest tests a telephone while Maj Andrew Cornish ponders and DCOS Maj Tom Dean despairs. Capt Neil Taylor keeps out of it

South Cerney was the scene of the action, which exercised not only the Regtl and independent Sqn comd teams, but also the Bde HQ itself.

On arrival on Friday night, each comd team was set to work immediately on the production of a comms estimate from different roles in which they might be called to deploy. Saturday morning saw them present their solutions to the assembled multitude. By the end, a good deal of the spectrum of op tasks that confront the Bde had been learned by all.

Fresh from all the talking, they were swept by the main CPX into a countrywide scenario, crafted by **Maj Tony Shaw** and **Maj Guy Bewsher** and lasting through the remainder of the weekend.



The Special Comms Cell surfing – Maj Mick Drake, Maj Mark Billingham, Maj Dick Gamble and Capt Brian Howe

Wheels were invented and reinvented, but key to the success was the involvement of personnel from the regional Bde Reinforcement Teams, CCRFs and two well-known Corps figures in their new guise of JRLO: **Col (Retd) Tony Kimber** and **Col (NRPS) Neil Donaldson OBE**.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

Like most, if not all the Army, OP FRESCO continues to feature, forcing the watch-keepers to read the newspapers with real news in them to find out about their continued employment. The HQ has benefited greatly from having such a willing and flexible workforce, able to turn round fastballs from COS in record time.

Regular and TA Personnel from across the Bde have been deployed on OP TELIC, and more are being trained up for OP TELIC 2. Preparation for the deployment of 97 (BRITFOR) Sig Sqn back to the Balkans next year is under way. If you meet an employer of TA soldiers, thank them and tell them that their employees will be back just as soon as we've finished with them.

AIRWAVE

The LAND AIRWAVE Project Team is established in Corsham and charged with delivery of the O2 AIRWAVE Service to LAND users. This is the TETRA system that is being rolled out to equip the Home Office Police. The team consists of the following:

Capt Bob Nixon (Project Manager)
Mr Don Fraser (ICP Comms Manager)
WO1 (YofS) Mark Whiting

Capt Jeff Jephcote
Mr Paul Smyth (2 Div)
Mr Bob Morgan (4 Div)
Mr Will Webb (SAINT Project Manager)

The delivery of Early Capability AIRWAVE Terminals to support LAND Integrated Contingency Planning operations has now commenced, with the acceptance of the first 100 Sepura SRP2000 TETRA Terminals. A number of VHF/TETRA Gateways are also being delivered for Project SAINT, providing an interface between AIRWAVE and non-TETRA radios. The NC Sig Regts of 2 (NC) Sig Bde will support both the AIRWAVE Terminals and Interface Gateways in operation. MMO2's AIRWAVE Service is now rolled out across 12 counties on the UK mainland. A further 26 counties will be reached by April 04, permitting significant utilisation of the system by mid 2004.

SWIMATHON

Early in 2003, an envelope dropped in the in-tray of the Bde Personnel Office. 'Thanks for helping in previous Swimathons,' it said, 'Would you like to enter again and raise funds for charity?' Thus the Weeds and Water Lilies Team was born!

The Team consisted of

Maz Wakeman (Personnel)
Andrea Nixon (Training)
Brig John Thomas (Commander)
Maj Tim Langford (Ops)
WO2 Matt Church (Staff Assistant)
Maj Wendy Kirby (CVHQ)

Team captain **Maz** arrived at the Springfield Centre pool in Corsham to welcome her team, that were due to swim at 19.30hrs. At 19.15hrs no-one had yet arrived, and clutching a handful of extremely fetching orange swimhats, she began to worry a little. '**Maz** does not have the ability to swim 200 lengths,' she thought to herself. At 19.20hrs, to her great relief, **Brig John** arrived, closely followed by **Andrea** and her husband, **John**, who was to count laps for the team.

Finally, with 2 minutes to start time, all the team were all there. Into the changing rooms and everyone was ready – just. **Maz** swam first - not speedy, but getting there, with encouragement given by the others on poolside. 15 done, 20 done, wish that lunch hadn't been spicy cous-cous, and 25 completed. Hurrah! Hand over to **Brig John**. Now the pool came to understand command and control!

The good Brigadier entered the water with such enthusiasm that he nearly drowned a fellow swimmer (but only a young lad, though). On his first length there was a distinct attempt to wipe out the opposition - only this wasn't a competition! Never before had it been seen that a single swimmer could expand to fit the lane width. But we witnessed it that evening. Next off was **Andrea**, interesting style. No-one wanted the swimhats provided; Andrea did not need one. Such speed, such grace, such dry hair!

In went **Wendy**, a triathlete. 'I don't usually swim this far,' she says. 'I may get puffed out, though.' Needing to breathe did not seem to be so important, and she glided through the water in her one piece (also suitable for cycling and running). Then we had **Matt**. Only little legs, but they worked like fins, propelling him through the water. He looked like a torpedo with fur.

Last but not least, **Tim**. What can you say about **Tim**? Goggles, small streamlined trunks and no knowledge of what is going on around him. He completed his allocated lengths in record time with tumble turns, and convinced that he did two more than was needed. We had to pat him on the head to tell him to stop.

And that was it. The Swimathon was over for 2003. The Weeds and Water Lilies team completed 5000mtrs for the Pontins Swimathon, raising a grand total of £556.00 for Macmillan Cancer Relief and other Swimathon charities. Thanks to all who sponsored us, and to the Team for their hard work on the day. What shall we call ourselves next year?

TRANSFER MARKET

COS, **Maj Jim Forrest** has joined **David Beckham** on the transfer market, but has chosen America over Europe. **Capt Steve Slater** has handed over to **Capt Rev Bolam**, and **Maj Tom Dean** has been elevated to a new post as DCOS. New TA staff in are **LtCol William Brown**, **Maj Craig Tallents** and **Maj Mark Baker**, all from Essex units, but as they replaced staff going the other way, fair exchange is no robbery.

Footnote. I'm not sure that we have permission to use David Beckham's name in The WIRE, but I shall plead ignorance as my excuse. Hopefully, there may be someone to bail me out if it goes pear-shaped. - Bernard Redshaw, Editor.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col SK MacRostie MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A Dick**

With most of the Regt now back from OP TELIC and enjoying their post op tour leave, all appears pretty quiet. Meanwhile, 219 Sig Sqn Composite remain in Iraq enjoying the sunshine, under the command of **Maj Rab Young**. However as we look back on the past month, the Regt has been very busy. We were honoured with a visit to the serving soldiers' families from **HRH, The Princess Royal**, accompanied by the Master of Signals and the Regtl Secretary. We were also very pleased to receive a visit from **Brig CL Le Gallais**, who came to see the rear party who have been working hard to keep things running back home. During his visit the Brigadier viewed the proposed plans for the arrival of CORMORANT in the Unit. It is now all hands to the pumps to ensure the field trials this year are a success.

The Regt says a fond farewell to **Capt** 'Al' **Higgins**, who is leaving to join 7 Sig Regt as their new 2IC HQ Sqn along with **Capt Emma Bruce**, who will be his new Adjt there. In return for these two stalwarts we welcome the new MTO, **Capt Matt Nuttall**, just arrived from 30 Sig Regt and **Capt Joe Docherty**. Also leaving, both on promotion, are **Lt Mel Crawford**, to 16 Sig Regt, and the RAO, **Capt Steve Potterton**, to the Welsh Guards.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj S Gillespie**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Cooper**

Along with the majority of the Corps, 214 Sig Sqn deployed to Kuwait City to support the JFLOCG. During the first few days of the deployment, the Sqn was forced to cope with what little resources we had at our disposal. This involved stalwart efforts from the king of the white fleet; MT **SSgt Mark Wilford**, and the professionalism of the photocopier, **Cpl** 'Dusty' **Millar** to the swift build of the ICC by **Sgt Glaves** and his crew. Not forgetting the Sqn sand sweepers, everyone has done their bit. A few weeks into the tour, some elements of 7, 16, and 14 Sig Regts and 262 Sqn joined us to supply forward HQ with CNR. It has been hard graft for the soldiers of 214 Sig Sqn Composite. Important decisions needed to be made as to where to have scoff: Burger King, Subway or The Pizza Inn!

Around the deployment to the Gulf, a few new members have joined or left the Sqn. We say goodbye and good luck to **Cpl Andy Green**, who has gone to show new recruits how its really done at ATR Litchfield and **Sig Bentley**, who leaves us for 7 Sig Regt. Arrivals to the sharp end include **Cpls Hodgson**, **Gough** and **Kadlec**.

Apart from the obvious setbacks of boots and desert combats, 214 had a fantastic time in the Gulf, and back in York, we look forward to whatever the city can throw at us. Here's to floods, fire strikes and, if there is time, CORMORANT - and maybe even pint or two. Cheers!

OPERATION TELIC ATTACHED PERSONNEL - *by Sig Hewes*

Many of us who are working in the Radio Village here in Camp Arifjan are attached from 7, 14 and 30 Sig Regts, and 262 Sqn. Soon after arriving here a good routine was established, giving everyone an easy time to settle in. The work is continuous and helps the days pass quickly, and with the added bonus of a Burger King, Pizza, Chinese or a Subway sandwich, (if you can be bothered to queue up for an hour or more, with thousands of Americans), the quality of life is quite good. The meals laid on are not of great quality but are adequate, with breakfast being the exception. Not only do you get scrambled eggs, sausages etc, but you also get a fine selection of doughnuts. It takes a bit of getting used to.

You quickly get used carrying your respirator everywhere you go and it comes in quite handy if you have to use the portaloos. The presence of such large number of Americans is always good for morale, especially when you find what they are carrying in their respirator haversacks, (chocolate, crisps, newspapers, cola and of course cigarettes!). Waking up is a bit of a problem as alarm clocks not only wake you and everyone around, but also initially caused the Americans don respirators - certainly amusing.

Overall Camp Arifjan is certainly one of the better places to be and spirits are high.

OPERATION FINGAL - *by Sig Smithson*

A rainy day at Lyneham saw us off on our 6-month tour in Afghanistan. After a frantic night in Bucharest, (the RAF like to spread things out), we arrived in Kabul, to be greeted by an excited soon to-be-leaving old det. After a brief HOTO and an initial comms brief, we were soon into the swing of things. The important points passed on were the price of rugs and how to get DVDs back home. We are struggling to keep **Lt Plested** in the COMMCEN, as the call of the junk food at the American PX is far more alluring. He is still to do his camp orientation as he is unable to find the gym, and due to his recent spate of scabies he has turned to growing a tash. **Sgt Howe** and **Cpl Lee Haase** have been keeping up British-Afghan relations by playing enemy on a recent trg ex. Rather them than me. Still they tell me that Bin Laden's caves are nice this time of year.

Although things are fairly quiet at the moment, several projects coming up in the future are sure to keep us busy. **Capt Jennings** has several ideas and ways to wake up the camp by mounting ambulance sirens onto walls and then setting them off at stupid o'clock. Several ongoing commitments see **Sgt Local** and one lucky other to visit a local school each week to teach basic computing to the teachers. I'm not sure how that works, because who is teaching the students?

Well done to the spearhead detachment in Bagram, who are working alongside the Americans. With their ongoing record, anyone working with them deserves their medal. And since their recent move to new premises, **Cpl Jules Roberts** is enjoying the new facilities, including proper porcelain toilets.

Congratulations go to **Sgt Howe**, **Cpl Jules Roberts** and **LCpl Eddie Kerr** on the recent births of their newborn babies prior to deployment.

With new arrivals coming in their droves, it is sure to be a summer of fun in the sun at Camp Souter. To avoid disappointment, remember to book early next year.

REAR DETAILS

OC Rear Party **Maj L Smart**
Acting RSM **WO2 S McGaw**

In the absence of CO, the 2IC, **Maj Lee Smart** was responsible for running 2 Sig Regt at home. When the main body of the Regt deployed on OP TELIC, leaving a mass of swirling papers in our in-trays, we stalwarts, we happy (but mostly unhappy) few, the rear party, were literally left holding the baby - a 10lb baby boy called **Connor**, in the 2IC's case! **WO2 (SSM) McGaw**, who was busy dealing with the smooth running of the Tp, also had other commitments assisting **Capt** 'Al' **Higgins** with welfare matters, mainly dealing with families whose spouses, partners, sons and daughters were serving in the Gulf. This involved many phone calls, house visits, a number of families' functions and arranging video conferences to allow the families to talk to their loved ones. It was all greatly appreciated by all who were able to use the facility, and it could set a good precedent for future deployments. **Sgt Sparrow** trained all OP TELIC personnel, taking them through all the ITD's prior to deployment and then set to work co-ordinating the Regt's recruiting activities in the vain hope that we might quickly be able to find some new replacements to fill our guard roster. The Regt 2IC, **Maj Smart**, has eventually managed to escape to Iraq, taking over from the CO to hand over the Regt's tasks to the follow-on forces and to bring the remainder of the Regt home by the end of July.

MT SECTION

The MT have been extremely busy, working closely with the Regtl ops team, ensuring all the tpt was booked as required for the varying stages of deployment. Left behind to keep things ticking over were **Cpl Harrison**, **LCpl Caledine**, **Hitchen** and **Sig Hanes**. They have all been very busy washing cars and doing an excellent job ensuring any tpt requests were promptly dealt with, fully supporting the Regt in its tasks in the Gulf. They also provided tpt and drivers for the families in York, for dinners and other occasions.

REGIMENTAL RECRUITING TEAM - *by 2Lt Brown*

Team OC **Sgt S Ross**

Although the Regt has been heavily involved with OP TELIC, the recruiting team has managed to continue operating as usual, and has been busy preparing for the challenging summer season ahead. A number of new faces have joined the team: **Sgt** 'Stu' **Ross** takes over from **Sgt Sparrow** as the Team OC, while **Sigs Eddon** and **Tucker** have joined just in time to take part in the AES displays. We say goodbye to **Sig Peak**, who has left the team to enjoy the Florida sun on OP VERITAS and **Sig Thrower**, to the desert sun on OP TELIC. Farewell to **LCpl Mitchinson**, who has been posted to the RSS, and our congratulations go to **Sig Clarke** who has just got married.

The team has also brought on board **LCpl Nugent** of the ISM dept, whose expertise in IT and networking will bring another dimension to the Team's display.

The Team has had an interesting season so far, including a visit to the Regt from the local College in April. The female students were put through their paces in various command tasks manned by the Team and assisted by other members of the rear party. **Sig Stock** caught the attention of a number of the girls as he led them around the assault course. They completed the course to raise sponsorship money for a sick fellow student.

Well done to all the staff on the team who have done an outstanding job during this busy period, showing great dedication while often having to work independently.

ROYAL VISIT

A particular highlight of the month was a visit, on 20 May, from the Colonel-in-Chief to the families of soldiers serving on operations. After weeks of preparation, planning every step of the visit and

several dress rehearsals with a heavily pregnant **Sig Wood** standing in for HRH, we were ready for the big day. As the Princess arrived by helicopter, clouds loomed above threatening to drive us into the wet weather programme. However, we soldiered on and **Her Royal Highness** was presented to **Maj Lee Smart**, who briefed her on the Regtl Orbat and responsibilities. After signing the visitors book, the Princess was introduced to **Mrs Jenny MacRostie**, the COs wife, who then presented the rest of the families to her. The Princess also met some of the single soldiers and personnel recently returned from the Gulf. After a presentation of a posy and a garland, she departed for another engagement. The wives were all thrilled to speak to **Her Royal Highness**, and were flattered that she took so much time to meet them. The day was very successful and ran very smoothly, thanks to the preparation and rehearsal with the Master of Signals, **MajGen Ian Sprackling OBE**. The rain even managed to hold off until after the great BBQ that followed.

HRH speaking to Master of Signals, Mrs Jenny MacRostie, the CO's wife and 2Lt Jules Thomson

PROJECT CORMORANT - *by YofS (SSgt) Crowder*

As we go to press, all things in the world of CORMORANT are rolling along nicely. 214 Sig Sqn are hurriedly transforming their previous PTARMIGAN garages ready for the contractors to come in and turn them into a trg area. This will be complete with classrooms, the CORMORANT Trg Rig and some dismounted box bodies. The new FofS, **SSgt Paul Hughes** is busily choosing a new paint colour for the garages but seems to be a little confused by all the different shades of military grey.

Once all this work is complete, trg will commence for half the Sqn in various aspects of the system. All this is in preparation for the much-awaited Systems Field Trial, which commences on 10 November this year, and runs until 12 December (honest!). The aim of the trial is to ascertain the capabilities of the system in a variety of situations. Other aims include trying to find the Ops Officer, **Capt Sherry**. The field trial will culminate in a Battle Field Mission, by which time the new YofS, **SSgt Crowder** may have got his predecessor, **W02 (YofS) Tony Martin**, to surrender his

HRH meets soldiers recently returned from the Gulf and LCpl Dwyer recently arrived from 2CSR, RASigs on exchange with EX LONG LOOK

desk.

It is hoped that, with a successful trial, the Sqn should see the issue of an initial operating capability in the New Year, ready for Comd 11 Sig Bde to declare us operational by May 04. In between then and now there remains much work to do - and thereafter, probably a lot more work, as PJHQ are itching to get their hands on the system.

SAILING – *by LCpl Linsley*

After a full day's travelling to Seaview Sailing Club on the Isle of Wight, a meet and greet in the evening and a full night's sleep, we were ready to get straight i nto the day's racing. All went well until we got into the boat and realised that none of us had ever sailed a Mermaid before. We guessed how to rig her up, managed to get her moving and made our way to the start line.

With **SSgt** 'Stu' **Taylor** at the helm, and myself (**LCpl Chris Linsley**) and **Cpl Helen Caplin** on the foredeck, we were ready for the first race. After a dismal start, there were two boats fighting for last place, the only other novice team and us. By the time we rounded the first buoy, the leaders had almost finished, and we were told if we retired we would be given last place!

The rest of the day's races went pretty much the same way, with our encountering many problems, ranging from lack of wind and strong tides, to sheer lack of experience! So after the first day in the overall table we were ….. Dead last!

The next day, after an intensive lesson from **Sgt** 'Windy' **Gale**, we actually managed to stay with the rest of the fleet. So with myself now on the helm and **SSgt Taylor** on the foredeck we started the second day's racing with renewed enthusiasm. We even managed to get the kite flying in a few of the races. With our new knowledge and confidence, we managed to make up a few places in a number of the races.

Our results from the second day reflected that we had learned something, and we gained confidence with every race. Due to our problems in the first half of the regatta, we still finished overall last. However, the lessons learned and the experience gained made the whole event a complete success.

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col G Norton**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Manktelow**

RSM'S HANDOVER PARADE

On 17 April the Regt bid farewell to **WO1 (RSM) ST Archer**, who was replaced by **WO1 (RSM) Manktelow**. **RSM Archer** has fallen on his feet and is posted to Italy for a few years. Everyone in the Regt bids him farewell and wishes him all the best.

CIVPOP FOR 2 PRINCE OF WALES ROYAL REGIMENT *- by Lt Bates*

The Regt had to scrape the barrel to find the 70 personnel required for the rural phase of 2 Bn PWRR's NI trg. With little more than a week's notice, those not on EXs LION SUN, ARRCADE DEPLOYEX or COMBINED ENDEAVOUR were sent to Thetford Trg Area to act as civilians for the week (no mean feat for the hardened warriors of 7 Sig Regt!)

We were required to act out a variety of roles so that 2 Bn PWRR could practise VCPs, cordons, live firing exs, culminating in a riot between 'Catholics' and 'Loyalists.' People didn't find it hard to drop into character, and the readiness with which they volunteered for 'drunken' serials made some wonder if 7 Sig Regt wasn't a teetotal unit after all.

Undoubtedly, the riot was the highlight of the week. The 'Loyalists' marched from their village of Tottington, as the 'Catholics' in Eastmere prepared for their rally that was to enter the village. The groups met at the entrance to the village, restrained by the infantry's riot shields, and soon a battle between the two sides ensued. It soon became less of a fight between the opposing factions, and more of a free-for-all against the Army. With only ourselves and some carrots to defend ouselves (and **LCpl Rizza**), we were outmatched by the infantry, who wore protective items on their elbows and shins, had helmets and visors and carried both riot shields and imitation hickory sticks. The Army soon pushed us skirmishing civilians back but, not to be defeated, we moved to the village of Stanton to continue our attacks on each other. Once again 2 Bn PWRR regained law and order, admittedly this time with a little less organisation and a little more violence. With only a few ripped clothes and one injury, we all returned for a shower feeling pleased with our day's riotous behaviour.

Although at times during the week we did seem to be there to have a bit of a laugh and get out of the garages for a week, the opportunity to be civpop for NI trg was more beneficial than that. Not only did we provide valuable trg for those who are due to begin their tour mid-June, but we also saw first hand the trg that goes into such a deployment. For many of us who have not had a posting to the Province, it was an education into the daily dangers that face the British Army there today. We wish 2 Bn PWRR the best of luck for their time in NI, and hope that some of the trg we provided was of use.

EXERCISE CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

EX CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT (12 –15 May) was held in London by 7 Sig Regt, who are based at Javelin Barracks, Elmpt in Germany. The ex was geared to developing and widening the knowledge of officers at all levels. It also gave SNCO's the opportunity to reflect upon that old chestnut: that unlike officers, they work for a living!

A 7-hour bus ride took us RAF Uxbridge, where we were to be accommodated for the duration of the ex. The following day at the National Army Museum, we had a lecture on the role of the private soldier in the Peninsular War. We learned many aspects of the soldier's life, from dress and tactics to family life. We were quite shocked to discover that soldiers back then were recruited with the promise of beer. It's surprising how things can change over a century or two! The Museum had many other displays, including both World Wars. We had to manoeuvre through hordes of foreign school children to get to of them, but they were well worth the wait.

The highlight of the ex from the 'subbies' point of view, was the Corps Dinner Night at the Savoy Hotel on the evening of Tuesday 13 May. Dressed in black tie, many members of the Corps descended on the *Coal Hole* prior to the dinner to meet up with friends before the event. Locals at the pub were so stunned by the visitors that one 'subbie' was asked: 'Are you all part of the Secret Service?' to which he replied: 'There is nothing secret about what we do, mate.'

The Dinner itself turned into a spot-your-mate contest, as old friends were re-united. The food was great, but all eyes were drawn to the table at which sat the denizens of the 20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn. They had balloons hovering above their table. Considering that no task is too great for the Magnificent 7, **2Lt Serge Wartemberg**, cunningly disguised as a waiter, served the table with water before calmly taking out a pair of scissors and liberating 5 of the balloons, to the dismay of those sat there. 'Well done' to **2Lt Robin Foster**, who was sat at the table but failed to recognise the 'waiter', despite being in the same Company at Sandhurst and having spoken to him earlier that evening. Your Extras were well earned!

Having made a swift recovery, the Officers of the Magnificent 7, were up bright and early the next morning for more Officer Development. At the Bank of England, we were apprised of that institution's history and the role it plays in the economy. The nuances of Monetary Policy, the Euro and Interest Rates were explained to all those who lacked a degree in Economics. **Lt Williamson** did well not to ask: 'What do you do when you lose your pin number?' We were even allowed to pick up a gold ingot - the closest most of us have ever been to serious money.

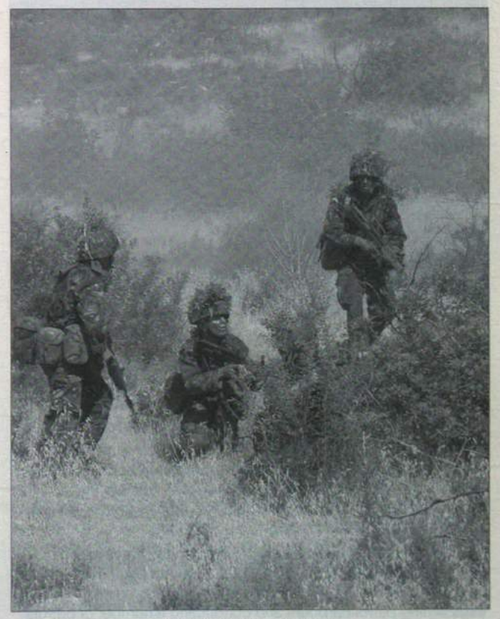
We then adjourned to the National Art Gallery, where we were taught to appreciate Art. Under the supervision of a most enthusiastic Guide, we were shown four paintings and told how they are best critiqued. We learned how to 'get into portraits' and, depending on the era, to recognise the hidden signs within them. Most of us left the Gallery feeling that we had learned something valuable and would, in future, no longer sound like **Dell-Boy Trotter** when talking about portraits.

All good things must come to an end, and we completed our ex with the most important visit of them all: the Cogent briefing at the Inns of Court on Thursday 15 May. There, we learnt more about Skynet V and other equipt coming into operational use soon. It was completely enthralling and it gave us a good idea as to what to expect in the future. The role of Defence contractors was also highlighted, as well as the problems they face in getting kit completed on time. We thoroughly appreciated the briefing and, after asking numerous questions, got to practise our newly developed Art appreciation skills on the numerous portraits on the walls!

EXERCISE LION SUN - *by Lt AS Youngman*

Our first EX LION SUN for 2003 was at the transit camp at Radio Sonde in Episkopi, which had only recently been vacated by augmentees for OP TELIC. We arrived on 3 May to find that Cyprus was in the middle of a heat wave, with day-time temperatures reaching 40°C. In these temperatures, when even menial tasks like collecting stores were hard work, it was a rude awakening for what the next month would be like.

The first phase was a series of range days covering the mandatory tests for all troops arriving in Cyprus (WHT and



2 Pl during the pl attack

Grouping and Zeroing). The second day took the form of a series of shooting competitions, the results of which went towards the overall inter-platoon competition running throughout the ex. Before the next trg phase, there was a sports day, in which platoons competed against each other at Football, Hockey and Volleyball.

Following this was a 12-day trg package, broken down into 3 four-day packages. The platoons rotated through each package in turn, my platoon, 3 platoon starting at the deep-end with the Tactics Phase. Most of this should have been revision but there were a lot of cobwebs to be blown away for the juniors. Amongst the new material was something that would prove to be the highlight of the ex, FIBUA. The four days comprised 1 day's revision on basic field craft skills and section level tactics, 1 day's FIBUA trg, 1 day's instruction on patrolling and harbours and finally a mini confirmation ex to test patrolling and then a platoon attack.

The second package was adventurous trg, which allowed us to try Rock-climbing, Sailing, Canoeing, Water skiing and Mountain Biking. It was a huge success, and the weather had cooled down. The days spent sailing commenced with water skiing while the instructors prepared the boats and waited for the wind to build up in the afternoon. The rock climbing was excellent, providing a challenge for everyone who had a fear of heights.

Cpl Collins showing off

The last package was navigation. The aim was to teach soldiers the basics of navigation and give them experience in using these skills - something which will stand them in good stead for the rest of their Army careers and which is sometimes lacking in basic trg nowadays.

When the final ex arrived, a number of personnel had, unfortunately, to return to Javelin Barracks to prepare for deployment to OP TELIC 2. This required a change to the Orbat, so three platoons became two.

The final ex started with both platoons carrying out a beach landing from an LSL provided by RLC Port and Maritime Sqn. The next four days were spent moving around the trg areas establishing patrol harbours and conducting a number of patrols including OPs, Recces and a few dawn fighting patrols. All of this

A FIBUA attack

led up to the final attack, which took place against the now-famous Paramali Village. The attack had to be re-written to accommodate the reduced company. This resulted in more work for the boys on the ground, but it went down very well. Everyone had developed a taste for FIBUA and was keen to put their newfound skills into use. The attack went in at dawn and lasted for about an hour and a half, spanning the whole of the village, including defended positions the enemy had spent the previous 24 hrs preparing.

All in all, it was an excellent ex that surpassed all of my expectations. My thanks and congratulations go to the whole trg team and the DS for organising an ex that was well-balanced between work and play and put a huge emphasis on the quality of instruction for our soldiers. The trg opportunity that EX LION SUN provides for our soldiers is unrivalled. In a perfect world, these exs should be compulsory for every soldier and officer. Since this is not possible, I am both glad and privileged to have had the opportunity to take part at this stage in my career.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Campbell**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Shepperd**

REGIMENTAL MT

The Regt MT welcomes **LCpl Noble**, posted across the road from 280 (UK) Sig Sqn, and **Sig Cairns**, from 16 Sig Regt.
We say a fond farewell to **Sigs Clarkin** and **Purnell**, to 231 Sig Sqn; to **Cpl Tremain** and his wife, **Tammy**, promoted and posted to 16 Sig Regt; and to **LCpl Lister** and wife, who leave on a well-deserved promotion to 19 Mech Bde Sig Sqn.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

We say good bye to **Cpl** 'Woody' **Woodward**; to **Sig** 'Daz' **Fry**, who is off to Warminster; and to **LCpl Clements**, who is bound for warmer (and sandy) climes. Good luck to them all. And a warm welcome to **LCpl Clark**, and **Cpl Whalley**, who's recently joined us from the infantry.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj H Jenkins**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) S Littlefield**

We have seen quite a turn-round of manpower within the Sqn hierarchy. First of all we have said goodbye to **WO2 Browitt**, who after successfully being promoted, has returned to Blighty to be an RSM with the TA in Liverpool. His unique presence in the Sqn will be sadly missed. We also said good bye to **SSgt George McGuire**, who has possibly spent more time in 7 Sig Regt than any other member of the Corps. We all wish him the best of luck wherever his career may take him. We welcome the new Sqn 2IC, **Capt Matt Freemantle**, from 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt; and **WO2 (SSM) S Littlefield** who has side stepped from 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn to fill the shoes of the SSM.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj A Fallows**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) K Read**

SQN BATTLEFIELD TO MONTE CASSINO - *by Sgt B Bazzard*

Battlefield tours are used as part of a cultural and educational development process for members of the Regt. They also promote teamwork, and are ideal ways of allowing soldiers and officers to bond socially. This was certainly the case during the 231 Sqn battlefield tour to Monte Cassino, a small town in western Italy some sixty miles south of Rome. This was the scene of some of the bloodiest and determined fighting during World War II between a tired and battle-worn Allied contingent and a dogged, hardened German force desperate to keep the Allies out of Rome. Perhaps the most impressive and apparent building in Monte Cassino is the monastery, which sits imposingly above the town and was the site of four separate battles for this piece of vital ground.

On being asked to organise a battlefield tour, **WO2 (YofS) Brown**, decided to take a small band of Officers and SNCO's from the Sqn to Italy. Fascinated by its history and proximity to the capital, Rome, he set about booking hotels, flights and most importantly, the historian, **Col (Retd) David Storrie**, our guide and story teller.

The OC had divided the group into two and tasked each to prepare a presentation on topics relevant to our tour. One syndicate was to brief on Anzio, the other on Monte Cassino. Power Point was the order of the day, with some excellent models and video footage. The odd comment on penetration from the rear kept the atmosphere light and interesting.

Our tour began with our arrival in Rome, following an epic journey from Germany aboard Rynair's spacious flight from Frankfurt Hahn (not Frankfurt International, but a very small airport in the middle of nowhere!) We met our historian and our crazy bus driver in Rome in the small hours before departing on a slightly harrowing journey to Monte Cassino. It being out of season, the YofS had managed had secure four-star hotel accommodation for us on the outskirts of the town. We settled in for the night with a quick beer before retiring in anticipation of the next days' events.

Following a continental breakfast, we journeyed to the Mignano Gap and various parts of the Gustav Line. **Col Storrie** gave a fascinating account of the various units and routes taken by Allies and Germans alike during the approach to Monte Cassino. We saw sites of river crossings and some the high ground held by the Germans and taken by the Allies. Hill 60 in Javelin Bks left a lot to be desired! After a quick bite for lunch in a sweet Italian bistro, *La Pace*, we returned to the Rapido River for the build-up to the first attack on the monastery and the town. We learned of the problems that 34 (US) Div had to contend with and had a look at some of the old fortifications. It was all very impressive.

The next day was the visit to the monastery. We started the day by returning to the lower parts of the Garigliano River. We then followed the route taken by the Allies back to Cassino town, where we stopped for a quick bite before journeying up the hill to the monastery. It was truly magnificent and demonstrated clearly how difficult it would have been to attack. We explored the newly-built monastery, allowing **2Lt Anna Bates** to purchase some genuine Monk Milk and Monk Butter from the shop.

On the Friday we departed Cassino for Anzio, where we spent the morning being shown the sites of the infamous beach landings. The YofS was again the source of much amusement as he tucked into possibly the most expensive fish lunch he will ever eat! Later that day, we left Anzio for Rome and, after dropping off our kit at the hotel we bomb-bursted into the city to sample some of the cultural sights and sounds. The Vittorio Emmanuel Building, the Coliseum, the Trevi Fountain and the Vatican all got a visit before we sat wearily outside one of the many impressive churches to tuck into Pizza and red wine! A great tour was had by all - an extremely interesting tour, lucky enough to find the one-and-only Irish bar in Rome. Typical!

Thank you to **WO2 (YofS) Brown** for all his hard work in organising the tour. Where are we going next year?

10 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col SA Leigh**

EXERCISE ATLANTIC CHALLENGE 03 - *by Cpl Auz Gambles*

EX ATLANTIC CHALLENGE was a transatlantic sailing exped from Gosport, UK to Rowes Wharf in Boston, USA and return. The exped was sponsored by the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre (JSASTC) and used the Challenge 67 yacht, *Challenger*. Its aim was to develop the personal characteristics desirable to the armed forces through adventurous sail training. The crew of 13 came from all 3 services and contained 3 Royal Signals personnel, including **Sgt Scott Pearson** from 243 Sig Sqn.

After my three-day road trip across Canada from BATUS, paying visits to Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Ottawa and Montreal on the way, it was a relief to arrive finally in Boston at 06.00hrs on the morning of 4 May. After finding Rowes Wharf only three blocks away from South Station, I found the yacht *Challenger*, which was to be my home for the next month. She was moored alongside the most beautiful building on the waterfront, the splendid Boston Harbour Hotel.

We weren't able to get our wind instrumentation fixed, nor the rod kicker that the outgoing crew had broken. Likewise, the water maker caused us a big problem, forcing us to store 500 litres of extra water on the boat. After fixing all the equipment that we could, we set out for the refueling berth and our departure point from Boston Harbour.

We departed on 8 May and, there being no wind, donked (on engine) our way SE towards the area off Cape Cod. Because of the problems the last crew had sailing back through the Northern route, it was decided that we would route via Horta in the Azores Archipelago, which of course we were all happy about, since we could use the warmth of the Gulf stream current to help us along. Eventually the wind built up and we finally turned off the engine and started sailing, which is what we had all come for.

We sailed some 19 days before reaching landfall and because of time constraints and delays, we decided not to put into the Azores but route directly back to UK. To say we were disappointed would be an understatement. We encountered winds of force 3-4 with a maximum of 7, gusting to 8-9 at times, and 20-25 foot seas to set the excitement buds going. We encountered a few pilot whales, lots of dolphins and large wheelbarrow sized turtles. Some of us were also convinced we had seen a shark, but for me the jury's still out.

For some of the crew, like **Scotty Pearson**, this was his first real sailing adventure. His comments towards the end of the exped are noteworthy. 'I think for your first real sailing exped, this is a little too much.'

By the time we had made landfall at Lands End we had experienced most emotions, boredom, anticipation, excitement and possibly a touch of fear, to mention but a few. But most of all, a longing to get back onto dry land, partake of a nice shower and get a steady meal and a beer down our necks. We arrived after 19 days and 2,993.5 nautical miles, feeling glad we had done the voyage but even gladder to be back on terra firma.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

We welcome **Alastair Bartlett**, who is the newest addition to the

team, hot off his ISIS administrator's course and heading straight for his first installation in Canada.

BATUS LCSS(R) INSTALLATION

As part of the ongoing overhaul of the Army's ICS structure, the task of introducing BATUS to the 21st century and the ISIS family ICS had fallen to the Implementation Team once again. Accompanying us on the installation was **Capt Kev Wilson** and **Cpl Adam Carter**, 238 Sig Sqn. The team flew out to Calgary, to be greeted on arrival at BATUS by SO2 Log Supp, who was hosting us whilst we were in theatre. A BATUS brief and an introduction to the Canadian G6 staff who would be supporting the installation took up the next day, whilst the project manager, **Capt Kev Wilson**, was left chasing up the equipment. This turned out to be a major operation in itself. Whilst awaiting the equipment, the only job to get on with was installing the network devices in the relevant buildings around BATUS HQ and FMA.

Once this was complete, the Team headed off to the Rocky Mountains for the weekend to do some sightseeing. There we visited Canmore town in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, then headed for the shores of Lake Louise and its glacier walk.

L to R Cpl Carter, Alistair Bartlett, Dave Brown, Cpl Gambles 'Quick, smile! It's bloody freezing out here!'

Unfortunately the lake had started to thaw so we couldn't reach the glacial face. We then set off for downtown Banff to enjoy its pubs and restaurants on the Saturday night. We heard on the radio of a record snowfall of 160cms in Calgary overnight that had broken all records and managed to close both Calgary Airport and the Trans-Canadian Highway. We visited the Banff Hot Springs to recover before setting out back to BATUS.

We managed to bully our way back to Suffield in time, only to find that the equipment still hadn't arrived. The next task given was to recce BATSU(W), involving a 250 kms journey north of Suffield and then to Trails End Camp. However, half way through this trip, the equipment turned up so we headed back to Suffield to

The Team outside the Banff Springs Hotel

complete the job we had arrived to do. Then came more snow, and by the next day we had to install 210 workstations in 1.5 metres of it! But we managed to complete the installation within the allotted time frame and get home in time for tea and medals.

REGIMENTAL TRIATHLON

Over the previous few months a team of finely honed athletes from HQ 2 Sig Bde & HQ 10 Sig Regt had been 'matured' in Corsham. They were **Capt Phil Cooper**, **Capt Chris Biddulph**, **WO2 (Supvr IS) Jon Heaton** and **WO2 Clint Barker**.

After a good performance at the 5 Div Championships in Bovington, where we finished second, we entered the ATA Sprint Championships at Bassingbourne. Following tradition, the Yeoman dropped out at the last minute leaving the team to complete the event as follows:

Chris Biddulph – 1hr 3mins (14th)

Jon Heaton – 1hr 10mins (59th)

Phil Cooper – 1hr 21mins (121st)

As a team we were unable fully to support **Chris Biddulph's** creditable performance, so dipped out on any silverware. But we enjoyed ourselves in the sun anyway!

Our next event will be the Army Olympic Distance Championships, to be held in Bournemouth. Watch this space for the results and maybe some photos. (Out of interest, and keeping with tradition, the Yeoman has withdrawn already!)

REGIMENTAL GOLF

The Regt mustered 2 teams to compete in the Corps Championships, held this year in Blandford. Our team consisted of **Capt Nik Bruce**, **Capt (Retd) Bob Wright** and **WO2 Jon Heaton**. Playing on the two hottest days of the year so far, the competition became an endurance event – unfortunately to such an extent that our Adjt was unable to participate on the second day. Needless to say we returned to Corsham with nothing to put in the trophy cabinet - just the recommendation that the CO gives the Adjt some time off to start toughening his feet up now in preparation for the Autumn meet!

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj IWR Seraph**
SSM **WO2 Crowther**

Over the past month, the Sqn has been making preparations for the forthcoming Ceremonial season. The season started off on the 22 May 2003 with a parade for the presentation of the Household Cavalry's Guidons and Standards. This was followed by Beating the Retreat, a musical parade involving the Mounted and Massed Bands of the Household Division. It took place over two evenings, with our Colonel-in-Chief, **The Princess Royal**, attending to take the salute on 27 May. Three days later we took part in another parade, The Major General's Review, which was the first rehearsal for the Queen's Birthday Parade. A further rehearsal took place on Saturday 7 June culminating in the Queen's Birthday Parade, Trooping the Colour on Saturday 14 June.

The usual teams from I&S Sec have been selected to fulfill duties such as Discreet Radio fits, Public Address systems and street lining. This has provided the opportunity for the more experienced members to train the inexperienced techs in the fine art of fitting a piece of plastic (earpiece) into a Cavalry Officer's ear without causing injury. So far this year we have refrained from deploying **Cpl Dan Cattermole** to the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment on Ceremonial Duties, due to his innate fear of horses. Radio Sec is extremely busy with other commitments at the moment, including the Incident Response Team (IRT) deployments and the forthcoming Buckingham Palace Garden Parties in July.

We congratulate **SSgt Ian Tait** on the birth of his daughter, **Jessica** and wish him well on his future posting to 21 Sig Regt. We welcome back **LCpl Paddy Morrison** on his return from OP TELIC and **Sig Emma Watson** on her return from JCUFI. We say farewell to **LCpl Chris Reeve**, who has been posted to 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn on successful completion of the selection course and to **Cpl Bart Storey**, who, after 28 years' service, joins Civvy Street this year to take up an FTRS post with the Honorable Artillery

Company. Other new arrivals include **Cpl Neil McElhinney**, from 3 Inf Bde, who arrived just in time to compete in the GOC's Sports Day and **Cpl Chris Burr** from 249 Sig Sqn. We say goodbye to **Sig Tim Peacock**, who has left us for the sunny climes of Colchester and 216 Sig Sqn.

INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM DEPLOYMENT - by Cpl Bart Storey

During the heightened security threat at Heathrow Airport back in February, the Sqn's IRT was deployed to Windsor to provide contingency comms for OP SLACK FLAK. The IRT were tasked to provide Mobile Amscerps, Secure Fax, Insecure Fax, EMS, Brent, Brahms and Brere. From Windsor, the team, consisting of **Cpl Bart Storey** and **LCpl Gibson** were redeployed to New Scotland Yard to assist the Metropolitan Police. The op lasted for seven days, during which Tech **Cpl Reg Perrin's** wealth of knowledge and unfaltering commitment to the task in hand proved invaluable. During OP TELIC 1, the IRT was on 6 hrs' NTM to deploy to airports across the nation in support of RAMP (Reception Arrangements for Military Patients) providing comms for the repatriation of injured military personnel from the Gulf. As a result, there was extensive familiarisation trg at Corsham and here in Chelsea Bks, on the RAS (Remove Access Server) laptop terminals that replace the old EMS ones. The four IRT teams had their annual get together in Wilton for a spot of trg and social indulgence recently. The emphasis was on ensuring that all the equipt is up to spec and that, as signallers, we can at last communicate to one another, as well as around the world.

THE INAUGURAL BRUNO AWARDS – *by Sgt Shaun Childs*

This year, Ops Sp Tp have decided to dedicate themselves to fundraising for two charities, Help a London Child and The Scientific Exploration Society (SES). The Sqn hopes to send a number of soldiers on an ambitious SES Expedition to Panama in December. Our aim is to raise around £18,000 over the coming year. With this in mind, our first fundraising event was a Sqn BAFTA Awards Ceremony with entertainment provided by talented members of the Sqn.

Over the course of the evening, seven awards were presented. Among them Best Male went to **Cpl Jay Beattie**; Best Female was awarded to our Chief Clerk, **Mrs Laura Allen** and the prestigious 238 (London) Sig Sqn Personality of the Year to **Cpl Bart Storey** for his tireless support to the Sqn. The entertainment was of the highest standard, with performances by acclaimed artists such as The Proclaimers, Paul McCartney, Barry Manilow and of course, Elvis (apparently he still lives!) The evening also included a raffle and charity auction hosted by Mr David Dickinson (aka **Sgt Shaun Childs)** in a very unconvincing fancy dress costume. The night was a huge success and we managed to raise a substantial sum of money for the charities. Many more fundraising events are in the pipeline after the busy ceremonial season is over.

A NIGHT AT THE DOGS - *by LCpl Mark Ryan*

Catford Racetrack was the venue, the weather was fine and the beer was cold. What more could we ask for? Well, apart from a big win that is! After meticulous planning and coordination by **Sgt Angie Thickett** and **LCpl Kath Carbery**, I&S Sec arrived at the racetrack. The event was the perfect opportunity for us to welcome our new Tp Comd, **Capt Abby Parkinson** and introduce her to the Sec personalities. The evening started out quite slowly, with most people hedging their bets and making the most of their two free drinks. **Cpl Mike Ridley** fancied himself as the John McCrirrick of the greyhound world and, armed with the racing section of the *Metro*, attempted to give tips to the less educated among us. All hope of a big win was beginning to fade, when out of nowhere, **LCpl Mark Ryan** found himself the holder of a winning ticket and £72.50 richer. We didn't see him get the drinks in though!

By the ninth race, most people had decided to give gambling a break and exchange money for beer directly. It was also about this time that the East End of London began to lose its attraction and the bright lights of the West End proved too hard to resist. After much deliberating we finally found ourselves in the *Cheers Bar* on Piccadilly Circus. An enjoyable, if costly, night was had by all.

241 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Don Pawlow**
YofS **SSgt Mick Durrant**

We are having difficulty remembering when the Sqn last featured in *The WIRE*, so we thought it might not be a bad idea to give you a brief idea of what we do. SHQ is in Donnington and provides CIS, Crypto and Commcen support for 5 Div. This is a pretty large piece of real estate encompassing the West Midlands, Wales and SW England. As you would imagine, we are widely dispersed with dets in Brecon, Bulford, Shrewsbury, Bramcote, Blandford, Lulworth and Warminster. All of these dets are civilian manned, with our 12 military posts based in Donnington - not that you will ever find them here, because they are usually either in Brecon, Bulford, Shrewsbury.....well, we are sure you get the picture.

The work is varied, ranging from repairing a faulty 100-pair cable in Bulford to installing a network from scratch in Warminster.

There is some time for play and, despite being so far apart, we are pretty well integrated bunch. The boss likes to take us on team-building walks now and again. All are invited, with civilians carrying their sandwiches and the military, 30lbs! So much for equality.

Well, enough from us this time around, but now we appear to have broken our duck, we feel sure you will hear from us again.

242 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj KJ Graham**

EXERCISE NORTHERN EOFORWIC – 11-16 MAY 2003 - *by Sgt AM Ambury*

The annual Sqn Adventure Training ex was conducted from the Norwegian Lodge situated in the Glenmore Forest in the Highlands of Scotland. Co-ordinating the exercise this year was **SSgt Graeme Scott** from Pennine Tp, along with 9 Cadet Trg Team, Strensall, who provided the instructor support and expertise, **Sgts** 'Al' **Brotheridge**, **John Shaw**, **Jim Nolan** and **Will Williams**. The 20 personnel who attended were drawn from Pennine Tp, York; Grampian Tp, Edinburgh and Host Nation Support, Balado Bridge.

Over the first two days we split into 2 groups and rotated between Kayaking along Loch Insh, and Rock-Climbing and Abseiling in Kinguisse. One of the more memorable moments was when **Cpl Fisher** became rather concerned about an approaching rapid, which resulted in him capsizing and squealing in a rather high pitched manner, to the great amusement of all those around him (though I'm sure he'll deny it!).

LCpl Paul Atkinson's excuse to the instructor as he hit a half-submerged tree was, 'I can't see without my glasses on!' The rock climbing was also a lot of fun, and varied in challenges from medium to very hard. The instructors had the first real challenge in getting **Sig Kerry Tolhurst** to climb into the minibus without getting 'disco-leg'! The third day we covered more difficult climbing in Kinguisse, Kayaking (including getting our BCU Kayak Two Star Qualification), and then ended the day with an overnight trek using a bothy for accommodation.

The final day saw us enjoying a short hike through some lovely scenery with the locals as part of the Aviemore International Walking Festival, and finished with an exercise BBQ that was planned and cooked by our chef, **LCpl Larson** from 1 RGJ.

The whole week proved to be a great success, providing a great opportunity for all 3 tps to get together and work as a Sqn.

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JR James**
SSM **WO2(SSM) P Brown**

4 & 5 DIVISION SOUTHERN AREA SEMI FINAL SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS - by SSgt (YofS) Johns

'Yeoman, can you do 100 metres in 60 seconds?' the Ops Offr asked me. To which I replied, 'Sir, I could walk it in less than that,'

thinking he meant running. 'Okay, be at Bulford swimming pool first thing tomorrow morning for a training session!'

It was at this point that I realised he meant swimming. So at 07.00hrs on a brisk Tuesday morning the Sqn hopefuls gathered for the first trg session (or rather, the only trg session). After an hour of grueling circuits, we were told that the competition would be the following day in Aldershot. The Minor Unit competition would pit us against the usual suspects, ATR Lichfield and 4 GS Med Regt.

The Team would be racing in nine events, the first race seeing **Cpl Jim Lang** in the 50m Freestyle. A good swim saw him second in a time of 35.94 secs and the Team off to a good start. The next race featured the Ops Officer, **Capt Alan Patterson** in the 50m Backstroke. Again another excellent swim, with a time of 38.08 seconds. Next in the firing line was **Cpl Jay Binnie**, his mere presence and size putting fear into the other racers. **Jay** produced a fine example of the 50m Breaststroke to finish second with a time of 43.08 seconds. Our ace in the pack, **Sig Trigger Beasley**, then lined up for the 100m Freestyle. A confident race saw **Trigger** easily pull away from the others to record a time of 1 min 04 secs - another 1st place.

Next was probably the most grueling of all the races of the day, the 4 x 50m individual medley. For those who don't know, the unlucky victim/volunteer has to swim 50m backstroke, 50m breaststroke, 50m butterfly and finally 50m freestyle. Our representative was **LCpl Steve Henderson**. In a hard fought race **Steve** produced an excellent result coming 2nd with a time of 3 mins 60 secs.

This was the last individual race and at this point the competition was close, with ATR Lichfield having won 3 races and placed second in 2, on 13 points and ourselves with 2 wins and 3 seconds on 12 points. Next were the relays, first up being the 4 x 50m Freestyle. An excellent performance by all saw the Team finish 1st in a time of 2 mins 07 secs. Next relay was the 4 x 50m Breaststroke, where a strong performance saw a time of 3 mins 04 secs, achieving 2nd place. With the scores after this event being ATR Lichfield 23, 243 Sig Sqn 22, the team who won the final event would walk away with the Div Championships. The 4 x 50m Medley Relay saw **Capt Alan Patterson** lead off on the Backstroke leg and produce a commanding lead when handing over to **Cpl Jay Binnie** for the Breaststroke. A strong swim saw us improve the advantage when **Jay** handed over to **Sig Trigger Beasley** for the Butterfly leg, who in turn handed over to **LCpl Steve Henderson** for the Freestyle, with a lead of just under half a length. Another excellent combined effort produced a time of 2 mins 24 secs and 1st place, securing the 5 Div Championship and the Southern Area Semi Final, which has booked our place in the Army Championships to be held on 25 June 2003. Look out for the next installment.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Wally Drain**
Sqn SSgt	**SSgt R Owen**

FAREWELLS AND ARRIVALS

Firstly we bid a sad farewell from the Sqn to the OC, **Maj Wally Drain**, who is posted to 16 Sig Regt. Good luck to him in his new post as Regtl 2IC. He and his family will be greatly missed by the Sqn. We have also said goodbye to **Mr Derek Keen** after 17 years loyal service to the Sqn. Welcome to **Capt Andy Campbell**, who takes over as Ops Offr, leaving **Capt Keith Roach** free to take over the reins temporarily as Sqn OC - a job I'm sure he is looking forward to. **LCpl Hebenton**, not content enough with his recent deployment to Kosovo, is now off for a 4-month tour in the IS Cell in the Falklands. Finally, we welcome **Cpl Emily Ironmonger**, from 252 Sig Sqn, Germany.

VISIT OF NEXT SQUADRON COMMANDER

On 15 and 16 May the Sqn was visited by the OC (Des), **Maj Beecher**, who takes over the Sqn on 11 August. During the visit, **SSgt Jim Bromfield** had to take on the role as acting SSM, as **SSgt Rick Owen** was on leave. It was to be a challenging day for **SSgt Bromfield**, as his drill has become a bit rusty after many years' service as a TA soldier. However, after a few last minute pointers from **SSgt Owen**, his memory was suitably refreshed and the visit was very successful.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to **Cpls Frain**, **Hart** and **Turner** for successfully passing their T1 entrance exams and to **Sgt Nikki Coombes** and **Sgt Pete Nealis** on their recent selection for promotion to SSgt. Congratulations and best wishes go to **LCpl Richards** who, on 19 April in Trinidad & Tobago, West Indies, married the lovely **Natasha Tuckett**. We welcome **Natasha** to Britain for her first stay, and promise her that the rest of England is not like Aldershot!

HOGSBACK BREWERY

Life in Aldershot has not been all exams, promotions and marriages this month. Despite being pregnant, **Sgt Judith Allsop** ensured that our Sqn's love of alcohol was not neglected by organising a hiccup in Aldershot's local Hogsback Brewery. A great evening was made even better as we continued the celebrations at a local restaurant. We look forward to the next event with eager anticipation.

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol CJ Thackray**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Fisher**

'Summer time and the living is easy. Fish are jumping and the cotton is high' penned **Cole Porter**, and from our perspective he may be right. With the disappointment of 'Yes TELIC 1, Maybe TELIC 1, No TELIC 1, Yes TELIC 2, Maybe TELIC 2 and No TELIC 2' we have been able to draw breath and turn our minds towards more domestic issues. Recent happenings have been centred around prep for RSIT and the Regtl Battle Camp (see Trg Wing submission). The lull in external activities also produced the opportunity for the offrs to jump ship on a couple of occasions; the First to Portugal and Spain for the 1 Sig Bde battlefield tour, and the other to the wilds of Snowdonia for some hiking.

The Bde battlefield tour was a splendid affair that followed the fortunes of **Wellington's** Army during the Peninsula Campaign. The Regtl presentation on the weapons and armaments of the day was professionally performed (complete with period dress) by

The Adjutant catches up on his beauty sleep at Porto Airport at the end of the Battlefield Tour

Capts AJ Smith, **Lee Keily** and **Nat Baker** ably assisted by **Lt Sarah Clifford** and **Sgt Maj** 'Angry' **Angove**. It was reassuring to see that then, as indeed now, so much depended on the Army's Late Entry fraternity (no prizes for guessing the background of the author of these notes).

With the ink barely dry on the postcards from that excursion, the offrs took off for less exotic climes, the high, wild and wet wastelands of the Snowdonia National Park. EX GREEN RAMBLER was organised by **Lt Tish Hodson** and saw some 25 offrs sampling the salubrious delights of Capel Curig Trg Camp. The activities consisted of a day's slog over some very impressive lumps in the ground, led by **LtCol JakeThackray**. The second day followed a similar theme, only higher longer and wetter, with the added delight of a night under canvas. Everyone had brought their own anesthetic-cum-sleeping potion, contained of course in the same bottle.

The Officers line up for photo shoot prior to their attempt on the north face of Snowdon

On the sports front we had a couple of successes to boast about. **WO1 ASM Hirchall** took a team of three to the Army Fencing Championships. This is a sport that he has nurtured for some time, and his efforts were rewarded with the 3-man team picking up the silver medal in the team event. The soccer season finished with team picking up the North Rhine Inter-Service League Trophy and winning the coveted Siggies Cup. The Siggies Cup is an RAF sponsored 5-a-side competition held in JHQ. It was the first time that Army units had been invited to compete, and probably the last.

The Regtl golf season kicked off on 2 April with the inaugural 'Ryder Cup' played between HQ Sqn and the LAD. After the morning's four-balls, the scores were extremely close with only half a point in it. The afternoon singles saw more of the same close action, and it wasn't until HQ's last player, **WO2 Dave Coleman**, came in with a win that we knew the team had won 8 – 7. Well done to HQ Sqn.

Thanks go to the competition organiser, **Cpl Phil Robson**. A great day was had by all - so much in fact that we are going to do it again later in the year. The Bradbury Cup, sponsored by Ideal Homes Furniture, and the first of three 'Bradbury' series of golf events the Regt holds, and was played for on 30 April. Special thanks go to **Sgt Paul Taylor** for his meticulous planning and execution of the day's events. The prizes are too many to name, but the results of the three main competitions were: Scratch Winner: **Cpl Phil Robson**; Handicap Winner: **Sgt Al Stubberfield**; and Texas Scramble Winners: **Sig Craig Toshack**, **LCpl Nige Foulkes** and **WO2 Taff Osbourne**.

The JHQ area pretty much came to a standstill on a certain Friday in May. Additional RMP were drafted in to assist in crowd control and no expense was spared in the press hospitality tent. The occasion was the final event of the orienteering season and final event for secretary of 5 years, **Maj Pete Doherty**. Unfortunately **Sir Bobby Robson's** flight was aborted at the last minute owing to leaves on the runway, so it was left to **Col David Hargreaves** to provide the kind words. **Maj Pete**, in a moving speech, said he would be missing neither running the League nor compiling *The WIRE* notes. He now intends to dedicate what spare time his new job allows in lobbying the MOD to raise the age ceiling of LEs for Pink List selection.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Guy Richards**
SSM	**WO2 Gaz Greaves**

Life in HQ Sqn continues to be busy in support of all Regtl activities. We have just entered an extremely busy period, encompassing both RSIT and the good old LSI. This being the case, you would expect to find everybody busy at work with no time for play. Not the case with this Sqn though, being the total professional, dedicated people that we are, we have still found time for the odd party, game of golf, and a battle camp.

MT TROOP

MTWO	**WO2 C Batley**
MT Sgt	**Sgt S Tremain**

We say farewell to **LCpl Lester**, who has moved to 7 Sig Regt; to **Sig Halley**, who has moved to 4 Armd Bde; and to **Sgt Jim Pritchard**, who has moved to the end other end of the building as SQMS.

We welcome **LCpl Louis Vint**, **Sigs Pestell**, **Jamie Bramald**, **Mick Stoker**, his wife **Steph** and their daughter **Frankie**. We hope they all enjoy their tour with MT.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1(FofS) C Hamilton**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt T Black**

April has been a busy month in TM Tp, what with being warned for ops again and then stood down again. Many of the Tp have been involved in inter-operability exs involving our NATO friends, and have enjoyed an introduction to a lot of other nations' traditions.

We say a warm welcome to **LCpl Harker**, and wish him, his wife and three children all the best; to **LCpl Greenwood**, from Blandford; and to **Sig Gill** and his new wife. **LCpl Gildea** has left us to join 16 Air Asslt Bde Sig Sqn. We also said farewell to **Cpls O'Neil** and **Cadogan**, who have returned to Blandford on their T1 Course and to **Cpl Thornton**, who has returned to Blandford as part of the Bowman Team.

TRAINING WING

Trg Wing WO	**WO2 (RTWO) Andy Jones**

We welcome our new RTWO, **WO2 (SSM) Andy Jones** and his wife **Hieke**. We say farewell to **Sgt Ross Thubron** and **Kirsty**, who have gone to Blandford so **Ross** can do his Yeoman's course.

May has been a busy time for the Trg Wing staff with the planning, prep and build-up for the Regtl Battle Camp, EX GREEN GAMBIT 03. The chosen few deployed to Sennelager Trg Area on Monday 19 May. The first few days were spent covering the annual ITDs, Live Firing 4, Live Firing 9 and (APWT)TS, which went according to plan, along with the rain that we ordered. The night nav saw the German police turn up, requesting info about soldiers running around the local houses. **Capt Gordon Wills** had to explain. Various battle lessons took place throughout the week, including anti-ambush drills, fighting in woods and forest (FIWAF), battle casualty handling drills and mine awareness. Pl and Sec comds were instructed on the orders process, which was put to good use on the ex phase. The final ex phase included an arduous 24 hrs defending a comms site, ambushes and recces, and concluded with a coy assault in the FIBUA village. The new ISAWES equipt (loaned by SAAB Trg Systems) made the assault very realistic. The pl comds, **Lts Tara Kane**, **Ben Stone** and **Sarah Clifford** soon learned how lethal enemy sniper fire was after loosing half their guys, and had to re-think their gung-ho tactics to outsmart their adversaries. And they did, much to the surprise of the en comd, **Lt Graham Dorrington**.

It was an excellent battle camp with many noteworthy performances, and the following personnel were singled out to

receive recognition from the CO for their efforts: Best team player, **Sig Yarwood**; Most improved field soldier, **Sig Jabba Hutt**; and Best field soldier: **Sig John**. Well done to all.

Sig Jabba Hutt picks up the most improved soldier award from the CO

The ex concluded with a 'smoker' and video of the whole exercise filmed by **Cpl Boswell**. Many thanks to the instructors for their hard work and dedication, and a final word of thanks to those unsung heroes the chefs, who made sure we were fed, no matter how many times the programme changed.

255 SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Ashley Hayden**
SSM	**WO2 Paul Storey**

The pace of life never slows in this Sqn. We have recently deployed on several multinational inter-operability exs and Regtl Battle Camp, whilst many of our personnel are backfilling jobs on OP TELIC and other on-going ops. And this is the quiet period before the build up for EX ARRCADE FUSION!

The 'all change' in the Sqn hierarchy continues to go well, with the 2IC, **Capt Gunny Gunson** departing for Upavon and **SSM Den Yates** moving across to become RQMS(A). This has meant new blood in, and we welcome **WO2(FofS) Gaz Clapham** and **WO2 (SSM) Paul Storey**. It has even been rumoured that we will get a Yeoman before the year is out

H TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Bree Looker RASigs**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Fudge MacPhee**

Our usual OC, **Lt Emily Greenwood**, has left for Australia on EX LONG LOOK. **Lt Bree Looker** has traded places with her and is our boss until 15 September. **Lt Looker** has begun teaching us Aussie Rules football on Wednesday afternoons. We are having a match with 7 Sig Regt at the beginning of September, so every second counts. Aussie Rules took a bit of time for our troops to understand and **SSgt MacPhee** ended up in the Sin Bin for a few minutes for playing rugby. He didn't like this, but I'm sure that we'll all understand the game in good time for the tournament.

New arrivals are **Cpl Lowe** from 15 Sig Regt, **LCpl Mikee Kervell** from JCUNI and **Sig Moffatt** straight out of the factory.

As for deployments, we've been all over the place. **Cpls Micky Lake**, **Phil Brown**, **LCpl Sean Peart** and **Sigs Bishop** and **Brett Naylor** have been mechanising Iraq on OP TELIC. **Cpl Green**, **LCpls Vincent**, **Crooks** and **Sig Russell** are doing their stuff down under...in the Falklands. **LCpl Joughlin** and **Sig Brown** are looking after the phone lines as the SMART Team in Kosovo and **Cpl Davey** and **LCpl Wells** are on the same detail in Bosnia. And too many people to mention have also been out to Bosnia or Kosovo on various short-term CPO projects. Most of the Tp deployed on the Regtl battle camp, EX GREEN GAMBIT. **Cpls Cooper**, **Rob Shubert, LCpl Mikee Kervell** and **Sigs Al Aston** and **Mikey Goddard** are currently in Italy on EX COMBINED ENDEAVOUR, an AARC ex.

Fitness and Sport continues to be a major part of H Tp life. The Tp ran as one on the Brüggen 10 then had a BBQ afterwards to celebrate. With a range of various deployments on their way for H Tp, morale is high and everyone's looking forward to those Saturdays down at the *Blue Lagoon* in summer.

CIS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Dick Rutherford**

The pressure continues for IS Tp, with a constant stream of exs and equipt trials and our usual support to HQ ARRC in the Big House. **SSgt Marty Abraham** led his band of merry men to Baumholder for EX COMBINED ENDEAVOUR. **WO1 (ASM) John Hadjicostas** (REME) and his team finally departed for Italy to take part in the ARRC Deploy Ex and **WO1 (ASM) Gary Hutcheson (REME)** departed with a small team to take part in EX CATHODE EMISSION. Meanwhile in the Big House, **SSgt Craig Dickman** (AGC) and **Sgt Dave Skingley** with a small team, have, in a very short space of time, built EXCON in the old MND(C) corridor. **WO1 Stumpy Rudenko** (RADC) and his gang have continued to pull rabbits from hats to provide IT trg for the ARRC Staff - often at short notice and with constantly changing goal posts.

On the op front, we welcome back from OP TELIC, **Cpls Paddy Briggs** and **Tam Mooney** and from OP OCULUS, **Cpl Mick Kenning**.

We say goodbye and good luck for OP TELIC 2 to **Sgt Steve Voyse**, **Cpls Paul Brown**, **Daz Kirby**, **Chicken McLuckie** and **Daz Pruess**. **Sgt Dave Whitfield** goes to Cyprus; **Cpl Mick Bannister**, to Bulford and **Cpl Russ Russell**, first to the Balkans and then back to 280 Sig Sqn. The promotions continue, with congratulations going to: **WO1 (ASM) Daz Edwards** (REME); **WO2 Paul Waters** on his selection for WO1; and to **Sgts Dave Skingley** and **Kim Castledine** on their selection for SSgt.

Hellos to **Cpls Frankie Franklin** and **Grubber Melia**. Now that the paper work is complete, we welcome the following on transfer to RSigs: **WO2s Paul Waters**, **Dave Brett**, **Lee Crugten**, **Di Hazelden**, **Andy Hole**, **Taff Osbourne**, and **Tom Ward**, **SSgts Colin Leech**, **Bernie Milburn**, **Richie Nichol**, and **Nige Williamson** and **Sgt Geordie Gowland**.

EXERCISE COMBINED ENDEAVOUR 2003 – *by Cpl Si Vickers*

EX COMBINED ENDEAVOUR is a multi-national inter-operability ex sponsored by USAEUR. It is held every year in the picturesque location of Baumholder, near Mainz, South West Germany. The ex this year involved 38 nations, including many former Eastern Block countries and South Africa, each trying to see if their Switching Systems, IT Systems and SATCOM Systems will work together.

It is also used to promote social inter-operability between the nations (this sometimes can be more important than the technical). IS Tp sent a contingent to provide two LANs, GP3 and many experts in different fields. We also provided personnel to assist in the collection of data. Data collected on these tests are entered on a database and distributed to all participation units for use on future ops.

This year's ex proved a success once again, with all members gaining a greater knowledge and understanding of problems that can arise between different systems. The data collectors realised that problems can also arise in verbal comms such as when dealing with a country who 'don't speaka da Inglish' that well. On occasion, this led to the opposite of what we asked them to do.

MAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Tara Kane**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Barney Balmforth**

After a session of meticulous SOP checks, our Sqn set upon EX GREEN GAMBIT in which we were firm favourites to win best platoon. We didn't disappoint! Congratulations go to **Sig John** for winning the Best Soldier Award, and 3 Platoon, who won Best Platoon Award.

We say goodbye to **Sig Grainger**, **Cpl Steve Carroll**, and quick hello goodbye to **LCpl Phil Mulligan**, who not long after arriving departs for OP TELIC 2. Welcome to **Sig Ian Riley** from 230 Sqn and to **Lt Tara Kane**, who was brave enough to take on the Tp.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Graham Dorrington**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Frankie Greenwood**

The last few months have seen the Tp return to its more familiar level of (under) manning, with 5 people leaving us. Farewell to **LCpl Dave Mark**, who is posted to 12 Mech Bde Sig Sqn. **Cpl Ali Richardson** returns to Blandford and **Cpl Pete Stewart** is off to Cyprus. **Cpl Simpkins** is posted to 30 Sig Regt and **2Lt Chris Humphrey** now returns to civilian life.

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**Lt Col I Hooper**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) G Smith**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SJ Morgan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) AA Chapman**

Following the rapid completion of the war-fighting phase of OP TELIC, the majority of HQ Sqn personnel who deployed to the Gulf have now returned to Colerne, where they await the inevitable medals parade! In SHQ the OC, **Maj Steve Morgan**, is now back in the chair, much to the relief of 2IC, **Capt Tony Barry**, who no longer has to keep his fingers crossed as draft CRs are mailed around the world. At the other end of camp in the SQMS Dept, we welcome **SSgt (SQMS)** 'Midge' **Midgely**, who has moved across from the MT. He celebrated his move to the Q world with the dubious honour of being sent to Folkestone as Camp SSM/SQMS for the Regtl Battle Camp.

MT DEPARTMENT

MTO	**Capt A J Barry**
MTWO	**WO2 (MTWO) B Rigby**

After a well-deserved leave, we welcome back from OP TELIC **Sig Mick Berry**. **Sgt Andy Paling** is also back and was promoted to SSgt 10 minutes after reporting for work. Congratulations! Their suntans may be faded, but the war stories keep on coming. We say farewell and best wishes to **LCpl Greg Ward,** joining 102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn in Gütersloh, and to **Cpl Steve Jay** posted to AFNORTH.

Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Jono' **Johnson** and his wife, **Maria** on the birth of their baby daughter, **Jessica**.

WO2 (MTWO) Bernie Rigby has now left us temporarily for a short stay at Basra International Airport (BIA) as RQMS of the Joint Heli Force Sig Sqn, leaving **SSgt Andy Paling** to take up the reins as Acting MTWO.

The MTO deployed to Battle Camp to run ranges, along with **LCpl Bibby**, who was MT Rep and ambulance driver, hanging around the ranges waiting for an accident to happen! **Cpl Jay**, **LCpl Molyneux** and **Sig Lewis** were also there, wearing cam cream and wishing that they had been selected to be MT Rep.

The MT's star runner, **Sig Chep Chepkwony**, having recovered from the injury sustained during the cross-country season, started this year's athletics season with a bang. In the last weekend of April he was victorious in the St George's Corsham 10km road race, the first of 400 competitors home. The following weekend saw **Chep** competing in the 5000m for Bath Athletics Club. **Chep** later managed to break the Wiltshire 5000m record. Congratulations on your successes so far, and best of luck for the remainder of the season.

QM TECHNICAL

QM	**Capt A Balsdon**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) JJ Johnston**

It has been quite quiet in the QM Tech Dept lately, as half of our small Dept are still on OP TELIC. **Sig Ian Ashcroft** has been battered black and blue after representing the Regt in rugby union, while **Sig Simon Morse** has been spending his hard-earned cash on another boy-racer car. **Capt Alan Balsdon** has recently arrived to take over as QM Tech from **Capt Pete Griffiths**, who can't wait to take over as 2IC Trg Wing at Blandford. We congratulate **Cpl Kerry Varley** (formerly **Johnston**), who got married earlier this year to **Cpl Rob Varley** and is now expecting an addition to the family.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SM Mannings**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) D Taylor**

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS ON OPERATION TELIC

The JHF Sig Sqn, under the command of **Maj Spencer Mannings**, deployed to provide robust tactical and strategic comms to support the JHF. The tactical systems we provided were Combat Net Radio, both Comd and Ground-to-Air Nets, Ptarmigan secure voice and data, and voice and data over the Light Weight Recce Node (LWRN). On the strategic side, we provided a plethora of secure systems. This was enabled through the deployment of TALON dets. TALON, a satellite bearer system, had not been deployed by the Regt before. The TALON nodes were deployed, built and managed with crews drawn from 21, 2 and 30 Sig Regts.

Three TALON Nodes were deployed, under the guidance of **WO1 (FofS) Paul Lewis**. They were established at the HQ, the Main Operating Base (MOB) and the Logistic Support Site (LSS), and proved to be a challenge for all concerned.

The JHF Main HQ TALON det was manned by a complete 30 Sig Regt team. **SSgt Tony McBean** was Tp Comd, with **Cpl Andy Campbell** as Det Comd. They were accompanied by **Cpl Kev Limbert**, as duty tech (for tech, read whinger!) and **LCpl Phil Keen**, as someone who actually knew about comms! Fortunately, we had the benefit of much direction from **WO1(FofS) Paul Lewis**, 21 Sig Regt's Foreman, who we immediately suspected of having a dangerously high level of sugar in his daily diet!

The arrival of the rest of our Det, in the form of **Cpl JT Taylor** as another tech, **LCpl Si Goddard** as our Gene Op, and **Sigs Saun Hanes**, **Roger Livesey** and **Marie Warner** as ops, saw the routine settle down to a steady pace. Problems never seemed to be far away though. The Kuwaiti heat was one of the first things to claim victims, with equipment failing in the temperatures that routinely exceeded 40° C, and usually before lunchtime! However, despite the high temperatures and the disruption of donning respirators, morale never flagged. Instant amusement was provided when **Cpl Kev Limbert** was shown even the smallest creepy-crawly. Many an evening was spent watching him run away screaming, and on one occasion straight into the JHF Comd's evening brief!

At the LSS, the lack of experience on the satellite and the tails could have posed a problem. But, with the invaluable knowledge of **Cpl Micky Turner** and **Cpl Leslie**, we managed to establish comms much quicker than expected. Patron (Secure Voice via satellite) was established very quickly and X-Net, (a faster and more up to date version of ATaCS) was engineered shortly afterwards, making the passage of data around theatre a lot quicker.

Sig 'Brummie' **Taylor** took over as Det Comd for the LSS TALON. **SSgt** 'Taff' **Jones** and his team of techs managed to engineer the remaining data systems of AMSCERPS (a Signal Messaging service allowing quick and easy passage of signals to and from

the UK) and Pt-to-Pt Fax, which came in handy when AMSCERPS crashed, or when the Ptarmigan link was too weak to pass data successfully.

The SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Kev O'Neill**, was a little concerned that the white TALON dome was not very tactical. But after a few weeks of sandstorms, it developed a natural sand colour and blended in quite well.

Considering the very little trg and experience we had, this deployment of TALON Nodes was a huge achievement, and a remarkable engineering feat, for which a great deal of credit is due to **FofS Lewis** and all crews.

SAFWAN FARP GROUP CROSS THE KUWAIT – IRAQI BORDER *–by Cpl Jenkins*

A small element of the JHF Sig Sqn were tasked with providing comms support to the Fwd Arming and Refuelling Point (FARP) for the JHF helis. The FARP group crossed the berm on D+1, establishing at SAFWAN HILL, just North of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border. This op involved a team of 23 personnel from 21 Sig Regt, commanded by **Capt Courage**. It comprised 3 comms dets providing ground-to-air, VHF, HF and SCRA(T); a Rebro station; an LO det; a FRT and a veh recovery asset. 21 Sig Regt (AS) also provided a MAOT det.

My FOB det was tasked with providing the CP facility for the FARP Comd, an RAF Regt Wg Cdr. Initially I was to be detached to a US Marine Corps Recce Unit with a 320 manpack radio. My role was to provide HF Data comms for the Ops Offr of 51 Sqn, RAF Regt. Once the airfield had been secured by the US Marine Recce Unit, it was my job, under the direction of the 51 Sqn RAF Regt Ops Offr, to call forward the CP and other elements of the FARP group. Before deploying, **SSM O'Neil** said to me 'You may see some action.' He was certainly right. On reflection, it was certainly an experience to tell the grandchildren about!

Shortly after arriving in Kuwait, we were thrown straight into an intensive week of prep and mission rehearsals for the SAFWAN op. We finally moved north to our assembly areas with my det meeting up with the US Marine Corps Recce Unit. On 20 March 03 at 15.30Z (H hr) we deployed north for the border. After watching an immense display of firepower being directed at Iraqi targets, the US Armd Veh that I was travelling in engaged an Iraqi Border Post building about 4km south of the border with its 25mm HE cannon rounds. The noise and vibrations were unbelievable. We then watched the arty bombardment and close air support by the Cobra helis on SAFWAN Hill (151m - the highest hill in southern Iraq), later to be occupied by our Rebro det. Following a short respite, we heard enemy arty exploding a bit too close for comfort. Thankfully, it was time to leave and get back to safety. There was a slight change of plan, the American Recce Unit was re-tasked and I was reunited with my det. I have never been so pleased to see the friendly faces of **Sgt Langridge**, **Sig Gallagher**, **LCpl Connor**, **Sig Sunderland** and **Capt Courage**. We were then later joined at SAFWAN by the other dets, who had been patiently waiting south of the border – bullet dodgers, **Cpl Lucas**, **LCpl Young**, **Sig Lampard** and **Sig White**. It was non-stop for the next 48 hrs while the antenna field grew and we engineered the comms in. We settled in to a shift pattern and had the additional task of providing comms for the CASEVAC Team, who had 2 Pumas at the SAFWAN FARP site. This first week was very busy. 51 Sqn, RAF Regt were also very busy on patrol in the SAFWAN area. Additionally, medical aid and humanitarian support were delivered to the local population. Charlie Tp Comd, **Lt Hannaford**, then arrived with her slippers in hand from Ali Al Salem!

On 29 Mar **Sig Gallagher** experienced a barrage of interference on a number of HF frequencies, including the Force Comd Net. A constant tone disrupted the net for 35-40 minutes. An interpreter was able to identify 2 separate Iraqi transmitter stations broadcasting propaganda against Coalition Forces. This information led to the subsequent neutralisation of the transmitter stations. Nice one, lads!

The dets at SAFWAN were provided with essential support from **Cpl Russell**, **LCpl Clamp**, **Cpl Harden**, **Cfn Phillips** and **LCpl Davison**; the LO det for OC 51 Sqn, RAF Regt and the RRB Crew

Sig Rory Gallagher on captured Iraqi Anti Aircraft Gun

on Hill 151 from **Cpl Janine Teague**, **LCpl Kingshot** and **Sig Heighton**. We also must not forget the MAOT crew, **Cpl Salmon** and **Sig Foan**.

On the 17 April 03 our SAFWAN vacation came to an end (as do all good things) and we received our orders to close down and move up to BIA to await further tasking.

JHF HQ MOVE

The majority of personnel from 21 Sig Regt (AS) had been based at Camp Rhino (within the American Camp Commando) for the larger part of two months. Living conditions were actually very comfortable and food plentiful on 'Op Tell Everyone Lunch Is Chicken.' Despite the usual reply, 'It's on the boat' to any request for equipment, we were well equipped. Everything was running smoothly, and we had a plethora of info systems for the Staff.

At the start of the war, JHF remained at Camp Rhino. We thought we would be safe 'in the gear with the RAF', but on the first day, a Seersucker landed at front gates of Camp Commando, giving us all a reality check as to how vulnerable we all were. We were then to spend our time diving in and out of Scud bunkers, in various states of NBC dress at about 5 min intervals. As the weeks went by, JHF were still located in Camp Rhino. By this stage, we truly were at the rear – we even had to go north to pick up the loo rolls on resup!

Eventually the plan to move was finalised and JHF's next destination was BIA, to which we moved on 10 April. The clearing up that was required there was no small task (not to mention all the poo left in the corners of each room!). A big thanks to the 2 and 10 Sig Regt inst techs for their help - they were literally up to their elbows in it! After a few days of hard graft the site was in a suitable condition ready to receive the Staff.

SSgt Steve Pope, **Sgt Helen Nolan** and **Sgt Nick Tipping** deployed as an advance party from Camp Rhino to Ali Al Salem Air Base, where the Staff were to move to to move control from the HQ to the flying site. After we led them by the hand to their desks and explaining the working environment of the MOB site, they very quickly settled in. This may have been a new loc, but they brought with them old habits. They still had to be shown where the water was and where the bin bags got put when they were full!

After much deliberation and delay, HQ finally got the call to tear down and move north on 16 April. The speed and enthusiasm with which the HQ was torn down reflected the eagerness of everyone to move. The dets were all packed up, lined up and ready to move when we were told, 'About half an hour, lads. We are just waiting for the REME……' 5 hrs later we left - and in darkness. Concentrations were focused at the border checkpoint when Convoy Comd, **Captain Courage**, informed us that there had been some shootings from the overhead bridges on the main route. After one U-turn and one breakdown, we arrived at the police station, our new home. For some this was their first night in a police station: for others we weren't so certain!

Thanks to an installation team from 2 Sig Regt, who supplied our entire fibre and cable infrastructure, the set up was relatively quick. After only 36 hours, comms were established, the Staff

could be moved into Iraq and subsequently JHF Main HQ was firmly established in BIA. This meant that we could start sending some of the Regt home (much to their delight!). Farewells went to the old RDC crew, **Cpl Si Chaffer**, **LCpl Glenn Sheppard**, **Sig Matt Scarff**, **Sig Al Davies**, **Sig Mike Corlett** and **Sig Ben McFarland**. Departing for colder climes, they left **Cpl Hazard** and **Sig Karin Whyte** as the only original members of the RDC still slaving over a hot ULS and some radios. Hi and bye went to **LCpl Whitehead** and **LCpl Al Cowan**, who had done an outstanding job at a whole range of tasks.

LIFE AT THE LOGISTIC SUPPORT SITE (LSS)

The LSS was established at the Ali Al Salem airbase back in February. It was set up with SAN899, 2 rad dets and a TALON node. Once we were set up and all the hard work was done, **2Lt Wright** thought he would do something he was good at - making signs. It only took him 2 days, but at least everyone knew where the car park was! At the same time **SSgt Dutton** found the Internet and decided to join the ISM team. At least you would think so, judging by the amount of time he spent on the computer! When the lads finally got to check their E-mails (when **SSgt Dutton** was asleep) they found the 'Am I hot or not?' website. **Sig Jimmy Cullen** was definitely NOT!

On 20 March 03 it was finally time to close down the LSS. The vehs were all packed up and sat in the Zulu Muster waiting to go back to the UK. The crews weren't so lucky - they had to take over from the 244 Sqn dets at MOB. After being in control for just 24 hrs, comms were finally solid and the links didn't drop for the rest of our time there. At the MOB det there was no Internet, so **SSgt Dutton** found a new job as car park attendant at the Zulu Muster point. All he needed was a book of raffle tickets and a deck chair and he really would have looked the part. At LSS we had the honour of being the only JHF SAN to provide all the facilities and have continuous comms throughout the tour!

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SO France**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Brown**

A period of great change in 244 Sig Sqn. We welcome back our guys from OP TELIC and congratulate the lucky few who will be going out again! In June, 244 Sig Sqn will replace 220 Sig Sqn in Basra. Around half of the Sqn will be deploying, as OP TELIC will be an ongoing commitment for the Regt. In preparation for tour, the Regt has just completed EX RED BEAUFIGHTER, our annual battle camp. This year we saw the sunny delights of St Martin's Plain at Folkestone. With excellent range packages and a 3 day FTX all based on peace support ops, this was a very enjoyable battle camp. With a mock-up village and a rather too realistic civpop, the Sqn is now certainly ready for what Iraq has to offer.

We say farewell to **WO2 (SSM) Carl Budding**, who leaves on promotion and congratulate **WO2 (SSM) Dave Taylor** also on gaining a well deserved promotion - but commiserate with him for being posted to 220 Sig Sqn! In their place we welcome **WO2 (SSM) Brown** and **SSgt (SQMS) Mark Morgan**. We say a further farewell to **SSgt (FofS) Bo Pradhan** who again leaves on promotion and welcome **SSgt (FofS) Lyndan Box** as replacement. Finally, we say a large farewell to **Capt Andy Hill**, who is posted to Portsmouth and welcome **Capt Tom Day** as our new 2IC.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt C Hill**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Cain**

ALPHA TROOP ON OPERATION TELIC

With the smell of war in the air, every one was eager to deploy to Kuwait and start doing what we are paid for. We finally got our date to deploy and flew with the wagons on an Antinov plane to Kuwait. Some 48 hours later, after the RAF had finished moving us about, we arrived at Ali Al Salem Air Base, where we set up our det at MOB to provide ground to air comms for 18 Sqn (Chinook) and 33 Sqn (Puma) RAF (JHF), some 18 aircraft.

The next couple of weeks we spent prepping for the inevitable, filling sandbags and generating our own exaggerated war stories.

The daily sandstorms took their toll, blowing away an RAF 12 x 12 tent that had not been pegged down properly and thus taking out our PU12 mast! As soon as hostilities commenced, Scud warnings were coming in thick and fast, improving our donning of respirator times. **Cpl Dan Slaughter** got the golden maggot award for staying in his doss bag for the entire war, whilst **LCpl Andy Weekes** never made a shift change on time due to waxing his hair, topping his tan or chatting up the J1 girls.

The MOB was tasked with assuming control whilst Main HQ moved up to Basra. The move went well, but we stayed at the rear with the gear. All in all it was a good tour and those that didn't deploy with us now have their chance as they deploy on OP TELIC 2.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt L Fish**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt M Pay**

This has been a very busy time of late with half the Tp deployed on OP TELIC and the other half keeping the home fires burning. Our boss, **Lt Lucy Fish**, has also gone on a swan to the Falkland Islands for 4 months. We say farewell to **SSgt Andy Gill**, who has gone to the Province on promotion to SSM. Also leaving us are **LCpl Steve Parsons** to NI and **Sigs Mike Lake** and **Steve Oxley** who will leave shortly to civ div. Good luck, lads.

We welcome from Blandford **LCpl Chris Powell**, **Sigs Cassi Fewtrell**, **Tania Davis** and **Gemma Salvidge**. On the recent demise of 249 Sig Sqn, we have gained some of their arctic warriors, **Cpl Gordon Sustins** and **Cpl Richie Hewitt**, **Sig Kev Burnand** and **Sig Richard Christopher**. Welcome to all. Hope your tour goes well.

BRAVO TROOP ON OPERATION TELIC

After many weeks' trg and waiting around, a select few from Bravo Tp finally deployed on OP TELIC around mid February. We were tasked to provide 3 FFRs and 9 personnel in support of 220 Sig Sqn Gp. **Cpl Ireson**, **Sig Horne** and **Sig Taylor**, were tasked to work and maintain the TALON satellite system, but once in theatre, **Cpl Ireson** found himself providing a very important SCRA(T) link, **Sig Horne** found himself operating at the MOB and Sig **Taylor** found himself operating at the LSS TALON det.

The FFRs were tasked with a variety of roles: one, under **LCpl Simon** was tasked with the role of CO's vehicle, where he travelled the most miles (many being on the 3-mile running track at Camp Commando!) The other two FFRs were tasked to provide a FOB or Flying Site, for both the Chinook and Puma aircraft, if and when required. Within days of arriving at Ali Al Salem airbase, the det was deployed north to provide the RAF with some shakeout training. During this time, **Cpl Kev Rutherford** got his first taste of the Kuwait wild life, when a rather large beetle decided it would like to make a nice warm home in his hair! After a few days, the det returned to Ali Al Salem and found themselves separated, one FFR being at the Chinook flying site under **Cpl Chaz Charnley**, the other being at the Puma site under **Cpl Rutherford**. It was here that **Sig Williams** shot to fame by on getting onto the front page of the *Daily Mail*! What can we say? He's a PTI... The Chinook site turned into a trade training school, with lessons given every day to the RAF about the different components of Ptarmigan. **Sig Phillips** and **Cpl Charnley** set about digging in, while **Sig Croston** tried to work out how to let the Padre know that on one of his visits, he had run over one of the 12-metre masts. However, nobody could find the right words, so it was decided that they would drop the subject and accept it as an act of God.

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Z White**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt G Smillie**

For the foreseeable future Hotel Tp looks like being fragmented by OP TELIC 2. An ideal time then to hand over the Tp to **SSgt Gaz Smillie**, who joins us up in the hangar from a mammoth 12-year tour at 264 Sqn. The look of joy spreading across **Sgt Hook's** face as he handed over the ration returns and nominal rolls was not particularly cleverly hidden!

The majority of the Tp deployed to Battle Camp at Lydd and Hythe for a fortnight, and all concerned acquitted themselves well. Of note are the performances on the Hythe Ranges by **LCpl Nicholson** and **Sig Airstone**, who achieved second and third place for the range week. **Sig Blagg** also provided amusement on the Urban Village range, when he opened up with his GPMG on the civ pop crowd.... Maybe another quick look at ROE is required

By the time this goes to print, another 15 of the Tp will be facing the challenges of operating and living in the desert/international airport environment. Reports of temperatures up to 59° C have sent people scurrying to replace their Hawaiian Tropic Factor 2 Bronzing Oil with something a little stronger.

JULIET TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt (QGO) Yamkumar Gurung**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Surje Gurung**

The year 2003 is undoubtedly destined to become an exciting and challenging year in the history of Queen's Gurkha Signals. Early last year the rumour spread of the possible formation of a third QG Sig Sqn and by late last year, it was confirmed that 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn (248 GSS) would be re-raised at 21 Sig Regt (AS), Colerne and the Sqn's role would be Ptarmigan. Without doubt, this was breathtaking news for QG Sigs personnel all over the world. **Capt Yamkumar Gurung** and **SSgt Surje** were nominated as Tp Comd and Tp SSgt/SQMS respectively, to establish the first Trunk Node at 21 Sig Regt. A daunting and painstaking task definitely lies ahead for all those nominated to form the Sqn, but certainly not an impossible task to achieve.

Capt Yam and **Sgt Haribahadur Gurung** (Chief Clerk 248 GSS) along with their families, arrived at Azimghur Barracks on 3 March 03. **SSgt Surje** and his family later joined them on 14 March. Whilst the Tp Comd and SSgt were carrying out planning for the arrival of the main body, **Sgt Hari** was temporarily attached to RAO to build the benchmark for the formation of SHQ. It had been confirmed that the first TN would be formed under 220 Sig Sqn, but since that Sqn is on OP TELIC, it will in the meantime be formed under 244 Sig Sqn as Juliet Tp. Both 250 GSS and 246 GSS were deployed to the Gulf, which has delayed the arrival of the reinforcement package 248 GSS was to receive from 246 GSS to form the Sqn.

During the short span of 2 weeks, we had the opportunity to familiarise with the camp, its surroundings and the workplace. The people in the barracks vicinity and the local area were eagerly awaiting our arrival in the Regt. The primary school in Colerne Village printed out all the signs in Nepali script to welcome the small contingent of Gurkha children. A short article about Gurkhas in the local newspaper indicated the keenness and interest the local people have shown in us. The expectation and the anticipation of everyone were very high, and we were all amazed by the reception and hospitality of 21 Sig Regt (AS).

The main body from 30 Sig Regt, including a Gurkha chef, arrived on the first week of April. The following week was spent on Tp admin, new arrivals brief and camp familiarisation. The first Tp outing for the year was to the Gurkha Museum at Winchester during Easter leave. Everyone had a wonderful moment to cherish the immortal sacrifice of our great grandfathers. Prior to this, we saw the arrival of **SSgt (YofS) Wilson** and 5 British soldiers to the Tp on a voluntarily basis from 244 Sig Sqn to fill the gap caused by the delayed arrival of the reinforcement party from 2 Sig Regt.

On 29 April 2003, we collected assets for the first TN from Ashchurch, and on 12 May, **Maj (QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO**, Gurkha Major QG Signals, made an official visit to the Regt. His visit included a meeting with the CO to discuss future manning of 248 GSS, the presentation of the assets for the first TN, a group photograph and a social gathering with the Tp.

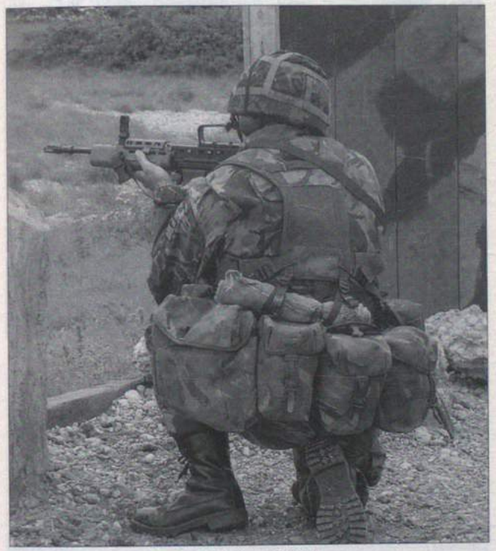
May continued with an in-house Ptarmigan overview and Induction trg at the Trg Wing and hangar area. PACEX was conducted in the camp vicinity to confirm the operability of the det. This proved to be beneficial for everyone. As this article is being written, the Tp is preparing the dets for the first ever second line inspection to be held next week. So far so good! Everyone is working their socks off to lay a good foundation for the third Gurkha Sig Sqn. Obviously the work-load will ease off when more personnel arrive from 2 Sig Regt, but commitment and determination will be doubled. We accept the challenge of our target to form the first TN by end of this year.

We are very aware that the future relies on the present - and that we are the present. We have been tasked to establish a strong foundation for 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn and we will give of our best to keep the pride of the Regt high with hard work, determination and dedication. The outcome of our hard work will be realised when we march proudly at the reformation parade of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn next year.

The first Gurkha element at 21 Signal Regt (AS) celebrating their first social gathering, Nepali New Year 2060 on 14 April 03

EX RED BEAUFIGHTER – *by LCpl Powell*

Our two-week annual Battle Camp began with the lengthy drive from Azimghur Barracks, to St Martin's Plain Camp near the entrance of the Channel Tunnel in Folkestone. The first phase consisted of a week of various ranges. Having recently transferred from the infantry, I was very interested in what RSigs could come up with! After the mandatory zeroing, we moved on to a range package, consisting of clay pigeon shooting, GPMG, section in defence, IBSR and a street range.



Cpl Ash on IBSR

The general consensus of the troops was that the time in the village was the most enjoyable, as we were all able to witness certain unit members' acting skills. After a good blow-out in the BBQ on the Sunday night, we were split into two platoons and moved out onto the area to conduct various serials. The final ex culminated in a very sweaty platoon attack on a bunch of peasants, fighting over a very large hill. Most people were very impressed with the overall package and enjoyed the whole of the two weeks. After a quick a clean up and debrief we returned home for a well-deserved weekend.

You are never too senior to patch up targets! Dep Comd JHC, Brig Caplin visits Regt on EX RED BEAUFIGHTER

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col IPF Vingoe**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D Hancock**

It has been a busy time for the Regt, as it has been for the rest of the Corps (and indeed the Army!), with OP TELIC and all of the Regt's other commitments. However, life in the Regt goes on, and we even managed to get away for a Battle Camp, some adventurous training, the London Marathon and a Regtl photograph. We extend a warm welcome to the new Adjt, **Capt Alex Clixby**, who takes over from **Maj Niall Stokoe**, posted to HQ Land; and to the new, slightly shorter RSM, **WO1 David Geordie Hancock**, from 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn, vice newly-commissioned **Capt Matt Nuttall**, posted to 2 Sig Regt.

A CLEAN SWEEP FOR REGIMENTAL SHOOTING TEAM – *by Capt Nirmal Bhattachan*

This year has been another outstanding year for the Regtl Shooting team. Despite having less time to train, due to operational commitments, we took both 1st and 2nd team places in the Corps SAAM, and had a clean sweep at the 143 (West Sussex) Bde SAAM. We also won many individual prizes, including **Sgt Som Chochangi** (2nd overall rifle shot in Corps SAAM and 1st in 143 Bde SAAM) and **Cpl Dickson** (Best Pistol Shot and Best Class B shot in the 143 Bde SAAM). **Sgt Dhir**, **Sgt Som** and **Sig Khagendra Tamang** also represented the Corps in the Inter-Corps Competition where R Sigs were victorious.

The Regt Shooting team proudly displaying the trophies from Corps SAAM & 143(WM) Bde SAAM 03 Standing, (L - R): Sgt Dhir, LCpl Autar, Cpl Chau, Lcpl Dambar, Sig Netra, LCpl Durga, Cpl Dickson, Sgt Som, Seated from (L – R): WO1(RSM) Hancock, Maj Hitman Gurung MVO, Lt Col I P F Vingoe, Maj Rowley, Capt Nirmal Bhattachan

B TROOP ON OPERATION TELIC

The majority of Bravo Tp was deployed on OP TELIC for the first part of this calendar year. With its satellite capabilities, the Regt was in high demand. Hence six 501's being deployed, with B Tp supplying the manning for two (Lime/Khaki). 501 (Lime) was under the wing of Tp SSgt, **SSgt Back**, while det comd **Cpl Wiggins** was in dire need of a translator to put his point across. The 501 came under the overall comd of 16 Air Asslt Bde, being attached to 216 Sig Sqn.

As the months progressed the Det dwindled in numbers, and we were sad to see **LCpls Stevie Wilson** and **Stevie Sharman** go. Needless to say no-one missed **Sig Darren Simpson**! The Det then moved to Basra and settled into the Shatt al Arab Hotel, getting straight into its new role as a welfare facility for the Fusiliers of 7 Armd Bde. In the meantime 501 (Khaki) under det comd, **Cpl Jamie Goulty** and sidekick **Sig Andy Harrington**, had the hard job of providing 1 patron line for 6 months.

EXERCISE BEAR'S CHALLENGE

The final week of April transformed the Tps of 258 Sqn into war-hardened infantry platoons as they tackled their annual Battle Camp. Throughout the week in Stanton, the platoons rotated through a variety of stands including NBC, map reading, FIBUA, tactics and survival.

We all worked hard, but the week didn't pass without a few funny moments. In the dead of night a scream was heard from one of Foxtrot Pls sentry positions. With lightning speed (!) a rapid reaction force was at the scene of the suspected breach in security, only to find a rather sheepish looking **Cpl Pollard** who had nose-dived into his shell scrape after tripping over a bungee. A good ex was had by all and the final dawn attack on Eastmere FIBUA village was a fantastic finale to a very good week.

THE LONDON MARATHON 2003 – *by LCpl Sokolowski*

A representative of the 2003 London Marathon approached **WO2 (SSM) Tucker** to see if the Regt could provide marshals and some additional security for this year's event. Although the SSM suspected that the volunteers had alternative motives (i.e. the opportunity of 24 hrs in the big 'smog', not to mention a free tracksuit) eighteen unsuspecting block rats from 30 Sig Regt volunteered to take part.

Sunday morning started with a bang! The team headed straight for the finish line on the Mall to pick up their tracksuits and be assigned tasks. After a quick photo opportunity, the teams took up positions to await the start of the race. There was genuine interest and excitement in the task, with access to all areas and the best views of the race.

Just before leaving for camp, everyone received a staff marathon medal and, although we felt that we didn't deserve it, it did allow free access to the underground. We all agreed that the thrill at the finish line has encouraged us all to run the marathon ourselves. It is one of the few events where taking part is truly better than winning. MTO, **Capt Sean Keilty** completed the Marathon and raised £500 for the Gurkha Welfare Trust. Well done, **Sean**!

MTO, Capt Sean Keilty crossing the finish line!

LATE ENTRY OFFICERS

Whilst at RAF Lyneham for the Regtl Offrs and SNCOs photograph, the Late Entry Offrs took the opportunity to dismount from their zimmer frames and have a photo taken - an excellent display of combined medal counts (28) and ages (394 yrs).

Proof that the Corps is still alive and kicking (just)!
Front (L– R) Majs Dougie MacTaggart, Ray Cory, John Standen, Jim Coffey
Back (L – R) Capts Sean Keilty, Graham Pardew, Joe Cox, Russ Darlington, Danny Roberts

EXERCISE RAMPANT DRAGON – *by 2Lt Emilia Ker*

EX RAMPANT DRAGON took place in Brawdy, Pembrokeshire with the aim of introducing members of Supt Sqn to low level adventurous training. In true JSP 419 style, with typical South Wales weather, we all got soaked for most of the week. This was acceptable to most, but the climbers, led by **Sgt Colin Bentley**, **LCpl Ben Powell** and **LCpl Paul MacKay** ended up retreating to the bus in gale force conditions. I'm sure the countryside was beautiful, but we were unable to see for more than 50 metres for most of the week!

Each arduous day's adventurous training always ended with a slap up meal cooked by our resident chef, **LCpl Ollie Oliver**, before proceeding to the local hostelry for a few well deserved beers and bonding with the locals. This included challenging and beating the local darts team, with a team led by the OC, **Maj Ray Cory** and **SSgt (SQMS) Steve Behan**.

All in all, the ex was a great success, a fair balance between low level adventurous trg and a good sociable time.

32 (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col EM Blyth TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) JH Greenwood**

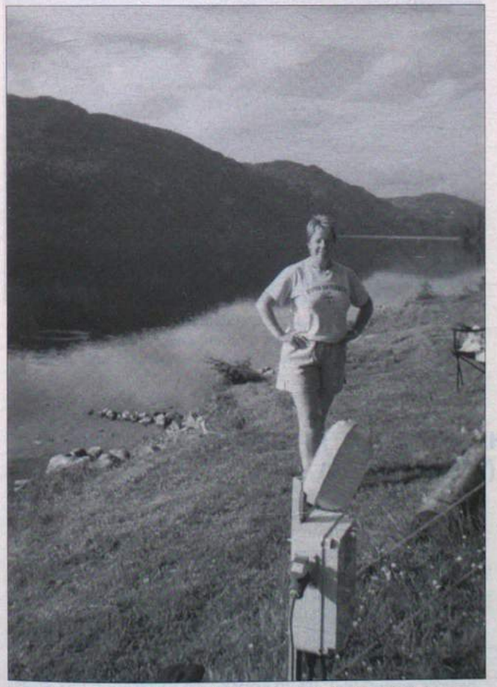
A warm welcome to **WO1 (RSM) John Greenwood**, from 30 Sig Regt and to his wife **Catherine** and daughter **Isabelle**, who are both beginning to experience the delights of Glasgow's cosmopolitan West End. The RSM has two years of hill walking already mapped out (no pun intended). We say farewell to the Adjt, **Capt Alun Crapper**, who is off to Blandford, and hello to **Capt Owen Finnie**, his replacement.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj CS Payn**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) N Sproul**

EXERCISE SALTIRE TERRAIN

Incessant sunlight and a warm welcome from organiser **Capt John Lynch**, greeted the main party for the start of EX SALTIRE TERRAIN. As the sun's warm rays beat down on the base camp at Fort George Inverness, the teams were briefed on what lay ahead. The importance of loading up on calories was emphasised. Luckily this was not a problem as Master Chef, **WO2 John Wren** and newly promoted **Cpl Steve Tinney** ensured that the usual ultra high standard of food was maintained.



Something unidentified clambers ashore at Loch Ness

Before the walk commenced, the teams were taken on visits to Culloden Moor and Fort George. Culloden is the site of the last ever battle on British soil which resulted in the defeat of the Jacobite Army, led by **Bonnie Prince Charlie**, at the hands of the Hanoverian Army, commanded by **General Cumberland**. Various theories abound as to the reasons for the defeat. Some point to the fact that the Bonnie Prince never actually attended a Staff College course and was therefore doctrinally bereft, whereas the '90 minute nationalists' cite poor team selection on the part of the Scots. Whatever the reasons, the battle and accompanying history was well explained by tour guide **SSgt Steve McLean**. The tour of Fort George was conducted equally well by **QM (V) Capt Keith Anderson**. The tour finished with a visit to the hugely impressive Cameron Highlanders museum.

Monday saw the start of the walk. The Great Glen Way is a newly opened walk, which diagonally dissects Scotland in a line from Inverness to Fort William. The 73 mile route (74.6 miles if you count one team's navigational problems) takes in some of the most splendid scenery in Scotland, including Loch Ness, Loch Oich, Loch Lochy (they must have run out of names for Lochs), Fort Augustus and the Caledonian Canal. The route also gives you the chance to be scared out of your skin by the RAF tornado pilots, who take every opportunity to buzz you at short notice whilst they practise for their next role in *Top Gun*.

By the second day of the walk three distinct teams had been formed. The Whippets led by the evergreen **QM Capt Graham Reith**, included **FoS (V) Denish Ghandi**, and **Sgt Graham Smith**. The late-arriving regimental golfing team of four from 52 Sqn bolstered this team. The Whippets established a fearsome reputation of completing each stage in record time - it was either a desire to push the body to its limit or an awareness of the early opening hours of pubs on the way. The Tree Huggers, led by **SSM Norma Sproul** conducted the walk on an altogether more relaxed basis. This was a more touchy feely group who encouraged sharing and bonding. It was Team counsellor, **LCpl Audrey Sheridan**, who conducted these life-changing sessions and probably engineered the chance encounter in a pub, which saw **Cpl Craig Douglas** meet his long-lost brother. The unfortunate look-a-like tourist was quickly photographed, bought a drink before he gratefully made a hasty exit. The last team, the Ramblers, led by **SSM Lynn Bertram**, got their name from the fact that most team members tended to ramble a whole load of nonsense after the lunch time pub session. The principal culprits here were **Cpl Bob Nursimiloo** and **Sig Zambo Zambonini.**

Wednesday was the occasion for the visit of the CO, **LtCol Eric Blyth**; Adjt, **Alun Crapper**; and newly-arrived **WO1 (RSM) John Greenwood**. **Capt Phil Donegan** was particularly pleased to hear that the RSM was NBC qualified and the resulting conversation quickly cleared the dinner table that night.

On the last night at Fort William the curtain was brought down with the traditional team sketches . The Whippets presented an unusual display in body painting, whilst the Ramblers provided a moving poem for the occasion. However the competition was probably shaded by the Huggers, who put on a rip-snorting musical extravaganza, competently held together by MC, **Norma Sproul**. In the end, all were agreed that the ex had met its aim of providing challenging adventurous training against a back-drop of stunning scenery, with the added element of a whole lot of fun.

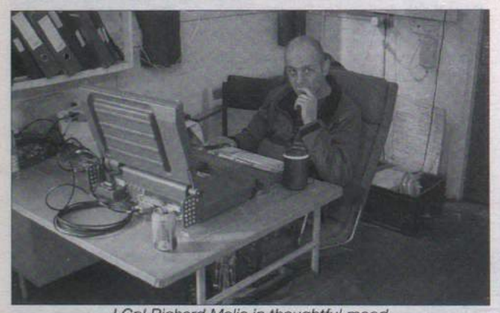
The End. SSgt McLean, 'John', LCpl Dorian, WO2 Sproul, LCpl Sheridan 'Alex', Sig McLuckie and Bob the Tramp at Fort William

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj A Thompson TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) L Bertram**

Firstly, our congratulations go to **LCpl Wiggin** on gaining his first stripe.

FIBUA TRAINING – CATTERICK



LCpl Richard Melia in thoughtful mood

With the end of the trg year looming, the Sqn travelled to Catterick to join the remainder of the Regt in FIBUA trg. Although bounty was already in the bag for most, a good number of Sqn stalwarts turned out to take part in a varied programme of events, culminating in a final ex. Entering houses using numerous methods, excluding the use of the front door and the exhausting, confusing and disorientating experience of house clearing was undertaken with enthusiasm. The latter activity acquired the Aberdonian acronym FISH – Fighting in Somebody's Hoose).

EXERCISE SALTIRE CANTER 9-11 MAY

The Sqn deployed to Black Dog Ranges and within the Bridge of Don Barracks to provide comms in support of EX SALTIRE CANTER. The whole range of equipments held by the Sqn was exercised successfully, and the deployment of a mobile det to a local police station in support of an OP MEDWAY scenario went very smoothly.

Having worked hard on set-up on the Friday night and throughout Saturday, a relaxing couple of liquid refreshments to wash down the BBQ, rustled up by our chefs **Cpl Linda Richardson** and **LCpl Christine Simpson**, was anticipated. That was until the intervention of the SSM, **WO2 Linda Bertram** and her team, who had busily spent the day cooking up a programme of interestingly named games. The events commenced with the allocation of teams, led by the OC, **Maj Andrew Thompson**, **Capt Linda Smith** and the PSI, **SSgt Andy Minorcczyk**. These appointments were immediately relinquished however, with rank slides being passed to the junior member of each team, who duly took command. In particular, **Sig Catriona Duncan** slotted into the role of Sqn OC with ease and enthusiasm.

The games commenced with 'Flying Rubber' – welly throwing whilst running backwards, moving on through croquet with 7lb hammers and blindfold mine clearing to 'cock-in-the-wind' – outdoor badminton. Refreshment was taken after each game, and the final event, involving buckets of water and offshore survival suits, predictably degenerated into chaos. The eventual winners were the team led by **Sig** (Acting Capt) **Philip Chohan**. Any fatigue from a hard day was quickly forgotten.

Sgt Linda McKenzie explains the details of mast erection to Sig Philip Chohan, a recent enlistment

34 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**LtCol G Hearn**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D Newton**

EXERCISE NORTHERN SLEIGH RIDE

In March sixteen members of the Regt took part in EX NORTHERN SLEIGH RIDE, a basic ski proficiency course, in the French Alps. This was the last exped organised by our QM, **Maj Les Wood**, before taking over the post of PSAO of HQ Sqn, but so successful and popular are these exs, that there will certainly be something similar taking place next winter.

The ex started well with flights leaving on time, but when the coach driver from Geneva was stopped for some minor traffic infringement and had his coach torn apart by some fairly enthusiastic French gendarmes, some members of the party

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NEWS FROM THE GULF

14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**LtCol NJ Borrill**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Jolly**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj PJ McElwee**
SSM	**WO2 D Clash**

WELFARE OFFICE

UWO	**Capt A Slack**
UWSNCO	**SSgt B Inglesant MBE BEM**
	Sgt A Gemmell

We have had a busy period in the Unit Welfare Office saying goodbye to **SSgt Kev Stacey**, who leaves the Army after 22 years' service, to be a probation worker. **Kev's** replacement is **Sgt David (Archie) Gemmell**. **Archie** proved invaluable during the period of OP TELIC, putting together a programme of fun events ranging from a Mother's Day lunch with children's entertainment, to fun days at the beach. Overall, there were 15 events over the three-month period. One of the most popular events was the bob-a-job day, highly publicised by the national press. Wives were asked to put in their requests for the tps back in station to perform. The tasks ranged from work on cars to removing garden rubbish.

Capt Andy Slack (UWO) has had a busy OP TELIC period too. He was already UWO, IC PRI and 2IC HQ Sqn, but during our busiest period he had to take over as MTO. Never mind officers' pay or officers' workload. Crack on, **Andy**. **SSgt Bob Inglesant** has just started his 2 years' continuance. As well as the UWSNCO, he is also the part-time PRI shopkeeper until PAYD comes in. He really showed how good he was with the children when, at the local Pembrokeshire Gulf Support Group, he kept 10 children (all under the age of 5) happy with a story for 40 mins.

THE REGIMENTAL EWCC ON OPERATIONS - *by Cpl Joanna Saw*

The conflict in the Middle East would not be complete without the participation of the brave souls of the EW Co-ordination Cell attached to the US 1 MEF HQ at Camp Commando. Wearing forced smiles, we struggled on through our daily business with only 'rice and chunks' from the wonderful local chefs to keep us going (the Burger King didn't arrive until the war was over!) Life was tough as we all got cosy with our American colleagues in our favourite Scud bunkers. **Maj Jim Craig** (US Army Exchange Officer) felt right at home getting re-acquainted with old buddies. During times like these, it was essential that we kept our morale as high as possible, **WO1 (Supvr R) Al Sutherland** indulged in some serious tanning time whilst off shift, earning himself the title of the 'Bronze God', whilst **SSgt Mike Beckett** kept the team entertained during his daily briefs, pointing at the map with his bayonet and ending his commentary's with 'And on a lighter note.....' It's also worth noting that **Maj Mark Adams** became an expert in carrying out important conversations on Ptarmigan whilst masked up! During this intense period, we muddled on the best we could, despite a near-miss by a Seersucker Cruise missile on the first day of the war and frequent trips back to the Scud bunkers thereafter. Throughout this veritable rain of missiles and frequent sandstorms, the CO, **LtCol NJ Borrill**, drove the EWCC hard. It must not go unmentioned that the Comms Det team, **LCpl Joe Howell**, **LCpl** 'Scotty' **Moran** and **Sig Carl Ara**, under the professional leadership of **WO1 (YofS)** 'Taff' **Owens**, worked extremely hard to maintain comms, despite the challenging conditions. This is even more surprising given the sauna-like conditions the Comms Det had to endure in the extreme heat, reducing all of them to stick-like men. They were the only people to eat ten ice creams a day and not put on an ounce of weight.

The Regt EWCC at Camp Commando, Kuwait

LtCol Nick Borrill and SIO, Maj Jim Craig (US Army) at Camp Commando, Kuwait

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

OC	**Maj NGC Yardley**
SSM	**WO2 J Ainsworth**

EX WHALE SPEAR 14-17 APRIL 03 - *by Cpl Robson*

EX WHALE SPEAR was a 226 Sig Sqn range week held at Castlemartin Ranges. The ex and was organised by **Sgt** 'Taff' **Kinsey** and the aim was to improve the shooting skills of the Sqn. During initial zeroing on the first day, some lucky shots managed to fire all their rounds through the same hole. A few soldiers had not fired the SA80 A2 on automatic before, and it proved to be very popular, with all the targets getting well drilled. **Sgt Kinsey** had managed to procure a wide range of foreign weapons from the Dyfed Powys Police Force for our use on the second day. These included an M16 variant, Uzi 9mm, SLR, Magnum and a selection of 7.62mm and other calibre automatic rifles. There was also a range of 9mm pistols, including the Browning to be fired. The foreign weapon range was run by **Sgt** 'Taff' **Morgan.** His hands-on approach in showing off his skill and prowess on foreign weapons resulted in his probably firing more rounds down range than anyone else. As a result, he gleefully announced afterwards he 'had done so much firing he could no longer hear himself speak!' The main event was the March and Shoot on the Wednesday. This consisted of a 12km march with a variety of

stands along the way. The stands included NBC, BFAT, General Knowledge, Map Reading, Recognition, Blindfolded Weapon Assembly, the Assault Course and a Rifle and Pistol Shoot. Although denied at the time, some teams were seen to take more direct routes to some of the stands than others! **Sgt Whitmore's** team took the slow methodical approach to the event, and went on to win the closely fought competition. **Cpl Maxwell** won best overall shot. Everyone worked hard and the final APWT results on the Thursday proved that the week's trg had been exceptionally valuable. Similar events are being planned for the future.

237 SIGNAL SQN (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

OC	**Maj JE Sutton**
SSM	**WO2 K Scott**

Notes by Sig RD Beddows, V Tp

As 237 Sig Sqn return from a well-deserved break after a successful Board of Officers, we are happy to see some of the Sqn's OP TELIC lads return safely from Iraq and disappear on their well-deserved leave. Not a bad deal really, a suntan and 3 weeks off. The Sqn also welcomes back **LCpl Fraser** from his stint in the Commcen. After being incarcerated in a room with no windows for so long, he is extremely happy to see sunlight again. Continuing the theme of sun, we also welcome back the sunbed queen, **Sig Churcher** from his tour of the Gym. The Sqn also welcomes the fresh-faced new lads, **2Lt Allen**, **LCpl Bodin**, **LCpl Knox**, **LCpl Kubiscek**, **LCpl Tinsley**, **LCpl Rutter**, **Sig Holden** and **Sig Archer**. That's a fair few crates. We are looking forward to the Sqn ex and trg package that will be running for the next few weeks in preparation for BATUS in September.

OPERATION TELIC

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

OC	**Maj Pete Cubbin**
SSM	**WO2 Ken Marsh**

Whilst the Regt's commitment to OP TELIC was driven mainly by 245 Signal Sqn HQ, the actual forces deployed consisted of Zulu Tp from 245 Sig Sqn, Tango Tp from 237 Sig Sqn, Romeo Tp from 226 Sig Sqn, a fairly large Echelon, the Light EW Team (LEWT) and elements of RHQ. In total, the Regt deployed 233 people to the Gulf, 28 of whom are still in Iraq awaiting recovery. Getting everyone out to the Gulf was achieved in a fairly piecemeal fashion, with people being loaded onto flights as and when possible. A lucky few managed to get familiar with the MCCP process several times before they actually got to leave. An even luckier few got to camp out on the floor at South Cerney whilst their flights were repeatedly cancelled or delayed! At least everyone got to view the Air Movement Centre's video of **Billy Connolly's** live tour at least five times! Early on into the deployment, 245 Sig Sqn Group, minus the LEWT (who at this point, had already abandoned the rest of us for an exciting time at the front with 16 Air Assault Bde HQ and Sig Sqn) became TACON 1 (US) Marine Div, OP COM 1 (UK) Div. This meant that we ended up at Camp Matilda in Kuwait with the rest of 1 (US) Marine Div. After we got over the initial shock that the Marines accompany all exercise with lively singing, we actually enjoyed living and trg with them. We turned out to be quite a novelty, as the only Brit contingent on the camp and a healthy bartering system soon sprang up. It's amazing what a British beret can get you (especially if you are a female officer – **Lt Rhodes**, **Lt Rowe**). The few weeks we spent in Camp Matilda revolved around getting all the vehicles and equipt set up and checking that everything was in working order following its lengthy boat trip. Unexpectedly the vehs had fared better than they do on our usual shorter trips to Germany and rolled off the boats requiring little attention. Time was whiled away at the camp playing board games in the evenings and going for runs around the camp when it was cool enough to do so (apart from the OpsWO and A/OpsWO, who were busy tending to **Capt Phil Ashworth's** needs). We also had to introduce 1 Radio Bn (which is 1 Marine Div equivalent of 14 Sig Regt (EW)) to our equipment and capabilities, as we were going to be working with them so closely. Most elements of 245 Sig Sqn Group had their own equivalent element of 1 Radio Bn that they worked with. This meant that within 24 hours of war breaking out, over a third of our number went over the border with the US Regtl Combat Teams.

A bit of Welsh pride

Cpl Stedman and his detachment

ZULU TROOP

Z Tp spearheaded the advance of 14 Sig Regt (EW) in the company of the US Marine advance combat team's HQs. After the move up to the border, the Tp waited until the fighting started, passing the time digging trenches and trying not to boil in the desert heat with NBC suits on. Hidden behind sand berms five miles from the border, the Tp watched the initial stages of the attack before charging over the border with the US units for whom we were able to provide fire support. One of our armoured rebros, commanded by **Sgt** 'Daz' **Daniels** and driven by **LCpl Kane**, was believed to be the first to cross the border. The crossing and initial stages of the war went without too many problems. The Tp Comd and Analysis Det (TCAD), which set up during the night, found in the morning that they were surrounded by trenches, bunkers, CPs and burnt-out vehs. **SSgt Tony Ward** and **Cpl Ben Ellison** had a lucky escape when they managed to spot traps set up in a mortar trench just before jumping into it. The next day the US Regtl Combat Teams (RCTs) moved on and these were replaced by British Bns, who had finally managed to catch up with 14 Regt. It was a quick farewell to the Americans, with our hearty thanks for all the MREs and all the other support (tents) they had given us. On the second night a replen run almost ended in tragedy when one of the platform's TCVs was ambushed on its return. The vehs comd, **LCpl** 'Stu' **Wilson** and driver **Sig** 'Vicci' **Gratidge** watched in amazement as an RPG round narrowly missed the front of the veh. Luckily, **Sig Gratidge** sped up and machine gun fire only clipped the top of the veh. Unfortunately it was discovered that there had been a casualty of the incident – **WO1 Smith's** Bergen had been lost from the top cage of the vehicle, leaving him only with what he stood up in for the next few days! The only incident producing tension was when a clearance patrol had to be sent out following the setting off of a tripflare. **SSgt Tony Ward**, **SSgt Jones** and **Cpl Kendrick** had a nervous half-hour until it was discovered that the perpetrator was simply a dog!

LIGHT ELECTRONIC WARFARE TEAM

The LEWT deployed at short notice to Colchester for pre-deployment trg. Once in-theatre, we embarked on a hectic programme of build-up trg, which involved desert driving, navigation, conduct after capture and eqpt trg on new EW equipment (issued just 2 days prior to deployment).

The linguists in the Tp polished up their skills by chatting with the locally employed civilians. The LEWT initially deployed as two patrols and a CP in support of 3 Para Battle Gp, and were inserted as part of their recce screen. The two patrols were thrown straight in at the deep end, co-locating with 7 (Para) RHA FOOs and 3 Para Mobile Support Groups (MSGs). Throughout the early phases of the op, both patrol locs took incoming artillery and small arms fire.

The patrols were then re-deployed to new locs, in order to establish the loc of an enemy FOO, prior to 3 Para's first company raid across the Al Hammar canal. Thanks to the patrols' accurate intercept, DF and analysis by the CP, 3 Para's mortars were tasked and subsequently annihilated the enemy FOO. The Tp was then deployed on several other varied tasks in and around the Rumaylah area in support of other units within 16 Air Assault Bde. The LEWT finally pushed further north with 16 AA Bde Main, but had no further tasking and so returned to co-locate with 14 Sig Regt (EW) at Shiabah airfield.

ROMEO TROOP

O is for OPR, apparently nutritious.
P is for pickle on the Burger King junk food, but delicious.
E is for easy, as in cheese – those swaps from those yanks deserve a few beers!
R is for Romeo, a big pat on the back.
A is for ankle, the war dodger was cracked.
T is for toilets, going in that hole.
I is for Issued in Theatre, or so we were told.
O is for ordnance and those 'cleared' sites.
N is for Naps, the belly-ache (**Sig Luxford**), the brain fug (**Staff Thornton**) and that fight!
T is for test-sniff two man.
E as in ever as in never again!
L is for lose as in the Sqn sports match and **George Dawes'** forfeit as Sqn bee atch!
I is for intestines whose contents came every which way.
C is for complaining done by all, (especially one) every day.

All in all, 14 Sig Regt (EW) had an extremely successful tour in Iraq. We were able to offer a capability that proved invaluable time and again, and to provide 1 (UK) Armd Div G2 with vital and timely intelligence. Incorporating an armoured EW tp, a wheeled EW tp and a radar tp under one armoured EW HQ had never been done before, but the OP TELIC deployment demonstrated that 14 Sig Regt (EW) was able to adapt regardless.

7th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OPERATION TELIC - SQUADRON OC's COMMENTS

Unfortunately the OC is too busy sunbathing, so yet again it falls to the hardworking Sqn 2IC and newly-crowned Camp Adjutant to fill a few lines. The Sqn has settled into its very plush surroundings now known as Allsopp Lines and which was formerly one of Saddam's palaces. It is typical of the British squaddie attitude that we are all still moaning about the lack of running water and air con, despite being in the plushest surroundings of anyone on OP TELIC. There have even been some complaints about blisters from the constant rubbing of sunburnt feet on marble floors.

Due to our current abode, the visit season has well and truly commenced. In the last 3 weeks we have had the PM, the CDS, CGS and several other slightly less important visitors cross our marble doorstep. As a result, the Sqn's assault on the world's media has been a success, and coupled with several promotions (yes that includes you, OC A Tp), promises numerous 'slabbings' on return to Hohne.

With returning in mind, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the guys and girls from 4 ABSS, 30 Sig Regt, 2 Sig Regt and our TA brethren for their fantastic support during the op. It is true to say we couldn't have done it without you. However, we in the Desert Rats, will gladly take all the praise for your hard work!

Finally a few fond farewells as the posting cull catches up with the Sqn. We say goodbye to the Sqn Ops Offr, **Capt Oli Dinnis**, the RQMS, **Jim Duncan**, the FofS, **WO2 Steve Erskine**, and the Artificer, **SSgt Steve Wright**, all of whom are leaving us on hard earned promotion - except **Capt Dinnis**, but that was to be expected really!

ALPHA TROOP – *by Cpl Lane*

Tp Comd	**Lt AJC Grant**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Walton**

THE STORY SO FAR

20 March 2003 saw the start of the second Gulf War. Along with many other Sigs units, 7 Armd Bde Sig Sqn were deployed to take part. And so we found ourselves moving over the Iraq/Kuwait border in the early hours of the 21 March. Thankfully all our vehs made it to their destination, which is testament to the professionalism and dedication of the crews.

After a few quick moves, including one where **Cpl O'Hanlon** threw himself from his veh, sustaining a broken wrist, the Tp found itself occupying a less than comfortable site at Shaibah Airfield. We were quickly into our routine and the Bde Staff soon joined us for the ensuing fun and games.

The next few weeks saw the monotony of det life creep in. Luckily, this was punctuated by lots of digging, and sangar building. Just as life at Shaibah was getting comfy (we now had a TV to watch the news on) we moved to Basra International Airport (BIA) and A Tp had its first break from being in control.

This brief period gave us the opportunity to do some much-needed maintenance on the vehs. More importantly it also gave us time to search for a porcelain toilet, a search, which sadly proved to be fruitless. The time at BIA flew by and it wasn't long before we heard noises about a possible move to a palace.

Sure enough, a few days later saw us sitting in the plush surroundings of the Presidential Palace in Basra. Once again, the lads and lasses set to work building a working environment fit for the Staff, whilst keeping an eye out for a porcelain toilet. This time the search produced results, and satisfied grunts and groans could be heard emanating from behind locked doors. Sadly, deep trench latrines would soon be back in use.

Within a very short space of time, considering the level of work required, we were ready to receive the Bde Staff. Once again, routine took over and monotony resumed. Always keen to help, the Sqn took on new responsibilities as the days and weeks passed, helping to add a bit of variety to our work.

We are now well settled and are still living in the Palace. Film and quiz nights, organised by the junior ranks, help to serve as a reminder that another week has passed, and all the talk is of what we will be doing with our leave. The end of tour is now in sight and everyone involved can be very proud of what we have achieved over the past few months. The work rate has been exceptionally high and this level of effort has helped produce some great results. The leave we will shortly be enjoying is, for once, well-deserved.

BRAVO TROOP – *by LCpl Gaz Warwick*

Here we are again, still at Basra Palace, and another fun-packed month for B Tp. We welcome **Cpl John Harris** and **Cpl Richie Applegarth**, and say to **Cpl Mick Clark**, who, after much dodging and diving, is finally on his detties, prior to posting. A special shout goes to **LCpl Dave Honeywill**, who picked up a rather mysterious back injury just after crossing the border, and has now been short-toured for his efforts (will he get his medal though?).

26 and 27 April saw the CSE show come to town. Along with five, slightly above average looking dancers, the lads and lasses were pleased to see 'Bee Gees Magic' and 'Bjorn Again'. It made a refreshing change from the norm. The month ended on a high note with a visit by the Prime Minister, **Tony Blair**. As usual everyone got a little too excited, but none more so that **Sig Ted Smith**, who models himself on the big man. He was quoted as saying, 'Just to touch him was such an honour.'

Our end of tour date is almost fixed, so morale is slightly up at the moment. But for now its back to the guard towers, 43's and staff support for the final push.

CHARLIE TROOP – *by Sig Nichol*

Whilst Alpha and Bravo Tps continue their excellent work on guard and radio shift, Charlie Tp's role in the Sqn remains an ever-changing one, throwing up new challenges whenever possible.

With the RRBs becoming redundant due to TAC SAT replacing CNR as the medium for the Bde Comd net, the Sqn's 3 remaining RRBs were called back to the Palace at Basrah. This meant that the hard-working re-sup team could now relax for the first time in ages. The crew of RRB E actually believed that re-sup had stopped two weeks previously as runs to their loc became less and less frequent. Perhaps the 50-km drive became less appealing in the 40-degree heat, or **Cpl Andy Newson** had actually forgotten they were there. RRB B was first back, freewheeling from the DWR live firing range at Safwan Hill under the watchful command of **Cpl Stu Codack**, with none of the crew having completed the tower test. Last but not least, RRB A was dragged back. They were disgusted when told they would have to revert to solar showers instead of running water and that their was only one choice of ice cream for dinner at the Palace compared with the BW's two flavours. The RRB crews send their special thanks to **WO2 (Yof S Phillips**, as they believe he is solely responsible for their return. Cheers, Yeoman!

So, what of the rest of the Tp? It wasn't only RRBs in Charlie Tp, you know. The personality drivers have continued to struggle on relentlessly in their air conditioned Mitsubishi Pajeros. Catering to their officers' every whim and desire, it's a hard life, honest. **LCpl Jay Preston** deserves congratulations for managing to remain the Comd's driver for the entire operation, and **Sig John Miller** continues his extensive trg programme in preparation for P Company. Homage must also be paid to **Sig John Stray**, who continues to bend over backwards for the Sqn OC.

We must not forget the augmentees, without whom we surely would not have managed. The TA lads and lasses have been a valuable asset, admirably filling gaps in the manning and doing first-class jobs. Special mentions must go to **Cpl Andy Newson**, whose special skills at fixing generators are second to none; to **Cpl Tony Hadley**, who delayed his final exams to become a commercial pilot, to perform a multitude of tasks for the Tp (none as glamorous as flying however) to **Cpl Ian Byrne**, who has thrown in the towel at his regular job to take an FTRS with the Sqn; to **Cpl Cheryl Duncan**, who has managed to complete an entire tour with no desert combats; to **Sig Merrick Prescott**, who has given up his tour of the States to come and grace us with his presence (He too has decided to take an FTRS with the Sqn, in the vain hope that he will become a man); and finally to **Sig Anna Yates**, who gave up an extremely busy life back in the UK to come and join us for OP TELIC.

The Tp says goodbye to all the 4 Bde guys who helped us during this busy time, especially **Sgt Duncan Samuel**, who left a legacy of burnt-out vehs for us to contend with. Cheers.

SUPPORT TROOP – *by Sig Firbank*

OP TELIC started back in January with the advance party flying into Kuwait, where we set up what would be home for the next four weeks at Camp Rhino, 80 kms from the Iraqi border. At the beginning of February the main body came out and the fun and games commenced.

We then moved up to the concentration area (Coyote) near the Iraqi border where we were joined by **Capt Shields**. With the temperature rising day by day, many started to realise what sweat and hard work actually was, resulting in two of them, **Ptes Geoff Elmes** and **John Smith**, having to slope off back to Germany with heat illnesses (missing the war!) The QM's Dept was working all hours keeping the supplies coming through in preparation for going over the border, while the A1 Ech boys supplied the vital supplies of water, rations and fuel to keep them going for five days without resup when they actually went over. With war imminent and the constant threat of Scud attacks hanging over us, we spent many hours in respirators and trenches with morale at an all time high!

As soon as the war started and we prepared to follow the battle groups into war, morale shot up. We moved over the border into hostile territory and up to our first loc, Shaibah Airfield. Here we set up a semi-permanent home for a few weeks, and all busted guts to keep the HQs and troops going, supplying everything from food and water to fuel and clothing. It was here the A1 boys took there first casualty. **LCpl Parry**, with a bad shoulder, back, arm (or something like that) is now known as 'Half-a-Tour Ted!' It was funny to see everyone diving for their helmets and cover when the AS nasties were going off, thinking it was incoming mortar fire.

With the war over, we moved up to Basrah Palace for a bit of comfort - which was welcomed by all, after living off our vehicles for three months with sand chafing our bums and mosquitoes trying to suck the life out of us. We moved into Phase 4, and the Sqn Ech started to get into a daily routine of really long hours and not much time to ourselves! Many thanks go out to all the boys and girls of the Ech for their efforts, as we have been stretched to the limit supplying what seems like the whole Bde with everything they need. They have gone over and beyond what could be asked of any mere mortal! We are looking forward to handing over to 19 Mech Bde over the next few weeks. Welcome to the melting heat of the Iraqi summer, boys.

Congratulations go to **WO2 (RQMS) Duncan** on his promotion on posting to Blandford as a Tp Comd and to newly-promoted **Cpl Burns**, **LCpls Reid**, **Sim** and the soon to be **LCpl Lacey**. Special mention to **SSgt Yendell** for looking after the boys and to **LCpl Smith** and **Sig McDonald** for all the hard work they have done since being attached to us.

BASRA PALACE 5 KM ROAD RACE – *By Lt Steve Cadywould*

The Basra Presidential Palace (Allsopp Lines) had been the home of 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn for little over two weeks when it was decided to hold a Charity fun run. The powers that be decided that to break the monotony, we would organise a road race around the Palace grounds. This would also encourage people to do some trg. As the saying goes, 'a healthy body equals a healthy mind.' The OFS was consulted and a date was set, Sunday 04 May 03.

With one week to organise the event, and never having organised a running event of any scale before, I enlisted the help of a couple of experts. These were **SSgt Cox**, who was to run the administrative side of the event, and **WO1 (SMI) Phillips**, a self-confessed expert who knew exactly what was required to compile the race results (a black art only understood by members of the PT Corps). I had planned on a low-key affair, with no more than 100 runners. **SSgt Cox** and **SMI Phillips** had other plans as they had both missed the London Marathon this year.

The course was constructed the day before leaving only a few pieces of the puzzle to be slotted together on the Sunday morning. The finish line took the most work, as the method **SMI Phillips** had chosen for the recording of the results required us to fit every competitor into the finish funnel. **Sgt Duncan Samuel** hammered all twenty 6ft pickets into position by himself, the kind of delicate treatment that led to his Land Rover (KU 74 AA) spending the remainder of the tour in the LAD. Cheers **Sgt Samuel**!

Race day arrived and the admin team paraded under **SSgt Cox** at 06.30hrs to finalise any remaining details. The registration opened on time with **Cpl Keith Lamb** at the helm happily taking entrance fees and stamping the hands of those who had paid. **SSgt Tony Simpson** was present at the start as the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Stu Whittley**, had said he would see him there. The 2IC did however fail to mention anything about actually running the race, so **SSgt Simpson** ran straight back to his bed after the race had got underway. At exactly 08.30hrs 167 competitors (and **SSgt Simpson**) in a number of cunningly-named teams sprinted off the start line. The temperature at the start was already well into the 30s, making the race a real challenge for anyone who entered. Thankfully everyone finished successfully, including **Sig John Miller**, who joined **Maj Cunningham** and ran the race in *dish dash's* and the 12 Regt RA three-legged team, who finished in a convincing last place.

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC **Maj Paul Smith**
RSM **WO1 Weaver**

As the Sqn stood down for Christmas leave on 19 December 2002, the comd element remained to complete initial Sqn planning for potential ops in the Gulf. On 2 January 2003 a signal was received formally warning off the Sqn for OP TELIC. Suspicious and cynical thoughts immediately arose that it was a mnemonic for 'Tell Everyone Leave Is Cancelled'. The following day the Nordic ski team was recalled from its trg in France and those nominated for the advance party returned to Colchester. Activation staff from the Bde HQ and a small team from the Sqn departed LHR, arriving in Kuwait in the early hours of 6 January.

After receiving orientation briefings from SBLA in Camp Doha, the advance party moved to Camp Commando to set up and facilitate a Bde Fwd HQ. Seen as both a political and military ally by the US Marine Div, the Bde HQ was warmly welcomed. The limited airlift available both to the Bde and 1 UK Armd Div in the initial stages of the op required an industrious and manouvrist approach to providing logistic support and structure to our HQ. In the quiet hours, US sentries could be heard shouting, 'The Brits are stealing the wood!' **Cpl Kemp** had ensured that enough materials were gathered to make bird tables, map boards, work desks and chairs – the USMC stenciling being quickly covered by mapping!

24 January saw the deployment of personnel to provide an initial operating capability. Those personnel in UK were busy loading the shipping or conducting individual trg in preparation for deployment. Rear Link dets were dispatched to the Battle groups to facilitate integration at an early stage. 2 Sig Regt SANs and 501 Det from 30 Sig Regt deployed from their unit locs to Colchester as part of the build-up phase.

The remainder of the Sqn arrived in theatre 11/12 February and moved immediately into the Kuwaiti desert to a designated loc, CA EAGLE. February also saw the arrival of the first assets by sea. The Sqn returned to its roots in the engineer/pioneer role and set about completing the build of a tented camp, constructing sangars, DTLs, desert roses and strip wash facilities. Rations were US MRE until a field kitchen was constructed. A number of build-up exs were conducted in February and early March to practise 'set piece' preliminary ops – movement to Assembly and Dispersal areas and crossing the Breach. One particular ex was conducted in a sandstorm – the worst for thirty years. The only injuries sustained were a broken arm, dislocated knee and concussion. The first unofficial movement of the HQ into Iraq was probably the Alpha Tp Main HQ tentage, which, against the advice of the Sqn was erected and subsequently blew away to the north! A blessing in disguise, it reduced the number of possible HQ permutations available for subsequent ops! During this same ex, **Cpl Welburn** ensured discipline and routine were maintained in the pitch black and reduced visibility of the sandstorm. After mistakenly grabbing a staff officer by the scruff of the neck and exchanging of expletives, he ensured that the remainder of the Bde staff dutifully filled sandbags and dug shell scrapes! On the occasions when comms proved impossible, DRs were deployed to move data around the battle space. Dispatch became ever more important for the passage of ATO and SPINS documentation to flying sites and info between the different Bde and Div HQs.

DRs became ever more important to move data around the battle space

4/5 Royal Irish Rangers provided a defence platoon for Bde HQ, which considerably lessened the burden of guards. Additionally, the TA augmentees arrived in theatre in early March. Both groupings integrated well into the Sqn and provided an invaluable service.

In the days leading up to war, planning continued and op detail was refined. On receipt of the signal authorising war, ammo was issued and personnel were sanitised. 20 March saw the Bde units move into initial staging areas. Scud attacks were launched against these locs, proving that Iraqi forces had indeed continued to conduct recces of Div and Bde areas prior to the start of the Ground War. The inevitable masking up and unmasking and the digging of shell scrapes in DA BRIGHTON combined with a 'What's that?' and subsequent reply of 'That's a mine from the first Gulf War. Go dig your scrape somewhere else!' ensured that the Sqn remained alert, if a little tired.

During that night the Bde recce officer moved forward with a small team to site the Bde HQ. Rebros (**Cpl Sharp**, **Cpl Oliver** and **Sig Seager**) and a small team attached to RCT 5 LO moved through the Breach early to facilitate comms between Battle Gps and Bde HQ, and to provide an organised and efficient Relief in Place of RCT 5. 22/23 March saw the Bde HQ move through the Breach and push up into the Rumaylah Oilfields at the junction of DALLAS/TAMPA. Step-Up HQ's VCP then had a valuable find when they stopped a brand new car (very suspicious in this part of the world!) containing 4 members of the Ba'ath Party complete with IDs and AK47s. The Bde HQ then moved north into the Rumaylah GOSP maintenance facility, where the HQ dismounted into buildings. At this point the Sqn reconstituted to become a formed unit and for several days while the Bde's Battle Gps were tasked elsewhere in the Div AOR, was the only major unit guarding the oilfields. The situation stabilised and thinking at that time was that this would be the Bde's final lay down loc. Routine was quickly established and allowed B Tp to turn around its assets in preparation for any future taskings.

Bde Step-up HQ somewhere in the Iraqi desert

A deployment north of the Euphrates had been planned by the Bde but not activated by Div. Subsequently, Maysan Province came under control 1 UK Armd Div and the Bde was tasked to occupy and patrol the province. A recce was conducted of the ground to the south of the Euphrates, initially but unintentionally linking up with D Sqn HCR. The area was not suitable for a Bde HQ loc. A smaller party from the Sqn returned to the area the following night in preparation to cross the Euphrates into the town of Al Qurna, reputed to be the site of the Garden of Eden from Biblical times. A loc was found, but the plan changed. After a brief occupation of the airfield, Bde HQ moved to a barracks loc just to the south of it. Bde Step-Up HQ located itself on the football pitch inside the camp and the buildings were cleaned and prepared for occupation by Main HQ. A Tp Main followed on a few days later and dismounted into the buildings. This was to be our final Bde HQ loc prior to draw-down of the Bde in June. Routine ensued with regular morning PT, guards, shifts and military trg where appropriate. Engineer plant made the digging of DTLs a little less manpower intensive and lessened the burden on the Sqn. Permission to use the Iraqi ranges north of the Tigris was eventually granted, allowing a number of Sqn personnel and the defence platoon to conduct live firing.

It was at this time that a small team was dispatched to the British Embassy in Baghdad in preparation for the return of its key staff. **Cpl Sherlock** managed to rewire the whole embassy prior to staff arrival. The team currently remains in Baghdad providing comms between patrols and HQ.

On 29 May the responsibility for Maysan Province shifted to 1 PARA and after the CHOC, Bde HQ closed down for the final time. Bde units and the Sig Sqn trickled through CONDOR, reconstituted in part and moved south to Kuwait as part of the extraction plan. Key nodes and rebros to facilitate the move have been withdrawn, leaving a small node in CA EAGLE to control the movement of personnel and assets out of theatre. At time of writing, 30 Sig Sqn personnel remain in Kuwait to load the boats on 17 June with a 4-man RLD remaining in support of 1 PARA in Al Amarah until early July and the British Embassy Support Team, also numbering 4 men, in Baghdad.

The Sqn, indeed the Corps, has benefited enormously from the challenges presented it as a result of the decision to deploy on OP TELIC. In the initial stages, the Bde Comd was extremely concerned about the provision of robust comms to facilitate complex ops. As the op for the Bde draws to a close, his doubts and concerns have been allayed and comms no longer feature in his 'top ten'. The Sqn has again demonstrated its ability to deploy rapidly and at short notice. The deployment has not been without frustration and limitation and lessons learned will be the subject of the POR and subsequent briefings to SOinC(A). Without doubt it was the vital contribution of all Royal Signals personnel, both Sqn and attached units that made the deployment a success.

AL AMARAH RANGE COMPLEX – *by Sig Smith 410*

We departed for the ranges at 06.30D, traveling en route through a number of small villages, arriving 1½ hours later in the middle of the desert with nothing to see as far as the horizon.

Initially we zeroed our rifles on a 100m range, using makeshift targetry from water boxes. We wore CBA, helmet and webbing, which was extremely uncomfortable, and were constantly sweating. Weapons had to be continually oiled to reduce stoppages and prevent overheating. We fired off at least 10 magazines each prior to moving onto 51mm mortars and GPMGs. On the next range there was a huge stone wall for a target roughly 700m away. The GPMGs made good work of cutting the wall in half. The mortars were then unleashed onto the same target area. This was the first time that I had fired either of these weapons. We took a break to escape the worst of the midday heat, downing plenty of water and resting in the shade of wagons. The next range was veh contact drills. 'Contact Front!' was the cue for the driver to bring the veh to an abrupt halt while the passengers put lead down onto the targets (Iraqi helmets). The driver threw smoke and put the veh into reverse, extracting from the contact. The same ex was conducted with a GPMG mounted on a 4-ton truck. This gave it much more realism and is probably the best ex I have conducted with live ammo.

'Contact front!' Vehicle contact drills on Al Amarah Range Complex

We had the opportunity to throw HE grenades. This was a bit scary at first, as I did not realise the damage that these could inflict on a target. I had to crawl up to a bunker, post the grenade and crawl back. It exploded, shaking the ground and producing loads of dust. All of the trg came together to make a live firing sec attack. This was amazing and made my heart race. The adrenalin rushed through me, smoke was everywhere and targets appeared. I was the grenadier. The sec comd and I went left flanking close to the enemy, close enough to post the grenade. I then switched to automatic and put a full magazine into the enemy position. Again, this was the first live sec attack that I had done. Now I am more aware of my surroundings, my mates and that a mistake could cost dearly.

At night we received QBOs for a night ambush. We tabbed until we reached the ambush loc. Everyone made their way to set positions: GPMGs, LSWs, and Mortars. Flares and Illum went up, and everyone hammered the rounds down at the enemy. Tracer zipped across the sky from the GPMGs and LSW section. The target was an old Iraqi tank on fire, with figure targets around it. All were taking a pounding.

At 23.00D we drove to the HLS, where we awaited our extraction back to camp. Again this was the first time I had been in a Chinook. The whole day was full of new experiences. If I get the chance I'd do it again.

0P AND PSYOP

The first few days of the War were pretty slow for our call sign 0P (**Capt J Crook**, **Cpl Danny Jones** and **Sig Dave Benson**). It consisted of marshaling, and counting the packets through the various mounting areas and eventually the Breach. Our next tasking was to move around the southern AOR looking for potential hotspots and reporting any int back to the Bde Comd or CoS. This carried on for a couple of weeks. Along the way we pursued Iraqis we suspected of being soldiers or terrorists and confiscated a small arsenal of weaponry.

During Week Three we were tasked to go on a mission with a det from 307 PsyOp Coy, US Army. Our task was to go with the lead element of 1 PARA into Ad Adyr and liberate it from Ba'ath Party control. We moved into the town without hindrance and proceeded to pass messages from a loudspeaker attached to the US vehs. The crowds came out in their thousands lining the streets to welcome us. After that, the word got across the Bde Battle Gps about the US PsyOp Team. The jobs then just came rolling in. '0P' also finally got to say 'Contact' over the net for real on the way up to D Sqn HCR position.

The job started to change for us with PsyOp. Instead of loudspeaker broadcasts we started handing out newspapers and leaflets and actively gathered int about Ba'ath Party members from locals. The whole war for **Capt Crook**, **Cpl Jones** and myself had been an amazing experience and won't be quickly forgotten.

The Sqn now has a period of well-deserved leave prior to the return of shipping to UK. Reconstitution in UK to prepare the Sqn for future deployment is scheduled for July, prior to summer leave stand-down. The Sqn returns to R2 in September with a mix of exs and adventure trg planned.

Crowds lined the streets to welcome us

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

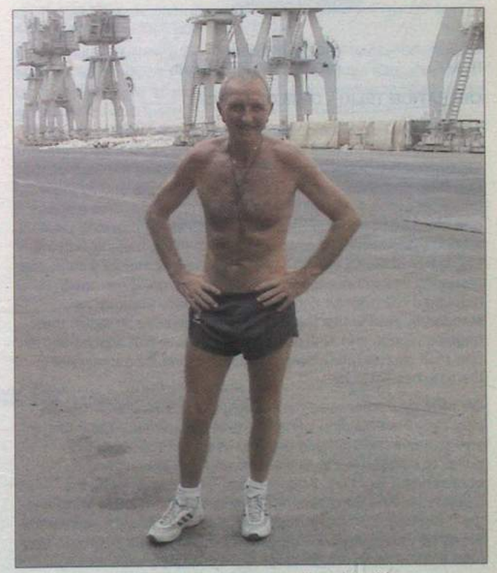
OC **Maj Rab Young**
SSM **WO2 Daz Abson**

DEPLOYMENT – OPERATION TELIC

Following our last inclusion, the Sqn continues to support OP TELIC into the next phase, commercialization and sustainment. We were given the opportunity by the CO, to remain in theatre until end of July 03 to oversee the OSCA network laydown plan. Who could refuse that one! The Regt has now returned to York after doing sterling work with the remainder set up in the Port of Umm Qasr. The RHQ element also remained behind to ensure a smooth transition for the arrival of Chief G6, **Col John Terrington**, who is now firmly embedded into COMBRITFOR at Basrah International Airport (BIA).

So where are we now? The war is over and hostilities have ceased. An installation team from 10 Sig Regt, headed up by **WO2 Bulli Bullivant**, continue to build HQ to a high standard. Well done lads. All the OSCA cabins are nearly in position, with the final one going to Baghdad very soon. **Lt Andy Nicklin** has deployed ahead of this move and is now our man in Baghdad! As for the rest of the Sqn, they are looking forward to some well-earned rest. First in and last out. The OC, **Maj Rab Young** is going into rehab on return as he is suffering from 'depleted golf syndrome'. So you can guess where he will be heading. Our new Ops Team of **SSgts FofS Stumpie Dunstone** and **YofS Brendan Plant** have taken over the reins from the Regtl Ops crew and have firmly stamped their authority on anyone who will listen. As usual, the busiest dept is Suppt Tp, who are still collecting, recording and delivering CIS assets throughout theatre. We all had a bit of respite last week and managed to get some time off to visit the CSE Show. Some even managed to get on stage. **Sgt Paul Clancy** strutted his stuff as a Dancing Queen (no comment) and **Cpl Vicky Lomax** enjoyed being the Magician's assistant!

We are now planning the redeployment back to UK at the same time as getting the lads some well earned R&R. The R&R is a bit like day-release from prison. You are supervised into a guarded US camp, have a swim and then back to your tent at night, and there is still no beer. Roll on leave, we all need to unpack our bags.



The OC, Maj Rab Young still pushing it!

OPERATION TELIC 2003 - *by Sig Emma Anderson*

January was the beginning of OP TELIC for the Sqn, with elements deploying before the main body, to a then, very small

camp in Kuwait (ironically called Camp Kohima) which would become the home base of the Regt during the war. Camp Kohima was situated next to a very large American camp called Arifjan, which would prove to bring hours of fun to members of the Sqn with its extensive range of fast food outlets, PX, - Oh and of course, a really good gym!

February was somewhat different as it bought the first move, in what was then an ex, to Camp Rhino, which was situated inside an American camp called Camp Commando. Camp Rhino would prove to be an eye opener as to what was to be expected of what would become OP TELIC.

March was probably the busiest time for the Regt, with many personnel deployed to the four winds, including attachments to 3 CDO Brigade, 16 AA Brigade, 17 Port and Maritime, and many other units in theatre. During the early stages of the conflict we had a detachment with 1 Div Alt, which moved into Iraq with 1 MEF. This proved to be a very rewarding job for **Cpl Vickers**, **LCpl Smith** and **Sig Adams**, and would take them into what was then a war zone to provide tac comms for the fwd element of the Div.

April brought good things for the Sqn, as the first EFI arrived into theatre and we all enjoyed a well-deserved can of warm Coke!

May provided the opportunity for the majority of the Regt to recover back to York, leaving 219 Sig Sqn, to form the OSCA Sig Sqn, who fought on. Some of the same faces at the front leading the way included **Lt Andy Nicklin**, **SSgt YofS Plant**, and many other war veterans. Entertainment was never far away and a CSE show brought the celebrity out of certain individuals, including **Sgt Clancy** and **Cpl Lomax**, who were chosen from a cast of thousands to appear on stage along with the cast where they shone like the stars they are!

We are now looking forward to returning back to York to a warm welcome from the rest of the Regt and a well-earned rest back in sunny Britain! Fingers crossed, or is it Crossed Keys! Either way, see you all in *Toffs*.

Cpl Rob Vickers and Sig 'Commando' Adams enjoying brew-up shortly after crossing into Iraq

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261) - JOINT FORCE LOGISTIC COMPONENT SIGNAL SQUADRON

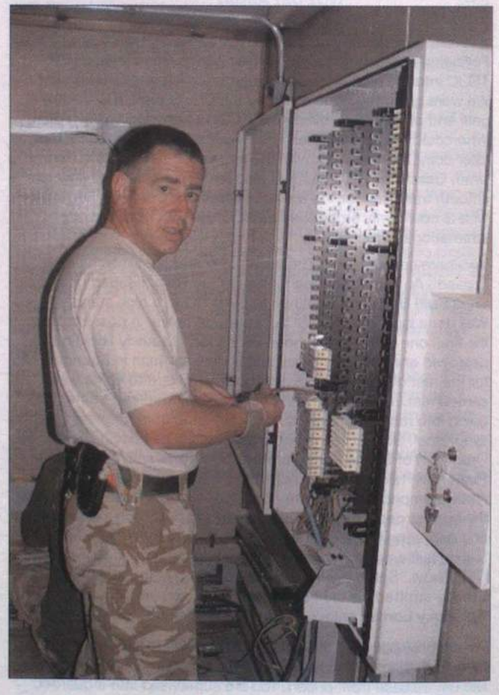
OC	**Maj Matt Fensom**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) KRJ Smith**

OPERATION TELIC – UMM QASR PORT

The Sqn has now been complete in Iraq for six weeks, and what a busy time it's been! The first job was the takeover from 214/262 Sig Sqn before preparing the HQ for the arrival of the Staff of 101 Log Bde. Our thanks go out to **Maj Stu Gillespie** and all those under his comd, for making the transition period such a smooth one. To date our time in theatre has been spent throwing WOTAN around theatre as if it was going out of fashion, battling with the fragile PTARMIGAN network on our evening conference calls, and preparing and moving the Staff and hangers on to our newly renovated HQ (with air conditioning and office furniture as standard!). Add to this the ever growing life support tasks, the ongoing pigeon and feral dog cull, frequent urgent dashes to the one-man saunas (portaloos), a HQ move, and it's not surprising the time has flown by!

We have recently moved the JFLogC HQ to a new loc – the old Iraqi Duty Free building within the port boundaries. The intention was to move the Staff and Sig Sqn into a purpose built HQ building, complete with air conditioning and briefing and conferencing facilities. After some outstanding work by the Queen's Gurkha Engineers, **WO2** (now WO1) **FofS Sue King** and the 2 Sig Regt Inst Techs, the move was on. Initially it seemed as though it was going to be bigger than Ben Hur, but thanks to the hard work of all involved, things went decidedly well.

The manner in which the Sqn has deployed has called for great flexibility from all ranks. No part of the Sqn has been unaffected by the need to alter roles, lose manpower, assume additional responsibility, and generally stay on our toes for fast balls. It is testament to the professionalism of all ranks that the Sqn has managed to start the deployment in such a positive manner. If you're about to be posted in, the moral of the story is be prepared to work (and play) hard.



The RSM gets back to his roots

THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT - *by Lt Liz Pointon*

The day started like any other day out here. After having been visited the day before by Forces Sweetheart, **Nell McAndrew**, the news that we were to be visited by our PM, **Tony Blair** went relatively unnoticed amongst the boys. On the other hand, being a particular fan of his, I was excited at the prospect. It was whilst discussing over breakfast, his policy on changes to the Government's stance on the referendum for the European constitution with my highbrow 2IC/Ops Offr, **Capt Jamie Noble**, that my day was to change considerably. 'I bet you 10p you can't kiss the PM,' he said. And there it was - the challenge had been set. Although quite nervous at first, I knew I had to go through with it, when my OC, **Maj Matt Fensom**, upped the ante by explaining that he had set the standard for daring subaltern stunts by dancing with our Colonel-in-Chief, **HRH, The Princess Royal** when he was a young Lt (- about 50 years ago!) When all were lined up after his visit, most were wilting from the intense heat. But not I. I was on the sidelines, busy puckering up with military precision, waiting for my moment. As he waved goodbye to the tps in his charismatic, catalogue pose way, I ambushed him from behind a 4GS Medical Regt ambulance and stuck a sloppy smacker right on his (surprisingly soft) cheek. And boy oh boy, did sparks fly! I won my 10p bet and diminished the OC's Royal rendezvous into oblivion. Subbies throughout the Corps, the standard has now been set…

The big moment – Lt Pointon executes Capt Noble's cunning plan!

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Keith**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Harman**

261 Sig Sqn left Aldershot on 26 April for the long journey to Umm Qasr in Iraq. The heat hit us as soon as we stepped off the plane at KIA. From here we went by coach to Camp Kohima at Arifjan, where we met the boat party and were reunited with our vehs. The following morning we drove up through Kuwait and into Iraq. When we arrived at Umm Qasr it became clear that there was an outbreak of D&V, so we were told not to share bottles of water and maintain a high standard of hygiene. But somehow the bug got out. One of the first victims was **RSM Kev Smith**, closely followed by **SSgt Lee Clark**, who insisted it was 'heat exhaustion' whilst running to the port-a-loo with his buttocks clenched.

It was only upon arrival at Umm Qasr that the size of the task ahead hit home. With the force protection measures in place, we had, in addition to our normal tasks, to spend a lot of time on escort duties to the various locs around theatre. We have also taken on the management of white fleet for HQ JFLogC and are considering renaming ourselves 'Avis Tp.' **SSgt Harman's** posterior requires surgically removing from his Toyota Land Cruiser! The ISM Team has been very busy trying to get the infernal JOCs system working correctly - something which hasn't been helped by the tendency of the civilian contract generators deciding they don't like the heat.

Some of the highlights to date have been a very enjoyable trip to the CSE show in Shaibah, where *Bjorn Again* and *Bee Gees Experience* were the highlight.

During our time in Iraq we have said goodbye to important members of the Tp. A big thank you to **LCpl McGuckin** and **LCpl Gray** for the work both in and out of the bar. A warm welcome is extended to **LCpl Reynolds.** We also express our thanks to **Cpl Webb**, **Cpl Tucker**, **LCpl Bye**, **LCpl Trotter**, **LCpl Perry** and **Pte Dunn** for their much-appreciated help.

VISIT FROM NELL McANDREW

Could it really be true? Was **Nell McAndrew** really going to come and visit us? You bet your bottom dollar she was. And boy, was she looking forward to it! After almost a month in theatre, rumours were rife that a VIP was in-bound for a morale-raising visit, but nobody knew who. We all knew that the PM was coming - that was taken as read. But the ComSec surrounding **Nell's** visit was unbelievably tight (just like her top!).

As the visit programme was being written, our intrepid OC, **Maj Matt Fensom** ensured that the Sqn got maximum exposure time (although not quite as much as he did!) and had the opportunity to get a quick photo taken. Unfortunately something had to give. Our 2IC/Ops Offr, **Capt Jamie Noble** was packed off to a Roc Drill, because everybody knew she would fall for his devilishly handsome looks - and then the wedding to **Dale Winton** would be off. Whilst all this commotion was going on, the RSM was wandering around foaming at the mouth - to the extent that we were about to get him a rabies booster jab. We were told that **Nell** had a great time and no doubt loved kissing all those sweaty men. Rumour has it the visit brought her close to tears – can't think why!

ARMY

FORCE HEADQUARTERS SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AG Lucas**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Lloyd**

The last instalment of *WIRE* notes from 211 Sig Sqn saw us busy guarding the Gas Oil Separation Plant (GOSP) in the southern Rumaylah Oil Fields. This task was completed professionally and handed over to 3 Para and we relocated north to the recently-secured Basrah International Airport (BIA).

The Sappers were busy removing destroyed T-55 tanks from the runway as the first packet of armour rumbled up to the rear of the terminal building. With the Sqn parked in formation on the pan, accommodation was secured in the old baggage sorting area, where the discovery of a camel spider did little to dampen the troops' spirits. A weapons keep safe area was established and it wasn't long before the order was given to stop carrying our respirators around. It was strange to walk about without the items that had never been more than an arm's length away for the last four months.

From the views on the roof to the abandoned Iraqi uniforms found deep inside the airport's air-raid shelters, the airport was a fascinating building to explore. The splendour of the VIP suite, with its gold plated taps and toilet furnishings was in stark contrast to the villages we had passed through on the way here. When every single room had been explored and examined, the HQ was built in the Domestic Departure Lounge with diamond 10

In our most northern loc in Iraq, members of Support Tp relax. L-R Cpl Rogers, Sig Mattison and Sgt Rodway

being built in the restaurant area of the International Departure Lounge. In less than three days, troops from 211 Sig Sqn, with a little help from Lima Tp, turned the airport lounge into a fully functioning Div HQ, ready to receive the Staff from the dusty desert. The airport offices were scrubbed clean and turned into the staff sleeps, whilst the air raid shelters were secured and turned into the Sqn armoury.

The Sqns of 1 (UK) ADSR were soon amalgamated to become the Force HQ Sig Sqn and elements of 201, 211 and 212 began to redeploy back to Herford. **Maj Lucas** stayed in theatre to command the Sqn, with **Capt Bosworth** returning to Herford and **Capt Hawkins** taking over the role as 2IC.

On 2 May the Sqn witnessed **Richard Branson** flying in on board one of his Virgin 747s packed with humanitarian aid. This was the first commercial aircraft to fly in to Basrah and the pilot was an exiled Iraqi pilot. It was an emotional time for all involved. As the media scrum died down, members of the Sqn showed the crew around the airport (they had certainly never seen bunk beds in a baggage reclaim hall before!) whilst others had a well-deserved massage in the first class cabin on the plane. The visit was a great morale boost to the troops, as many saw their faces in the UK national press a few days later and some were even lucky enough to get on TV.

Another morale booster for the Sqn came in the form of the CSE show. With a stage built in the dusty and windy conditions at Shaibah Airfield, most of the Sqn danced the night away to the tunes of *Bjorn Again* and *Bee Gees Magic*. **Cpl Thompson** and **Sig Cunningham** provided an important comms CP for the event and managed to park their Land Rover strategically in front of the stage, ensuring the best view for the night.

Two C130s outside our new home at BIA. They had just brought Donald Rumsfield

On 29 May the Prime Minister, **Tony Blair**, visited Iraq to thank personally the troops for their involvement in the op. He arrived from Kuwait on an RAF C130 and was met by the GOC and most of the Sqn. Some waved from the rooftop whilst others sat in the Sqn rest room watching it unfold live on Sky TV, only to see **LCpl Stanyer** trying to shepherd the media around and walk straight in front of the camera. After a briefing from the GOC, the PM came upstairs and the first people he encountered were the duty ops at Syscon. He eagerly shook everyone's hand before moving on to another briefing. As the PM left to go to Basrah Palace, the Sqn settled down to lunch, arguing about who had actually shaken his hand and whether he described their performance as 'remarkable' or 'fantastic'.

Force HQ Sig Sqn line up with the first commercial aircraft to arrive at BIA

Basrah Palace was the scene for the Certa Cito Dining Club's first dinner of the tour. Before too many of them redeployed, all Royal Signals Officers in theatre were invited to a dinner to celebrate the success of the op. The chefs from 7 Armd Bde put on a magnificent meal, enjoyed by all, and **2Lt Carpenter** was introduced gently to the duties of Mr Vice at a Regtl Dinner.

As events quieten down in theatre, Force HQ Sig Sqn reformed into two Tps. A Tp, commanded by **Lt Kamara**, is responsible for the comms provided and the day to day running of the HQ. B Tp, commanded by **Lt Gaw**, concentrates on the MT with the help of **Sgt McNeilly**, and the IT systems in the HQ with the assistance of **WO2 Harris**. With a rotation of jobs

211 Sqn setting up Div Main in their first field loc in Kuwait

every 4 weeks, we get experience in all aspects of the HQ and we soon learn our way around downtown Basrah and the quickest way to get back to the border.

There is still a considerable number of TA augmentees working in the HQ, allowing Regular soldiers to return home for career courses, postings or to prepare for an up and coming tour in the Balkans. Filling essential roles such as techs, QM staff and comms ops, the TA augmentees have ensured that the Staff still receive the high level professional service as they did throughout the op and back in their peace time locs.

The Sqn is now looking forward to the handover to 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt and returning to Herford for a much-needed rest. In the immediate future we also look forward to a BPFA, which needs to be held at 05.30hrs because of the soaring temperatures during the day. Friends and family back home can look forward to their very own bronzed Adonis' coming home very soon.

RADCON - *by Sig Cunningham*

Life in RADCON started off pretty hectic at first due to the fact that we had to remote everything into a designated radio room via a skylight on the roof of BIA. This in itself proved to be relatively straightforward as the majority of 211 Sig Sqn had previously done this in the FIBUA village at Sennelager Trg Centre. The RACON team, initially comprising **Sig Bosanquet** and myself, under the watchful eye of **SSgt (YofS) Emsen**, soon became a well-oiled comms machine. This continued for about 2-3 weeks until we took over all of DSG's assets, including a massive seven 321s and three KIPLINGs. With the immediate influx of more nets, the RADCON ranks soon swelled, to include **Cpl Nicholas**, **Cpl Birks**, **LCpl Douglas**, **LCpl Stanyer**, **Sig Barnwell**, **Sig Waters**, **Sig Hutton** and **Sig Briffett**. This large amount of manpower was only required for a short time as the op was firmly established in Phase 4. And so naturally, half the lads retreated faster than an Italian main battle tank. By the end of April, with Force HQ well established at BIA, we were down to minimum manning. And we reluctantly waved goodbye to a good two thirds of 211 Sig Sqn (aka 'The General's right hand men' - as described in the May edition of *Soldier*).

It is now June, manning has depleted yet again and we have a total of six ops left to man 2 nets 24/7 and, as is usual in static locs, do guard. The remaining ops are **Sigs Cunningham**, **Briffett**, **Barnwell**, **Hutton**, **Pacey** and **McAllister**.

ACCESS SECTION

For the last few months all the Sys Ops and Relay Ops have been working in the Access Sec in BIA. The job involved pretty much listening to the Rad Ops' white noise as we are co-located with them and waiting for something to go wrong. We have had a lot of changing about over that period, mainly to give them a change of scenery. MT driver was the most sought after job until they started getting guards as well! Now, as everything winds down, Herford has never been so appealing!!

COMMCEN - *by WO2 (YofS) Jephcote*

Info Mgr **Maj Nick Hotson**

Under the careful guidance of **Maj Hotson**, and using a system originally designed by **SSgt (YofS) Dave Rodgers**, Commcen/RDC Tp advanced through Kuwait and Iraq issuing/receiving and tracking documents in support of 1 (UK) ADSR Staff. Working closely with RDC staff for trg on the electronic systems, Regular and Augmentee clerks and sigs learned how to work in tandem to provide the level of service required.

The desert phases of the op proved to be a challenge, with the number of HQ moves (and the logistics involved), the heat build-up and the lack of sleep over long periods and then fighting to keep the sand out of the computers (and the people) to make them work efficiently. The moves were carried out smoothly because they had been practised, the heat we eventually got used to, and the sand was kept out by putting Clingfilm over all orifices (the computers, not the people). Even tough book computers are not so tough when faced with a desert storm (no pun intended).

Now, sitting in our air-conditioned but still very hot part of the HQ, and the desert phase a distant memory, we reflect on the important part we played and are proud to have served during OP TELIC.

TRUNK NODE 061 - *by LCpl Wignall*

Tp Comd **Lt MR Mallett**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Steve Tresidder**

Since the draw-down of the Coalition forces in the Basra area, TN 061 and attached personnel, (namely Radio Relay 051 C, crewed by **LCpl Wignall** and **Sig Hicks** and 16 Sig Regt's Central 323, crewed by **Cpl Griffiths, Cpl Devlin** and **Sig Matthews**) have formed the nucleus for the remaining land forces, providing Force HQ with vital comms links throughout theatre. For the last 2 months of our deployment we have settled into a busy schedule with little room for error. In spite of the tight hours we were keeping covering shifts, doing fatigues, stagging on, supporting out dets and picking rubbish out of the barbed wire, people still managed to put in time to keep fit. This paid dividends when in 56C the inevitable happened, a BPFA. Inspiration came in the form of **Cpl Scott** who, at the ripe old age of 50 passed in style in 12 minutes. Extra PT was also put to good use by a team of 10 runners who took part in the Umm Qasr 10km Fun Run with a stretcher. Sporting T-shirts supplied by the *Daily Mirror*, they managed to raise in excess of $500 for the Children of Iraq charity. **SSgt Tresidder**, **Cpl Griffiths**, **LCpl Mulligan, LCpl Hatchard, Sig Smissen, Sig Wilkinson, Sig Matthews, Sig Bickerton, Sig Jarvis** and **Sig Hicks** all deserve commendation for their efforts.

A change of command on 6 June saw us wave goodbye to **Lt Timmy Mallett** to attend a much-needed Tp Comds Course. Another morale-boosting event was the opening of the Blue Oyster Bar on Friday and Saturday nights. This proved to be a torment for some, as it was run on a strict 2-can rule.

With the clock ticking on the time remaining and temperatures ever rising, our only remaining regular Sys Op, **Sig Smissen** has been joined by an influx of Relay Ops looking for cooler working climates in the Switch. The latest of these is **LCpl Boothby** and **Sig Vallelly**. The increase in temperature has also inspired a weight loss challenge between **Cpl Russell** and **LCpl Hatchard.** The jury is still out on the winner of that particular challenge.Trunk Node 061 would like to thank all those who have served with us and wish them all the very best for the future.

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **LtCol CR Owen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) JT Cauldwell**

OPERATION TELIC2 – THE NEW BATCH

As expected, the peacekeeping phase has brought new demands on the TA and a further limited mobilisation was announced in Parliament on 30 April to backfill many units who are short of crucial manpower to both operate and repair tech equipt. For the Regt, this translated into a further 19 nominations, all of whom have now received their call-up papers. This includes two Sqn Comds, **Majs Peter Ayre** and **Dominic Hope**. On 2 June we will be saying a temporary farewell to seven soldiers from 89 Sqn, HQ Sqn and 95 Sqn. Others, including the Sqn Comds, deploy between 14 and 20 June. We are sure they will be quickly joined by Parcel Force and a ceaseless supply of bluey's to keep them in touch with the home front. Those deploying on 2 June will be joining 19 Mech Bde Sig Sqn after a short period of intensive training at Chilwell and acclimatisation in-theatre. Most have close friends already serving in the Basra area, and are hoping to catch up with them before they are demobilised.

Maj Pete Ayre contemplating his mobilisation

Hopefully our next article will include an item of personal experiences in the Gulf, but in the meantime I can share one or two amusing anecdotes. However, I have been sworn to secrecy and cannot reveal the source. **LCpl Sam Blackburn** from 95 Sqn settled into her new environment extremely well and quickly adapted to the operational situation during the war-fighting phase. But **Sam** could not fully understand the 24/7 concept and was overheard asking her new Tp SSgt why they didn't get Saturday and Sunday off. His response is unprintable! Down the road at HQ Sqn, **LCpl Craig Poulton**, who was last seen in *Soldier* magazine, took a break from laying cable to **Gen Brimm's** HQ to pen an application to be a weapons inspector. He explained that the UN Weapons Inspectors had found nothing in ten years, but he had spotted a Scud missile flying over his head within two minutes of arriving in Kuwait. This made him an expert. Finally **Cpl Tony Hadley** will have some explaining to do to the OP PLUNDER team to convince them that the tiles he brought back from Saddam's Palace matched the ones in his own bathroom! Many thanks to **Capt Alec Rogers** and **Capt Jim Taylor** for this amusing interlude. I told you I could keep a secret.

DEEP AND CRISP AND EVEN

It goes without saying that life in a TA unit does provide opportunities for trg other than military. These come in the shape of leisure (golf is placed under this category, as is adventure training and skiing). Later in the year the Regt is mounting trekking expeditions to Spain, led by that explorer extraodinaire, **Capt John Middler** and a sailing expedition to the Baltic, led by our new Adjt, **Capt Charlie Roberts**. So we expect some interesting reports from these two events. To whet your appetites in the meantime, the skiers have just returned intact from Zermat, sporting tans, lip cream and full of humorous stories after their fun-filled time in the Swiss Alps during April and May. As reported by **Sgt Ray Blanchette** and **LCpl Michelle Carvell** (who will be topping her tan up soon in the Gulf), it was the last week of the ski season, the snow was indeed deep and crisp and even and they had the perfect scenic backdrop, the magnificent Matterhorn. The slopes were free of tourists, so unrestrained fun was the order of the week as everyone was anxious to get onto the piste, literally. By the end of the week, both skilled and novice skiers had had a tremendous time and came back with many memories, especially that of **WO1 (RSM) Yogi Cauldwell**, who was making a dramatic descent down the slope at Mach 1 desperately trying to position his skis into a snow plough. But even **Yogi** was outdone by **Sig Tony Reid's** gymnastics. He tried to impersonate **Eddy the Eagle** with a desperate cry of 'Oh Shhhhh.....ugar!' as he embedded himself into a snowdrift.

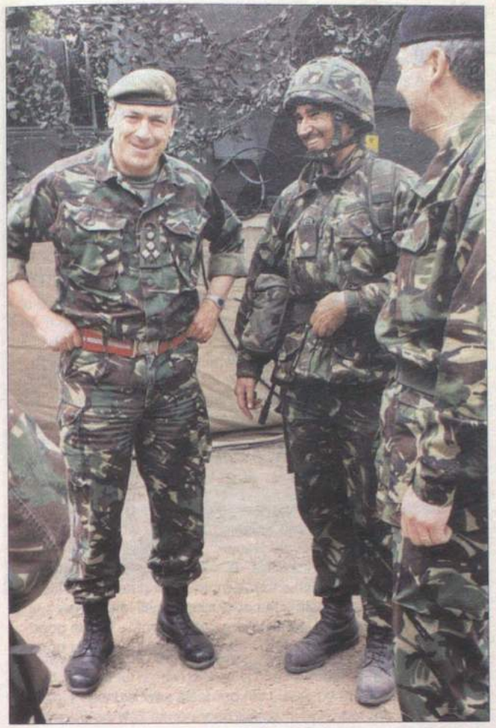
Next year the ski-ing expedition is off once again to Europe. So if you want some fun, contact the organiser, **SSgt Rod Shelton Smith**, on Canley ext 8915 and get your bid in early.

CHAMPS NOT CHUMPS

The Regt's success in Orienteering carries on unabated. The 5 Div Relay event took place at Hare Wood near Andover on Wednesday 19 March. Competing as a minor unit, the Team was **Capt Tom Jeffries**, **SSgt Chris Jones** and **SSgt Dave Arnot**. Against tough opposition from Regular units, they performed well, achieving runner-up position. At the Individual event at Norbury Park, Leatherhead, on 7 May, **SSgt Dave Arnot** was joined by veterans, **Capt John Middler**, **WO2 Chris Smith**, **SSgt Waggy Wagstaff** and two novices, **Sigs Ben Rankin** and **Luke Clarke**. **Chris Smith** was the M40 runner-up, and **John Middler** the M50 runner-up. Much to their surprise, our two novices took first and second places in the under 25 race. Unbeknown to them at the time, they were the only two competitors in that category, but they received their medals like true Champs not chumps! At the Harris relay event in Chepstow, South Wales at the end of May, **Capt John Middler**, **W02 Chris Smith** and **SSgt Waggy Wagstaff** were awarded the Minor Units Cup as a result of their fine performance. Well done!

REGIMENTAL EXERCISES

On Saturday 10 May, the Regt was pleased to host Comd 143 Bde, **Brig Andrew Meek** on a visit to EX SUMMER FALCON. He



Brig Andrew Meek shares a joke with the CO and Lt Paul Rodenhurst

Promotion at last for Cpl Smudge Smith

was met at RAF Cosford by the CO, **LtCol Calvin Owen**. He visited a number of locs throughout the ex area, including 48 Sqn's Access Node and, after a grand tour of the Shropshire countryside, TN 039, manned by 95 Sqn near the pretty village of Much-Wenlock near Telford. He made time to talk to many members of the Regt, before returning to Shrewsbury later that afternoon. Following this successful ex, the CO did a round robin of Sqns, surprising **LCpl Smudge Smith** of 89 Sqn, when he unexpectedly promoted him to the rank of Cpl.

Unfortunately, the Silver Bullet weekend was cancelled due to our heavy mobilisation and Civilian Contingency Reaction Force (CCRF) commitments. However, in the next edition of *The WIRE* we expect to share the experiences of those who have been nominated to support our civilian colleagues as part of the CCRF, and the trg that took place at Caerwent with Police, Ambulance, Fire Service and NHS as part of EX CAMBRAI CO-OPERATION.

143 BDE SKILL AT ARMS COMPETITION

The CO was delighted that, despite severe manning problems, all Sqns managed to enter a team into the 143 Bde SAAM. But, with the limited preparation time they had, would they perform to an acceptable standard? Fortunately over the weekend 16 – 18 May no team was to let him down, and the Regt achieved some pleasing results. **Sig Andrew Macdonald** of 95 Sqn achieved TA Runner-Up in the LSW match and with his partner **Capt Pete Mouland**, came third in the team competition, only one shot behind the team that took second place.

Dry training in preparation for the Competition

Match 2 and 8 also saw some close-run shooting, with **Sig Lewis** only 5 shots behind the overall winner and **Cpl Simon Claydon** and **Sig Andrew Macdonald** only one shot further behind. With more preparation for next year's competition the CO is looking forwarding to reaping greater rewards. The Regtl team honours go to 95 Sqn, closely followed by 89 Sqn. **Sig Macdonald** was so pleased with his performance and the performance of his 95 Sqn team, he has submitted the following account.

SHOOT TO THRILL

Over the weekend of the 17 and 18 May, my team and I were representing 95 Sqn and the Regt at bde level shooting. Our team comprised **Capt Mouland** (captain), **WO2 Kinsey**, **WO2 Roberts**, **Cpl Winstanley** and **Sigs Hughes**, **Trow**, **Lewis** and myself. The Regt had entered 4 other teams, from each Sqn and HQ. We knew that the competition would be tough, especially with the Fusiliers, the Light Infantry and Regular unit teams present. However, morale was high and we did have some very experienced soldiers in our team. And the majority of the team had recently represented the Regt at Corps level, where we performed very well, but missed out on the prizes. This time we were quietly confident we could come back with some silverware, or at least beat the rest of the Regt on overall points!

Saturday, the first day of the competition, began at 05.45hrs with most of us believing that we had been woken on ex! After sorting our heads out and having some breakfast, we set out to Kingsbury ranges early, in the hope of getting good insight into the shoots we were about to take part in. The team was split up,

with individuals put into different details and given different times for their shoots. This broke up the team, so we needed to perform well on our own - a scary thought but, with the preparation we had done previously, was not a problem. Arriving at the ranges at about 08.00hrs, we had plenty of time, with my first shoot at 10.45hrs.

However **Captain Mouland** was not so fortunate. His first shoot was the APWT in the first detail. Once the first few details had passed, we were all feeling confident. There were six shoots, including snap shoots from prone, fire trench and with respirators. Overall the team did very well, and individuals in the team were high up the scoreboard. As the day progressed, the team did better and better as we established ourselves as the stronger team in the Regt.

The second shoot that I took part in was the Match 8 Army Hundred Cup, comprising prone at 300m, kneeling at 200m, standing at 100m and a snap shoot at 100m. This shoot went well for us and we made some reasonable individual scores. At this point, the day was over for most of the team, but for **Capt Mouland** and myself, it had just begun. We had the Match 29 LSW. For me this was the most significant shoot and the culmination of many months' trg. I had already done it at the Corps competition and knew it is a demanding shoot physically, and drills with the LSW need to be very slick. Each soldier has 50 rounds, and you start at 600m, then to 500m, 400m, 300m and 200m. The main points can be taken at the 600m and 500m, with 10 rounds at each firing point, but it is a great distance. Next, after firing 4 rounds at an exposed target at 400m, the gunner has 30 seconds to advance to the 300m point and engage the target with 16 rounds. So a fast advance is required to get the rounds off! Then the last part of the shoot is the snap at 200m with 10 rounds. This can be the more relaxing part of the shoot - if you can catch your breath by the time you get there! At the end of this shoot we both felt confident that we had shot well, but it wouldn't be until the next day that we would know our scores.

On Sunday we again started the day early with breakfast and an early move out to the range. Our first shoot was the Section Match. A similar layout to the LSW Match, it comprises a sec of 8, 2 LSW gunners and the rest riflemen. The match simulates a sec attack, starting at 600m and finishing at 200m. The gunners, **Capt Mouland** and myself started the shoot by engaging the targets at 600m. The sec then split into two fire teams with 3 riflemen and 1 gunner in each. After the gunners finished firing at 600m, the left fire team advanced to the 500m fire point to engage the target. The right fire team then did the same, advancing to the 400m point. Next the riflemen advanced to the 300m point and once they started firing, the gunners could advance to engage. Finally, the whole sec advanced to the 200m point to engage the target.

We all left the firing point confident of a reasonable score, and as the day drew on, the scores were released and we knew that we had all done very well and should gain some silverware. The final shoot was the Falling Plate shoot, where, with a team of 4, you advance from the 300m point to the 200m point as quickly as possible to engage the 10 plates. Our team was **Captain Mouland**, **WO2 Kinsey**, **Sig Lewis** and myself. We ended up getting knocked out in the first round but, with the high levels of shooting and the scores we had already achieved, we weren't too downhearted.

With the competition over we then attended the prize giving parade. 30 Sig Regt claimed the majority of the silverware, which was well deserved. However I was much delighted to claim TA Runner-up in the Match 29 LSW. As a team we also managed 4th position in the LSW match and the most team points in our Regt, which was a prize in itself! In conclusion we all had a very enjoyable weekend and we all had a good shoot. It was good experience and we all intend to improve for next year and bring back more silverware to the Regt

The White Helmets

OC **LtCol RVJ Brannigan**
CI **SSgt P Boughey**

The Season is now in full swing and we are all becoming seasoned performers. At time of writing we have all returned from our first few displays and are preparing for our first long tour on the road. So far we have performed at the Aldershot Army Open Day, The Royal Balmoral Show in Belfast, Verwood Carnival and the Royal Bath and West Show. More on that later.

OPENING DISPLAY

On 9 May we held our opening display for the SOinC(A) at Blandford. This display is a chance for the SOinC to view the display team before they depart on the summer season. It is also the display at which all the first years are awarded their White Helmets following their hard winter's trg.

The day dawned bright and sunny, much to everyone's relief. After losing a lot of trg time over the preceding weeks due to horrendous weather, some pretty frantic last minute trg had been required. After many late nights and working weekends, the Team was feeling confident of a good display, providing the weather held.

In a break from the normal morning routine for an opening display, a short ceremony took place at the White Helmets HQ building. **Mrs Sue Spooner** and her son **Martin** were present to name the building after the late **LtCol Phil Spooner**. **LtCol Spooner** was a previous OC of the White Helmets who did an enormous amount for the team. His was by far the best choice for the new name. The RSMDT is now run from Spooner Building.

As friends, family and sponsors started to gather on Hawke Square, tension and excitement started to build. Before we could begin our display there were two other Teams keen to show their skills. The Band introduced the day with their customary faultless

Mrs Sue Spooner names the RSMDT HQ 'Spooner Building' after her late husband, LtCol Phil Spooner

display of incidental and marching music followed by the Royal Signals Freefall Parachute Display Team. An outstanding freefall display was given by four jumpers, with **Maj Tony Crilly** trailing the Corps Flag to an accurate landing completing the display.

Tension in the pits mounted to an all-time high as the Freefall team cleared the Square. It was nearly time. As **LtCol Brannigan** introduced the Team and we started the motorcycles, all thoughts of nerves were forgotten as everyone's training kicked in and we began the display.

Halfway through the performance all the first years entered the arena on the three-bike fan (pyramid) to be awarded their White Helmets. Congratulations to **Cpl Ian Dickinson**, **LCpls Ian Allen**

The newcomers. Sig Chris Fitzgerald shows concentration as he guides the 4T's

and **Dave Kruczek**, **Sigs Bowles**, **Fothergill**, **Fitzgerald** and **Johnston** who all received their White Helmets from the SOinC(A). **Cpl Baz Fullerton** was awarded his LSGC by the SOinC(A) and **LCpl Ian Allen** was announced as the recipient of the Lucas Trophy for the most accomplished new rider.

The display finished as **Capt Malcolm** presented the Team to the SOinC(A) for the salute. After all the build-up, trg and preparations, it had all gone without a hitch. Everyone felt extremely satisfied as we all adjourned to the Semaphore Arms for the Reception and Lunch.

Families, sponsors and team members all mingled and chatted in the reception. **LCpl Ian Allen** was presented the Lucas Trophy, and the man of the moment, **Cpl Baz Fullerton** was presented the Elson Trophy for the rider who was given most to the Team throughout the previous year. Congratulations to **Baz** and also to **Shona** who has to put up with him when we don't!

SOinC(A) congratulates Cpl Baz Fullerton on his LS&GC award

All in all, the whole day went extremely well. Everyone said what an excellent time they had all had, and many letters of praise have been received in Spooner Building. After a start like that we look forward to a good season.

SOinC(A) congratulates LCpl Ian Allen on being judged the best all-round new rider

BELFAST AND THE START OF THE SEASON

No sooner had the opening display ended than we were off to Belfast to perform at the Royal Balmoral Show. 15 Sig Regt had kindly offered to accommodate and support us. No small undertaking! Many thanks must go to the Regt 2IC, the RSM and to **SSgt** 'Dusty' **Miller** and his patient team of minders.

As we arrived in Fleetwood for the eight hour ferry crossing a small hitch was encountered as the Ferry Company seemed to want £1200 from us before the coach could board. A quick whip round raised £1.49p but luckily they let us on anyway. **Cpl Damien Chorlton** would probably have been happier if we had been unable to board anyway, as he has the ability to feel seasick in a small puddle. The blow of an eight-hour crossing was softened when the free breakfast was discovered. The Galley had no idea how much food 30 White Helmets and **Sig Ricky Gaston** can consume when it's all free!

Once we had arrived and settled in, the first two days went very well. Despite 05.30hrs starts for 15.00hrs performances! The crowds were huge and very appreciative and the Team rose to the occasion. Sadly, the weather broke for the last day and we could put on only a drastically reduced display. Despite this, the organisers seemed very happy with the Team and we left on a high note. The return journey proved to be a bit of a nightmare with ferry delays, broken ramps and closed motorways. We were all very glad to return to our homes for the few hours sleep before we returned to work, turned the fleet around and set off for two displays for the Star and Garter Homes Tattoo and then four more for the Royal Bath and West Show.

For a job that is demanding, busy and rewarding why not apply to join the team? Details can be found in SOinC(A) Policy Directive 204 held in Orderly Rooms or by calling Blandford (9) 4371-2405 (01258 482405). You don't have to have any motorcycle experience to apply.

Cpl Mal Cooper making the car jump look easy

FOOTBALL

WE ARE FIRMLY BACK ON THE MAP! - *By Capt Tommy Steele*

Although my last report was full of optimism, the Massey Trophy seemed out of our reach. We would need to win the remaining 7 fixtures to stand a chance of beating RLC to the title. A tall order, especially considering the Quadrangular tournament. The games against RE, RA and REME are always extremely competitive, with RE the only team ever to have won all three games in the Quads. And the Corps hadn't won the Quads since 1987!

Our next game was against AMS at Hermitage. A nervous start saw us struggle to get to grips with the opposition, the medics working very hard to close us down and disrupt our natural passing game. After 20 minutes there was still no sign of the our getting on top, until a mistake by AMS led to the first of 6 goals scored in 9 minutes. At the break, the score remained 6-0. The second half saw us score another nine goals to complete a 15-0 drubbing. The youngsters were absolutely outstanding. **Sig Wood** scored five and **Sig Bates** three, but a special mention must go to the **Moffat** brothers. Both **Glen** and **Al** played - and scored! When was the last time that brothers played for the Corps, and did they both score in the same game?

Our next two games against Int Corps and AAC. Int Corps withdrew on the day, conceding the game to us. Then, unable to field a team, AAC also conceded. We had gained six easy points, but we had missed the opportunity test the team again. But, with only four more games to go, victory was looking possible.

At the next game, against AGC at Worthy Down, the Corps ran out very comfortable winners at 5-0, an ideal warm-up for the Quads.

THE QUADRANGULAR TOURNAMENT

Our next opponents, RE, play a very physical and traditional game, using a 4-4-2 system. They like to get the ball forward to their strikers as quickly as they can and make it extremely hard for us to get the ball down and play. With both sides trying to win the physical battle, it took 20 minutes before we could start our passing game. With **Sgt Joey Collins** at the back, the midfield engine got into gear. **Sgt Paul Alford**, **Cpl Wes O'Connor** and **Sig Craig Critchley** started to dominate the centre of the park, the two wing backs, **Cpl Tony Richardson** and **Cpl Simmy Simpson** worked like ten men, and the two forwards, **Cpl Stevo Stephenson** and **Sig Jay Bates** terrorised their back four. It wasn't long before we took the lead. After a fine strike by **Cpl Stephenson**, one nil soon became two, with a third to follow shortly before half time. A brace by **Stevo** and one from **Cpl O'Connor** put the Corps ahead. The second half saw the sappers have a go, but we weathered the storm, with **Cpl Stephenson** taking a hattrick to give the Corps a convincing 4-0 win.

The second match, against RA, was similar to the game against RE - big physical lads playing a 4-4-2 system. With **SSgt Dean Boughen** fit again, he took his usual position allowing **Sgt Joey Collins** to go into midfield and **Cpl Wes O'Conner** to fill the left wing back position. After 20 minutes we got hold of the ball and started passing the gunners off the park. It wasn't long before we scored, not once but seven times without reply.

The dream was still alive. It all rested on the last game. The tension was palpable.. REME had spoiled our party on more than one occasion, and they were looking to do so again. They play attractive football. They like to get the ball on the deck and play and, like us, they use a 3-5-2 system.

The game started fast and furious, with REME imposing their quick one-touch passing game that left the Corps chasing shadows. But we worked hard, denying them space and time on the ball. Apart from a header that flashed wide, they never actually threatened the goal in the first ten minutes. Some excellent work in midfield saw **Sgt Paul Alford** and **Sig Craig Critchley** breaking up the play and passing the ball to **Sgt Joey Collins** on the right hand edge of the box. In a flash, he whipped the ball across the box to find **Cpl Wes O'Connor** waiting to gleefully head the ball into the far corner of the net. The next 30 minutes were a true test of our belief, as REME simply carried on where they had left off.

Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE presents the Quadrangular Cup to Sgt Joey Collins

They started to pass us off the park, but our work rate and commitment was unbelievable, forcing them to pass the ball and not allowing them time to settle. When REME did get through, they found our keeper, **LCpl Adam Pinchback** in fine form. At half time, we were delighted to see the Corps still one-nil up.

After a few words of encouragement, the boys went out for the final 45 minutes of the season in a really positive mood. We knew that REME would come again, but we were ready for them. We more than matched them in all departments, and even though they had better possession, we worked hard as a unit, keeping our belief in our system. When they threatened, our defence were solid, and the keeper was exceptional. The pressure was unbearable and the tension tangible. We needed a second goal to make it safe. With only 15 minutes to go, **Sgt Joey Collins** answered the call to realise our dreams - 2 nil and nearly there.

With time running out, REME continued to push forward and pose problems, but after breaking the play up, we managed to score a third by **Cpl Glen Moffat**. The final whistle sounded and the rest is history - 3 nil to the Corps. The Cowan cup, the Boyne Trophy, the Quadrangulars and the Massey Trophy were all ours. The second team only to win all three games in the Quads, we scored 14 and didn't concede a single goal!

A special mention must go to **WO1 (RSM) Richie Bell** for all his hard work over the years. The players recognised this service to Corps football by presenting him with a painting of his beloved Leeds United. We hope that he will continue to serve on in his capacity as Corps Secretary. The players also recognised **LtCol Rik License MBE** for his efforts as Chairman of Corps football by presenting him with a gift set of fine Taylor's port after the match against REME.

Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE presents the Massey Cup to Sgt Paul Alford

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The Skiing Team

began to worry. Not **2Lt Helen Baxter**, though. So excited was she about the forthcoming ex that she slept through the entire incident and was totally bemused by all the chat in the bar that night.

Lt Karen Ford presided over the instruction with her characteristic majesty and meticulous attention to detail, while her unworthy assistant, **Maj Mark Brookes** of MOD could only lurk in her shadow and live in fear of being taken to task for encouraging his class to seek out jumps, moguls and other ways of damaging themselves.

The beginners made great progress in their ability during the six days of instruction, five complete novices passing the BSP exams – including the rigorous one-hour written paper set by **Lt Ford**. All intermediates honed their techniques on some testing runs. **WO1 Mark Anderson** probably won the title of most improved skier. On the first morning he stayed upright for all of 10 metres before losing control and skiing the next 150 metres on his back. Undaunted, he repeated this trick many times over the next 2 days before his experience took over and he gained some composure. Sadly, though, he fell foul of the CI for being late for an evening lecture. His plea in mitigation ('someone put a beer in front of me') was rejected, but he was spared RTU-ing, instead having his sentence reduced to being listed as a fail in the course stats. Ah, well, **Mark**, you'll have to try again next year.

I am told that an exped is successful if no-one gets killed or arrested. It therefore gives me much pleasure to declare EX NORTHERN SLEIGH RIDE a resounding success.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Mark Finch**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Dave Carr**

15 (NE) BRIGADE SPORTS DAY

Once a year the Sqn forms various teams of fighting spirit, commitment and not a little skill to represent 34 (N) Sig Regt in the Bde Sports Competition. On 18 May this year the Sqn entered teams in the 5-a-side football, volleyball and squash competitions. 49 Sqn were the defending squash champions, and although they were unable to retain the cup, they did manage to gain a creditable third place.

The volleyballers were challenged to win a game this year by the Sqn 2IC, **Maj Graham Jennings** and apparently he now owes them all two beers each. The footballers emerged victorious and lifted a very attractive shield, so congratulations to the team: **Capt Keith Williams**, **SSgt Mark Carrick**, **SSgt Greg Sharpe**, **SSgt Terry Shiels**, **Sig Dave Bean**, **Sig Mustard Colman** and **Sig Neil Varley**. A big well done for all who attended the event. The volleyballers are on for the championship next year.

The Victorious 5-a-side Football Team

EXERCISE SUMMER FALCON – 09/11 MAY 03

At the Regtl Comms Ex, 9-11 May, the Sqn performed admirably and special mention must go to all the inexperienced personnel for their maximum effort and commitment: **Cpl Bedford**, **Sig Ambler**, **Sig Carlisle**, **Sig Cranswick**, **Sig Rogers**, **Sig Shippen** and **Sig Humphries**.

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIG SQN

OC	**Capt Jez Bailey**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Les Middleton**

ATTS & DETS

We welcome the following new recruits into 50 Sqn: **Sigs Gemma Howe**, **Mark Kent**, **Sarah McAlister**, **Christopher Gray**, **Laura Steward**, **John Bailey** and hello to **Sig John Ancrum** transferring in from 38 Sig Regt. As a welcomed addition to the Sqn's Regular staff, we have a new SPSI at Darlington, **SSgt Mick Hodds**, from the Welsh borders, and **SSgt (FofS) Dave Cook**, fresh from Blandford and full of good ideas. We also welcome **OCdt Joanna Burke** to the fold, and wish her the best of luck with her MTQ 2 exam and 3 weeks at RMAS.

We are sadly losing **SSgt Heather Fraser** at the end of her FTRS engagement with the Sqn. The whole Sqn would like to place on record our thanks for all her efforts over the last year.

OPERATION TELIC 2

5 lucky 'volunteers' from 50 Sig Sqn have received their brown envelopes and will join Regular units due to deploy to the Gulf. Best of luck (some for the second time) to **Cpls Matt Graham**, **Jenny Jones**, and **Mick Donovan**, and **Sigs Ronny Robson** and **Pat Hutton**.

EXERCISE SPRING LOAD

It was great idea and perfectly planned, but it failed live up to the advertising. In prep of future ITD weekends, the Sqn planned some ITD trg without the pressure of testing. The Friday evening started well with a round robin of weapons trg and weapons handling tests in preparation of ranges the next day. The morning broke bright and clear, always a bad omen for ranges, and we departed for Catterick and the ranges, only to discover that we could not gain access! A quick re-org took place to make the most of the rest of the day and the trg time available.

EXERCISE YO YO

As continuation trg for all the Regtl offrs and SNCOs, a CP trg day was organised and hosted at 50 Sig Sqn. All those who attended found it very informative and useful, and at times quite entertaining. We all progressed around the stands as dictated by the timings of the Regtl Tfc Offr, **Capt Steve Wayman**. Inspirational leadership was delivered by 49 Sqn 2IC, **Capt Keith Williams**, and the entertainment was delivered by the OSC double act of **Capt Simon Smith** and **SSgt Ian Middlemiss**. It was a worthwhile ex, providing much needed background info on all those tasks that happen all the time, which previously we had been unaware of.

EXERCISE SUMMER FALCON

Due to the reduced numbers available, the planned Sqn deployment in support of this Regtl ex was curtailed. Therefore our Access Tp did not deploy SAN 666, but strengthened TN 035. All the happier for having a few more people around, we departed to our loc of Cordilleras Farm on the Feldom Ranges trg area. Progress went well with the only real complication being the establishment of an SHF link with our Radio Village some 3km away. We had opted for the SHF link (as specified in the LID) in lieu of the Quad link **Sgt Micky Jemmett** had originally wanted to lay! Well done to **Cpl Ian Paterson** and **Sgt Micky Jemmett** for getting the SHF link in. Once comms were in, life settled down into a working routine, which afforded us the opportunity for a few individuals to be become acquainted with something new. Congratulations to **SSgt Pete Robinson** for finally making it into Node Comd and surviving an entire shift.

Our Saturday routine was broken only by the arrival of the Bde Press Offr and Photographer, who make us run up and down the same track (several times) to take photos for publicity for EX COAST TO COAST. No one now wants to make a career in the movies following the repeated cry of 'Let's try that one again please.'

EXERCISE COAST TO COAST

Ex Coast to Coast Team at the start in Workington

Motivated to do something for charity (specifically for Cancer Research), **SSgt Chris Ogg** wanted to provide a real challenge for the Sqn. This was inspired because his father, **Alistair Ogg**, had previously suffered from cancer. Thus was born the idea for 50 Sig Sqn to run the Coast to Coast cycle route (140 miles long and rising to over 1500 ft) in relays, starting in Workington and finishing in Newcastle.

Eighteen runners arrived at Workington on a very wet Friday evening to depart on the Saturday morning. The organisation was such that the two mini-buses would leapfrog each other. The first bus, which became known as the 'technical bus', had 5 running pairs: **SSgt Ogg** and his wife **Jenny**, **SSgts Jeff Martin** and **Mick Hodds**, **Sgt Del Trotter**, **Cpl Craig Straughan**, **Sigs Laura Stewart**, **Andy Sampson**, and **Raman Sinha** and **WO2 (YofS) Mick Proud**. The second bus, known as the 'willing amateurs', had 4 running pairs: **Lts Jo Barr** and **Paul Denning**, **Sgts Ross Blair** and **Cliffy Readshaw**, **Cpl Ian Paterson**, **Sigs Chris Gray**, **Keith Elsdon** and **Mark Mansfield**. The honour of the first leg went to **SSgt Chris Ogg**, **Jenny Ogg** and the CO, **LtCol Garry Hearn**, who joined us for a few hours prior to returning to the northeast to join in the Bde sports day!

Sig Andy Sampson shows True Grit on Ex Coast to Coast

In many ways it was our own Sqn road trip, which perhaps in years to come, Hollywood could make a movie about. We learned a lot about each other. **Cpl Craig Straughan** chose to run the entire way in his Damart underwear, which started brilliant white, and ended with a great need for Daz. We learned what colour **Lt Jo Barr** could get **Sig Mark Mansfield** to turn when running him up hills in Penrith. We learned how to lose a GPS in Keswick. But worst of all we learned that for such a young thing, **Lt Jo Barr** listens to BBC Radio 2, and is not ashamed to admit it!

Through all the fun and games, we had a great time. All those who started finished -some in a poorer state than others - but we all finished. Special thanks go to our ever-diligent support staff, **SSgt Carol-Ann Phillips** and **Sig Pat Hutton**, for providing food and drink at strange times and in strange places, and to our unit photographer, SQMS **SSgt Colin Ridley**, for appearing at those times when we did not look our best!

Also special thanks to the 'Tooth Fairy' who left a birthday cake at the foot of a bed on Sunday for that individual who is a whole two persons old and can now legally drink!

36 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col P N Willmott TD**
RSM	**W01 (RSM) WJ Morrow**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Pete Minshall**
Acting SSM	**SSgt Graham Carroll**

A busy period in TA terms over the last 3 months. We have said goodbye and welcome back to **Pte WI Evans**, **Pte Wan King** and **Sig Norman Hill**, all of whom spent time on OP TELIC. They have been big timing in the bar and sporting their squaddy suntans. On a serious note, it is great to have them all back safe and well after completing service for their country.

June arrives and its time to say goodbye to **SSgt Graham Carroll**, who is off to Bosnia for a summer tour. He still believes that in 6 months he can match the OP TELIC suntan. We'll check it out in December, **Graham**! Farewell to **LCpl Merredew**, who transferred to 94 Sig Sqn (V). We all wish him luck for the future.

We welcome **Capt Ted Pryke** (PSAO), **WO2 Frank Butcher Gilbert** (MTWO) and **SSgt (SQMS) Geordie Patterson**. We all hope you stay longer than your predecessors do.

Congratulations to **Cpl Rodwell**, who did very well on the recent SNCO Cadre Cse. We wish him luck on his Class 1 course later in the year and the promotion that should follow. The SNCO's are waiting with baited breath in the bar to celebrate. So come on **Rodders**.

A sad farewell to **OCdt Powell**, who departs soon for the best leadership training known to man, at RMAS. She has worked very hard for the Sqn and will be sorely missed. We wish her all the best and hope she graduates into the Corps later next year.

The Sqn is now preparing for two military skills weekends and the Mountvoy Trophy, a Military Skills competition. Looking further afield, Annual Camp is set in Salisbury Plain with Communications, Adventurous Training and FIBUA to tempt all from under the rock where they live Monday to Friday.

45 (ESSEX) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Mark MacKenzie-Bell**
Acting SSM	**SSgt Pickett**

Well done to the OC on his recent promotion. We hope that all the other vacant slots can be filled. We need a 2IC, Ops Officer, YofS, SSM, and with the deployment on OP TELIC 2 of more key figures, we will require a FofS and Tp SNCOs.

EXERCISE EASTERN SUMMER

The Sqn deployed over the weekend 9–11 May 03. The SPSI drove his RR but luckily, **SSgt Barwick** looked after the Det. The ex was a success, as the vehs all seemed to work after the ECI inspection. It was an achievement getting them to Bassingbourne.

EXERCISE RED GROUSE

EX RED GROUSE was an Sqn ex arranged to practise our mil skills and prepare for the Mountvoy Trophy. With all the new call-ups we have had, we were a bit thin on the ground. Out of the whole Sqn there were nine of us altogether. We took with us one TCV, one Triffid and a Land Rover. The window for our arrival to STANTA was 00.00 – 00.30 hrs, but things did not go exactly to plan. The route to STANTA was fine, but the convoy took a wrong turn and that's where the fun started! Let's just say that the map reading from then on was interesting! I'm not going to mention any names, as I will probably get all the crap jobs if I do. We did however, find our location, only to be bugged out immediately as voices were heard.

We knew there was an enemy waiting for us so we took every precaution. By now it was getting light, so we decided to get our heads down and get to our loc in the morning. We duly moved into loc and all-round defence was put in place, ready for the impending attack, which came just as breakfast was ready. The attack was short and sharp and we'd like to think that we saw off the enemy. We then had to feed our enemy, who were from 54 Sqn.

The next phase of the exercise was pre-training for the Mountvoy Trophy. The first stand was patrolling and section battle drills. To get to the next stand we were given a bearing to follow and had to patrol there using the principles we had just covered. We then split into two teams, 54 Sqn following the footpaths and we following the bearing. We eventually arrived at the NBC stand.

By then it was very hot, even in the shade, and I was dreading putting on my NBC suit. Whilst doing the drinking drills I felt something on my cheek. I thought it was a hair until it crawled up my face and over one of the lenses. The respirator came off pretty quickly!

The next stand was the battlefield first aid. As we approached from open ground into a wooded area, we heard yelling and a horn tooting. We fell to the floor, probably causing ourselves some injuries in the process, and two members of the patrol went to investigate. **SSgt Andy Hayler** was the one doing the yelling. With him fixed up and his arm sewn back on, we continued.

With 54 Sqn we made up a section of nine, which was split into two fire teams. We kind of knew we were going to get attacked some time soon, and we were, from a clump of woodland to our left. The enemy could not be seen so we had to go and find him. We split into our fire teams and went in. Co-ordinated by the Tp Comd, the attack which was successful.

We returned to the TAC pretty knackered. Thanks must go firstly to 54 Sqn who came to shoot us. They made a good enemy and we hope they will come out to play with us again. Next, thanks to the OC for organising the more 'shoot em up' fun weekends. Let's hope more of the Sqn will come next time. Thanks to **Sgt Gladman** and **LCpl Smoker**, for keeping us well fed and to **SSgt Hayler**, for keeping us well entertained (and bringing the beer).

54 (EAST ANGLIA) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Phil Taylor**
Acting SSM	**SSgt Osbourne**

The annual 54 Sqn Officers Dining Club Dinner (54ODC) was held at Selwyn College, Cambridge on Saturday, 17 May 03. It was well attended by a number of past and current members of the Sqn and Regt. Usually on these occasions a member of 54 Sqn has to 'sing for his/her supper'. This year the update on the Sqn's activities was given by the new OC, **Maj Phil Taylor**.

REGIMENTAL SNCO CADRE COURSE, 5-6 & 12-13 APRIL 2003 – *by Cpl Blackwell*

The occasion of the Regtl SNCO Cadre Cse saw seven Cpls descend on West Tofts Camp, STANTA, for two weekends of military and leadership instruction and testing, with all candidates hoping to impress the DS and pass the course. The seven hopefuls were **Cpl Rodwell** from HQ Sqn, **Cpl Allen** from 44 Sqn, **Cpls Putnam** and **Witcomb** from 45 Sqn and **Cpls Allen**, **Blackwell** and **Mossop** from 54 Sqn.

The first weekend started off with a parade and inspection conducted by **SSgt Sinclair**. The day continued with lessons and instruction on a variety of subjects, including leadership, security, instructional techniques and the preparation and extraction of orders. The day culminated in a weapon handling test and a military knowledge written test.

On the second day everyone was out on the trg area for leadership tasks. Each student was put in charge of the rest of the course for a particular scenario or command task.

The second weekend saw the field phase of the course. Straight away we were out on the trg area in the dead of night and into an OP. When morning came we were all glad of the sun's warming rays. Drawing on the lessons of the first weekend, we continued the ex, moving into and setting up a harbour area. Numerous tasks were given to students as, in turn, they took on the role of IC or 2IC. The time flew by as we did clearance patrols, recces, VCPs and more. With this phase over, we recovered back to West Tofts, where it was now time for students to give their lessons on a range of core military subjects, such as map reading, first aid etc.

At this stage, the students thought the course was over, but the DS had other ideas. The gauntlet was thrown down and a stretcher was introduced, leading to a lot of sweating and weak knees. With the course finally at an end, all that was left was the final parade and presentation of the Top Student Award to **Cpl Blackwell** of 54 Sqn, and relief as the students could return home to hot baths and cold beers.

EXERCISE ENDURING HELP 2003

EX ENDURING HELP is an annual cross-country motorcycle event organised by REME in aid of Childline and Army Charities. It is a team event that entails a riding an issue motorcycle round a demanding cross-country course for 24hrs without a break. Demands are placed on both the rider and the machine to finish the event in one piece. The event is also used as an opportunity for experienced and novice riders alike to practise and develop their off-road driving skills over hills, mud, loose sand and, if your unlucky, water. Most team members managed to hit the dirt several times at least but still managed to walk away relatively unscathed on Sunday afternoon.

37 SIGNAL REGIMENT

ARMY

CO **Lt Col RG Mather**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A Keen**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Major J Riley**
SSM **WO2 P Hall**

What a time to have a breakdown - on the way back from a weekend ex and of all places, in the same packet with the Sqn OC leading. Worse still, the veh in question just happened to belong to the REME, so you can image the variety of comments they were subjected to. So how many mechanics does it actually take to fix a REME veh? Answers on a postcard please. **Sgt Glen Draper's** comments that it was planned to provide a realistic trg scenario for **Cfn Lieu** was almost believable, and after only a 30-minute delay they rectified the fault.

Sgt Draper (far left) supervising the 'trg' with Cfn Lieu under the cab doing all the work, whilst SSgt Paul Freeman remarks that he had a similar fault on Ben Hur's chariot. Cpl Lee Carroll (far right) tries to model 'Jimmy'

What a weekend for the Sqn's Annual Ranges, with sweltering weather and excellent conditions for firing. The finale was a falling plates competition from 300m between the Offrs, SNCOs, Cpls and ORs. The first draw was between the Offrs and SNCOs, with the SNCOs winning convincingly. After strong resistance from the Cpls' team on the last draw, the SNCOs team were the eventual winners of the competition. The SNCOs team did have ex Infantry members and **SSgt Pete Savage**, who was ex Artillery, commented that he should have been firing from 3 miles with a barrage effect.

The SNCO falling plates winners. L-R, WO2 (RQMSV) Wood, SSgt Bennett, WO2 (SSM) Hall, SSgt (SQMSV) Savage

93 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj M Cosgrove**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) H Kenny**

Sgt Richard Gibson has recently returned from Costa Rica, where he and a group of 52 walked for ten days through the jungle to help raise over £300,000 in aid of Macmillan Cancer Research. Richard, who raised £2,700 personally, walked through coffee plantations and dense rain forest, ending up 11,000ft above sea level on the country's highest volcano, and said that the experience was 'well worth a few blisters and the odd encounter with a snake' (We're told that 95% of snakes in Costa Rica are poisonous!).

In May **Capt Neil Reid** and **2Lt Chris Harvey** took part in 42 (NW) Bde's main recruiting event for the year, OP ENERGISE. Working in conjunction with the Regular RSigs recruiting team and the Army Youth Team, the pair worked in a variety of locs, including Blackburn, Burnley and Preston.

93 Sqn is currently preparing for the CO's Challenge weekend, where DIY skills will be put to the test. The unit is helping out a Women's Information Self Help (WISH) Centre in Blackburn town centre. A full report in the next edition.

The Sqn has seen a number of successful course passes in recent months, including:

RSOP Class 3	**Sig Paul Clayton** **Sig Tracey Cook**
Sys Eng Tech Class 3	**LCpl Phil Creighton**
Elect/Dvr Class 3	**Sig Gary Clarke** **Sig John McAllister** **Sig Mike Williams** **Sig Ryan Lewis** **Sig Jason Whalley**
TCB	**OCdt Richard Smith**

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj PH Fowler-Smith TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J R Krikorian**

96 SQUADRON'S 10TH BIRTHDAY DINNER

96 Sig Sqn (V) was formed in February 1993 under 'Options for Change' at Westfield House, Coventry. Its 10th Birthday was celebrated in style at the Sqn Dinner Night attended by the CO, the Sqn and a group of Old Comrades who had served during our 10-year reign. The Lord Mayor was guest of Honour and provided us with a succinct history of Coventry. He surprised **Sig** 'Monty' **Montague** and **Cfn Garrie Grimbley** by presenting them with their joint 'Best Soldier 2002' Award and promoted them and **Pte Davenport** to LCpl.

OPERATION TELIC

The OP TELIC group of **Sgt Ian Hayley**, **Cpl Judy Dunn**, **Cpl Jim Wingfield**, **LCpl** 'Gripper' **Flynn** and **LCpl Stu Adams** eventually reported to RTMC Chilwell to be mobilised for service with19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. We wish them a successful and happy tour and look forward to hearing their tales on their return.

Cpl Niall Temple is due to return from OP TELIC 1 around 15 July, as is **Cpl Ryan**, currently serving on FTRS with 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. The sandbags are in the bar and a few cold beers await them both. Watch this space!

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE, OFFICER RECRUITING FOR 2 (NC) SIGNAL BRIGADE

96 Sig Sqn (V) was tasked with providing a Comd Task and Info Stand on behalf of 2 (NC) Sig Bde to promote Officer Recruiting. **Lt Matthew Longcake** planned and coordinated a very successful competition event on Salisbury Plain, where the visiting UOTC teams had to manoeuvre manually a broken down veh through a mock village with various obstacles and minefields. The Teams also visited the Info and Equipt Display Stands, where they were briefed by **Lt Matthew Longcake** and **SSgt Jez Bromley**, on the Bde's role and its equipt. Approx 150 members of the UOTC participated and had a thoroughly enjoyable time.

WINTER WARFARE - *by Sgt Andy Pollard*

Since the 90s it has become an annual event for the Regt to exchange a soldier with 709 Comms Regt in Toronto, Canada. During Annual Camp last year, **Sgt Dave Asals** and **LCpl Welch** came over to England and spent the majority of their stay in various locs around the south coast was to see and use some of the Regt's equipt. They both enjoyed their visit, with a few days off to visit Blandford and London.

It was now my chance to go to Toronto to undergo some winter warfare trg and some time off to enjoy some Canadian hospitality. After a good flight, **Sgt Asals** was waiting to take me to Fort York Armoury, a very impressive drill hall dating back to 1933. The drill hall, with an array of Messes and classrooms, is home to 4 regts, a Cadet Force and a Regtl Museum. I was made to feel at home with **W01 Kevin Philips'** endless supply of tea, and friendly chat with all the permanent staff.

Unlike our Corps, Canadian Sigs is not part of the Army but is a support Regt providing comms support to all of their Armed Forces. I found this a bit awkward until I got to know some of the Naval rank structure.

After a good nights' sleep, I had my first look at the weather since my arrival - a frozen Lake Ontario. After breakfast I was taken to where I would be staying for the duration of my visit. A staff offrs trg college in York Mills, the accommodation was very comfortable with a rest lounge opposite my room.

A few days were spent getting to know the local areas, with members of the Regt taking it in turns to take 'the Brit' around. A visit to the CN tower and a sushi bar were mandatory. After some time on the basics of snowshoeing and toboggan-loading with **Sgt Carrado**, I was issued and taught to wear all the essential kit for the forthcoming ex. A lot of time was spent running through dry drills with the C7 and C9 weapons, making sure I was up to speed on them.

The weekend had arrived, and **Dave** and I were off to Hamilton to go out with A Tp TSM, **SgtMaj Tracy Sharpe**, a previous exchange soldier from 2 years earlier. An excellent night was had meeting up with members of other neighbouring units. The following morning we headed off to Niagara Falls, an awesome sight that should be visited by all. My hosts insisted that it is much better to view it from the Canadian side than the American side.

After the weekend it was back to weapon trg. Was **LCpl de Freitais** ever going to pass me? On Tuesday I was off to Kingston for a visit to 3 areas, the first a visit to 3 Sqn an operational fast-reaction unit that provides comms support throughout the world (this was evidenced by the many flags hanging from the rafters of their deployment bay). A tour of the trg facility helped me understand why the Canadians had such professionalism. The third visit was to the Sigs Museum where a chronicle of Canadian Sigs was made very interesting by the volunteer guide. After a night in Kingston, we headed back to prep our kit for EX INCLEMENT TOWER.

With the weather warming up to -9ºC, we made the 3-hour drive to the ex area, and spent the rest of the day building snow defences and erecting some of the tentage. A good night's kip followed by a good breakfast, and we put up the admin tent ready for the main body.

Sgt Pollard with C tent group patrolling the Trg Area

The winter warfare trg was running alongside a comms ex. We rehearsed sec battle drills, surviving in the field, basic harbour area drills and toboggan-pulling throughout the Friday night and Saturday. The final phase of the ex was to take place in near whiteout conditions.

The 3 secs were to deploy on patrols, where they might encounter various friendly/hostile groups. They were to use the correct ROE that had been taught throughout the day. My task was to control a Radcon, a 4-man sec to various grid references, intercepting the patrols, firstly as friendly, secondly as resentful and thirdly as armed enemy (a chance to use all the pyro we had been given!) The patrols reacted well when the enemy finally attacked them. For a lot of the troops, it was their first chance to use pyro and the adverse weather didn't curb the enthusiasm. It wasn't until the following day that they began to realise how tiring the ex had become, and by the time we returned to Fort York, we were all exhausted.

It was an excellent visit to 709 Regt, and the Canadians really did know how to look after the exchange soldier. I would recommend everyone to take the opportunity to participate on one of these exchange programmes. Canada is a lovely place to visit - but they can keep the snow!

38 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **LtCol SJ Richardson**
RSM **WO1 AM Maxted**

It was some time back in February that the Adjt remarked to the CO that the period between Easter and the summer leave block was probably the quietist few months of the year. As it turned out, this has not been the case. Along with the rest of the British Army, we too have been sucked into the OPs TELIC and FRESCO whirlwinds.

The Regt still has a number of its personnel deployed on OP TELIC 1 and, like other units in the Bde, we are seeing the first of our returnees just as we are sending our TELIC 2 personnel to RTMC. We still have a number of TA volunteers supporting the Bde in UK, as well the many personnel mobilised on ops in the Balkans and those on FTRS contracts around the world. Faced with heading up the deployment of 97 Sig Sqn (V) to deploy to BLMF next April, we are starting to wonder if anyone will be left to open the post in 2004.

There have been a number of key appointment changes in the Regt over the last couple of months. Our QM of 3 years, **Capt Jeff Williams**, has gone to 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. We welcomed his replacement, **Capt Rod Cowan** from 11 Sig Regt

Hon Col 38 Sig Regt, Col Christopher Jewes, presents WO2(YofS) Bleasdale with his LS&GC Medal

(via Kuwait), then despatched him to Deepcut on the QM's course. In the same Dept, **WO2 (RQMS) Taff Bryant** has handed over his responsibilities to **WO2 (RQMS) Pete Crawford**, from 2 Sig Regt. **WO2 Bryant** has moved into the Project REEBOK deputy manager's appointment, where he hopes to impress 2 (NC) Sig Bde with his extensive knowledge of fibre optics and telephone exchanges. **WO2 (RQMS) Crawford** has also vanished in the direction of Deepcut, muttering something about going to learn how to count. This leaves the QM's Dept in the very capable hands of **Mrs Faith Austin**, their civilian AA.

In Regtl Ops, **WO2 (YofS) Bob Bleasdale** has handed over to **WO2 (YofS) Chris Green**, who joins us, complete with disgusting suntan, from CCU Cyprus. **YofS Bleasdale** sharpened his cranium and went south to Brawdy to join 14 Sig Regt (EW), but not before we had time to wheel him out in front of the Sgts' Mess and present him with his long overdue LS&GC. Our irrepressible NRPS Trg SSgt, **SSgt Frank McCubbin**, has also jumped ship for Germany to take up a civil service post with the CDA. Watch this space for details of his replacement.

Had 64 Sig Sqn (V) submitted any notes I'm sure they would have written copious farewells to their long-serving NRPS SQMS stalwart, **SSgt Dave Burton**, rather than this cursory mention I'm giving him. Congratulations go to **SSgt Paul Ingram** on his appointment as **SSgt Burton's** successor. A final, and rather belated welcome to **Sgt Waite**, the new HQ Sqn SPSI Tech who joins us from RAF Digby.

EXERCISE EURO RAM 3

Project Whitman would probably mean little to the wider Corps, but to 2 (NC) Sig Bde it means many things. To 15 members of 64 Sig Sqn it has most recently meant the opportunity to spend a long weekend in Maastricht doing what we do best - communicating.

Firm believers in the old adage that time spent on recce is never wasted, we headed to Maastricht to recce the real estate we would be using. On arrival, we were told that said real estate was mid way through being sold, but as the sale had not been completed, it would probably be OK to use it (nothing like certainty). Happily, this particular football pitch was given a last-minute temporary reprieve from the building industry, and all 15 of our soldiers were delivered there, courtesy of the overnight ferry from Hull to Rotterdam. In our special 'flexible' TA way, we got things working, and whilst not on shift, we were able to see if Maastricht lived up to its reputation of 'the art of fine living.' I am pleased to report that it did.

Whilst we were enjoying a meal at a local eatery we were befriended by an unusually amicable Dutch couple, who seemed strangely pleased to see us. After they had bought us all a beer and enquired about what brought us to Holland for the weekend, the Dutch gentleman asked us if we were gay. What can you say to a question like that?

So what lessons did we learn? 1. The devil is in the detail; 2. Assumption is the mother of all foul-ups; and 3. The Dutch really are very friendly people.

87 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj Ahern**
SSM	**SSgt Ward**

Life is busy in the Portacabin land, our current TAC. Triumph Road TAC is currently being rebuilt after it started to subside due to a river running underneath it! We are all eagerly awaiting September, when the building work should be completed and we can celebrate the reopening of our TAC.

New faces in the Sqn include **SSgt Stu Couszins** (formerly 64 Sqn), who takes up the SQMS NRPS role; **OCdt John Ritson** (formerly 46 Sqn) and **Cpl Taylor** from 31 Sig Regt. Congratulations to **OCdt Green**, who passed TCB last month. On a different note, eight of our Sqn are still in either Iraq or Kuwait and we wish them all a safe return.

MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION - *by 2Lt Clay*

At the beginning of May eight of us travelled to Altcar to enter the RFA Military Skills Competition. The Saturday consisted of a number of stands including map reading, shooting, observation and signals (you would hope we'd get full marks for that!). Also included were the inevitable 'lets run you round until you're ragged' stands, notably the BPFA, assault course, trailer run and stretcher run (in respirators)! The boys' team (**Cpls Magas**, **Houghton**, **Taylor** and **Sig Clark**) put in a sterling effort, coming third out of over 20 teams. Due to a loophole in the rules the female team was actually led by **Cpl** 'Delilah' **Brittain** (male) and included **Sigs Shardlow**, **Armstrong** and myself.

Despite a few problems with the driving stand (what can you expect?) and overcoming the 12 foot wall, we came second to a slightly scary Scandinavian team. This led to much embarrassment for **Cpl** 'Delilah' **Brittain** as he collected the trophy from a slightly bemused Colonel. Next followed drinks and a disco and a karaoke rendition of *Delilah* by the man himself, finishing off a highly amusing and enjoyable day.

The female team, led by Cpl Brittain

39 (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**LtCol AH Campbell-Black**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) JR Stillie**

5 (QOOH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Richard Belbin**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Robbie Hall**

We bid farewell to our 2IC, **Capt Ruth Empson**, who moves on to RSS, and we welcome her replacement, **Capt Jane May**, ex RA.

Congratulations to **Sgt John Smith** on his promotion and selection for deployment on OP TELIC 2 along with **LCpl James Osborn, Paul Docherty** and **Jonathan Godwin**.

Congratulations and a big welcome to the World for **Amelia Randall** born on Friday 23 May 2003, some 6 weeks early to **Sgt David** and **Lisa Randall**.

TOP SOLDIER

Sig AJ Griffin enlisted in the Corps and joined the Sqn in February 2003. After completing initial TAFS trg during March 2003, he attended the 1st Recruit Trg Course at Lichfield from 5 – 19 April 2003.

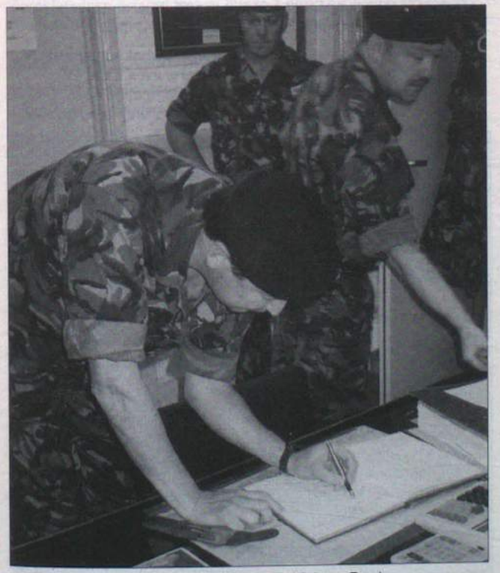
Not only was he awarded the Best Recruit on his TAFS trg he was also presented with the award of the Best Recruit on the Lichfield Course. Well done **AJ** and welcome to the Sqn.

COMMISSIONING

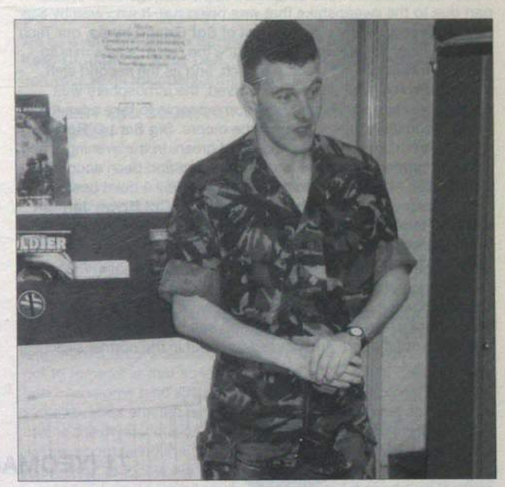
Welcome to **2Lts Rob Fuller** and **Mike Curtis-Rouse** following their successful attendance on the RMAS TA Prep Course and TACC 10 – 31 May 2003.

VISIT OF COMMANDER 2 (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE, BRIGADIER JE THOMAS MBE

The Bde Comd visited the Sqn at Banbury on Tuesday 20 May 2003. Following an intensive briefing on the Sqn and the History of the QOOH, he visited Trade Trg, Weapon Handling Instruction and Recruit Trg.



Brig Thomas signing the Visitors Book
WO2 (SSM) Robbie Hall and OC Maj Rich Belbin



2Lt Alex Orr, OC RTT, briefing Potential Recruits

NATIONAL TA DAY – 17 MAY 2003

The Sqn set up recruiting stands in Broad Street Banbury and the Westgate Shopping Centre in Oxford. A reasonably successful effort in both locations, some 12 potential recruit names were taken, of which four will be attending the TAFS 1 Initial Trg Weekend.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Bill Ruthven**
SSM	**SSgt Kath Addison-Scott**

Yet again there has been considerable movement of personalities over the last few months. OP TELEC 1 people are still in warmer climes and OP TELEC 2 see **Cpl Martin Dyer**, **LCpl Bryan Jarman** and **Sig Michael Mann** deploying. We wish them well. The Sqn now has 12 personnel either mobilised or on FTRS tours. They are carrying out various tasks, not all with RSigs. For example **LCpl Paul Wylde** is serving as a dog handler in Banja Luka!

Farewell and congratulations also go to **Capt Jo Howard**, **Lt Rob Wood** and **Sig Charlie Bonnett**, all now attending Sandhurst, to obtain their regular commissions. We must also congratulate **OCdt Jo Godfrey**, who has recently passed her RCB and hopes to attend Sandhurst in the near future.

TEN TORS 2003

39 Sig Regt are tasked annually by 43 (Wessex) Bde with providing the comms and data collection systems for the Ten Tors Challenge on Dartmoor. The event is based at Oakhampton Camp and for some years 57 Sqn have had the responsibility of co-ordinating and manning the event. This year some 38 offrs and soldiers from the Sqn deployed, together with **W02 Dickie Lee** from HQ Sqn.

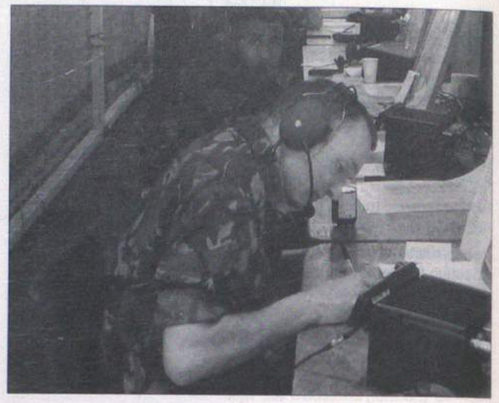
We arrived on the Friday evening to be briefed and settle into our accommodation. An early start on the Saturday found us standing in the breakfast queue at 05.00hrs with 'We Are The Champions' blaring out over the Tannoy to wake the teams.

The first shift of **W02 Dickie Lee**, **Sgt Kerrie Hill** and **Sgt Roger Theyer** found a new computer system awaiting them. After a quick induction, they settled down to the standard checks to

ensure that comms were in with all the Tor parties, and began to acclimatise to the variations on voice procedure practised by the RAF and RN who were manning some of them. This done, a number of people were released to observe the 07.00hrs mass start.

The start seemed to go off smoothly and the shift eagerly awaited the news of the first team to reach a tor. Their eagerness was in part due to the sweepstake that was being run. It was won by **Sig James Green**, much to the disgust of **Sgt Gringo Innes**, our Tech PSI who, despite attempts to influence the result, was a minute out. The morning went without a hitch, and as the second shift, commanded by **W02 Jane Tuck** arrived, the atmosphere was rather more relaxed. This allowed some people to take advantage of afternoon helicopter trips over the moors. **Sig Sara O'Reilly** returned from hers a peculiar shade of green. In the evening, once it was confirmed that all teams had returned and been accounted for, we were able to retire to the NAAFI to enjoy a quiet beer or two and enjoy the disco. That is, except for **LCpl Bryan Jarman** and **Sig Robert Chariton**, who had drawn the short straw for the overnight listening watch.

Back in the Comcen the next morning, it was a repeat performance of the first day, although looking at some of the faces wandering around, we wondered what some people's definition of a 'quiet beer' actually had been! Still, messages were received from the tors and passed for input in the normal slick manner. Before long, news of teams reaching their final tor was coming in and, as the last team was accounted for, the Sqn packed its bags and quietly slipped away for another year, with the feeling of satisfaction of an important job well done.



Ten Tors Communicaton Cell

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol SCR Malik TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) SPJ White**

FINAL RECRUITS COURSE IN BLANDFORD

April 2003 saw the final TA Recruits Course ever to be held in Blandford (so they say). Many friends, family and unit representatives were invited to watch the pass-off parade. **Col Beacom TD** (Dep Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde) was the Inspecting Officer. We were told that out of the six recruits from the Regt, three had scooped awards. Best Recruit went to 68 (ICCY) Sig Sqn's **Sig Darren Huson**; Top Field Student went to **Sig Harries** of 265 (KCLY) Sig Sqn; and Top Academic Student went to **Sig Kerry Corrigan** also of 265 Sig Sqn. We also managed the top three students of the course and had five students in the top ten.

RHQ welcomes the new Trg Maj, **Maj Kenny Kendrick**, QM, **Maj Pete Whitehouse**, and Regt FofS, **SSgt (FofS) Chris Usher**, fresh from his course at Blandford. We also have a new Regt YofS, **WO2 (YofS) Cade**.

We say farewell to **Maj Stu Boyne**, who leaves to pursue a career in Civvy Street; **Capt Trevor Keates**, who is moving to 1 ADSR on promotion; and **SSgt (FofS) Danny Fielding**, who has gone off to work on projects. All the very best for the future.

Col Nigel Beacom (Dep Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde) with the Award Winners

68 (INNS OF COURT AND CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Jonathan Manley**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Terry Gardiner**

It was the media attention given to the TA during the firemen's strike and in the build-up to Iraq that convinced newcomers, **Tom Moor**, a sixth-form college student, and **Lucinda Foley**, a bank secretary to take the plunge and join the TA. But, on talking to them, we discovered other things that motivated them.

Lucinda Foley, 32, grew up in Australia. But what actually made her sign up to part-time soldiering over here, even if the TV coverage was a catalyst? 'I wanted to do something new, something entirely different,' she explained, talking to us as she stripped down her rifle. 'And the TA allows you to combine so many things at once. I've only been coming a couple of months, but already, it's getting me fitter, it's giving me the perfect contrast to my day job slumped behind a desk, and it's introducing me to all kinds of really genuine people I'd otherwise never have met. There's none of that pretentiousness or one-upmanship you get amongst the girls in my office.'

New recruit **Tom Moor**, 18, also feels that same sense of purpose and of community you get in the TA. But it is the overall mix of training, responsibility and fun, which appeals to him most. And the money comes in very handy, too. 'There aren't many of my college mates who get paid for doing part-time jobs they actually enjoy. But I do.' The Sqn's just been off adventure training on the Isle of Wight, and there are regimental exercises coming up after that. 'It's hard to do everything I want, especially at the same time as revising for my A-levels. But as soon as my exams are done, I'll be back with a vengeance. The TA's really opened up my eyes to the Army so much that I'm now thinking about it as a living.' There can't be much better advertisement for the TA than that!

A SHINY NEW SECOND LIEUTENANT

After three weeks of the gruelling regime in RMA Sandhurst, **OCdt Huck Keppler** was seamlessly transformed into a brand new 2Lt.

2Lt Keppler – An Officer and a Gentleman

What makes this achievement of particular note is that he joined 68 (IC&CY) Sig Sqn in September 02, and, having had no previous military experience, he worked like a Trojan. **2Lt Huck Keppler** passed off the square in May 2003. Some think this must be some kind of a record. He works in the media industry and is currently transferring to Media Ops, where his skills will be put to good use. As his sponsor unit, the Sqn wishes him well for the future.

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Major Michael Wood**
SSM	**W02 (SSM) Jim Swain**

The Sqn has been through another very busy period over the last few months with a Regtl ex, Sqn Adventure trg, recruiting events and recruit trg weekends.

REGIMENTAL EXERCISE

We deployed to the South of England on EX PHOENIX EAGLE, an ex designed to test the Sqn's ability to communicate with its equipment. The skills tested were deployment, setting up, communicating, moving locs and finally returning to camp to complete turn-around tasks. It was a good ex, which stretched the Sqn and provided good learning for younger members.

SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING

In May 03 **Lt Chris Barraclough** and **WO2 Richard Pieper** organised an Adventure training weekend in Wales. Hill walking and Mountain Biking were but a few of their activities. The party came home tired but saying they fully enjoyed the weekend.

Members of 70 (EY) Sig Sqn during the hill walking in Wales

RECRUITING EVENT

881 Sig Tp, led by **SSgt Brian Malyon**, ran a recruiting stand in the town centre of Chelmsford over the weekend 26/27 April. The response from the public was very good with the permanent staff now following up interested parties.

We all wish **SSgt Jason Barsley**, **Cpl Richard Marsh**, **LCpls Kelly Cloughton**, **Kelly Delf**, **Stabler,** and **Derren Honychurch** bon voyage on their deployment on OP TELIC 2.

265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Penny Wood**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Stephen Shelley**

EXERCISE SHARP SIGNALLER 1

The weekend was billed as being one of looking at alternate comms equipment, plus a chance to consider some tech aspects of OP MEDWAY, which we certainly needed.

Having been split into manageable teams, we set about revising our HF skills, and the first challenge of the day was searching the long-term memory banks in order to erect a 12m mast! You've got to remember that as the primary NCRS users of the Regt, it had been some time since we had been using any other antenna system. Mast erected and a dipole deployed, we set about calling the mysterious callsign 'Architect.' Once comms were in, we set about using the system to patch through to other networks in an effort to locate our SSM, **WO2 Steve Shelley**. Once located, we deployed alternate antennae and stepped up to more powerful CNR.

It was certainly interesting using only a fraction of a football pitch to support various masts. I don't know why the groundsman was so touchy, it wasn't exactly the theatre of dreams (unless you dreamed only of dandelions).

After lunch, it was over to AMSCERP equipt, of which only a fraction of the Sqn had used previously. The Sqn Yeoman (Des) **SSgt Vincent** put together a comprehensive trg package, which enabled all attendees to master the system. Even **LCpl Ash Green**, an ED, managed it. On being told it was a tri-service piece of kit and that ours was an Army model, **LCpl Green** correctly observed that that was a stroke of luck as our one was green in colour.

After dinner there was more trg in yet another system, which served to whet our appetites for one or two social beers in the NAAFI. We had been so very lucky with the weather, we decided to push our luck and hold an impromptu outdoor social evening (around the back of the NAAFI). It was a very pleasant evening and a great chance to catch up with colleagues.

The weather promptly ran out at 05.55hrs, a fact that we were all acutely aware of with the commencement of Sqn PT at 06.00hrs. Several circuits of the camp and a burst of relays saw us get completely soaked and not due to sweat!

The final element of the comms trg was completed in double quick time, leaving only the drive home after a fairly comprehensive brief on this year's upcoming Camp.

As ever it is a busy training year, with numerous objectives to be met. Camp in the Czech Republic looks to be the clear favourite of this year's training, but this weekend was certainly a lot of fun and very useful also.

JOB VACANCY NOTICE - SSGT (SQMS) NRPS POST

Are you leaving the Regular service and looking for a job in the South East? Have you completed your All Arms SQMS course, currently hold a driving licence and know your way around UNICOM? 71 (Yeomanry) Sig Regt may have the job for you.

We are looking for a SQMS to be based at Bexleyheath in Kent with a starting salary of £23,287.00. If you are interested, then contact the RAOWO (**WO2 Jim Ford**) on 94691 5135/5129 or civil, 01322 529225.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIG SQN (V)

OC **Maj Roden**
SSM **W02 (SSM) Singers**

In April 2003 the Sqn finally took charge of the Sunflower system. For those in the Corps who have never heard of it, this is an LF transmission system utilising an aerostat as the antenna support platform. On 2 April 2003 the system was formally handed over to Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas MBE**.

The BT Project Team with Brig JE Thomas MBE, Maj M Drake and Lt Dale RN, DPA

BALTIC SAILING TRIP

Ever wondered why people say its Baltic? When 2 Sqn ventured out onto the sea in March, we found out why, but the Nordic weather gods smiled on us and we did have a lot of sunshine to go with the cold. After 2 days trans-European travel, **SSgt George Pendrich**, **Cpl Bruce Tarbet**, **Sig Stew Howard** and **Cfn Lindsay Goetz** arrived in Kiel ready to take to the water and find their sea legs. The first time the boat went over, a few eyes opened wide, wondering if it was going to stop. But it did, and then they could stop hanging on quite so tight. The first day done, including the shopping, it was time to set sail for Denmark. The weather was perfect, too perfect at times, as the one vital ingredient for sailing was missing, the wind. However, many thanks to all the staff at British Yacht Club, Kiel (especially the skippers) for a great time and an excellent week on the Baltic.

GOODBYES

PSAO Capt Naismith (NRPS) enlisted as a Boy Soldier in 6 (Boys) Trg Regt, Beverley in Sep 1954. He served 24 years with the Corps, during which time he reached the rank of RSM. On completing his Regular service in January 1979, he was accepted for the post of PSAO. He served another 24 years as PSAO, during which time he was instrumental in the selection of a new loc for the Sqn in 1988 and the subsequent move. The Sqn wishes him and his wife, **Ann** all the very best in his retirement.

There must be something in the water, because there is to be a turn around of the Sqn Comd team. First to go is **W02 (YofS) Del Goodenough**, who is off to Regt! Ops 15 Sig Regt. All the very best to you, **Sally** and the kids. Secondly, we say goodbye to the OC, **Maj Mick Drake**, who is off to Bulford to head up the BOTAT Team. We'd like to wish him and **Ann** all the very best for the future. Lastly, we have a change over of SSM from **W02 (SSM) Lance Thornton-Granville** to **W02 (SSM) Bruce Singers**.

WO2 Thornton-Granville hands over to WO2 Bruce Singers

HELLOS

A big 2 Sqn Hello goes to the new OC **Maj Roden**. We hope you and your family enjoy the Dundee Experience. To **W02 (YofS) Rob Lewis** and family: you'll understand the Scottish dialect just in time to be posted, **Rob**. To **Capt Alan Haughton** (PSAO) and family: we hope you enjoy your time with the Sqn. To **Capt Davy Crockett**: as the new Sqn 2IC, we hope you enjoy your tour.

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj Alan Blackwell**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Burdge**

The last couple of months have seen the Sqn tested in its core warfighting role and then dispersed around the world. Just before Easter, the Sqn deployed into the field for a manoeuvre CAST ex with the Staff, at the end of which we were declared to be at Collective Performance Level 4 (CP4) and thus ready to enter our High Readiness Year this autumn. With the possible deployment on OP TELIC 3 later this year, the trg and validation of the last year has been essential. Easter saw over half the Sqn deploying to BATUS – having been stood down from OP FRESCO – to support the Bde training in Canada, and the majority of the Sqn remains there. The Paderborn based elements have, nevertheless, still managed to compete in the Corps SAAM in UK, host a visit by the Master of Sigs and conduct a range of military, trade and adventurous trg. The following articles describe some of these events.

LIFE AFTER SANDHURST – *by 2Lt Robin Foster*

I had no idea what to expect when I arrived at 200 Sig Sqn, for the first time. Like all new tp comds fresh from Sandhurst I was a little apprehensive and wanted to make a good impression on my first day. Instead, I ended up looking like a startled rabbit staring down the headlights of a sixteen-wheeled, ten-tonne truck.

Nevertheless I quickly got to meet most of the Sqn and before I knew it, had settled into the Sqn way of life. One of my first tasks was to plan and run an APWT range day. The best learning happens when one makes mistakes and I certainly learned a lot from my first range day. Firstly, and most importantly, I learned that one should not forget to pick up the RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Burdge**, when driving to the ranges. Secondly, packed lunches are called packed lunches for a reason and need to be brought to the range in the morning, not after lunchtime! Finally, it is usually a good idea to get the troops to make ready before giving the words of command 'in your own time, go on.' I suspect, had it not been for **Sgt Piper's** tireless effort and help, the day may have cost me more than three bottles of port!

My next major task was to plan a two-day adventurous training package for those in the Sqn who had not deployed to Canada. This was a two-day water sports event at The British Mohnesee Sailing Club, and is fully reported below by **2Lt Sharples**.

My brief time with 200 Sig Sqn has taught me that the real Army is far better than impression we got during trg, and if my first three weeks are anything to go by, I am going to have a most enjoyable time with the Sqn.

10 MILES FOR CHARITY – *by LCpl Ellis*

200 Sqn on the Brüggen Ten

For the team from 200 Sig Sqn, the Brüggen Ten started with a few quiet beers downtown in Mönchengladbach, followed by several loud ones to get us in the mood for the ten-mile tab the following day. On the day, the sun was out and the lads were really looking forward to getting started. After consuming full fry-ups to absorb the liquids of the previous evening and re-hydrating ourselves with bottles of PowerAde, we were set for the off.

For the tab, the team carried 30lb packs and went round in the style of a booted speed march, with **Capt Phil Muir** and **WO1 (RSM) Burdge** setting the pace. The target was to complete the 10-mile road race in less than 2 hours, which we fulfilled with 5 minutes to spare. We could have completed it in less time if we hadn't stopped at the 5-mile point for refreshments, kindly donated by **SSgt Gibbins** and **Sgt Walsh**, the team morale SNCOs.

The Sqn raised £200 in sponsorship, the highest amount by any of the units involved. After the event, it was presented to **Brig Inshaw**, Comd 1 Sig Bde. The money will go to Silver Child, a Corps-sponsored charity supporting the children of Great Ormond Street Hospital.

The team comprised **Capt Phil Muir**, **WO1 (RSM) Burdge**, **SSgt Scotney**, **Sgt Giffen**, **LCpls Merrick**, **Walker** and **Ellis**, and **Sigs Day**, **Saddler** and **Ferris**. The admin team was **SSgt Gibbins** and **Sgt Walsh**.

BRIGADE CAST – *by Lt Rob Bott*

As part of the Bde's trg year, we were scheduled to conduct a Bde CAST ex in late March. However, this was to be a CAST with a difference. Because the Sqn had been confirming and consolidating its war fighting role during the previous FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET I to IV series of exs, it seemed pointless to conduct this ex in the CAST building. So it was decided that this was to be a manoeuvre ex out on Sennelager Trg Area, with the Bde Staff joining us to conduct their trg in the complex. This plan was very nearly scuppered on a few occasions due to our OP FRESCO commitments. However, in the end, there were no planned strikes for the ex period.

Surprisingly, as a Tp Comd in the Sqn, I had not had the opportunity to deploy on an ex with the Staff up to this point. Therefore, it was to be a learning experience for me, and also my first chance to practise my true op role. Conducting the Sqn-level FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET exs ensured that I was confident that the Tp could perform extremely well in their role. However, the added factor and pressure of the Staff in the HQ was exactly what we needed to complete our prep for high readiness.

The initial Sqn deployment was made a few days prior to CAST proper, to allow us to conduct a PACEX and be confident that we were ready to receive the Staff. As Bde Main, my complex took on the Staff for the first phase of the ex, the initial planning phase, so the pressure was on from the start. They settled in to their field environment quickly and there was a buzz of activity throughout the complex. With no major comms problems, the time was spent refining the complex and establishing a routine.

Over the next 48 hrs, there were approx ten changes of control and moves, with the last three being undertaken in the last 8 hours of the battle-fighting phase. This meant that the pace was fast and furious throughout, and there was limited time to tear down, move, set up and receive the Staff into a working environment.

Overall, this ex confirmed our high level of capability to go into the next stage of the Formation Readiness Cycle in August. It also gave the Staff confidence in our ability consistently and rapidly to provide them with a working environment, whatever the conditions or pressures placed upon us. For me, it was a long-

needed experience that has allowed me to see how vital our role is to the operation of the Staff and the Bde as a whole.

A FAREWELL VISIT FROM THE MASTER OF SIGNALS – *by Cpl Tris Dunbar.*

On Wednesday 9 April, 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200) hosted a visit by the Master of Signals, **MajGen IOJ Sprackling OBE**. It was his first visit to the Sqn during his time as the Master, and so we had a busy and interesting timetable organised for him. His first port of call was SHQ where he met the OC, **Maj Alan Blackwell**, and the RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Burdge**.

The Master was then taken on a tour of Talbot Bks (during which he was shown all the Sqn facilities) culminating in a chat with the soldiers in the garages. As with all good visits, the final loc for the day was the hub of the Sqn, the Gauntlet Bar, where the entire Sqn was assembled.

The Master with the OC, RSM and medal recipients

The Master then kindly agreed to make some presentations for the Sqn. The first presentation was to **SSgt Gibbins**, with his LSGC medal. Then it was the turn of **Sgt Hoskins**, who also received a well-deserved LSGC.

Finally it was my turn, having been awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service for my work in Kosovo on OP AGRICOLA VII. I was very proud to have received this award and even prouder to have been presented it by the Master in his final year in post.

After the speeches and the odd beer, the Master was taken off for a meal with the Sqn Offrs and WOs, which left the rest of us to get on with an entertaining night of celebration in the bar.

The next morning the Master had breakfast with the soldiers in the Sqn cookhouse (the food had never been so good!), before saying his goodbyes and continuing on his tour of the RSigs units in Germany.

EXPEDITION TO THE BRITISH MOHNESEE YACHT CLUB – *by 2Lt Sharples*

With half the Sqn on ex in BATUS, the remainder thought they would cheer themselves up by getting themselves to Mohnesee Lake to try out their water sports skills. Organised and directed by **2Lt Robin Foster**, there were about 40 of us lined up on a Wednesday morning, eagerly expecting the delights that the Club had to offer. We were not disappointed.

As soon as we arrived, we were briefed and instructed to carry out a swimming test, and with no wetsuits on, we were bravely led by **Sgt Walsh** into the not-very-warm lake. After we had warmed up with a good plate of hot food, a group of ten left the centre for a mountain-bike trek around the lake, while the rest of us got onto the water and with great gusto, tried our hands at windsurfing, dinghy sailing and canoeing.

Cpl Phillips soon emerged as the expert on canoeing, and later on when the wind died down, his enthusiasm and expertise came in handy, especially with the capsize drills! Attempting to windsurf was a challenge for everyone, and with each gust of wind or any

Canoeing on Mohnesee Lake

kind of attempt at a turn, things initially got a bit tricky, so much so that **LCpl Ellis** decided not to bother with that turning lark and eventually found himself being dragged along by the rescue boat from the other side of the lake!

Good fun was had by all, especially perhaps the group of happy bikers, who got a little geographically challenged in the rain and rocked into the bar an hour late. We all had a busy evening in the bar, but by the morning everyone (almost) was bright eyed and bushy tailed.

The Thursday was much on the same lines as the previous day, and while **Sgt Pagett** showed off his sailing skills whilst simultaneously losing his hat, the rest of us honed our now almost expert skills on the other equipt.

Overall the two-day trip was a thorough success, and every individual had a good time. No doubt the Sqn is looking forward to the next time they will be able to visit the Mohnesee.

CORPS SAAM – *by Cpl 'Laney' Lane.*

Trg for this year's Corps SAAM started early in the year with a practice shoot at Haltern Ranges, where the initial team selection took place under the watchful eye of **Sgt** 'Hutch' **Little**. After several more range days, the final candidates for the team were decided upon. The team leader was to be **2Lt Sharples**, our gap year commission officer, with **Cpl Crutchley**, **LCpl Ingham**, and **Sig Williams** filling the other slots. I was to be the team admin Cpl, providing those all-important motivational speeches!

Arriving in the early hours of the Monday morning from the Chunnel, and with little sleep, we decided to do our final preparations. However, the Corps SAAM marshals were a little surprised when the first question we asked on the morning of the competition was, 'Where is the zeroing range?' Most of the other teams had been there for a few weeks, undertaking intensive training!

However, with only a vague recollection of the shoots that we had been memorising on the way over, we did surprisingly well, especially on the fire assessment stage. There was some confusion over the types of shoot and when to mag change, but if nothing else we had a great time and learned a lot in the process. Practice (lots of) does make perfect in this game!

When all the VIPs turned up on the Friday, I was shocked to see how big this event was! It was a huge reunion for all the members of the Corps (the RSMs keeping us particularly entertained with their stories of 'the good old days'!) The presentation of medals was given by the Master of Signals and the SOinC(A). No silverware made its way back to Sennelager on this occasion, but we did come fourth in the Minor Units Cup!

We are all looking forward to being at the SAAM next year, and with more practice and experience on our side, we anticipate the Sqn will come away with something other than great memories.

BRIGADE COMMANDER'S COMMENDATION

Sig Wheeler was awarded the first Bde Comd's Commendation by the current commander, **Brig Rutherford-Jones** during his recent visit to the Sqn. **Sig Wheeler** had woken to the smell of smoke in the barrack block and discovered that another soldier's room was on fire. **Sig Wheeler** entered the room, fought back the flames with a hand-held fire extinguisher, and pulled the occupant out and away from danger. Had it not been for **Sig Wheeler's** rapid and brave actions, it is likely that the occupant of the room would have been overcome by smoke and died. For these actions he received this commendation.

Sig Wheeler receives the Commendation from Brig Rutherford-Jones

1 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC **Maj AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1(RSM) AJ Shadwick**

TREGANTLE BATTLE CAMP 2003

On Sunday 16 March, 215 Sig Sqn deployed early to Tregantle Fort, on the southern Cornish coast, for a week of hard work on annual battle camp. As soon as we arrived at the Fort it was 'all go', and the pace for the week ahead was set.

The first three days were spent on the nearby ranges, all of which sloped towards the coast at a 45 degree angle. A trip from the 100-metre point to the butts was a PT session in itself. As a result of running up to paste and patch targets, shooters spent most of their time firing with sweat in their eyes. The ranges included GPMG firing, a definite favourite with the troops.

On Thursday morning we deployed to Dartmoor for a live firing ex, which involved live firing section attacks. Everyone involved enjoyed the day and a lot of aggression was put into the attacks. **LCpl** 'DJ' **Latham** showed a complete disregard for ammo consumption, spending most of the attacks carrying an empty GPMG, having used all his rounds in the first couple of minutes. Just goes to show that ops can't count. The day ended with the start of the final ex.

This ex consisted of three secs against an enemy force. The objective was for the three secs to locate four downed friendly force pilots before the enemy got them. However, the pilots were captured by the enemy and held POW in a nearby fort. So there was a dawn attack. Our three secs stormed the fort but were soon overwhelmed by the enemy fire, and after a long firefight, ENDEX was called with victory awarded to the bad guy.

The week ended with some awards been presented, including the Best Shot award to **Cpl Rone**, and Best Section award to 5 Sec, commanded by **Cpl Allen**. (Although everyone felt that if it hadn't been for his sec 2IC, **LCpl James**, they would surely have come last).

The battle camp really kick-started the Sqn's trg year, preparing

Cpl Kay prepares his section for live firing

us for deployment to BATUS later in the year, and then maybe on to future deployments to sandier realms.

EXERCISE ATLANTIC CHALLENGE

Early on Monday 7 April, **Capt Chris Smith** and **Sgt Dave Sangston** (Area Systems Group) arrived at the JSASTC, Gosport with the rest of their crew to join the yacht *Challenger*, a 67ft 52ton steel cutter, built and previously owned by **Chay Blyth**.

The aim of the exped was to develop the personal qualities essential to the members of the Armed Forces through adventurous sail training in a military environment. But most of the Sqn thought it was an elaborate ploy for the 2IC to abandon his in-tray and avoid the Bde study period.

The crew of 14 (skipper, mate and 3 watches of 4) was a mixture of all ranks drawn from all three Services. We had three days to familiarise and prepare the boat before sailing to Falmouth, the final port of call before heading west for Boston, USA. Part of our prep was an afternoon of sea survival trg and familiarisation of the

safety aspects of the boat, including hands-on in the middle of the Solent.

After a final supper in Falmouth, we set off on the evening of 11 April. A couple of days and 300 nautical miles later, most of the crew had found their sea legs and began adapting to life living eating and sleeping at various angles whilst bobbing up and down. But in the early hours of day 4 we sailed into a squall, the wind increasing from 12 to 45 knots in a very short time. With the amount of sail we had up, the boat reacted violently, resulting in a preventer rope snapping from the boom. The rope flew around the boat, removing the HF antenna, before settling over the side and wrapping itself around the prop. As the sun began to rise, we assessed the situation. We now had no engine and no comms! But we also had one crewmember who had been suffering from severe seasickness from the outset. The ship's doctor administered a drip to re hydrate him, but this triggered a series of chest pains. The skipper decided that he should seen buy a hospital doctor, but to extract the individual, a Mayday call had to be made. RSigs came into their own, as **Sgt Dave Sangston** and **Capt Chris Smith** set about building an improvised HF antenna, and it wasn't long before we were speaking to the coastguard to arrange a transfer 100 miles off the coast of southern Ireland. Fortunately our fellow crewmember made a speedy recovery and is now well.

Because of this unfortunate false start we were forced to return to UK to make some necessary repairs. After a couple of days it was decided that we would still attempt the Atlantic crossing, but a

Challenger, with Capt Smith at the helm

Rescue off the coast of Ireland

few crewmembers had to withdraw because of work commitments. Eventually, with repairs completed and crew reshuffled, we set off. Not many crews have the opportunity to complete a 1000-mile trg session before attempting to sail across the Atlantic!

The crossing itself took 19 days and challenged the crew from start to finish. We battled through two Force 9-10 storms. We had to make minor (and in some cases major) repairs to the yacht throughout the trip. After 3 days the water maker broke down, resulting in strict water rationing for the rest of the trip. The prevailing winds forced us north, passing under the Flemish Cap and across the bottom of the Grand Banks, with the crew recalling scenes from the film *Perfect Storm*. Finally, on 9 May we sailed into Boston Harbour for a well-earned drink and 2 days' R&R before making the six-hour flight home.

The exped was a once in a lifetime experience with many highs and many lows. In total we sailed over 4,000 miles in every type of condition that the ocean could throw at us. The value of these expeds should not be underestimated, and all should be encouraged to participate in similar ventures. I would like to take this opportunity to thank **Capt Charlie Roberts** for all his efforts as the project officer, and the staff at JSATC Gosport. For further details of similar expeds, check out the Corps web page or visit www.jsatc.org.

12 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj Chris Paterson**
RSM **WO1 Carter**

AFV DRIVING COURSE - *by LCpl 'DJ' Brittain*

Eight members embarked on the Sqn's latest AFV Driving Course hosted and instructed by **Cpl** 'Tips' **Tiplady** and **Cpl Glen Armitage**.

Snowed down with theory for two weeks, **Cpl Gaz Lawson** and others couldn't wait for the open road, or the parade square as we started out with. After perfecting the manoeuvre phase, we finally hit the road, **Cpl Bob Roberts** taking it more literally than others. We gradually worked our way through almost the entire fleet due to some outstanding tiller control by **Sig Tony Handley**. The moment of truth finally came, the test. **Cpl Roberts** set the standard to follow (which wasn't hard for **Cpl Richie Cranswick**). One by one we all took our turn and, against the odds, we came away with a one-hundred percent pass-rate.

EXERCISE MOUFLON KIRINYAGA - *by LCpl Richy Laws*

Over the weekend 6-8 June the Sqn mounted an adventure training ex with 14 Sig Regt (EW) in Snowdonia. This was prep for a larger-scale exped planned to Corsica in July to traverse the length of the Island via the Grand Randonée 20, a gruelling route, climbing and descending over rocky terrain.

After a 7-hour road move on Friday afternoon, we arrived at Capel Curig Camp near Betws-y-Coed, where we were met by **Lt Katie Bermingham** (14 Sig Regt). After quick unpack and dinner, we had an orientation of the camp, a brief on the following days activities, and then acclimatisation in Capel Curig.

Saturday morning saw the group depart in search of undiscovered Welsh mountains, the more familiar peaks all being crowded by professional mountain runners. This allowed the likes of **Cpl Lowe**, **LCpl Michell** and **Sig Mitchell** to try their hand at navigation under the watchful eyes of the instructors. Not yet being commissioned, they found this relatively easy.

Whilst we were on one leg of the journey an interesting local appeared to tell us all about the history of the various slate mines we passed en route. The one we had just stopped at had produced 2,000 tons (or tonnes - he didn't specify) of slate per year. This was insignificant compared with other mines which reached 200,000 tons (or tonnes). Who says adventure trg isn't for intellectuals?

The end of the day saw **Lt Christian Barker** educate the group on the merit of a decent cream tea in preference to more obvious refreshment. The contingent from 14 Sig Regt then opted to seek out local culture in preference to the offer from **Capt Adam Corkery** to climb one more peak for the day.

Sunday brought dire weather so, instead of pursuing scenic views, the decision was made to mount Snowdon ascending via the Miner's Track and down the Pyg Track. Little did we know that the 3 Peaks Challenge was reaching Snowdon at that point, so the achievement was undermined by yet more professionals sprinting past us up and down the mountain. Good recce! Sadly the etymologists amongst us could not determine the meaning of Pyg, but by the time we reached the bottom, we were all sweating like Pygs. Swift farewells were made and everyone returned to work on Monday tired but enthused, anticipating somewhat different adventures in Corsica. For those who find the trip a little to daunting, the Sqn is also offering sailing and multi-activity AT in July, so bring on the glorious sunshine.

KOSOVO TEAR DOWN - *by Cpl Chris Lowe*

The tear down required only a small number of people from QM Dept and the Techs (of all varieties). After the main body left for home, we were left with a daunting task of stripping the comms sites and packing away the rest of our equipt. The prospect of doing this was made much more acceptable by the fact that we knew we would be left under the Foreman's supervision.

The QM Dept's main role was to close down the accounts and to empty out the rubs we had been using in Slim Lines. This was easier said than done when the temperature was edging towards 30° C. With the direction of **Maj Fred Payet**, **Sgt Powell** and **Sig Gaz Evans**, we were able to make light work of it. I just wish **Sgt Powell** would have kept his shirt on!

During this period the Techs had to tear down comms sites and hand over equipt to the Finnish Bde and to a new smaller sig tp from 3 Div. This involved a lot of travelling between sites, including Goles and Czechbat, to remove the containers. These containers were then brought back to Slim Lines until they were ready to be shipped to UK to be used on the next op. The microwave dishes and antennae also had to be removed from the towers at these sites. This was mainly done by **FofS Rob Clifford**, **Cpls Billy Richards**, **Pete Minza** and **Sigs Pippa Lavenu** and **Wayne Sturdy**, with the rest of us giving a helping hand.

One big task was to remove kit from the PTK building, Kosovo's version of BT. This was 12 floors up, and it had been installed near the service elevator. But, about ten minutes after we arrived, the service elevator packed in. To make matters worse, it was a public holiday and there was no one to fix it. So we had to drag the equipt (which was in 6-foot racks) across the building to the passenger elevator. Six of us could barely move these racks! The passenger elevator could barely take the weight either, and at one point, the alarm went off due to having too much weight in it. Nobody wanted to get in the lift with the equipt after that. We did have outside help from **Bob Pearce**, a civilian engineer from Cogent, who was full of useful ideas. We left him to remove the UPS batteries.

The Finnish Army helped us for much of the tear down by providing transport when we needed to move large items. Another excellent Finnish aid were the saunas to relax in at the end of a tiring day.

One evening, after we had broken the back of the hard work, QM Dept organised a leaving BBQ. It turned out to be a very interesting night. I don't know what was in the food but a lot of people ended up looking like Radioactive Man. **FofS Clifford** was glowing the most.

In my opinion, the tear down was just as hard as the initial take over when we first arrived. But having said that, we all had a good time with morale being high most of the time.

SQUADRON POST TOUR FUNCTION - *by LCpl 'Lamby' Lamb*

After a vigorous six-month tour of Kosovo what better way to wind down than an end of tour function? The spending on the event gave an indication on how important HQ considered it for us to let our hair down after being away from friends and family for so long.

The theme for the function was the Oscar Award Night in Hollywood, with the red carpet laid out at the entrance and the large Oscar statues on the stage. This turned out to be a bit confusing for some people, especially **SSgt Alexander-High**, who thought that he had finally made it to Hollywood as a comedian. But the only thing that amused everyone was the suit he arrived in.

As part of the classy scene, there was also a Casino, with Blackjack, Roulette and Poker. Everyone was given about £100 worth of 'funny money' which was turned into chips to gamble with. Lady Luck not being on my side, the novelty soon wore off for me and I was soon back at the other table working hard on lager consumption. On the other hand, **Alex Smith** soon became a millionaire. Not only did he have a natural eye for gambling, he also looked the part. With a cigar in one hand and a glass of martini in the other, he looked like the next **James Bond**. All he needed was a stunner on either side of him - but there was no chance of that.

Throughout the night there was continuous entertainment including a band called *Inside Out*. They played mainly old classic songs, a good touch, which got everyone in the party mood. Next were three dancing girls but they didn't seem to be on stage long enough. There was also some unexpected entertainment when we found that one of the lads could break dance. The dance floor cleared, and out came **Scotty Pardoe**. After seeing this, some of the other lads plucked up confidence to give it a go and people come from all angles rolling around the floor. Now that was entertainment!

It was an excellent night out and a night to remember. Our thanks to **Sgts Si Ferrer** and **Stu Ireland**, who worked on it from start to finish - including acting as minders for the dancing girls.

DEFENCE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES AGENCY (GERMANY) 252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

S02 Strat & Tech Dev **Maj G Pickersgill**

STRATEGIC AND TECHNICAL DEVELOPEMENT

As a further step in the transformation of 252 Sig Sqn into 'The Agency', Sqn HQ is now distributed as follows: **Maj Garth Pickersgill** has moved into Telephone House and although he retains his responsibilities as Sqn OC (known here as the 'Army Tribal Chief') he is now establishing the post of S02 Strategic & Technical Development. With the posting clock ticking, there is now light at the end of the tunnel for **Garth**. We have a nominated relief, but no sight yet of a posting order. Is a certain Capt in line for a hard time if the awaited paperwork does not materialise PDQ?

ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT HUMAN RESOURCES

Adjt **Capt CJ Udell**
SSM **W02 (SSM) DW Stewart**

Capt Eric Udell has moved into Telephone House and whilst retaining his current GI welfare, administrative and disciplinary responsibilities for the soldiers in 252 Sig Sqn, he has now taken on another role within the DCSA(G) registry domain. Along with this role and the retitle to Adjt DCSA(G) comes the additional responsibilities traditionally associated with the post: providing admin support to the HQ on a day to day basis. He also takes on similar responsibilities for the RAF element of DCSA(G), who are now an integral part of the Agency. He is ably assisted by Chief

Clerk, **Flt Sgt Phil Harries** RAF, and a team comprising **Pte Dave Shearon** AGC, **Mrs Dawn Glasgow**, **Miss Fiona Logan** and **Mrs Michelle Winters**.

Our civilian staff are now providing a truly combined registry facility in support of all DCSA(G) personnel. **Miss Christina Constantine**, our Sqn dependant clerk, has moved into the Big House to join the current incumbent, **Miss Jan Gallagher** in establishing our B registry. This facility (a combination of the old 11 Sigs Unit RAF registry and elements of 252 Sig Sqn) will provide a postal distribution and personnel admin focal point for those working in the HQ building.

WO2 (SSM) Dave Stewart has also moved to Telephone House. He will retain most of the traditional SSM with responsibilities for our soldiers' feeding, discipline, training, boots & haircuts and good old admin. In addition he picks up the responsibility for ensuring the smooth running of the various visit programmes by providing the admin support required. **Sgt Taff O'Connor** has moved into an open plan office alongside the Agency's TLO, where he is in the process of incorporating the Army ITD Database and putting processes in place for the Military trg requirement that will eventually be managed through the links established with Rheindahlen Support Unit.

VISIT OF BRIGADIER T GREGORY ROYAL MARINES

During a visit to the Agency, **Brig T Gregory RM**, Director Engineering, Interoperability & Information Systems, DCSA conducted a presentation ceremony for two members of the RSigs element of DCSA(G). **SSgt Andy Lloyd** received the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal, having served a total of 1080 days in NI, and **Sgt Rob O'Connor** was presented with the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal for 15 years irreproachable service. They were accompanied by their wives, **Mrs Debbie Lloyd** and **Mrs Louise O'Connor**, with son, **James**. The Brigadier presented both ladies with a large bouquet of flowers.

During the ceremony, the Adt, **Capt Eric Udell**, read out the citations and later, over a drink or two, the medal recipients discussed the impressive detail contained in their respective citations. The ceremony was followed by lunch and a reception in the Sgts Mess.

BRÜGGEN 10 MILE ROAD RACE SATURDAY 5 APRIL 2003

Members of the Agency recently took part in the Brüggen 10 mile road race held on Elmpt station on Saturday 5 April 2003. The Agency had not entered a team as such, but members who partook as individual runners achieved the following finish timings:

Male Open Category 442 Runners

Place	*Name*	*Time*
131	**Sqn Ldr Slee**	0l: 12:19sec
147	**Mr R Storer**	01:13:36sec
	Placed 16th in Super Veteran Category	
205	**Capt E Udell**	01:18:35sec
217	**Sig Gilmour**	01:1.9:39sec
218	**Cpl Hirst**	01:19:39sec
295	**Sig Growcott**	01:26:36sec
389	**Maj Prince**	01:37:01sec
	Placed 65th in Veteran Category	
395	**Mr B Potts**	01:38:42sec

Female Open Category 113 Runners

2	**Cpl N Dean**	01:02:58sec
72	**Miss K Johnson**	01:38:43sec

The Sqn OC and all ranks congratulate all those who tools part, particularly **Cpl Nikki Dean**, who achieved an extremely impressive and very close second place in the Female Open Category.

The reception after the medal presentations. Rear, L-R: Sgt O'Connor, Maj Pickersgill, Col Eaton, SSgt Lloyd. Front, L-R: James and Mrs Louise O'Connor, Brig Gregory, Mrs Debbie Lloyd

ARMY

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj Mark Everill RLC**
2IC **Capt David Orr**

The last 2 months have seen the formation process of 262 Sig Sqn quicken significantly. Those deployed on OP TELIC in support of 2 Sig Regt have now all safely returned and are telling war stories to anyone that is foolish enough to pull up a sandbag. An account of the Sqn's exploits in the desert will appear in the next edition of *The WIRE*. After a couple of days back in work, those who had deployed disappeared on some well earned Post Op Tour Leave. When they return, the Sqn will be 75 strong and with the veh compound rapidly filling up with yellow coloured vehicles, we are beginning to resemble a functioning Sqn. 262 Sig Sqn is now formally broken down into two Tps, A Tp (Radio) and Support Tp, and it is in these Tps that trg will get under way in earnest over the next few weeks. Trg will then intensify at Sqn level with a series of exs building up to the Bde FTX in November. Going from scratch to CP5 in 6 months will be no mean feat, but everyone associated with the Sqn is determined to make it happen.

SSgt Dudley, Cpl Hague and LCpls Spiers and Weston on OP TELIC

It only remains for me to congratulate all those involved in OP TELIC, who have done the Sqn proud, and those who formed the Rear Party, who endured the less glamorous and less rewarding side of the conflict with typical good humour.

BA(G) SIX A SIDE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS
- by Capt DR Orr

I blame BFBS. An advert was heard encouraging teams to enter the BA(G) Six-a-Side Football Competition, and I thought this was the ideal stage to make our maiden appearance in a competitive sporting event. Word quickly reached me that the man for the job was **Sig Taylor**, who I was assured was a David Beckham and Sir Alex Ferguson rolled into one. A hasty trial session was organised, during which it became apparent that the necessary attribute required to be chosen for the squad was availability on the day. Owning your own boots pretty much qualified you as Captain. After a further trg session we took a trip to our inherited 'sports store', where we discovered that, at best, we were going to run onto the field dressed like the Jamaican basketball team. A few favours were called in, and soon we had procured a half-decent looking strip. After a pasta meal and a good night's sleep, we were ready to take on the best BF(G) had to offer and, incredibly, we were actually quietly confident. This blind optimism can only be attributed to the fact that there were two Scots in the starting line up!

The competition started badly. In a league of 4 we failed to qualify for the final stages, despite the best efforts of the team. We were given new hope, however, when we qualified for the plate competition. Despite some very credible performances, we once again came away empty handed (largely because there was no wooden spoon on offer!) The Sqn's first foray into the sporting world may not have ended in triumph, but at least we took part, despite being the smallest unit represented by some considerable margin. My thanks go to all the lads who turned in some fine performances, and in particular to **Sig Taylor**, for organising the team.

WARSTEINER BREWERY VISIT – *by Sig Ord*

The drudgery of Rear Party routine was broken for 262 Sig Sqn in late May, when **Cpl Montgomery** organised the inevitable in a brewery. The day started with everyone turning up in an array of silly hats and sunglasses, although the best effort was made by **Sig Taylor**, who arrived complete with Welly boots and dust mask. As the coach got within the general vicinity of the brewery, chief navigator, **Sig Kate Ord**, proclaimed that we must be near, as she had just seen a Warsteiner delivery lorry on its rounds. Great delight was taken by all when they tried to explain to a confused **Sig Ord** that Warsteiner is drunk in various locations and not just in the brewery that produces it!

Although interesting, the actual brewery tour was probably not the main thing on everybody's mind and occasionally questions of 'Are we nearly at the bar yet?' were heard. After the hour-long tour had finished, it was a quick run back to the coach that was to transport us to the second phase of the operation. There were few complaints as the coach driver enthusiastically showed off his Michael Schumacher style skills. To the great delight of all, we soon arrived at the bar, but the euphoria soon turned to disappointment, as the free beer was limited to 5 Euros per person. The unanimous decision was taken to buy rounds, although this proved difficult as the barmaid would only sell beer if you had finished your previous one and would only accept orders of 10 or more at a time!

Despite lengthy pleas, we had to leave to leave the place of cheap beer to make way for the next tour. So we made our way to the coach and headed bake to Gütersloh. However, the journey wasn't exactly an express service, courtesy of the surprisingly small capacity of **Sig Watson's** bladder! All in all, everyone had a good time, and we appreciated the chance to let our hair down. If only the next day at work had been as much fun, when even painting a Land Rover became an exceedingly difficult task.

280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Russell Edwards**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dixon**

Since the last edition of *The WIRE*, the Sqn has had a busy time (even more so than usual!). In March we deployed 23 personnel on OP DISPLAY DETERRENCE, as part of the NATO forces stationed in Turkey to protect their southern border with Iraq. The rest of the Sqn has been left holding the fort, dealing with the many VIP visits, including the Master of Signals on 9 April, who presented **Sig Fewster** with her promotion to LCpl. He seemed pleased to be presented with a black and white photograph we had found in our unit's records: that of himself as a Capt when serving with 28 (BR) Sig Regt, the predecessor of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn. Meanwhile the rest of the Sqn have been participating in the Sqn exercises, such as the battle camp in Haltern, EX FRAN AXE.

The Master of Signals receiving his presentation from the Sqn – a photograph of himself as a Capt serving with 28 (BR) Sig Regt

The Sqn has seen the departure of the RQMS, **WO2** 'Dutch' **Holland**, to enjoy his few remaining months with the Army back in Middlesborough with 34 Sig Regt (V). The SQMS, **SSgt Maw**, has also left us for pastures new. Despite having served his full 22 years, he has decided that green is still the life for him, and has transferred to the LSL with a new post at 8 Inf Bde, NI. **Lt Barber** became **Capt Barber**, and then decided that he wanted a medal, so went to the Gulf with 3 Div Sig Regt. Good luck to them all.

OPERATION DISPLAY DETERRENCE - *by WO2(FofS) JK Sutton*

On 28 Feb 03 280 (UK) Sig Sqn, as part of the NATO Deployable Communications Module (DCM) Bn, was informed that it was on 10 days NTM in support of the NATO Article 4 Mission to South East Turkey. This heralded the start of a frenzy of activity in order to get the necessary tasks completed to enable the Mobile Communications Module (MCM) and its crew to deploy. The 23 personnel from 280 Sqn (led by **Capt Brunton**) were to be augmented by a crew of 4 from the ACCAP Bn in Maastricht and 3 engineers from the Command Logistics Depot in Brunssum. The final team of 30 comprised 23 British, 5 US and 2 Dutch personnel. With each nation having their own particular rules and regulations, this made life very interesting when it came to completing the pre-deployment trg and other admin tasks. These problems were soon overcome, and the US and Dutch personnel even became familiar with British NBC procedures.

On 3 March, the Unit was placed on 5 days NTM. Prep continued and enough stores were placed on the vehs to make the entire team self-sufficient for 5 days. No one knew at this stage what awaited us, what the living conditions would be like or whether we were getting fed. What we were told was that the 12 vehs, 5 trailers and the majority of the personnel were to be transported in 2 Antonov AN 124-100s to Diyarbakir airbase in Turkey. A number of us were more than a little concerned at the prospect as visions of vodka-fuelled Russian pilots sprang to mind!

The day of reckoning finally arrived and the team and all the equipt arrived at Geilenkirchen airbase on 14 March. The first Antonov had already landed and there was a sizeable crowd of people gathering just to catch a glimpse of the airborne behemoth. Loading of the aircraft started in earnest and from the amount of flashes going off from various cameras, you could be forgiven for thinking that **President Putin** himself was flying. Once the loading was complete, we had a short time to get the first group of personnel into the passenger area just in front of the tail. It was a pleasant surprise to find reclining seats just like a regular passenger aircraft. It certainly beat a C130. The flight was surprisingly smooth, the only period of disquiet being the takeoff. We were on the runway for so long that we began to think that the pilot was going to drive all the way to Turkey. Thankfully the curvature of the earth made the runway drop away beneath us and the giant bird clawed its way into the sky.

An Antonov AN 124-100

After a 4-hour flight, the first aircraft landed at Diyarbakir. We then endured a frustrating time while Turkish customs checked all the official paperwork. A timely fax from SHAPE prevented **LCpl Wood** from being deported from the country on the Antonov which was heading back to its home - in Minsk! Shortly afterwards the second Antonov arrived and the team was complete. After an overnight stay in a rundown hangar (The Dedeman Hotel in Diyarbakir) the crew and their vehs traveled to Pirinclik, where the MCM was to be set up to provide NATO comms for the Forward Control Element (FCE) of the Joint Command South East (JCSE). Once the loc for the HQ had been decided, the MCM set up nearby so that the usual NATO facilities could be remoted into the building. We had taken part in a number of exs recently, so the set-up was rapid, with all services provided to the HQ in 24 hours.

Although we had all comms in to SHAPE, there were a number of issues still to be overcome. A planning error meant that the HQ were not in a position to administer their own networks. This resulted in **LCpl Cooper** and his small team working around the clock for the first 4 days administering the HQ networks as well as their own. For his efforts, **LCpl Cooper** was awarded a CinC AFNORTH Commendation from **Gen Sir Jack Deverell**.

We then settled into a daily routine of shifts to keep an eye on the various circuits. This included various civilian E1 links, TSGT based links to ground stations in Italy, NATO SECRET WAN, NATO UNCLAS WAN and SECRET VTC services to the HQ. We were visited by a number of VIPs during the Op, including CinC South and SACEUR himself.

To keep everyone in shape, PT was a regular undertaking making the most of the facilities provided by our Turkish hosts. The Turkish food became a bit repetitive and the quantity was also a factor. **Cpl Chacksfield** watched in horror as his carefully honed torso started to shrink before his very eyes. The eagerly awaited suntans also failed to appear. At an altitude of 2800 ft, snow, sleet and rain featured heavily.

After 5 weeks, it was deemed that there was no longer a threat to Turkey from Iraq, so the HQ and our presence were no longer required. After a carefully controlled close-down of circuits, everybody stepped up a gear for the teardown. All the equipt and kilometres of fibre and copper cable were stowed back in the trucks ready for the extraction.

We weren't to return by Antonov. A Dutch ship had docked at the port of Iskendrun to transport the Dutch Patriot Missile Batteries back to Holland and we were allocated space in it for our vehs. We had to get them to a staging area at Incirlik (near the Turkish coast) which involved an 11-hour drive with an escort of Jandarma (Turkish Paramilitary Police). The journey was largely uneventful and the lads had a few hours to enjoy the facilities of the US section of the Incirlik airbase prior to the flight out of the country at 04.50hrs the following morning.

All in all, it was a very good deployment. We had arrived prepared for a 6-month stay in-theatre, but it turned out nowhere near as long. There were many unknowns prior to the deployment, but the team worked brilliantly together to pull it off. There was nothing but praise from the JCSE staff and from the various dignitaries who visited throughout the Op. A big 'well done' to all the team.

FOOTBALL

The Sqn football team had an excellent season. The highlights were the winning (again) of the BA(G) Minor Units Cup, with an enthralling final against 24 Regt RLC. This went to extra time, penalties and then sudden death. This triumph paved the way for a trip back to UK and a meeting with HQ Land Comd in the semi final of the Army Minor Units Cup. Thanks to the Sports Lottery, we travelled back to Blighty in style. The coach was equipped with a toilet, TV and video player and a happy-go-lucky coach driver named **Fritz**.

Many thanks to 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, who allowed us to use their transit accommodation at such short notice for the duration of our stay in the UK. The first day was spent trg and for our captain, **LCpl** 'Speedy' **Lister** to pick the team for the next day's semi. This wasn't hard, as most of our first-string players had deployed to Turkey (we had more shirts than players!)

The semi-final was played at Salisbury City Football Ground – well, their practice pitch anyway. The sun was out, the birds were singing and blokes were as well. It was a glorious day! Even though the final score was 3-1 to us, it wasn't an easy game, but we were headed for the finals against Bassingbourne. And so it arrived, the final of the Army Minor Units Cup. This too, was a hard fought match. We took the lead half way through the first half, thanks to **Cpl Chris Granshaw's** header from a well-taken corner, only for Bassingbourne to equalise towards the end of the half. The second half was even more intense, with both teams searching for the winner. Towards the end and extra time looming, Bassingbourne took the victory, with a well-worked corner.

Even though we were unable to bring the silverware home, the boys who were available put up a good show, and there's always next year.

SHOOTING TEAM

CORPSAAM 2003 turned out nice for the firer's of 280 Sig Sqn. **Sig Shaun Preston** proved that running down the range was really no big deal. **Sig Mark Hall**, huffed and puffed his way down the gun-run, achieving a commendable score (not to mention that his target was fired on by one of the Gurkhas). **LCpl Rache Allen**, although really liking her tranny van, achieved second female competitor. **Sgt Richie Turnbull** held the middle ground and was a member of the victorious pistol team. **SSgt Dave Copley**, only went and won Champion Rifle. As a team, the Minor Units competition was won, so it was trophies and medals all round!

CYPRUS COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (CCU)

OC **Maj Matt Hanson**
USM **WO2(SSM) Dave Smith**

CHARITY FUND RAISING

Through the Charities Committee CCU has continued apace with its fund raising activities, resulting in over a thousand pounds being donated to the Children's Liver Disease Foundation and Margaritta Liassidou Children's Home. **Mrs Lisa Lewis** presented the CLDF with a cheque for £550 during a recent hospital visit and her husband **Sgt Steve Lewis** presented the Margaritta Liassidou Children's Home with children's toys and a cheque for £50. **Cpl Pete Sorrell** presented another £500 to the CLDF.

Another CCU charity donation

The CLDF researches the causes of Liver disease and provides support for families of children suffering liver diseases. The Margaritta Liassidou Children's Home in Paphos cares for disabled children and is the only one of its type in Cyprus. Both these institutions rely solely on donations.

SPORT

PAPHOS MARATHON, HALF MARATHON & 10K RUNS

Sunday 2 March saw the 5th Paphos Spider Net Marathon and a good turnout from CCU personnel. Unfortunately **Lt Fiona Watson**, who would almost certainly have picked up a trophy, was recovering from a cold and like **Cpl Doug Malcolm** (injured) was unable to compete on the day. Nevertheless some key Service runners from all over the island were entered in the 3 events. It was not a typical sunny Cyprus morning but the cooler slightly breezy start would hopefully help with some good times.

The marathon competitors were transported to Aphrodite's Rock for their 08.30 start, whilst all other half marathon and 10k competitors started at the Paphos Fort, where all 3 races finished. **Cpl Daz Sharpe** (CSS) was taking part in his first marathon along with veteran, **WO2** 'Smudge' **Smith**.

Starting the Half Marathon were **SSgt Chris Brown** (winner of the Gate to Gate), **FltSgt Dave Allen**, **Sgt Alex Archibald** and **SSgt Elvis Hemstead**. Unfortunately **Cpl Steve Hudson** and **LCpl Will Loates** were let down by their driver and had to get a Taxi to Paphos! Although they missed the start of the half, they managed

to get into the 10k race, which started 15mins later. They both did very well and completed in good times.

Because of local Police intervention, the half marathon course was reduced during the race by about a mile, which made for some fast PBs. **SSgt Chris Brown** ran a great race and totally destroyed all opposition to win in a time of 1hr 9mins, picking up an extra trophy as the BFC winner. Congratulations!

OFFICERS & SNCO'S V JUNIOR RANKS FOOTBALL MATCH - *by SSgt Gaz Tinsley*

As part of an old 12 SU tradition, the annual Old Guys against the Whippersnappers football match was re-instated under the newly formed CCU. The 2 teams under the watchful eye of the selectors, **SSgt Gaz Tinsley** for the oldies and **Cpl Andy Teasdale** for the youngsters, met on 16 May.

The weather was unforgiving, blistering heat and no breeze. The youngsters reckoned that each individual member of the squad would score at least 5 goals in this game, whilst the oldies, were more worried about how many of them would make it through the 90 mins.

Under the referee, **Mr Mike Toner**, the game started fast and furious, and within 3 mins **Sig Col Caisley** had blasted a shot from outside the area, past the full stretch of **Capt Iain McNelly** in the oldies' goal. The oldies caught their breath and slowly started to get into the game, coming close on a number of occasions.

Then in the 15th minute, the ball broke to **SSgt Mick Lingard**, who calmly slotted the ball past 'Chippie' **Chapman** in the youngsters' goal. Now it was 1- 1. The game went on but not at such a fast and furious pace, with both sides coming close.

Half time came and went, and still the score was 1-1. **Capt Ian McNelly** pulled off a fantastic save in the oldies' goal. Unfortunately it was from one of his own players, but they all count. Then in a moment of magic, **Sgt Alex Archibald** (who claims he only scores a goal every 20 years), picked the ball up about 25 yards from goal and lobbed it past a stunned 'Chippie' **Chapman** in the youngsters' goal. The crowd went wild (well I did), 2 - 1 to the oldies and 10 mins to go. The youngsters tried to recover, hitting the post, but all was in vain. At ENDMATCH the score line read 2 - 1 to the oldies.

Everyone had survived, a few were battle weary, and some were very sore and would take days to recover. We had taken a good hard beating on the pitch but victory was ours, and well deserved it was. At the end of the game **FltSgt Dave Allen** presented the winning captain with the trophy, donated by himself on his retirement from football at the sprightly age of 50. Thank you to the referee, both managers and the 30 plus members of the Unit who turned up. From the oldies to all the youngsters out there 'Better luck next time'

NETWORK ENGINEERING SERVICES SECTION

OC	**FltLt Elaine Spalding RAF**
Sect SSgt	**SSgt Elvis Hemstead**

It's been a busy few months for NESS with a lot of extra hours put in by everyone due to OP TELIC and also the installation of the new COERS Radio System. Things are on their way to getting back to normal and with 81Sig Sqn (V) visiting the Island, the Sections can relax with competitive sports afternoons and friendly social functions, 'Who's for a Keo'.

During the busy period, while a lot of you were probably in the desert building sandcastles or something, we here in Cyprus were being put through our paces by **Cpl Pete Sorrell**. He organised the unit poker competition which, after 8 gruelling preliminary rounds, produced an exciting final with **SSgt (FofS) Glenn Thompson** taking 8th (last) place and **WO2 (FofS) Neil Henry** (HQ BFC J6) taking 1st place. This included £230CY worth of NAAFI vouchers and a slightly bigger trophy than the 8th place one.

This event was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who took part - even those who didn't last long. Thanks again to everyone who took part and thanks to **Cpl Pete Sorrell** who managed to raise £500CY for the CCU Charities Committee.

Sig Craig McHale prepares for his next mission

Cpl Carr and **Sig Craig McHale** were invited to an open day to see what the RAF firepower was all about. They spent half a day examining a Tornado with both the pilot and navigator explaining which button does what. During the visit, aircraft were constantly taking off and landing, giving an indication of what they were capable of. At the end of the day they were granted the pleasure of sitting in both the pilot's and navigator's seats. All the buttons and switches were mind-boggling (a bit more complex than a Play station!). **Cpl Carr** was disappointed that he couldn't have a go, but since he had only third party insurance cover, they didn't think their aircraft would be covered enough. Our lads both said the whole day was a day to remember and would recommend it to anybody that can spare the time.

We have a few a few hellos and goodbyes. Farewell to the Rad Ops who have moved to CSS, especially to **Sig Harvey**, who has left for 2 Sig Regt, and **Cpl Berry** who has gone to 3 Div Sig Regt. Welcome to **Sgt** 'Billy' **Beaumont** from Blandford, to **Cpl Alli Smith** from 21 Sig Regt (AS) and to **LCpl Chris Turnbull**. Finally congratulations to **Sgt Rogers** for coming off of the Sgt-SSgt board, and to **Cpl Ben Mcfaul** and his new wife **Sam** on their marriage.

THE CCU SERVICE DESK – *by Sgt Tony Thirlwell*

Set up with a wave of NESS's magic wand, the Service Desk (or the Fault Logging Cell as it was known) continues to provide an efficient means of logging and rectifying faults in Cyprus. The ops are now working normal day hours and provide first line support by suggesting possible solutions for known faults.

After the initial settling in period, the desk is now being overseen by **Sgt Tony Thirlwell** with his trusty sidekicks, **Cpl Alli Smith** and **JT Paul Clarke**. **Alli** is a vision of sweetness and light on the phone but complains bitterly when it's back on hook. We will all miss her voice when she leaves to go on her CFTS course in June.

We welcome our two new phone jockeys, **Duncan Ayre** and **LCpl Matt Holmes** who joins us from across the road.

AKROTIRI SECTION

OC	**Capt Ben Psaila**
Sec SSgt	**SSgt Danny Cain**

As events return to normal following OP TELIC, Akrotiri Section and in particular Airfield Det, have had more time to enjoy life in Cyprus again and to regain the sporting initiative from Dhekelia Sec. We congratulate all those who took part in the CCU Inter-Sec Hockey tournament on 25 April. Although we finished only 4th overall, spirits where high all day and the player of the day goes to **LCpl Fell**, the team's leading scorer with an amazing one-handed individual effort. Watch out for us in the swimming!

We have had a few changes in the Sec recently. **Sgt Gaz Jordan** has gone to 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn in NI, **Cpl Dave Atherton** to 10 Sig Regt, **Cpl Robert Morris** to JCU(NI) and **Cpl Tim Berry** to 2 Sig Regt. We welcome **Cpls Mark Aplin** and **Pete Stewart**

from 16 Sig Regt and **Sig Ben O'Neill** from Blandford. Finally we congratulate **Cpl Richie Lewis** on his promotion.

DHEKALIA SECTION

OC	**Capt Dean Richardson**
Sec SSgt	**SSgt Watts**

We've had lads representing the Unit on the Cyprus SAAM, where we came a respectable fourth out of 13 (mostly infantry) teams and were the first Corps team. 110 took part and our top shot was **SSgt Watts**, who came 19th overall. After a few rigorous trg sessions with **LCpl Jones**, we won the Griffin Cup Hockey Competition for the third year running, maintaining our position at the top of the league table.

After a colossal battle with the evil property management monsters we have succeeded in keeping our beloved BITSA bar. This means that, after ringing the bell, new arrivals **LCpls Paul Clarke**, **Dean Smith** and **Sig Dan Sprules** can all provide us with free beer; **Cpl Becky Taylor** can celebrate her promotion; **Sgt Mac McGuckien** can celebrate coming off the SSgt board; and **Cpl Nathan Hadley** can rejoice in completing his Det Comds course and his impending marriage to **Trudy**.

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

QM	**Capt Dave Stachini**
SQMS	**SSgt Paul Jordan**

The Dept has had a hectic time in the last couple of months. The whole world has been issued mobile phones (or so **Sgt Hyland** seems to think) and the issue of cable to Akrotiri Sec has reached an all-time high, so that we can now wrap the whole of Cyprus in 100-pair cable. As a Dept, we are all working towards the UINs of 259 Sig Sqn and 12 SU coming together and all the accounting action becoming one!

We congratulate **Cpl Alderson** on his successful completion of his RMQ course. This means that he now knows which end of the range the targets are, even though he can't see them! **Capt Stachini** has never left his office in the 9 months he has been here and cannot fit another cap on his head as MTO, Health and Safety Offr, Civilian Employment Officer, Welfare Officer and something else… ah that's it, QM of CCU! Comings and goings have been limited to the arrival of **Andy**, the new SWS storekeeper. We are also anxiously awaiting the SQMS's new arrival and hope the birth all goes well for him and **Anna**.

I quite like the way Dhekalia Section have presented their comings and goings. Let's see who can better this one - Editor

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT SIERRA LEONE

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY ADVISORY AND TRAINING TEAM (SIERRA LEONE)

All change at JCU over the last couple of months. **LtCol Matt Helm** has departed for somewhere, although at time of posting he did not know where. No doubt he has been posted AWOL, but if anyone is missing an Officer please contact JCU and we will forward his contact details. **Maj Jonathon Turner**, formerly of 1 Sig Bde and Ferrari racing team, has arrived and taken over as 2IC and Trg Offr. Freetown's golf caddies are in mourning following the departure of **WO1 (RSM) Tim Comyns**, although the arrival of **WO1 (RSM) Ged** 'Golf Shark' **Keane** and his rapid rise to top of all rankings, despite allegedly not having picked up clubs in 20 years, has ameliorated the situation somewhat. **WO1 (YofS) George Hume** is finally due to leave Sierra Leone, although no one will believe it until he is actually on the flight. Rumours that he was left here by the British Army on the granting of Independence have finally now been put to rest following a check of the Commonwealth archives, although the confusion appears to have started when someone saw his leave card.

WO2 (FofS) Dave Cook has just arrived to replace **WO2 (FofS) Paul Hubble**, who leaves us to prop up a bar at SHAPE. **WO2 Hubble** became somewhat of a celebrity in his final weeks here, presiding over the presentation of a donated Manchester United strip to the RSLAF Football Team in the National stadium, and an epic St George's day party, which the French Ambassador declined to attend on account of his invite including a number of pointed quotes from **Horatio Nelson**. Not to be outdone, **WO1 (YofS) George Hume** tried to get **Rolf Harris** to visit to witness the handing over of a rescued baby chimp to the local sanctuary, but sadly he would not return our calls. However, a very relieved 2-month-old baby chimp now resides at the Tacguma Chimp Sanctuary and now answers to the name of 'Jimmy'. Although he is not perhaps as brimming with multi-media attraction as the Corps Museum, any Corps personnel passing by are invited to drop in and say hello and make a donation towards his upkeep.

SSgt Ian Thorburn continues in the noble causes theme with his selfless work for the Wilberforce Garrison school. Following on from a number of initiatives in BF(G) to fund essential supplies, such as paper and pens, supported by SSAFA and 7 Sig Regt, a high profile Charity Ball is to be held to help raise funds

Offroading to the max. Colin McRae visits Sierra Leone for driving instruction from Maj Turner

for the necessary repairs to the school buildings. With a raffle, including prizes of a free flight to UK (it is actually a return flight but the odds of anyone actually coming back are pretty low!) interest has been exceptional. **SSgt Dave Alderson** continues with his many projects, and now has an opportunity to set up a little business fitting out Landrovers for IMATT. In this he has been ably assisted by the Det Comd of the 30 Sig Det stay behind party, **LCpl Sid Reynolds** and his 2IC **Sig Scotty Randall**. So invaluable have they been since the departure of the JTFHQ in March, that **LCpl Reynolds** is being posted out here to provide a bit of continuity and will single-handedly make up one third of the 'Under 30' club in the increasingly crusty IMATT establishment.

Outside of the JCU, **Maj Harry Ross**, the SO2 J6 at Force HQ, continues to hold lavish parties and to entertain at 'Chez Harry', formerly his and **Maj Jonathon Turner's** house. The 2IC moved out to allow more room for the catering staff and food preparation

areas, as catering for such large numbers was becoming difficult. His largesse has become legendary throughout IMATT, and invitations to his soirées have become much sought after. **Maj Turner** has continued to offer flying lessons in his specially adapted Landrover, and has succeeded in pulling 6G on the Bo – Kenema highway. **Lt Col Richard Wilson** has moved away from the CIS fold and become CO of the Inf Trg Team based in Benguema. In this way, he hopes to prepare the inf units for the imminent arrival of secure data radios, although problems with funding have delayed wiring up Sierra Leone for Bluetooth.

642 SIGNAL TROOP DCSA (GIBRALTAR)

Tp Comd **Capt Bill McCreath**
CSM **Sgt Torrington**

- Notes by Cpl Owen Trimble

Another busy period has seen the Tp integrating into DCSA (Gibraltar), the combination of comms elements of all three services and civilian organisations. We are currently known by the rather grand title of 642 Sig Tp (DCSA) Gibraltar DCSA (Gib) 2 Voice & Infrastructure. This sadly will see the demise of the Tp as an independent unit.

ARRIVAL AND FAREWELLS

We have being saying goodbye to a few old faces and greeting a few new ones. The Tp Comd, **Capt Tony Woolaston**, has opted for the warmer climes of Saudi Arabia. He and his family are wished well by members of the Tp. Also moving on since our last appearance in *The WIRE*, was **WO2 (FofS)** 'Ski' **Sharp**, who has sampled most of the exotic locations around the globe while pursuing his warped hobby of extreme sports. MCM Div decided that 3 Cdo Bde was the best place to continue his pastime and he found himself in the mountains of Afghanistan days after leaving the Rock. **Sgt** 'Deano' **Boughen**, our Army football player, also left on a free transfer under Bosnian rules, on promotion to 15 Sig Regt. **Sgt** 'Torry' **Torrington**, after being selected for promotion, is off to the Falklands and is currently desperate to sell his rebuilt very reliable motor (honest Guv).

A special mention goes to **Mr Ronnie Martinez**, who celebrated his retirement after 35 years in the MOD. A well-respected member of the Tp, **Ronnie's** hobbies included whisky tasting and bull-fighting, in which **Ronnie** would pitch himself against a calf, invariably coming second and consoling himself with a week on the sick list for his efforts. **Ronnie** knew how to wield his power and did so by exercising his lack of generosity when issuing stationery. He insisted on the old-for-new method oblivious to the fact that WD quill pens no longer worked. His big day started at 10:00 hrs with **Ronnie** and a few close friends in the bar trying to entice us all in for a swift pint. Being professional soldiers, we obviously declined! The main event took place in one of **Ronnie's** many locals, a Social Club and to our amazement, he had laid on a free bar with enough tapas to feed the rest of Gibraltar. **Capt Tony Woolaston** said a few words (for a change). This and the importance of the event brought a tear to **Ronnie's** eye. **Ronnie** will be missed by the Tp and we wish him and his wife a long and happy retirement.

We say a warm hello to our new boss, **Capt Bill McCreath**, our new FofS, **WO2 Ade Fletcher** and also to **Sgt Arnie Renforth**, **Cpl Carl Stephenson** and **Mrs Annabelle Victory**.

EXERCISE SNOW CHALLENGE 2003

In February this year, following last year's success, the Tp set itself the task of organising yet another trip up to the mountains of Sierra Nevada. A lot of behind the scenes work was carried out prior to departure. A big thanks goes to Dunasfern, for their generous sponsorship, without which the trg would not have taken place. Also we are thankful to Wadsworth, Westex, Sedgewell and Fibre Warehouse for their support for the venture. The Gibraltar Amenities Fund was approached and they very kindly loaned us, free of charge, the GAF 7-seater Trajet for 5 days. The other vehicle to be used in transporting the Tp up to the mountains was the minibus supplied to us by the ATC.

Unfortunately (or fortunately) the bus broke down 2 days prior to departure, so at the last minute **SSgt** 'Geordie' **Wynn**, **Sgt** 'Torry' **Torrington** and **Cpl Owen Trimble** drove to Malaga and hired a car for the duration. At 05.00hrs on 17 February the Tp met at the Spanish border and after one last roll call, we were on our way. Also included in the trip were others from the Command, **Flt Lt McGhie** RAF, **Capt Dickerson**, and **WO2 Kernihan** from RE. The weather on our arrival was glorious, but the resort was swarming with tourists.

After a monotonous morning queuing for passes and ski equipment, we eventually got onto the slopes. To start with, the beginners had a basic introduction to skiing, and those who had skied previously, a refresher. **FofS Ade Fletcher** and **Sgt Giz Carr** set off for the baby slopes to gain a little confidence before tackling the café for tea and cake. **Flt Lt McGhie**, **Capt Woolaston**, **Capt Dickerson** and **WO2 Kernihan** tried slopes a little more adventurous, whilst the remainder, **Sgt Torrington**, **Cpl Trimble**, **LCpl Bennett**, and **LCpl Pavitt**, went straight to the top and bombed, without a care, all the way to the bottom of the mountain. **SSgt Wynn** joined us later, after having to travel to the top of town to sort out some pillow and bed sheet 'admin'. The night out was abandoned by most. The travel and the skiing had drained all their energy.

Unfortunately, on the second day, the weather had decided to show us its dark side. Cloud covered much of the mountain, bringing with it wind and sometimes vicious snowfalls. It was time to hit the shops. Within 30 minutes the whole team looked near professional, but this did not improve the skiing skills of **Ade Fletcher** and **Giz Carr**, who preferred a little hill walking (to collect skis that had come off). The evening was to be the night out for the whole group. After a rather fresh walk down the mountain to the bustling centre, we eventually found a restaurant able to seat all 10 of us. The walk home at around 04.30hrs would not have been the same without some WWF in the snow. Poor **H** with his new chinos.

The third day brought the same weather as the previous one. Some saw it more as a challenge; others saw it as a chance to catch up on their caffeine intake. The snow remained loose and those who did ski could only see approximately 10-15 metres on the virgin slopes. With the weather being as bad as it was, the slopes were free of tourists, allowing more suicidal skiing. Cue **Torry Torrington**, who came crashing into the barrier head first after quite possibly the hardest part of the route. That evening was a quiet affair, with a group meal in town and then home to bed for an early night, fresh for hopefully nice weather.

The fourth, penultimate day and the last day of skiing did not bring any improvement in the weather. The first meeting for all was at the top café for a group photo, where visibility was poor but just good enough for a photo. A good day skiing was had by all, and everyone finished without injury. The evening meal was at a hotel in the centre of town, where the food was superb. Afterwards, some ventured for a night out, whilst others (the same lot) went home for Horlicks and bed.

On the final day, we woke to find the cars snowed in. On came our multi-skilled Foreman using toilet lids for shovels. A few sore heads made the journey home harder than it should have been, but in the end, 10 people left Gibraltar and 10 people came back safely.

THE CBF SHIELD - *by LCpl Pav Pavitt*

Last term I was given the task to head up our challenge for the CBF Shield competition. 642 Tp have always had a strong team, but this term we have been dogged by injuries. Our first competition was the volleyball. We lost our first match, and unfortunately had to settle for fourth place, despite winning our remaining games. This was one of only two defeats for the entire competition. With strong (as always) support from the civilian section, we took the football sixes, easily winning every game. Our third competition was the handball, another game which we always do well and win, despite a height disadvantage compared with every other team in the tournament. This was a close run thing with NATO SGT, but the experience of 642 Tp proved invaluable. The fourth event was the cricket. The weather being unpredictable, the competition took place both inside and outside the gym. Not being strong in this game, the indoor game was to our advantage. But it was not to be. We lost the final very narrowly, but we have vowed to win it next time. The last event was the potted sports competition. This type of competition favours technically minded people, and this is where was had an advantage. With help from a few lads from 2 Sig Regt, we walked every challenge. Overall we won the CBF shield by a big margin.

CBF Shield Presentation

UKRF NATIONAL MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION

FOREIGN TROOPS INVADE ALTCAR

Twenty-four teams of Volunteer part-time Reservists from all over the UK, plus Belgium and Holland, competed in a grueling Military Skills Competition at Altcar Training Camp. With four to a team, involving both males and females, sixteen different events had to be completed. Among these were: an assault course; first aid involving a mock helicopter crash; a trailer race (of which both wheels had to be changed without a jack); shooting; driving round obstacles blindfolded with a navigator to guide; a section attack; a stretcher race; a map and compass exercise and a three-mile fitness run.

Those involved in running the competition included TA Volunteers from 156 (NW) Transport Regt, RLC (V) and 33 Sig Regt (V).

Col Charles Ackroyd presents the overall winners' trophy to the 42 Sig Regt team

Winners of the top female team trophy, 87 Sig Sqn. L-R: Sigs Nicola Armstrong, Kerry Shardlow, Emily Clay and Cpl Dion Brittain

Visiting VIPs included **Col Charles Ackroyd**, Chairman, UK Reserve Forces Association, and his Deputy Secretary, **Col Rex Stephenson**; **Col Maurice Sheen**, Col TA Volunteers and **Col Nick Goulding** from HQ RLC. All were involved in the prize giving at the end. Besides congratulating participants on showing how professional that they were, they also thanked them for travelling such long distances, especially the Belgian and Dutch teams.

The All Female Team Winners Trophy was presented to 87 Sig Sq (V), who also gained third place overall winners for the competition. The Kevin Needes Trophy for the fastest time on the Speed Run went to 42 Sig Reg (V), who also gained first place overall for the competition.

SPORT

RUGBY

CORPS RUGBY TOUR TO HOLLAND 25 APR – 2 MAY 03

Having not toured since 1995 and with several Merit League titles in the intervening years, a tour was long over due for the Corps squad. With Corps Rugby undergoing somewhat of a restructuring this season and having just missed out on another Merit title, it now seemed the ideal time to restart the touring ethos that the Corps had lacked over the last 8 years or so.

Squad members were: **Maj Jase Kennedy**; **Capt Bobby Strawbridge** (Tour Manager); **WO2 Pete Curtis** (Corps Captain); **Sgt Paul Jones**; **Sgt Julian McTavish** (Coach); **Sgt Dave Hudson**; **Sgt Sean Thomas**; **Cpl Ian Wells**; **Cpl Gaz Collins**; **Cpl Andy Ward**; **Cpl Matt Cowlard**; **Cpl Tony Gallagher**; **Cpl Steff Gibbs**; **Cpl Hoppy Hopkins**; **LCpl Emosi**; **LCpl Laura Hopkins** (Physio); **LCpl Sila**; **LCpl Suka**; **LCpl Scout Hood**; **LCpl Kev Breen**; **LCpl Blair Evans**; **LCpl Pod Podesta**; **LCpl Oli Holborn**; **Sig Si Byrne**; **Sig Oli Ollivant**; **Sig Barinisavu**; **Sig Jon Howells** and **Sig Kolikata**.

The UK based element of the squad, 12 in all, met up at RAF Uxbridge on Friday 25 April 03 and departed early the next day with our driver (and soon to be mascot/guardian angel/general good egg) at the helm of the chartered team coach. On arrival at 7 Sig Regt, our base for the week, priorities where quickly established. Get into the accommodation, confirm and establish links with Brüggen players and lastly locate Regtl Bar. So it was on the Sunday morning that 30 heavy heads took to the field for trg, conducted by **Sgt Julie-Anne McTavish**, who utilised his repertoire of sessions that he is honing with his detachment to the Welsh RFU. That afternoon was our first fixture against PSV Eindhoven. Whilst maybe not of the same calibre as their football namesakes they are, nevertheless, one of the oldest teams in Holland. The Corps fielded a team of approx 80% full strength and this, coupled with initial poor cohesion and the cobwebs of the journey (and possibly the night before) made for a scrappy first 15 minutes. After this initial teething problem, the Corps began fully to assert themselves on what was clearly becoming evident as lesser (but no less committed) opposition. In the spirit of the tour and the game, changes were made at half time to even the teams but overall, the Corps was too strong in all areas, running out comfortable winners 48-21. Two of the home team's tries came from Corps players seconded to them to make up their numbers.

Trg over the next day and a half was good preparation for what had promised to be our strongest opposition, RC The Dukes from Den Bosch, who play in the Dutch 2nd Division. This evening fixture involved a long drive, and arriving in Den Bosch to find a sand pit for a field was not an auspicious start. Driving further into deeper darker Holland, we arrived at the playing fields, but regrettably few of the Dukes did! By this stage of the proceedings, even the Dukes' Coach (an ex-pat) was becoming concerned that the Dutch relaxed, laisse faire attitude was being pushed to the extreme. With only minutes to go to kick off, they finally put their hands up and asked for 4 of our players. Fielding as strong a team as has played for the Corps this season, we simply blew away the opposition and after 30 mins half time was called, with the score at 53-0. A complete integration of players to produce a more competitive game and the Anglo/Dutch Dukes (with 7 of our key players) won the second half 17-5, with **LCpl Oli Ollivant** scoring again against the Corps.

After the match it soon became apparent why the majority of the Dukes had failed to appear. It was Orange Day, a Bank Holiday to celebrate the Queen's birthday. The third half festivities soon moved from the Dukes' clubhouse to downtown Den Bosch with our 2 (and only) hosts from the home team.

The final match on the Thursday was against a team recognised as being our weakest opponents (6 leagues below PSV) so a development team was fielded against RC The Wasps of Nijmegen. Remarkably, this team were the only one to field a full squad against us. Again teething problems made the first 20 mins a scrappy affair. **Cpl Matt Cowlard's** injury and departure to hospital was his second episode of MIA, but one from which he re-emerged with no lasting damage. A few changes at half time and the Corps ran away with the game with a score of 38-10. An early departure the next morning precluded a full sampling of Nijmegen night life but, given the order of dress for that evening, the Irish Bar we frequented had enough to talk about the next day.

With 3 convincing victories in 3 matches and 144 pts for and 48 pts against, the tour was a success. Added to that, with a squad of 30 players taking to the field, regardless of current operational commitments, it was testament to the latent rugby ability and enthusiasm within the Corps. Scores aside, the tour achieved what it set out to do: re-establishing a touring ethos, rewarding players for the season past and building team spirit for the coming one. A huge thanks goes to 7 Sig Regt for hosting the squad so well and to **SSgt Andy Wyatt** for his behind the scenes organisation.

Whilst all players partook fully, two are worthy of particular note. The most aspiring player who showed guts and determination in playing against the Corps on two occasions and skippered the Corps on the third was **Sig** 'Oli' **Ollivant**, whilst the title of the player contributing most to the tour goes to **Sig Jon Howell**.

The tour for 2003/04 is scheduled for Canada. All potential Corps players should make themselves known either direct to the Corps Rugby Committee or via their unit OIC Rugby.

OFFICERS' RUGBY, ROYAL SIGNALS VERSUS REME

On the first Saturday in May every year in the west of London there is a hotly contested rugby match between two teams of sporting Adonis. No, not Army v Navy, but Royal Signals Officers XV versus the REME Officers XV, who play each other at Cavalry Barracks on the morning of the big one. Having lost the last two years' encounters and without a win this season, the Corps Officers were looking for a victory to end the season and get out of the rut. With only 10 minutes to the scheduled KO of 10.00 hrs, this seemed a remote chance, as REME had a squad of over 20 and the Corps had only 6. As the line in the film *Field of Dreams* says , '..if you book it they will come...' And, in a miracle act enough to turn any man to religion, come the KO (albeit a delayed one), the Corps had 22 players ranging from Col through RO to OCdt to call upon.

Players on the day were **Col Jim Richardson**; **Lt Col Joe Cooper**; **Majs Dave Gaul**, **Jase Kennedy**, **Robbie King** (now engaged!), **Rich Webb**, **Niall Stokoe**, **Grant Davies** (ALS), **Scotty Marshall** (QARANC) and **Andy Atikens**; **Capts Jules Hill**, **Miles Booker** and **Richie Angove**; **Lts Jim King**, **James Chapman**, **Alex Stanger**, **Brian Jefferys**, **Eddie Maskell-Pedersen**; **OCdts Si Pierson** and **Ben Dowderswell** and **Capts (Retd) Andy Talbot** and **Kenny McKenzie**.

The Corps started well and put early pressure on REME. After a long time camped outside the try line, a penalty gave the opportunity for 3 points, which skipper of the day, **Maj Jase Kennedy** took. However, at that time, and in the spirit of Corps Officers' Rugby, his decision was derided from the sidelines. **Maj Niall Stokoe** slotted the 3 points in a rather non rugby way - but 3 points are 3 points, so who am I to argue. Though REME scored twice in the half, their tries came from rare incursions into the Corps half. Further pressure brought a penalty try which, though directly under the posts, the kicker (**Maj Stokoe** again) managed to send west of the upright. A second kickable penalty was snapped up, and at half time the Corps turned round 11-10 up. An equally fiercely competed second half ensued, with the Corps fielding its first ever Red Tab in **Col Jim Richardson**, Col MCM Div, putting his boots on. Bowing to peer pressure and clearly looking for that loan tour posting to Barbados, **Lt Col Joe Cooper**, who had sworn he only wanted 20 minutes, jumped on at half time and upped the ante. Some outstanding passages of play saw **Lt Jim King** get a thoroughly deserved try, and though REME reciprocated, the eventual score line of 16-15 belies the dominance the Corps had for the vast majority of this game.

Corps Rugby as a whole, of which Corps Officer Rugby is only one facet, is as healthy as ever. Organisation of the Officer scene for the 2003/04 season will be done by **Maj Lloyd Golley** on Blandford (94371) 5229.

CYPRUS WOMEN'S RUGBY

Rugby Union had a great show on Saturday 24 May. It started with the Swallows (Akrotiri Ladies Team) playing against the Episkopi Ladies.

Collette McGinn got the Swallows of to a great start scoring an excellent individual try within the first minute of the game. As the tension rose, we saw some great tackles from both teams and a very near miss just before half time by one of Swallows match virgins, **Clare Grant** (yes, Cyprus Lions' very own). Throughout the first half, the forwards of both sides seemed to cancel each other out, but the backs from Akrotiri gave the Swallows the edge.

In the second half, Episkopi Ladies started the strongest side with their number 20 (**Kerry**) bursting through the Swallows defence, breaking through numerous tackles to score an excellent try. From then on the Swallows started to turn the screw, with the forwards winning every line out. Eventually **Collette** made a run of seventy metres to ground the ball just short of the try line, with good support from **Joe Jones**, who eventually scored the try giving the victory to the Swallows.

Overall the match was very even and we thank Episkopi Ladies for making the effort and help to provide an excellent advert for Ladies Rugby. For the future we hope to have a combined WSBA team before the Tens to give us a strong chance of winning the competition. Training will start soon with the Akrotiri coaches **Phil Lloyd** and **Taff Veale**.

The excitement continued with the Army vs RAF match. The game got of to a flying start with an excellent try to Army in the first few minutes. This gave them a good platform from which the Fijian backs dominated the game. The forwards on the other hand, were even, with RAF getting the edge on most of the scrummages. Relying on the speed and agility of their backs, Army started to run away with the game, eventually winning the match. However the RAF team never gave up, and scored an excellent consolation try in the corner and **Cpl Wildman** converted with probably the best kick of the game.

Action in Ladies rugby

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THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

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Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C Conlan
Membership: Mr P J Cuckow

Association Office, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone: Military System (9) 4371 2090 or Civilian 01258 48 2090. Welfare Secretary Telephone: Military System (9) 4371 2089 or Civilian 01258 48 2089.

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 MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

The 2003 Reunion *(See photos inside front and back cover)*

Well over 900 members and guests attended the annual RSA Reunion at Blandford Camp over the weekend 29/29 June 2003. Many of those who had found local accommodation booked into Reception on Friday afternoon. The Reception Desk was expertly manned by **Cpl Matt Lee** and his band of soldiers from 2 Sqn, 11 Sig Regt. Here Members collected their meal tickets, programmes and souvenir badges. They were welcomed with a cup of tea and invited to leave messages on the board for other members.

WO2 (FofS) Andy Soward did a sterling job on the RSA database in Reception. He asked members for details of their postings whilst with the Corps, and was able to produce for them, lists of others who had served in the same unit at the same time. To date only about 2,500 of the 11,000 members on the RSA database have their posting details recorded. So if you haven't yet sent in your posting details, please do so. Just list the units and the 'from' and 'to' years.

The weekend commenced at 10.30 hrs on Saturday with the Princess Royal Day Parade, formed by officers and soldiers of 11 Sig Regt. It was a splendid display, enjoyed by all. Credit for the high standard of drill and turnout must go to 11 Sig Regt's RSM, **WO1(RSM) Des Forrester**, and all who participated.

The All Ranks Lunch in the Regimental Restaurant was provided by **Mrs Hazel Adams** and her staff of Sodexho Ltd. High quality fare was enjoyed by everyone, including the Master of Signals and SOinC(A).

In the area in front of the Corps Museum, was a display of vintage vehicles, kindly arranged by **Len Melling** and several old comms vehicles, organised by **Mike Buckley**. OC 4 Sqn, 11 Sig Regt kindly opened the indoor range for Members to fire the SA80 rifle, converted to shoot laser rounds at a high-tech video target. **MajGen Tony Boyle CB**, Chairman of the Association took the first shot and challenged members to beat his score. (But we can't reveal what that score was!)

The afternoon arena show started with a display by the Massed Bands (Corps Band, Corps TA Band and Corps Pipes and Drums), after which the Corps Free Fall Parachute Display Team dropped from high onto the square. The Corps RSM, **WO1 Staniford**, then took the six finalists of the Standard Bearers Competition through their paces. Our thanks go to **RSM Staniford** and his assistants, **WO2 Chris Davies**, **SSgt John Morley**, **Sgt Janet McTurk** and **Mrs Jillian Hurst**.

Next followed the high-powered thrills of the White Helmets Display Team, with a commentary given by Team Captain, **Capt Jon Malcolm**. The Master of Signals, **MajGen IOJ Sprackling OBE**, then presented **Barry Moody** (Scarborough Branch) with the Winner's Trophy for the Standard Bearers Competition. **Barry** also received a silver salver and a badge for his carrying strap. **Archie Cairns** (260 Sig Sqn Assn) then received the Runner-up salver. The other finalists, **Bryan Littlecott** (Southampton), **Roy Bilby** (East London), **Roy Barfoot** (Bedford) and **John Mumford** (Reading) were also presented with salvers. Finally The Master presented **Albert Howe** (Cardiff Branch) with the 75-Year Pennant in recognition of the Branch being in existence for that many years.

The Retreat Ceremony concluded the afternoon's events, following which, several hundred members descended upon the Sgts Mess, where the RSM had kindly opened the doors to all retired ranks.

The weather held fine on the Sunday morning for the traditional Drumhead Service on Hawke Square. The Association's Honorary Padre, **Rev Peter Clemmett**, led the Service, ably assisted by 11 Sig Regt's Chaplain, **Rev Brian Woollaston**. At the start of the Service, the new standards of the Southampton, Cardiff, Exmouth and Colchester Branches were dedicated by **Padre Clemmett**. During his sermon, **Rev Woollaston** pulled off a master stroke of stage management. Just as he said that God was calling us all, a mobile phone rang from somewhere in the congregation. Truly a memorable moment. Some would claim Divine Intervention

All Members then lined up behind the Corps Band for the March Past. **MajGen Sprackling** took the Salute for the last time before retiring as Master of Signals. Our thanks go to **Gen Sprackling** for his commitment, leadership and enthusiasm as President of the Royal Signals Association during the last 6 years.

The Association's gratitude goes to everyone in 11 Sig Regt who helped in the planning and execution of the Weekend. Without their help, the Reunion could not have been enjoyed by so many.

Please make a note of the dates for the 2004 Reunion, 26-27 June.

NEW MEMBERS The following new Life Members have been enrolled since the last issue of *The WIRE*:-

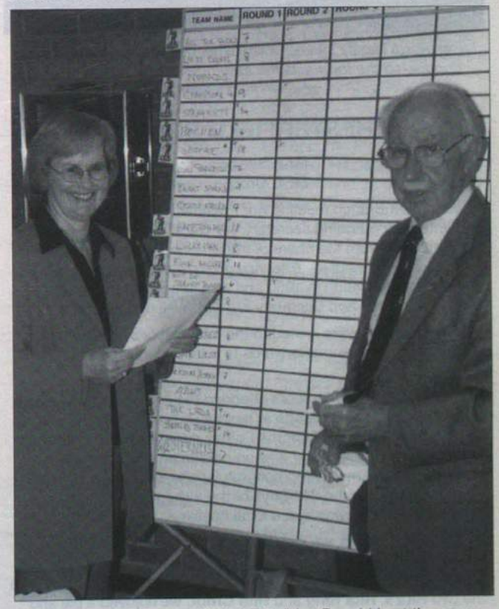
Name	*Branch*	*Service*
Sgt Ray Edge		1971-83
SSgt Steve Rideout		1977-99
Sig Dennis Bowden		1950-52
Col Neil Donaldson		1966-03
WO2 Jim Alger		1981-date
Cpl Dave Fowler		1973-96
Sig Garreth Burton		1982-96
Sig Steve Fleet		1990-96
Sig John Townson		1969-74
Sig Pete Sellers		1994-01
Sig Sid Thomason		1960-68
Cpl Bill Abbott		1961-67
Lt Col Bob Morley		1967-03
Sig Eric Davies		1954-56
Cpl Alan Taylor		1969-85
Sig Stanley Trowell		1945-48
Sig Ray Hoff		1946-48
Sig Ernest Ellis		1943-45
Dvr Denis Wright	Rotherham	1955-57
LCpl Arthur Gee	AFSR Assn	1948-49
Capt Shane Knight		1979-03
Lt Col Alan Wallace		1965-02
Capt Annabel Taylor		1996-03
Maj Paul Gaffney		1972-03
Lt Col Jack Amberton		1965-02
Cpl Geoff Young		1960-84
Sgt Patrick Lohan		1945-53
LCpl Maurice Lang		1959-61
LCpl Bill Stretton		1959-61
Cpl Jimmy Byrne		1987-98
Cpl Keith Kimberley		1973-95
Maj Alan Broomhead		1963-88
Dvr Brian Wilson	Norfolk	1956-59
Sig George Rayworth	AFSR Assn	1939-46
Sgt Alex Sheekey	AFSR Assn	1943-47
LCpl Peter Robins	AFSR Assn	1957-59
Dvr Wilf Robinson	AFSR Assn	1946-49
Cpl Stephen Pakenham Bishop		1979-90
Sig Martin Roscoe		1980-88
LCpl Dave Johnson		1987-94
WO1 Syd Kassim		1973-96
Dvr Hugh McEwan	AFSR Assn	1942-47
LCpl Mark Rhodes		1989-96
Sig Lionel Jones		1989-96
SSgt Steve Jones		1972-96
LCpl Verrol Skerritt		1985-98
Cpl Bryan Hewertson	AFSR Assn	1943-47
Maj Alan Schroeter		1938-46
Sgt Derek Frape		1952-74
WO2 Colin Lewis		1957-94
Sig Ken Hedges	Reading	1955-58
Sig Bernard Malerbi	Reading	1958-50
Cpl Max Agrippa		1966-74
LCpl Steve Buckingham		1988-01
Sgt Brian Rogers		1972-94
Sig Peter Norman	Chesterfield	1949-51
Cpl Alan Smith		1984-98
WO2 Pete Penfold		1965-89
Cpl Amanda Murray		1993-00
Maj Tony Windrum		1946-48
Cpl John Lindebringhs		1958-69
Sgt Alf Davidson		1989-date
WO1 John Andrews		1975-00
Cpl Alan Roscoe		1992-97
WO2 Wendy Hooton,Nee Barton		1972-90
Cpl Bob McClurg		1967-90
Cpl John White		1992-99
LCpl Paul Hawkyard		1985-93
WO2 Dave Bradshaw		1973-94
Sig Ted Fox	East Kent	1943-47
WO2 Brian Hayward		1968-94
Sig Stuart Rogerson		1989-96
Sgt Dave Humphries		1968-92
LCpl Graham Jones		1989-97
Cpl Malcolm Wiltshire		1975-90
Cpl Mark Catney		1991-00
Cpl Alan Evans		1972-97
Cpl Craig Walker		1986-99
Sig Fred Haliam	Rotherham	1968-70
Sig Jim Jeffs	Rotherham	1956-58
Cpl Nick Simpson		1988-99

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Jane Knight**

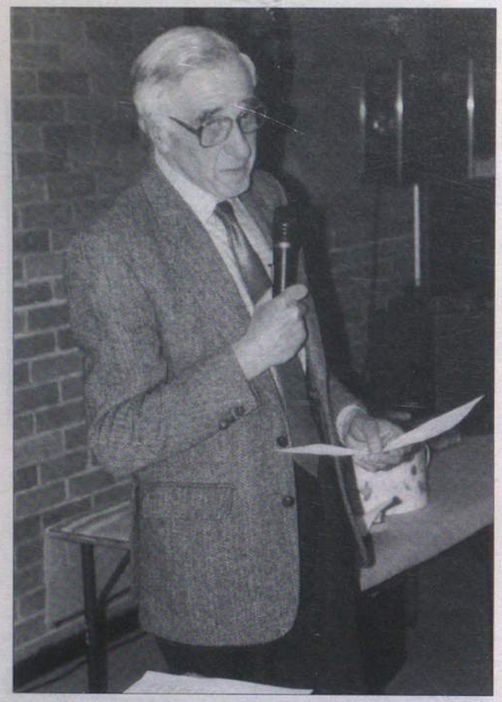
The top 'Serving Members' team 'The Nomads' receiving their prizes from the Branch President. L-R Brig Noel Moss, Sgt Nicky Combs, Mrs Alex Smith, Mr John Wynn, WO2 Pat Smith all of 251 Sig Sqn

Our annual Quiz Night has long been one of the most successful of our social occasions, and that held in May was no exception. Again we were joined by teams from West London and Reading, both branches acquitting themselves well. We report with modesty, however, that the victors were a team from our own Aldershot Branch with the ladies of the Lionesses taking second



Mrs Edelgard Moss and LtCol (Retd) Ian Ronald kept the score

place. 251 Sig Sqn won glory as the best from the serving units, a victory justly can be claimed for the garrison home of the British Army. The event took place at the Families Centre, for the first time at this venue, where in the interval we were served an excellent buffet. We have to thank the organisers and the staff for the great success of the evening and to acknowledge the hard work and efficiency of our Chairman, **Noel Moss**, our Quiz organiser **Neville Lyons** and the Committee, whose combined efforts brought it to fruition.



LtCol (Retd) Neville Lyons, Quizmaster, devised, orchestrated and conducted the torture as the assembled masses struggled to answer his questions

CHESTERFIELD BRANCH

Chairman **Mr K Silcock**
Secretary **Mr D Croot**

At our recent Branch meeting our President, **Mr Doug Naylor** presented our outgoing secretary, **Mr Geoff Waddoups** with a retirement gift from Members of the Branch. **Doug** thanked **Geoff** for the many years of loyal service given to the Branch. **Geoff** joined the Association in 1950 and was appointed Branch Treasurer in 1962 and Secretary in 1986. Well done **Geoff**.

In May Members were invited to the new Mayor's civic service at the Parish Church and afterwards to a reception at Chesterfield Town Hall.

Also in May Branch Members attended the annual Airborne Forces remembrance parade at nearby Hardwick Hall, the original basic training camp of Airborne Forces during WW2. A contingent of the Parachute Regiment was on parade and we saw a fly past of a Douglas Dakota. Warm congratulations were given by the many onlookers to the Old Boys of the Airborne Forces. We enjoyed a pint afterwards at a local hostelry.

At the June meeting, we welcomed 5 new members, including 3 ladies. Our Chairman gave an informative talk on 'Jimmy', mainly for the benefit of our nonserving members of the Corps. Thanks to the two **Rita's**, **Rita King** and **Rita Croot**, we enjoyed a pie and pea supper after the meeting.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs J Barrett**
Secretary **MajGen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

11th May saw 40 Members board the good ship *Pocahontas* at Gravesend, sail down the Thames and up the River Medway, berthing in the historic town of Rochester, where some ventured ashore to trade with the natives and purchase trinkets before re-embarking for the return journey. The voyage was accompanied by a sumptuous meal and a nonstop commentary by the Skipper, describing the many interesting landmarks (or are they seamarks?) along the route. Yet another enjoyable day with a most interesting host, who has made this and previous seaborne expeditions up and down the Thames a true delight.

On Sunday, 8 June, Penshurst Place, a beautiful and historic venue, was our destination for this month, when 32 of us braved the rain-threatening clouds to gather for a guided tour of the ancestral home of the Sidney family since 1552 (although the history of this magnificent building goes even further back to the 14th Century). So we trod the floors that Kings and Queens had trod many centuries before and ducked through doorways that had no doubt been banged by the heads of courtiers, ladies in waiting, squires, esquires and sundry others so many years ago. Some of us took advantage of the lovely grounds within which to take our picnic lunches, while others went the easy way into the restaurant for an equally delicious meal. By the time most of us were leaving the Place, the sun came out to round off a most interesting day.

At the June Committee Meeting, the writer was asked by the Committee to convey their congratulations, along with my own, to the Editor on his most successful innovative improvements to the Corps magazine. It was clear from the first 'different' issue that it was going to be a winner. And so it is. Congratulations!

News of Members: **Peter Foakes** has an appointment with a surgeon in the near future and we wish him well. **Marie Crisp** has been fitted with a pacemaker and recommends it to everyone. **Donald Crisp** has now recovered from diverticulitis and is so pleased that he doesn't care if it is not the right spelling - but he certainly does not recommend it to anyone.

EAST LONDON

Chairman **Maj (Retd) P Burton**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) JB Greenwood**

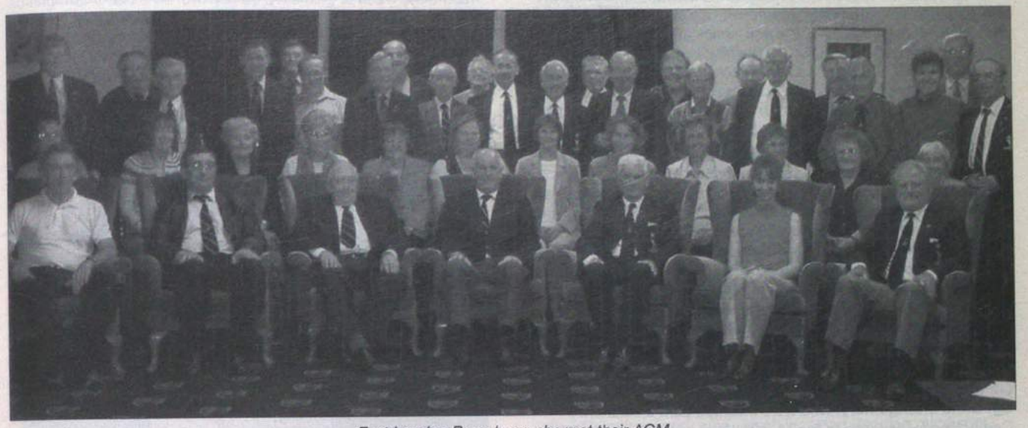
In early April, **Paul Burton** (Chairman) and **Alan Turner** (Information Manager and Assistant Secretary) represented the branch at the RSA AGM held in the Victory Club, London and heard first hand about the changes that are proposed for the Association. This information was disseminated to the Branch at the April meeting, when there were over 40 members in attendance. The meeting was immediately followed by the AGM, when all the committee members were re-elected to their existing posts. We took advantage of the large gathering to have a group photograph taken. (Photographer, **Brian Streetly**). Grateful thanks to **Frances Greenwood** for the light buffet provided.

At our annual dinner dance held in March, the winners of the Best Troop Competition for 36(E) Sig Regt (V) were announced. It was not possible to make the presentation of the Cup at the dinner, so on 26 April, **Ted Head**, **Brian Streetly** and their wives, headed up the M11 to 755 Sig Tp in Norwich, where they were dining out **Sgt Kim Medley** after fifteen years service with the TA. The Tp Comd, **Lt Anderson**, asked **Sgt Medley** to perform one last official duty and to accept the Cup on behalf of the Tp, which he did to loud cheers. **Brian** and **Ted** would like to extend their thanks to all the members of 755 Sig Tp for the wonderful hospitality they received during the evening.

We received bad news in May, when **Geoff Dyer** our President and a long serving Member sadly passed away. **Geoff** had served the East London Branch since 1967 including acting as Treasurer, Chairman and eventually President. **Geoff** had originally been with the RA but re-badged to RSigs in 1961. Our heartfelt condolences go out to **Geoff's** family.

We recently went to the Orchard Theatre, Dartford to see the combined might of the RA and Belvedere Concert Bands, and to the Kenneth More Theatre, Ilford for a concert by the Carmel Thomas singers. Those who attended thoroughly enjoyed the performances. As I write these notes in June, members are looking forward to the reunion in Blandford at the end of the month, and the other events planned by our Social Committee, including several trips and a Supper Dance on 15 November. The date for the Annual Dinner Dance has been set for 13 March 2004.

Although we have a thriving Branch here in East London, we always welcome more members and encourage any potential members living in East London, South and East Essex area to join us. Serving TA members are also very welcome. Our meetings are held in the Sgts Mess of 36(E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 8pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month except December. Details can also be seen on our website at http://www.royal-signals.org.uk/rsa/eastlondon.html



East London Branch members at their AGM

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J McMillan**
Secretary **Miss I Muir**

The Branch regrets to inform that another of our founder members, **Joseph Leahy**, passed away after a long illness on Friday 25 April. His obituary appears elsewhere in the issue.

At the Branch meeting on Tuesday 15 April, it was announced that the letter sent to RHQ concerning the plaque for the Branch Standard had been successful. A plaque would be made available for each of the winning branches, prior to the year 2000.

The Branch Standard Bearer, **Bill McNamara**, paraded the Branch Standard with the standards of thirteen other organisations in Balloch, on Sunday, 18 May for the Commemorative service for Dunkirk Veterans. Twelve Branch members attended the parade in support of **Bill**. The Navy, Army and RAF were all represented by their Cadet formations. Other youth organisations were also in attendance. At the saluting base for the march past, were **LtCol (Retd) MTPM Ferguson RA OBE**, the Provost of West Dunbartonshire Council, **Alastair Macdonald**, and **Fiona Stewart**, daughter of the late **Brig Ferguson**, who was well known in this area.

The Parade Marshal was **George Sharp** an ex Argyll and Sutherland Highlander, and the parade was led by the Pipes and Drums of the Loch Lomond Argyll Pipes and Drums. The Memorial Service in Remembrance of the Miracle of Dunkirk, was held in Jamestown Parish Church conducted by Minister, **Rev Dr Archie Ferguson FRINA**. During the Service, the local children and their teacher presented items they had made themselves, representing all three Services involved in the evacuation of Dunkirk. Land, Sea and Air were shown as, shredded paper for water, tanks and vehicle cut outs for land, silver stars stuck on a blue paper background, with paper helicopters representing air.

At the buffet reception laid on after the church service, I met the Provost and enquired of the unusual medals he was wearing. It transpired that they were presented to him by the Polish Government, for his work among the Polish community in and around West Dunbartonshire, and included the Polish Golden Star award and the Polish World Medal. He and his colleagues on West Dunbartonshire Council give a great deal of support to the Veteran Organisations of WW2. After the ceremony the council provided the excellent buffet and a free drink, much appreciated by those attending.

The Branch congratulates founder member, **Bobby Gilchrist**, who has only one arm and is nearly 79, on completing the Slide of Death from a height of 130 feet, raising over £400 for charity. No, he's not ex-Airborne Signals, just one of a kind bred by the Corps.

The Branch AGM was held on Tuesday the 20 May 2003, the Branch President **LtCol Alastair Petrie** presiding. In his opening address, **Col Alastair** mentioned that at last year's AGM he said it was a privilege to have been asked to become President of the Branch, and his feelings have not changed. He had enjoyed the Burns Supper, and realised that the Branch had its own excellent pipers. He mentioned that he has enjoyed *The WIRE* even more recently, because of the interesting notes sent in by **Jim Prentice**, keeping the Branch to the forefront.

The Chairman's report stated that the members' trip to Erskine Hospital and the Blandford re union went well. The Firefighters' strike had upset some of the arrangements, but the Branch had coped well.

The Secretary's report echoed that of the Chairman's. She thanked everyone for their support. She had been informed of the death of **Sid** the barman of the WOs and Sgts Mess at Blandford, and, closer to home of the death of **Joe Leahy**. The Treasurer reported that the Branch had had a good year, and continues to have a good working relationship with its suppliers. He expects the full support of the members to encourage recruiting of new members to the Branch.

The Secretary and Treasurer were re-elected and a new Chairman, **Jim McMillan** was elected to replace **Joe Keegan**. The new Chairman thanked members for voting him in and said he intended to carry on the good work of previous incumbents in the position.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Hon Sec **SSgt (YofS) I Wolfe**

The Branch holds its meetings at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. A welcome awaits any serving or ex-signaller.

Our annual formal dinner was held on Good Friday 18 April 2003. In the absence due to illness of Branch President **Maj (Retd) Bill Douglas**, the proceedings were opened by Branch VicePresident **Maj (Retd) Noel Johnston**, who said grace after welcoming all guests and, in particular, **LtCol Robert Kelly**, CO 40 (U) Sig Regt (V); **WO1 (RSM) TA Henry** and **WO1 (SVWO) Derek Irvine**. The Caterer was new to us this year and was indeed an improvement. After the toasts, Chairman **John Brown** spoke of the year's work of the Branch and thanked the CO & RSM of 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) for their help over the year. **LtCol Robert Kelly** responded.

The Chairman then sprang a surprise on **Harry Stanley**, our 50 year badge holder, Branch Foundation Member and our oldest Branch Member at the age of 90 (and a very active 90 too, who has rarely missed a meeting for many years). **Harry** was presented with a very nice piece of crystal suitably inscribed with the Branch name and his age. The Branch is indebted once again to **Ian** & **Debbie Wolfe** for all their organising skills, to Members who helped set up and later clear up the premises and to **Jim Hagan** and those who helped in the bar. Also to the Ladies who raised an excellent amount from the raffle.

Our congratulations, while a little belated, are offered to two of our Branch Members, our Hon Sec, **SSgt(YOS) Ian Wolfe** and **Sgt Chris Montgomery**, who were awarded Lord Lieutenant's Certificates for services to the TA and the community. Sadly **Chris Montgomery** passed away on 12 July and **Ian Wolfe's** brother died recently. We offer our sincere condolences to their families.

HUDDERSFIELD BRANCH

Chairman **Mr D Tippen**
Secretary **Mr Geoff Scott**

Our year started with a visit to 2 Sig Regt's Open Day, where we presented a plaque to 246 QG Sig Sqn. This was presented by **Mr Geoff Scott**, on behalf of the Branch and received by the CO, **LtCol I Cameron-Mowat** on behalf of the Unit.

Bob Cook presents the plaque to Betty Mellor

Also on our visit, **Mr Bob Cook** (Area 1 Representative) presented a plaque to **Mrs Betty Mellor**. **Betty** is the backbone of the Branch. She rarely misses a meeting or function. Her late husband was a founder member of the Huddersfield Branch in 1947.

This year saw the sad loss of **Mr Ken Annas**. An ex sigs officer with Indian Signals, he will be missed very much by the Branch. The year came to an end with our annual dinner, enjoyed by all members and guests. We were disappointed that our friends from York could not join us, but this will be rectified by an extra dinner when they return from the Gulf.

Geoff Scott presents the plaque to LtCol I Cameron-Mowat

LINCOLN BRANCH

Chairman **Mr FG Patman**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) DG Wood**

We celebrated our 25th Anniversary with a dinner night and a church Rededication Service. Both were well attended, enjoyable and successful.

We are very lucky to have as our meeting place, the barracks of the East of England Regt, so dinner was held in the Officers Mess and we had the Mess silver at our disposal. As well as serving us a superb 6-course meal, the Mess Caterer, **Sgt David Metcalfe MBE** was able to give us an insight as to the history of some of the silver on display. One item in particular was a very large drinking mug dating back to **Queen Anne** and presented to her by her then Queen's Champion, a Major and a member of the **Dymock** family. In Lincoln, we have a member of that same **Dymock** family as our Deputy Lord Lieutenant.

It would be fitting to mention our founder member, **Maj (Retd) Frank Philp**, who has his 80th birthday this year and to reflect on his initiative 25 years ago that brought the Lincoln Branch into existence. **Frank** was serving as the Army Recruiting Officer for the County of Lincolnshire in 1977 and had organised a band concert for the Army Benevolent Fund in Lincoln Cathedral. He thought that since it was the Corps Band performing, it would be a good opportunity to appeal through local press and radio for all ex members of the Corps to make an effort to attend the concert, adding that it would be followed by a meeting to see if there was enough interest to get an RSA branch up and running. There was a good response and there was enough interest. At its first official meeting a Committee was formed and later a Standard was ordered. **Frank** was elected first Branch Secretary, a position he held some eight years, handing over to someone else when the Branch was well established. We have a lot to thank you for, **Frank**.

I must also mention as a valuable member of our up front team, **Bill Doyle**, our Standard Bearer. For the past 18 years **Bill** has never missed an event of ours, or in fact the other 25 occasions when he turns out to represent the Corps and the Branch. He is always well turned out and on time. Most are happy occasions, except of course, when we say our last farewells to fallen comrades. Thank you **Bill**.

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs PM Tennant**
Secretary **Mr H Nealon**

A great silence seems to have descended on Reading Branch over the last few months. So a few lines in *The WIRE* may not come amiss. We start with our AGM, which was held on 15 March at the WOs and Sgts Mess at the Army Technical Foundation College at Arborfield, after which the Branch Committee looked somewhat different. The list now reads Chairman, **Pauline Tennant** (what again!), Hon Secretary, **Hugh Nealon**, Treasurer/Membership Secretary, **Alan Foot** and Newsletter Editor, **Gordon Barnett**. Among the Committee appointments **Alan** still retains the Dinner Secretary post (for which much thanks) and **Paddy Verdon** assumes the mantle of Information Manager. The meeting was very well attended and there followed an excellent buffet lunch and a successful raffle. Our thanks to the Mess President and to **WO2 Chris Coates**, who made it all happen. Since then we have had a Branch meeting at one of our favourite country pubs and acquired three new members, **Mr Ken Brown** (Chairman of Brighton Branch), **Mr Ken Hedges** and **Mr Bernard Malerbi**. We wish them all a long and happy association with our Branch.

Sadly, we lost a member of long standing when **Mr Cyril Rowland** died in April. He had been in poor health for many years. The Branch was represented at his funeral.

In May we held a successful skittles evening at another of our favourite pubs. Then the Chairman disappeared into the wilderness of Alaska and hasn't really caught up with what has (or hasn't) been happening. Put this lack of attention to Corps matters down to a mind almost totally taken over by whales and grizzly bears.

Before these notes appear we shall have held an informal dinner and a garden party. Visits to Bletchley Park and Kneller Hall are also planned.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr SL Smith**
Secretary **Mr AAT Dear**

A SAD LOSS

It is with deep sadness that we report the passing of **Margaret Davies (Meg)**, who died on 15 May 2003 after a short but very painful illness. **Meg** was the beloved wife of **Norman Davies**, the Branch Newsletter Editor and Auditor. **Meg** thoroughly enjoyed being an Associate Member of the Branch and entered into the spirit of the Association, being actively involved in fund-raising and backing **Norman** in his Branch activities. Her funeral took place at Portchester Crematorium on Friday 23 May. It was gratifying to see so many of her friends from the Southampton Branch RSA and the Wessex Branch of the British Korean Veterans Association in the congregation, supporting the family. **Meg** was accorded the honour of two Standards, the RSA Branch Standard, carried by the Branch Standard Bearer, **Bryan Littlecott**, and the BKVA Wessex Branch Standard, carried by the Wessex Branch Standard Bearer and our Chairman, **Sid Smith**. The eulogy was written by **Meg's** husband, and the tune *High on the Hill*, taken from a CD, by the band of the Blues and Royals was the chosen music. Floral and poppy wreath tributes were paid to **Meg** and over £100 given to Cancer Research UK. **Meg** will be sorely missed by the Branch.

ANNUAL REUNION LUNCH

The Southampton Branch 57 Annual Reunion was held at Kings Court Masonic Centre, Chandlers Ford on 27 April, this being the first one organised by our new Treasurer, **Mrs Claire Littlecott**, who can take a bow for doing such a fine job. Unfortunately our main guest, **Brig Charles Le Gallais** was down with the flu, so **Brig Johnny Clinch** and **Tony Dear** had to rewrite the script. Luckily **LtCol Alan Davies** agreed to step in at short notice. **Alan** was accompanied by his wife, **Jean**. Grace was said by **Capt Chris Cluett**, who included a prayer for **Margaret Davies**, then seriously ill in hospital. Chairman, **Mr Sidney Smith** brought a few innovations to the proceedings by toasting the new Branch Standard, which was paraded in by **Bryan Littlecott**. A toast to absent friends reminded us that many friends were missing this year. In the order of Loyal Toasts, **Mr George Packer** deputised for **Mr Norman Davies**. **Brig Johnny** welcomed the guests from other Branches in our area, which included Reading, Aldershot, Salisbury and Winchester.

Top Table L-R Sid Smith, LtCol Alan Davies, Brig Johnny Clinch, Jean Davies, Claire Littlecott

The Chairman then introduced the speaker, **LtCol Alan Davies**. **Alan** gave a most interesting account of his experiences as a young boy soldier, from when he went for his medical with 200 National Servicemen, who thought he was mad to sign on. A revelation was when **Alan** was put on a charge for stealing a kipper. The orderly officer had noticed the extra kipper on his plate and put him on a charge. Up before the CO, he was asked if he would accept the CO's punishment of four strokes of the cane. The boys always accepted this option, otherwise the alternative was 'jankers'. The caning meant bending over a chair to receive four strokes on the backside from the Sergeant Major. On returning to their quarters, the other lads would want to see the red marks displayed! For most people present at the Reunion, it was something they had never heard of, as striking another soldier was considered a very serious offence. This is only an extract from **Alan's** life in the Army and we look forward to more revelations in the future.

Always we finish with a Grand Draw for which we are grateful to **Ruth Dear** and **Vera Packer**. Our Reunion was not without drama, though. One of our members fainted, so we can be sure it will be talked about for a long time.

DEDICATION OF NEW BRANCH STANDARD

The dedication of the new Branch Standard is planned to take place at the Drumhead Service on Hawke Square, Blandford, on June 29 at 10.30hrs.The Padre who will bless our Standard is **Rev Peter Clemetts** from West Wellow. Our Standard Bearer, **Bryan Littlecott** and the Committee hope that as many supporters as possible will make it on the day. (Full report in next issue of *The WIRE*)

L-R Bryan Littlecott, Sid Smith

CONGRATULATIONS

Our Congratulations go to **John** and **Betty Riggs** on their Diamond Wedding Anniversary, 28 April 2003 and to **Claire** and **Bryan Littlecott** on their Silver Wedding Anniversary. 15 July 2003.

KOREAN WAR REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

On 9 July 2003, a BKVA Parade in London and Service in Westminster Abbey was held to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the cease-fire of the Korean War.
Signals Korean War Veterans, **Sid Smith**, **Tony Hull**, **Norman Davies**, **George Clarke** and **Frank Sidey** from this Branch were on parade. Thirty-nine BKVA Branch Standards formed a Special Marching Group. **Sid Smith**, our Chairman, is also the Standard Bearer of the BKVA Wessex Branch and was given the additional honour of being one of twenty Standard Bearers who, after the March Past, lined the route to the Great West Door of the Abbey before and after the Service.

RECRUITMENT

The Branch sent out a questionnaire to 36 ex-regulars of the Corps taken from the RHQ list and living in the Branch area. 12 replies were received, 6 of whom said they wish to join the Southampton Branch. (We shall see).

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

The recent past has seen a lively period for the Branch, our annual Dinner being held at the Masonic Hall in Staines at the end of May. This was a most enjoyable occasion, well attended, with good company and an excellent repast. It was the first time for many years that the event had been held at this venue and it was agreed that its success augured well for the future.

Earlier that month we fielded four teams at the Aldershot Branch annual Quiz Night and our lads and lassies acquitted themselves well, although not quite good enough to take the highest accolades. May proved a very social month for the Branch, a party of our Members joining 31 Sig Regt on their visit to Rouen. Reports indicate that this was an excellent weekend, full of enjoyment and adventure, although the exact details of these visits are rarely divulged.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Branch Secretary **Tony Hull**

The Reunion this year will be our fifth Annual Reunion and will be held at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Watford on Saturday, 4 October, at 18.00 for 19.00hrs. Dress is lounge suits or blazers. 60 rooms have been reserved at the hotel and booking forms are available on request from the Branch Secretary, Tony Hull, Tel: 01202 770261.

Whilst on holiday in Australia earlier this year, we visited **Peter Harris**, one of our members, who lives near to Canberra where the bush fires were raging at the time. **Peter** had been suffering from the drought for some time and there wasn't a blade of grass left on his property. We then went on to Bonny Hills in New South Wales, where we recruited a new member by the name of **Mackenzie Rennie** (known as **Ken** or **Jock**). **Ken's** name had been given to me by **Ron Elliott** just before we left for Australia. **Ken** then gave us the name of **Ralph Carpenter**, who also lives in Australia and we recruited him on our return to UK.

REVISIT TO OUR OLD STOMPING GROUNDS - *by Mick Teague*

A group of BEBA lads and lasses held a small reunion at the old stomping ground of Catterick/Richmond on Tuesday, 20 May. Those who came from afar could not have failed to notice the change in Catterick from Garrison to village life.

Those present at this pilgrimage were **Eddie** and **Margaret Whiffen**, **Clive** and **Jackie Pritchard** with **Jackie's** Mum, **Peter** and **Betty Lasota**, and **Cliffe Webb**, **Bill Gray** and **Mick Teague**.

The venue was the Holly Hill Inn at Richmond, where an excellent buffet lunch had been arranged by **Eddie** and **Margaret Whiffen**. The landlord had arranged the lunch in a separate room, which made it very pleasant. During and after lunch, memories and photos were produced. Future get togethers are in the pipeline.

Margaret Whiffen, Jacqui Pritchard, Jacqui's mother, Bill Gray, Eddie Whiffen, Cliffe Webb & Mick Teague

AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENTS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Gerald Evans**
Secretary **Dennis Egan**

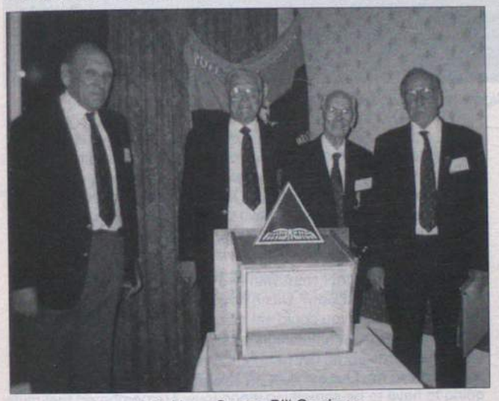
42 members of the newly renamed Air Formation Signal Regiments Association met at the North Stafford Hotel, Stoke on Trent on Saturday, 10 May, for their annual dinner and AGM. With the change of name, recruiting has surged ahead and 13 of those dining were attending for the first time. This led to some notable encounters. **Roland Jones** and **Chris Collier** met for the first time since 1947, when they served together in 64 WSS; whilst **Arthur Thomas** and **Harry Carver** met up with newly joined **Leslie Virgin** and **Bill Gardener** for the first time since they had parted in 1944.

Chairman **Gerald Evans** welcomed everyone to the largest reunion yet, apologising for the absence of our President, **LtCol Ivan Hooper**, unavoidably detained somewhere in the Gulf.

Extracts from his reports, *Beaufighters from Kuwait*, published in a recent edition of the Association's newsletter, had attracted much interest and comment. There was one consistent theme throughout the AGM: satisfaction at the number of new members recruited to both the Association and the RSA following the change in the Associations' title. The closer relationship with 21 Sig Regt (AS) and adoption of a new Constitution also gave cause for satisfaction, as did the successful fund-raising appeal to create a tribute to Air Formation Signallers, past and present, in the National Memorial Arboretum.

Whilst the hotel had changed hands since our last reunion, we were delighted to find that the catering manager and some of the restaurant staff were old hands whom we had met before. They treated us very well in spite of having two other, very large, functions running on the same evening.

Following the AGM, when the Committee Members were all re-elected, **Dr David Vickers** joined the Committee as our Webmaster and will be responsible for developing our various websites. Our silvertongued Welsh orator and Committee Member without portfolio, **Colin Morgan**, thanked **Roland Jones** for his work in re-entering member's information into the new format master sheets and thanked the Committee Members for their hard work throughout the year. He concluded by presenting **Pat Soward** with a framed citation 'In recognition of his outstanding and dedicated service to the Association'.



L-R, Harry Carver, Bill Gardener, Leslie Virgin and Arthur Thomas

260 (SAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

Chairman/Secretary **Geoff Scott**

Before beginning, all members of 260 would like to say how sad we are at the death **Sid Soqo**, a very valued friend and member of the Sqn Association who died on the 21 March 2003. He was buried on the 9 April, and the funeral was attended by members of the Sqn Association, accompanied by some of their wives.

The Sqn AGM on the weekend 12 - 13 April was a full programme of events this time, and to this end we had to hold the AGM on the Friday night with about half the 80 odd people who would be attending the weekend. Some had come from as far away as Germany and Belgium. The meeting passed off with one sad note. Due to **Roy Andrews** not being very well, he and his wife **Pat** have taken the decision to stand down as our Secretary/Treasurer, but **Geoff** and **Beryl Scott** have taken up the posts. Thanks for all you've done **Roy** and **Pat** and good luck to **Geoff** and **Beryl**. Our President, **Bill Cunningham**, made a presentation of a Jimmy to **Roy** and **Pat**.

With that, the weekend's events began, the bar being the favourite place to have a quiet chat and of course the inevitable one or two sherbets (squaddies' habits die hard). The highlight of the evening was the passing around of old photographs. After the evening meal, it was back to the watering hole and a top up of the falling down water till the wee small hours of the morning.

Having dragged our heavy heads off our pillows, it was down to the good old English fry-up and oodles of coffee (or even a hair of the dog) to start the new day. The rest of the day was spent looking around Loughborough and then back to hotel, to spruce up for the main event for the weekend the Dedication of our Standard. Back at the hotel, we started all over again with a sit-down meal and a raffle run by **Beryl Scott**, assisted of **Ulla Freeman-Pannett**. All had an excellent night and, with one or two exceptions, the faces told the story the following day.

The next meeting is to be held in Dortmund in Germany in May 2004, with the 2005 meeting to be held in Shoeburyness.

THE STANDARD DEDICATION

The Sqn formed in 1968 to provide comms for the newly formed 36 Heavy Air Defence Regt RA, and did the job in UK and Germany until it was disbanded in 1977. Twenty years later, at the RSA weekend in 1997, a group of ex members of that old Sqn met up and discussed the possibility of getting together with other ex members for a weekend gathering of our own.

They say that 'From small acorns Mighty Oaks do Grow' and after a few telephone calls, the first meeting was set up one June weekend in 1998, with thirty odd people turning up for a very emotional time. This was the start of many weekends to come and the formation of 260 Sig Sqn Association. To this end, we set up a small Committee, **Roy Andrews** was elected Secretary, and we steamed ahead getting the Sqn recognised by the RSA.

With the onset of Christmas 2001, the idea to have a Sqn Standard arose. The task was taken on by **Jan Greenland** (ex Secretary of 36 HAD Regt RA) who, after a couple of heart stopping moments completed the job for us to unfurl the Standard at the AGM in April 2002. The next step was to take the Standard, in the careful hands of **Archie Cairns**, to present and display at the RSA Weekend. He achieved this very well and has since paraded it at quite a few functions in Scotland, where he lives.

Archie Cairns, with escorts Geoff Scott and Steve Freeman-Pannett parade the new Standard alongside those of the RBL

The Dedication was held in the All Saints Parish Church, Loughborough on Saturday afternoon during the weekend of our Reunion 12- 13 April 2003 and was conducted by the **Rt Rev Cannon Derek Major Buxton**. **Archie Cairns** presented the Standard on behalf of the Sqn, with escorts **Geoff Scott**, and **Steve Freeman-Pannett**. Members of the RBL attended the ceremony with their Standards, and we were all invited to RBL Club for afternoon 'tea' and buffet.

Annual Reunion of 260 Signal Squadron (SAM)

DO YOU REMEMBER THE CORONATION PARADE IN JUNE 1953?

– by Alison Schofield

Last week I was at the Grand Reunion of the WRAC Association in Birmingham. It was most encouraging to see how many 'Jimmies' were being worn alongside the Association badges, but that is not the subject of this article. At the final dinner I found myself sitting beside a retired officer, (she had better remain nameless!) who recalled that she had marched in the Coronation Procession. She mentioned the terrible weather, her ruined uniform and how her white underwear (I'll spare the graphic details) had become an irreversible black. She then went on to tell us that she had returned to her mess in Richmond Park, drunk a triple brandy, bathed and then returned to London to party all night. I told her that my own experience had been somewhat different, but didn't go into great detail. However, the conversation brought certain memories to mind and I wondered how many other readers of *The WIRE* remember the day and what they recall.

My husband is quite clear about his. He was an officer cadet at Catterick, had the day off and together with three others, went off in a Morris Minor opentop (thoughtfully provided by one of the mothers) to a slapup dinner in Boroughbridge. He says they spared a thought for the course immediately senior to his own, who were taking part. What he didn't know was that he was eventually to marry a member of the Coronation contingent!

I was one of eight WRAC Officer Cadets selected to march in the Procession. Since the preceding January, we had been practising, along the roads and lanes of the Hampshire countryside, and a week before the Coronation we were transferred to our 'concentration area' in Richmond Park. We were allowed to go out in the evenings, and London being within easy reach, it was a fabulous privilege for young women usually shut away in the country.

London was wonderful at that time. All troops there for the Coronation had to wear full dress uniform when not in barracks, and London was so crammed with troops, that the West End looked like one enormous musical comedy set. Added to the excitement was a certain spice of danger. It was difficult to identify other people. Some regiments sported uniforms specially designed for the occasion; others had delved back into military history. All were adorned with extra bits of braid or chain, which effectively hid the wearer's rank, and of course nobody knew who we were either, since we normally left our camp in civilian clothes. To be on the safe side, one or two of them tried to salute us but the RSM, in fierce mood, threatened severe retribution if we tried to return the compliment.

On our first free night I went with two friends to Lyons Corner House. Their 'Salad Bowl' was a novelty because food was still rationed and there you could eat as much as your plate could carry - and we were very hungry after a full day's marching. Then, having spent nearly all our money, we looked around for something to do. Our being in full No. I Dress uniform, it was going to have to be something innocuous. I remembered that my father was often at his club in the evening, so on the offchance we walked down there. I gave my name to the porter, who confirmed that Daddy was indeed in the building and we were entertained to gin and tonic in the room reserved for lady guests - a rare privilege in term time. He treated us to a taxi back to the barracks, but we got out some way from the main gate to avoid questions. I kept the change!

On 1 June we were confined to barracks and our two Corps senior RSMs inspected our uniforms and shoes. Polish, spit and polish was never my forte. I had always survived by doing other people's homework in return for their elbowgrease, but now I was on my own! My new black shoes were just not shiny enough and our senior underofficer was grumbling openly as Lights Out approached.

My saviour was unexpected. **'Basher' Ashworth**, the RSM from the WRAC Depot, who terrified us all, stumped into our barrack room, picked up my shoes and disappeared. Twenty minutes later she was back with one balanced on each upturned palm. They were immaculate. 'Not a word Ma'am,' she said gruffly and disappeared, leaving me to wonder if I was the only soldier to have my shoes 'bulled' by a senior RSM!

At 3.30 on the morning of 2 June, we had reveille and breakfast (small rations and only half a cup of tea!) to an announcement on the cookhouse radio that Everest had been conquered. Then into a chartered doubledecker London bus and on our way - still very early, but we had to be in London before it was closed to traffic. We de-bussed and formed up near the Goring Hotel to wait for our parade marshal. We then marched to the front of Buckingham Palace, where we were to stand at attention during the Queen's crowning.

Being in the front rank, I was able to appreciate the full horror of a mass of navy blue uniforms with white gorget patches and hatbands approaching us on what seemed to be an inevitable collision course. It was the Combined Officer Cadet Schools contingent. At the lastminute, I heard an order for 'about turn on the march' (a manoeuvre whose relevance I had until then questioned) and they disappeared in the other direction. I don't know where they went - perhaps some reader knows? We couldn't have halted; there were too many troops marching behind us.

During the crowning it started to rain heavily, but we were well entertained by the running commentary emanating from the motionless lips of the Guards lining that part of the route. After the crowning we were marched to St James' Park and fallen out. It was raining even more heavily now, but helpers carefully lifted rain capes over our caps and uniforms so as not to smudge the blanco on our white gorget patches.

We were each given two sandwiches from tents set up in the park, and although the head of the procession was now moving off, we were still free to stand and watch the Commonwealth contingent. **Queen Salote** of Tonga, in an open carriage in the pouring rain, waved and smiled at us. Very encouraging if you were just a soggy individual with a very long march ahead of you.

Soon we were fallen in again and the procession began in earnest. Down Birdcage Walk to Parliament Square and even a watery sun - but not for long. Into the Square and we could hear **Richard Dimbleby** telling BBC listeners how smart we looked in our new green uniforms. Then left wheel into Whitehall, Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly and the Ritz, where we halted. The whole Procession were now stood easy, feet firmly in place on the ground but the chance to stretch cramped fingers and shoulders for a while. Then we moved off again, past Green Park, Hyde Park Corner (careful here!) Park Lane, Marble Arch, (all the moves we had practised around oil drums) down Oxford Street, Regent Street, (my parents hosting drinks on a balcony - I didn't dare look up), Piccadilly Circus, Admiralty Arch, The Mall, the Victoria Memorial, Constitution Hill, Hyde Park Corner again, into the parks and at last the bridge in Kensington Gardens, where we were halted and fallen out.

As we departed, we had, from the top deck of our doubledecker bus an unforgettable view of London in celebration mood and of the WRNS waiting to be dismissed, their faces chalk white with the pipeclay which had run down from their caps

Afterwards was an anticlimax. We were confined to barracks, the only heating was in the drying room and the NAAFI was closed (the girls, like my husband, had the day off) so we couldn't even watch the only TV set available to us. I had to wait a quarter of a century to see my self on film! Back in battledress, we jolted back to camp the next day in the rear of a three-ton truck. Our wrecked uniforms were taken off for refurbishing by our various military tailors, to be returned just in time for our Commissioning and dispersal a few weeks later. It had been ordained that, as a compliment to Her Majesty, we would march in our officers' uniforms with cadet insignia attached for the occasion.

What a mess they looked! Blanco had soaked into the jackets, and there was a permanent bend in skirts caused by the unaccustomed stretch from 27 inches (then the regulation pace for women) to the 30-inch pace of the predominately male participants of the Procession. In the following ten years I never managed to get rid of the bend in mine. Whenever my uniform got wet it would sag again, serving as a permanent reminder of its first outing! In the end I donated it to the National Army Museum, but they have wisely never put it on display!

Most of us never met again, and fifty years later, would probably not recognise each other. But there we are on the BBC documentary film, forever young and fit. I saw this for the first time when it was shown on the 25th anniversary of the Coronation. Our small sons watched it and picked me out. 'Mummy is the one with the drip running down her face!' commented the younger one. That just about sums it up!

RETURN TO SUEZ CANAL ZONE 28 APRIL - 7 MAY 03

- by Capt (Retd) Gordon Park

On 27 April 2003 I flew to Schipol airport (Amsterdam) to meet up with nearly eighty other members of the Suez Veterans Association for a reunion visit to the Canal Zone in Egypt. After a good flight to Cairo with KLM, we then proceeded by coaches to our hotel on Forsan Island, Lake Timpsah, which is joined to the Suez Canal. The local town is Ismailia. It was a four star hotel and we were well looked after by staff who were very friendly and spoke excellent English. The Canal Zone is not a recognised tourist area, and we were regarded as VIPs as we travelled around in our coaches, always with armed Egyptian police and army as our escorts. Even the hotel had armed police on duty twenty-four hours a day, but I personally did not feel intimidated.

I had served in Egypt from December 1951 to December 1954, being posted in El Ballah as a DR, and then MT NCO for eighteen months. I moved to Tel El Kebir for a further eighteen months as MT Cpl. My unit was Egypt Comd Sig Regt, which eventually changed to 3 LofC Sig Regt. It was a working unit and we were always kept busy, most of the time posted to active service.

L-R Maj (Retd) Paddy Henry and Capt (Retd) Gordon Park on the banks of Lake Timpsah

Also on the visit was another ex Corps member, **Major (QM) (Retd) Paddy Henry**, who served at El Ballah with 1 LofC Sig Regt from October 1951 to November 1954. As you can imagine we spent many hours talking over old times and drinking a few Stella beers (the Egyptian type not the Belgian variety) It seemed to taste a lot better than I remembered it 52 years ago!!

On our first day we were taken on a guided tour of Ismailia, looking up old haunts etc. It was a public holiday and hundreds of the locals were sat around enjoying themselves in the parks and on the banks of the Sweet Water Canal. They were very friendly to us, shouting: 'Welcome to Egypt' 'What is your name?' 'Where are you from?' etc. But it was a nice atmosphere and we enjoyed our walk. You can imagine what the party looked like. The oldest was about 80 and the youngest around 66-67 - more like an outing from an old folk's home. We also had armed police in civilian clothes escorting us.

We had further trips out to Moascar, Fayid, and Port Said war cemeteries. All were kept in immaculate condition by the Egyptian workers. We visited old camp locations from Suez to Port Said, but El Ballah, where many of us served, has completely disappeared. The old Suez Canal road has gone and is just a dirt track, the Treaty road is now a dual carriage way from Suez to Port Said, and from the Canal Zone to Cairo is also a dual carriageway.

There were two highlights of the trip for me. One was the trip to Cairo (it was out of bounds the whole time I served in Egypt), where we saw the Pyramids and the Sphinx at Giza, the Tutankhamoun museum, and the Pharaonic village. The second was the trip to Port Said, where, all those years ago, we were

Just one of the many young Corps soldiers buried at Moascar War Cemetery

allowed to visit for a few hours on a weekend from El Ballah. It was here, in November 1956, that I went back again as a reservist. Only this time it was with 2 Press Comms Sig Sqn (AER) and we landed on the beach in the LST *Empire Doric* on the first morning of the Suez Invasion together with elements of 6 RTR. I was there till the last day of the invasion and returned to the UK on the troop ship *Astorious* and my second demob.

To summarise, I enjoyed the trip back to the Canal Zone. It brought back a lot of memories, some good, some bad. I met a lot of old timers like myself. We all had a lot in common, but most of the others were ex National Service men, who had not wished to be there in the first place. Not that I volunteered, but we all had to do what we were told.

Would I do it again? The simple answer to that is: 'No. Been there, done that, got the t-shirt.'

THE SUEZ VETERANS' ASSOCIATION

This was formed about eight years ago and currently has about 1300 plus members. It is open to all those who served in Egypt in the Canal Zone, and to those who took part in the actual Invasion in 1956.

It holds regional meetings, an annual AGM (this year at the Norbreck Castle Hotel in Blackpool) and annual return trips to the Canal Zone. We have quite a few Ex RSigs members, but would welcome many more.

If you are interested, contact **Gordon Park** at the following address, or ring the membership secretary **David Powis** on 020 8262 7839, or log onto www.suezveteransassociation.co.uk

Capt (Retd) Gordon Park
72 Kingfisher Drive
Skegness
Lincs
PE25 1TQ
Email: celia.gordonpark@btopenworld.com

VETERANS OF THE GREEK CAMPAIGN 1940-41

- From Edgar C Harrison OBE MC BEM(Mil)

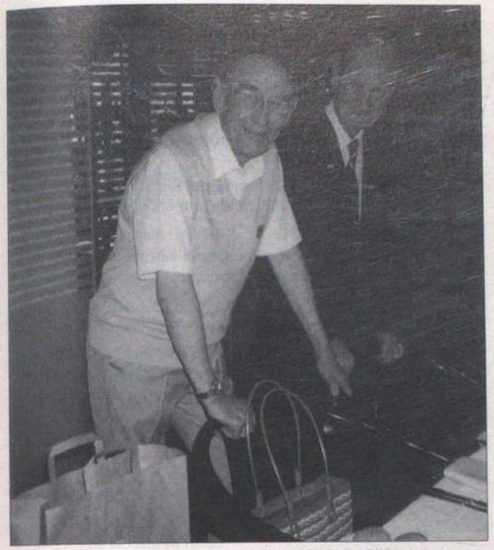
The Remembrance Service commemorating the Battle of Kalamata 28/29 April 1941 was this year held on Thursday 22 May. This ceremony is held alongside the monument in memory of all allied forces who lost their lives or were taken prisoner during the campaign. The monument is at the spot where a New Zealander, **Sgt JD Hinton**, won the Victoria Cross when allied forces retook the town from the Italians who unexpectedly and with great speed had come down the west coast to seize Kalamata. This victory was short lived, as an overwhelming force of the German army gained control of Kalamata. A naval force sent to evacuate the allied forces would probably have succeeded

Delivering the Oration at the 2003 Commemoration Ceremony

in their mission but the port and harbour had reportedly been mined. The failure of HM ships to use the port facilities resulted in only a pitiful number of our troops being taken off the beach.

As to the actual Service of Remembrance this year, it was conducted by an Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox faith, assisted by the Padre of our Athens Embassy. The UK Defence Attaché attended the ceremony, together with heads of the Greek armed forces, a municipal band and a host of civic dignitaries, including the Mayor of Kalamata. The passage of years has taken its toll, and we veterans are now much reduced in numbers. However, we take great pride in marching the short distance to the monument, ably assisted by the stirring music of the Greek band. This year I thought the turn-out, discipline and drill of the Greek armed forces was the best ever. They did us veterans proud, as did the Greek press, radio and television. After the service, the Municipality of Kalamata provided an excellent buffet lunch in an adjoining park. This park contains the old railway station, where so many ended up after the long retreat from northern Greece, in my case from the Albanian border.
This year there was another occasion to remember. Our President, **Edwin Horlington** of the VOTGC 1940/41 was honoured with the Freedom and Honorary Citizenship of Kalamata. At a ceremony at City Hall, **Edwin** was suitably honoured and presented with a magnificent parchment, on which is inscribed in letters of gold, his contributions to Greece in general and Kalamata in particular.
Up to this year's service, I have been the sole representative of the Corps. I was therefore particularly pleased to have a fellow signaler alongside me this year. He, **Eric Bardsley**, joined the Corps in March 1940, and he has given me the following details:

2336907 **Sig Bardsley E**. March 1940 Prestatyn, North Wales, trained to B3 standard as OWL. Sailed from Liverpool January 1941 in *SS Samaria* as a member of 51 Heavy Wireless Section, commanded by **Lt Burnage**. To Egypt, via Freetown and Durban, and then from Alexandria to Greece on 1 April 1941. Taken prisoner on 28 April 1941 and sent to Arbeitskommando



Afterwards at the lunch. Edwin Horlington and Edgar Harrison

at Weissenbach (Ennstal) on railway work until June 1943. Short spell in Stalag 3 for 4 weeks in Villach then to Arbeitskommando at Friedberg (Osteierman) on more railway work. Left Friedberg on 31 March 1945 and travelled, with Russian Army help, through Hungary, Romania and Ukraine to Odessa. After two weeks in Odessa, sailed home, arriving Gourock on 12 June 1945.

Eric is now living at 7 Wolfe Close, Walton, Chesterfield S40 2DF, and he would be delighted to hear from anyone who remembers him.

Thank you Edgar for this Commemoration story. It rings a personal bell for me. I had an uncle killed in the Battle of Crete in May 1941, and I have been attending the Commemoration services there each May for the past 15 years. I am greatly impressed as each year the local people turn on such wonderful Commemoration events and give returning veterans such a good time. As in Kalamata, the numbers of veterans who can make the trip decreases as the years pass, but increasingly their numbers are being made up by their descendants, who, like the local population, are determined that the events of 1941 are not forgotten. Long may it continue. – Bernard Redshaw, Editor.

DEDICATION SERVICE AT THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

For the past twelve months the Air Formation Sig Regts Association, 19 Sig Regt Association and 21 Sig Regt (AS) have been raising money to create a memorial tribute to those members of the Corps who served in Air Formation Signal Units. Phase 1 was completed with the planting of nine copper beech trees and the installation of the first four commemorative plaques. These were dedicated at a moving and emotional service on Sunday, 11 May.

The morning started at 10.00hrs when a small convoy, led by **Pat** and **Maureen Soward**, left the North Stafford Hotel heading for the Arboretum at Alrewas, a gentle 30 mile drive away. Already on parade to greet them were representatives from both Associations, including **Andrew** and **Sylvia McKowen** and **Edna Pritchard**, who had contributed towards a tree and plaque dedicated to **Andrew's** father, **Maj George McKowen**, **MBE** and **Edna's** husband, **Cpl Ron Pritchard MID.**

The service, led by **David Childs**, Director of the Arboretum (who did a quick change to Lay Reader) was held in the wooden chapel

Mrs Edna Pritchard plants a tree in memory of Major George McKowen MBE and her husband, Cpl Ron Pritchard MID

on the site, the only place of worship created to celebrate the new Millennium. He started with an introduction to the Arboretum and to the Chapel, a cause to which he is obviously wholeheartedly and enthusiastically devoted. He noted that the Chapel is also the only place in the country where a two-minute silence is observed

One of the dedicatory plaques

every day. Our service included a two-minute silence with *Last Post* and *Reveille* played by a bugler from the Staffordshire Regt, whilst **Arthur Thomas** paraded the Standard of the Staffordshire Branch of the RSA and **Chris Collier** paraded the Union Flag.

Moving outside, a short prayer and another moment of silence preceded the symbolic planting by **Gerald Evans**, Chairman of the Air Formation Sig Regs Association, and **George Brew**, Chairman of 19 Sig Regt Association, using highly polished spades previously used by **The Queen**, **Prince Philip**, **Prince Charles**, **Princess Anne** and other members of the Royal Family.

The Arbour Restaurant provided a magnificent buffet for the forty people assembled. The two chairmen, meeting for the first time, held 'deep and meaningful' conversations and the reunion continued until, reluctantly, we had to make our individual ways home.

HERFORDER OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION 'CENTENARY'

No, we are not the first Branch to celebrate 100 years, but probably the first to achieve 100 members in only our second year since formation. It has all been due to our Chairman, 'Gentleman' **Jim Sloan** and Secretary, **Dave Smith**.

The three meetings we have held so far have been in Nottingham, Dunoon and Scarborough, all ably organised by **Jim** and **Dave**. Everybody had a marvelous time at all three venues, although one or two ladies did make light of the promised Dunoon cruise.

On 6 October we are off on our travels again, a five-day trip to Herford in Germany for our fourth reunion. **Jim** and **Dave** are already planning our first 2004 reunion in Llandudno in March. We expect to take all two hundred rooms in the hotel, so you don't have to be a member if you would like to join us. **Jim's** phone number is 01324 626173 and **Dave's** 01294 465014. Alternatively, **Terry Hearldon** (me!) would be delighted to pass any communication on to our hierarchy. Phone me on 01925 481024. We would be pleased to welcome wives at any reunion.

Jim has now opened our shop, and has for sale: Ties at £7.50. Lapel badges £250p and Car stickers at 50p. We do have an annual subscription of £5, (come on lads, pay up), but Wives may become Associate Members for a one-off payment of £5.

Our next AGM will be held at the Scottish venue in October 2004. (Aha! so that's where we're going). One final note, we have two available seats for Herford. First to send money gets 'em.

Herforder Association Reunion, Scarborough 14 – 16 March 03

REUNIONS

ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2004

The RSA AGM for 2004 will be held in the Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF at 10.30 hours Saturday 27 March. All Life Members are eligible and most welcome to attend. Any points for the agenda must be with Association Headquarters by 1 February 2004. Points received after this date may not be addressed at the Meeting.

REUNION - 200 (20 ARMD BDE) SIG SQN, DETMOLD

It is planned to hold a 200 (20 Armd Bde) Sig Sqn reunion, weekend 29/30th August 2003, at the former home of the Sqn in Detmold, Germany.

All personnel are welcome to attend, both ex-members and serving members. For details please contact either:

Ben Casey
Paderborner Str 143
32760
Detmold, Germany
Tel: +49 5231 948744
ben@caseys.de

or

Martin Avins
34 Claremont Drive
Moira
Co Armagh, BT67 0SE
Northern Ireland
Tel: 02892 610749
martin@avins.fsworld.co.uk

660 SIGNAL TROOP (EOD)/EOD ECM OPERATORS REUNION 2003

All serving and former members of 660 Sig Tp (EOD)/EOD ECM Operators, are invited to attend a reunion at Didcot Station Sgts' Mess on 4 October 2003.

Contact **Sgt Steve Bruce**, Mil 94234 3366, Civ 01235 513366 or 11eod660sgt@dlo.gsi.gov.uk for further details.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION REUNION DINNER

will be held at

RAMADA JARVIS HOTEL, WATFORD

on

SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER 2003

For bookings and info call
Tony Hull on **01202 770 261**

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

BETFOR ASSOCIATION

As Chairman of the BETFOR (British Element Trieste Forces) Association, formed Dec 2002, may I take this opportunity to invite readers of *The WIRE* who may have served in Trieste (1945 - 1954) to view our website at www.milhist.net/betfor where they may be able to renew friendships and acquaintances with those whom they may have lost contact with over the years, and to see some of the sights of this wonderful City including the Barracks they may have been stationed in.

Alternatively they can contact me at tara254@longmeadow45.fsnet.co.uk or by phone (01432) 271001 for further details concerning the Association.

Jim Crow, Ex RSM R Signals, 1943-1968.

SGT ANTHONY (TONY) KNIGHT

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of 24378740 **Sgt Anthony Knight (Tony)** who served with 8 Sig Regt from 1975-1992 is asked to contact **Ann Hobday** (sister) on 01642 510106 with any information.

PTIs 16 SIGNAL REGIMENT 1963 - 66

From: **Mr R Robson**
3 Dent Close
Haswell
Co Durham DH6 2BP
Tel: 0191 520 8519

Dear Sir,

I am looking for the following PTIs who served at 16 Sig Regt between 1963 and 1966:

LCpl Blackie (Piggy), **LCpl Payston** (Brummie), **LCpl Coles** (Big Mouth) and **Cpl Les** (Plonkie).

We must get together. Please ring **Ronnie** on 0191 520 8519.

Yours.....

FR (REG) PRICE

From: **Mr J K Price**
14 Woodside Road
Ketley
Telford
Shropshire
TF1 5HB
Tel: 01952 247092

Dear Sir

I have recently acquired a diary, which my late father kept when he was serving with the Corps in Europe mid 1944 to May 1945.

The Museum at Blandford suggested that I contact you to help gain information so that I can further my research on my father, **Reg Price's** Army service.

I have his record of service card, together with photos and a story in a local paper regarding the finding of a bullet when Dad's right leg was amputated. The bullet had been in his leg for 35 years – I now have that bullet!

I welcome any news that may be generated through your magazine and thank you in advance for any help given.

Yours.....

MRS PD GALYER

The Army Non War Graves Cell is trying to trace **Mrs PD Galyer**, widow of the former **Cpl Graham Keith Galyer**. **Graham** died, aged 35, in July 1981 whilst on the Y List with 11 Sig Regt. They lived in a married quarter in Wheredale Rd, Catterick Garrison.

Graham's grave is marked with a simple wooden cross in the cemetery of his hometown of Scartho, Grimsby, and the Army Non War Graves Cell hope to provide a more appropriate headstone. It would be more appropriate if his widow could be traced and informed about this action. If anyone can help trace **Mrs Galyer**, please contact **Steve Lane** at PS4(Army) Casualty Cell at Upavon on 01980 615559.

FRED (JOCK) RUSSELL AND OTHERS

From: **John White**
E-mail: jwhites@telusplanet.net

I'm just dropping a line to contact some of my old buddies. My name is **John** '*Chalky*' **White**, I served in the RSigs from 1959 – 1968 at Catterick, Cyprus, Bournemouth, Malaya (Ghurka Sigs), Derby, and finally at Liverpool. I then joined the TA in Liverpool until 1975, when I emigrated to Canada.

I am still involved in a semi-military club here in Edmonton Alberta. IOOB (International Order of Old Bastards). I would like to contact any of the members of the Corps who served with me to have a chat. I do keep in touch with **Jim Carruthers**, chairman of the RSA Liverpool Branch.

I hope you can help me contact some old friends. I am particularly interested one from Malaya days, **Fred** 'Jock' **Russell**. I hope to have a reply from you.

Yours .....

REGIMENTAL PLAQUES WANTED

9 Sig Regt (Cyprus)

13 Sig Regt (Birgelen, Germany)

I am looking for one of each. If anyone has one to spare, please contact **Jim Keeping** on 01202 574 527.

13 LofC SIGNAL REGIMENT - LIEUTENANT STEWART

From: **Paul Hammersley**
88 Tarawera Road
Lynmore
Rotorua
New Zealand

Dear Sir

While cleaning out my office desk, I found this photograph of a **Lt Stewart** and it set me to thinking if he is still alive.

During the war I was OC of the LAD attached to the 13 LofC Signals.

We were stationed at Chislehurst in Kent and it was while we were there that I became friendly with **Lt Stewart**. Unfortunately his unit was posted off to Italy and, as usually happens, we never met again.

There would be many in 13 LofC who would remember me, but his is the only name I can recall. I am 81 and I suppose they would all be about the same age. I would very much like to get in contact again.

I thought it worth a try to write to your magazine. You never know.

Thank you

Yours.....

CORRESPONDENCE

ANZAC DAY IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

From: **WG Saffin**
28 Bedford Road
Weston Super Mare
Somerset
BS23 4EJ

Dear Sir,

Whilst on an extended holiday to Western Australia I decided to go into the City to watch the ANZAC Day parade, which was held on 24 April.

Checking through the paper for timing and routes I saw a notice stating that the Royal Australian Signals Association would be marching and all former members and Allied signallers were invited to attend. I rang the person named in the advert and spoke

to **Peter Lofdahl**, who gave me very warm greetings and assured me of an excellent day out should I attend.

The next day I turned up at the assembly point to be greeted by **Bill Sneddon**, who was aware of my coming. He couldn't mistake me, I was wearing my blue baseball cap from the Museum; everyone else had black ones.

Introductions were made all around this included **Col Fitzpatrick**, who had attended the first course at Blandford after the move from Catterick, and **W02 Bob Shaw**, who volunteered to be my guide and mentor for the day.

As the time crept on, our numbers grew to about ninety. Divisional Banners were unfurled and two very immaculate Army Cadets hoisted up a huge Association banner. We were ready, the unit in front moved off and then it was our turn. Coming out on to the main route, we were greeted by many thousands of spectators, lining the pavements five and six deep. The noise was deafening. National Flags flew everywhere; thousands had been given out by the *Australia Post* and it appeared that every child had one.

The salute was taken by the Governor General of Western Australia and on the approach the band struck up *Once a Jolly Swagman*. At the sound of such a great piece, heads raised shoulders squared and I am sure we all felt like twenty-somethings again.

Following this, a Service was held in the gardens by the Swan River. It was estimated that 40-50,000 had lined the streets and about 10,000 attended the Service.

By kind permission of the CO, we had all been invited to 109 Sig Sqn, based in Irwin Barracks, Karrakatta to join in their family day. A superb buffet lunch was served by the catering staff and after all that exercise, it was most welcome. During the afternoon I met the Secretary/Treasurer, **Paul Ranford**, who assured me that anyone coming to Perth would be most welcome attend any of their social outings.

Through the medium of *The WIRE*, may I say a very sincere thank you to our fellow signallers in Perth for such a warm and a great day out. Special thanks to **Peter** for the 'goody bag' and to **Bob** for driving me out to Karrakatta and back to the Metro station in the City.

If anyone is visiting WA, **Peter's** telephone number is 9305 1303 and **Paul's** address is P.O.Box1680 Mandurah WA 6210. Get in touch - you will not be disappointed.

Yours ....

SGT EDWIN AINSWORTH

From: **Haks Watburgh Schmidt**
Duivelmolen 21
5345 ZR Oss
The Netherlands
email: aexstburgh@wxs.nl

Dear Sir,

I am a Dutch journalist doing research on the airborne landings at Arnhem in September 1944; and more specifically, on the fate of 13 Platoon, the Border Regt and the pilots of the glider that took them to Arnhem on Sunday, 17 September 1944.

To that end, I would like to get into contact with former members of 13 Platoon. One of those members was **3606441 Pte Edwin Ainsworth**, who was from Blackburn, Lancashire. In the Arnhem literature, he was reported to have knocked out a German tank with a PIAT during the Battle.

With help from the *Lancashire Evening Post* I have contacted his two daughters. They told me that **Mr Ainsworth** had sadly passed away in the late seventies, but that after the war he had rejoined the Army in the Royal Corps of Signals.

He became **Sgt Ainsworth** with the new army number, 21045171, and appears to have served with 2 Sqn, 14 Sig Regt, Worcester Road, Droitwich. He left the Army in 1968.

My hope is that we might be able to contact somebody who served with **Edwin** during his time in the Corps and whom he might have told more about his Arnhem experiences.

If anyone does remember him, could they please contact me at the above address.

Yours.....

WORLD WAR 2 MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN GOSFIELD, ESSEX

From: **Ian Mactaggart**
Craig-y-Llyn
37 Braintree Road
Gosfield
Halstead
Essex CO9 1PR
Tel: 01787 473 658
Email: ianbase@aol.com

Dear Sir

I am endeavouring to compile an historical record of the military activities that took place in and around the village of Gosfield, Essex during the Second World War. Whilst I have been quite successful regarding RAF activities, I am having problems with those of the Army.

All that I have established so far is that from 1940 – 42 Signals units were at Gosfield Hall (Map Ref M228480) and Orange Hall Farm (Map Ref M225475). They may have been connected with IX Corps, which apparently had their HQ at Sloe House in Halstead. From local reports, it appears that the Signals unit used the top floor and stable block of Gosfield Hall, whilst a lower floor room was used as an Officers Mess. I have reference to a 319 Battery having their Officers Mess in Gosfield Hall, but the only Artillery unit of that number was in Scotland, which adds to the confusion.

It is possible that there are readers who served in the Gosfield/Halstead area who may be able to provide me with information. If so I would be very pleased to hear from them.

Any assistance you may be able to provide to identify the units involved would be gratefully appreciated.

Thank you in anticipation for your help.

Yours.....

DONATIONS

Eastbourne Branch	£150.00
Capt (Retd) H Jennings in memory of **Stan Parkin**	£20.00
Mr W Cameron	£50.00
Lt Col (Retd) NAV Ribchester in memory of **Cpl Alan Robinson**	£20.00
20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (200)	£93.52
Mr & Mrs AD Spence in memory of **Maj Des Spence**	£50.00
Thales Comunications Ltd	£275.00
Norfolk Branch	£100.00
Lincoln Branch	£50.00
Julian Kenneth Bird	£500.00
Richard Cartwright	£20.00
Collection at the funeral of **Mr Stan Parkin**	£123.03
Donation in memory of **Julian Kenneth Bird**	£37.50
Mr AR Ayres	£20.00
Chester Branch	£100.00
Bournemouth Branch in memory of Mr LJ Fitzpatrick	£5.00
Mr Al MacMillan	£10.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of Mr LJ Collins	£10.00
Bedford Branch	£50.00
Mr T Magowan	£1000.00
Peter McNaughton in memory of Lt Col Nigel Ribchester	£25.00
Brig AL Dowell in memory of Lt Col Nigel Ribchester	£35.00

LAST POST

Andrews - WO2 LM Andrews	Served 1950/75	Died 26/05/03
Bevan - Sgt JA Bevan	Served 1950/61	Died 30/05/03
Chapman - Dvr GT Chapman	Served 1948/50	Died 13/06/03
Collins - Sig LJ Collins	Served 1942/47	Died May '03
Dickson - LtCol DA Dickson	Served 1936/60	Died 17/06/03
Dyer - Maj G Dyer	Served 1941/?	Died 08/05/03
Fairweather - Brig C Fairweather CB CBE, KStJ,TD, JP, DL	Served 1928/46	Died 17/05/03
Fitzpatrick - Sig LJ Fitzpatrick	Served 1941/46	Died 28/05/03
Glass - Capt RG Glass	Served 1939/45	Died 27/05/03
Harris - Sig ES Harris	Served 1939/46	Died 03/07/03
Haydon - LtCol JM Haydon	Served 1953/89	Died 12/07/03
Higman - Sgt W Higman	Served 1964/79	Died 23/05/03
Johnston - Maj CW Johnson	Served 1942/76	Died 06/06/03
Lloyd - Lt JE Lloyd	Served 1943/49	Died May '03
Palot - Sig RF Palot	Served 1939/46	Died 1991
Ribchester - Lt Col NAV Ribchester	Served 1943/83	Died 30/06/03
Rowland - Sig C Rowland	Served 1947/52	Died 10/04/03
Spear - WO2 D Spear	Served ?	Died 30/05/03
Sullivan - Sig R Sullivan	Served WW2	Died Jun '03
Vines - Sig WE Vines	Served 1941/46	Died 08/06/03
White - Sgt RG White	Served 1939/46	Died 23/06/02
Whitecross - Sig JM Whitecross	Served 1945/48	Died 02/06/03
Wooldridge - Sig RM Wooldridge	Served 1950/52	Died 19/06/03
Young - WO1 SW Young	Served ?	Died 18/06/03

FAIRWEATHER - Brig CC Fairweather CB CBE KStJ TD JP DL died on Saturday 17 May 03.

Claude Fairweather was born in 1906 and was educated at St Peter's School, York. He was commissioned into 50 (N) Div Sig Regt in 1928. He was also a member of the North Riding T and AF Association from 1933. Embodied with his Regt in 1939, he left for France in January 1940 and was evacuated via Dunkirk. He then became CI at No 1 STC and was responsible for the introduction of the Creed system trg into the Corps.

From 1941 to 1943 he commanded 2 Div Sig Regt in India and Burma, and in 1943 was promoted Colonel and appointed CSO 33 Indian Corps. After only a month he became CSO to **Gen Orde Wingate** to raise and organise signals for the Chindit expeditions into occupied Burma. He took part in the expeditions and was appointed OBE. He wrote the history of 2 Div Sig Regt activities in Burma, which has been published in its Regtl history.

In 1945 he was promoted Brigadier to become CSO 34 Indian Corps, an amphibious formation raised for the recapture of Malaya. He was demobilised in 1946, rejoined the TA Association and was a member of a small committee to resuscitate TA in the UK. He was Chairman of the North Riding Cadet Committee for five years and became Chairman of the Recruiting Committee in 1947. He was appointed Deputy Lieutenant for the North Riding of Yorkshire in 1949, was Chairman of the Yorkshire (North Riding) T and AF Association from 1950 to 1958 and Chairman of the North of England TAVR Association from 1968 to 1971.

He was Hon Col of 50 (N) Div, RAOC 1955-67. In 1964 he became a member of the Joint Administrative Council of the Council of the T and AF Association and, in 1967, was appointed Hon Col of 34 (N) Sig Regt, an appointment he held until 1976.

He had many civil interests. He was a Director of the Tees Towing Company, a Governor of his old school, and was appointed a JP in 1963. In 1973 he took on the appointment of Chairman of the new Cleveland County Area Health Authority, for which he was eminently suitable, having been a County Commissioner of the North Riding, Yorkshire St John Ambulance Brigade and a member of the Order of St John. He was Chairman of that Order for North Yorkshire and appointed Knight of the Venerable Order in 1978. Appointed Vice Lord Lieutenant of Cleveland in 1977, he retired on age in 1982, and reverted to Deputy Lieutenant, Cleveland.

BARTON – Sgt Julie Barton ('Tiger') died aged 41 on Saturday 22 March 2003, after a brave fight against cancer.

A longstanding member of the TA, **Julie** joined 71 (Y) Sig Regt in January 1980, and initially trained as a Data Telegraphist and Radio Operator (badged WRAC). Subsequently she trained as a Military Clerk, and was re-badged AGC on the formation of the Corps in 1992. Throughout her 23 years with 71 (Y) Sig Regt, **Julie** regularly attended the TAC at Bexleyheath, and was a founding member of HQ (KCLY) Sqn, based there. She was a staunch member of the Sgts' Mess, and – in her quiet way – supported the social life of the Sqn by managing its bar and helping to organise its social events. Although a civil servant by employment, **Julie** was dedicated to her TA career, which provided her with interest, friendship and a degree of adventure. Having attained the rank of Sgt, she attended many courses and was awarded the Efficiency Medal (TAVR) in 1992 (with first clasp in 1998), and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002.

In addition to her routine TA activities, **Julie** was a highly respected target and full-bore shot of exceptional ability. She shot at County level through civilian clubs, at National level with the TA and was a member of the Civil Service Rifle Team. Her average score was a very creditable 98.7%, to the envy of many other good shots. She spent a great deal of time coaching, both in the TA and in the civilian clubs to which she belonged.

Julie's funeral took place on Thursday 3 April at Our Lady of the Rosary, Blackfen, followed by the Committal at Eltham Crematorium and a Wake at the TAC, Bexleyheath. These events were well attended by **Julie's** family, work colleagues and friends, including many members of her 'TA family', past and present. Her mother, **Terri**, drew great comfort from the show of affection, respect and support, proudly showing visitors the selection of **Julie's** shooting trophies that were on display. Her brother, **Colin** and his wife **Cynthia**, who had travelled from Australia to support **Julie** during her illness, enjoyed reminiscing and sharing memories with guests.

LtCol Simon Malik, CO of 71 (Y) Sig Regt, said in conclusion to **Julie's** eulogy: 'We will all remember **Julie** for her friendship and caring personality. She always put the needs of her family and friends before herself. While small in stature she was big in heart, and her nickname 'Tiger' – given to her by HQ Sqn – was well-deserved'.

LEGGE - Maj PD Legge DCM (David) died on Sunday 23 March 2003 in Perth, West Australia.

David served in the Corps from 1932 to 1967. He was attested on 4 April 1932 as a Driver, Horse Transport. From about 1933 to 1938 he served in India in Peshawar, Rawalpindi and Nowshera, returning to UK in time for mobilisation for WW2.

As a Sgt, **David** was among the first to go to France with the BEF. As the force withdrew to Dunkirk in June 1940, he was actively engaged in maintaining lines in his Bde area. There was a desperate shortage of cable, so **David** made use of the remains of existing civilian overhead lines. From 6 – 8 June, disregarding heavy enemy bombing, he worked ceaselessly to maintain the lines to two anti-tank batteries. At one point he even manned an anti-tank gun until a crew could be found for it. For this action he was awarded the DCM.

David's DCM Citation reads:

During the 6th, 7th and 8th June, in the Bosc Bordel, Buchy Areas, this NCO and other ranks (under Lt JJC Harvey) worked ceaselessly, and with complete disregard to their own safety, in repairing the telephone cables in the 'B' Bde area, which were continually cut by enemy bombing. Largely as a result of their efforts, telephone communications were maintained right up to the moment of the withdrawal on the evening of 8th June.

David saw further WW2 service in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and NorthWest Europe and was commissioned on 17 November 1943. Post war, he served in Kenya, Germany and UK. His final posting was as QM, 30 Sig Regt in Blandford.

Whilst commanding a mixed British and African sig unit in Kenya, he had posted to him as 2IC, one **2Lt Geoffrey Howe**, now **Lord Howe of Aberavon**, who reflects:

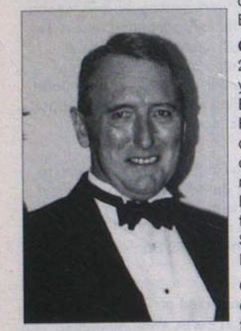
*Shortly after **DL** was appointed as CO of our Tp, our battery charging shop was burnt down, and a Regimental Inquiry (or some such) followed. **D** was worried stiff – not that he could have prevented it. A few weeks later (before the conclusion of the Inquiry) he turned up one evening on my doorstep, grinning from ear to ear, and said: 'Come quickly, **Geoff**. The bloody Sergeants' Mess is on fire!' and we roared off in his jeep, to watch the place burn to the ground.*

From then on, his confidence never looked back. For he had realised – a necessary lesson for those 'in command' of anything – that those in positions of responsibility cannot sensibly be held personally accountable for everything that may happen on their patch.

I had cause to draw comfort from that lesson on more than one occasion in later life – and often thought of ***Dave****.*

David is survived by his wife, **Mary** and son, **Bill**.

HOOTON - WO2 Colin Richard Hooton, Royal Army Pay Corps, died 9 July 2002 at Bury St Edmunds aged 52 years.



Colin enlisted into the Army on 25 September 1967. He spent 22 years with RAPC serving in Great Britain, Germany, Northern Ireland, Hong Kong, and during the 1982 conflict in the Falklands. Like other RAPC members, he spent much of his career attached to RSigs units. He was awarded three medals, including Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Colin had a great love of sport, especially rugby, which he played for 27 years before retiring. He was a member of several teams during his rugby playing career. The highlight was playing for the 'Tigers' in Hong Kong, which won the Hong Kong League championships for the 2 years he was stationed there.

He met his wife **Wendy** whilst serving in 8 Sig Regt, and they married in 1985. They both left the Army in 1990 and took on a pub tenancy for 9 years in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. Their daughter **Hannah** was born in 1991.

Colin was diagnosed with cancer in 1997 and fought a long, brave battle with much courage and strength for almost five years. Colin leaves children **Martyn**, **Douglas**, **Claire** and **Hannah**, and granddaughter **Chloe**.

JAMES - Maj JG James MC ('Gordon' or **'Jimmy')** died in October 2000 at the age of 84.

To some people he was known as **Jimmy**; to others as **Gordon**. In hospital he was referred to as **John**, which was very confusing, especially as this was his real name. In the Sunbury Nursing Home, where he received such excellent care before his peaceful death, there was a big plaque on the door that read **'Major JG James MC'**. There he was called **Major James**, which seemed about right.

Gordon came from a generation whose lives were characterised by the Second World War. For my generation, born safely after that conflict, there was something mysterious about the way that those who had fought in the war and had seen its horrors, would speak so little of it. This was especially true of **Gordon**. Any enquiry was met with that very particular clearing of the throat, which was so characteristic, and which I am sure we all recognise. It could mean many things. It could mean 'I don't wish to talk about that, thank you very much', or 'I'm not sure what to say to that, but I'll think of something in a minute'. Sometimes it could mean 'You're talking nonsense and I can't be bothered to reply'. Today we shall have to brave that clearing of the throat as we rightfully praise **Gordon** or **Jimmy** as an example of all that was best of that generation.

He was born in Croydon in 1920, and educated at Strode School, Egham, where, when he found out that his season ticket ran out two days after the end of term, insisted on making the journey anyway so that it wouldn't be wasted. In 1933 the family moved to Southend and he was a pupil at Southend High School. Saturdays were spent cycling round the town, searching second hand shops for spares so that he could build homemade radios. He already showed great signs of self-sufficiency, darning his socks with fine fuse wire, much to his mother's consternation. He began an engineering degree at Queen Mary College, but when war came, resented his friends enlisting and joined up himself. He was posted initially to Catterick, where early war work included collecting fresh snow from the moors to replace dirty snow in the camp. He was then posted to OTU in India, travelling in an overcrowded troopship. En route, three weeks were spent in Durban where, feted by the locals, he spent, in his own words 'the best three weeks of my life'. After trg in India, he was posted to Burma. In the words of **Pat O'Brien**, the war in Burma was 'not a nice party' and we can only imagine the horrors of that campaign. But knowing his character as we do, we can also imagine the selfless and unassuming way that **Gordon** would have faced those difficulties and horrors. He was awarded the MC, a rare award for a Sigs Officer. He kept pretty quiet about his MC; indeed it is said that he did not even tell his wife, **Ruth** about it. I hope he will forgive me if I don't keep quiet about it today. (I can hear that clearing of the throat). This is an extract from the citation for his MC:

'On Ramree Island on the 4 February 1945, Capt James supervised the laying of a telephone line from Bde HQ at Yebadin to the forward Bn ...at Konbaung. This involved his party passing through an area which was under heavy enemy mortar and small arms fire. Regardless of the enemy fire Capt James continued to encourage his men and personally laid the line over a chaung crossing, which was coming under particularly heavy fire. On reaching the Bn HQ and finding that the line to one of the forward Coys had been cut.... Capt James volunteered to go forward and repair the line himself. This he accomplished again showing complete disregard for heavy enemy fire. The personal example of unselfish and untiring devotion to duty was an inspiration to the men of his Section to maintain their work at a very high level of efficiency.'

After the war he elected to stay in the Army. There were various postings, including Cyprus, where he met an Army Officer called **Ruth**. They were soon engaged and married and so began a relationship which draws praise and admiration from all whom I have spoken to. **Ruth's** warmth and wit was the perfect foil to **Gordon's** dry military bearing. Though I am told that when **Ruth** served aduki beans one evening, saying that they were a good source of second class protein, **Gordon** retorted that he would only have first class protein served in his house. They loved travelling, taking whatever opportunities presented themselves, hitchhiking across Australia or drinking his beloved red wine in France. **Bambi** was born in Catterick in 1962 and it is here that my own warm memories begin of an exotic Army uncle who could arrange rides in armoured cars, tanks and army canoes and who was particularly generous with brown ten shilling notes. **Sarah** was born in Malaysia in 1966, and I have heard happy stories of their time there - of **Gordon's** fine work with the Malays as well as tennis, hospitable dinner parties and Singapore Slings. There followed postings to Brussels and then a civilian job in Chessington, where he famously cycled the nine miles to work.

Ruth's tragically early death in 1985 heralded a new era in **Gordon's** life. Long before the phrase 'New Man' had been dreamt of, **Gordon** taught himself, recipe book in hand, how to cook. He took advice from that excellent cook, **Amanda**, and co-opted **Sarah** to produce family favourites such as prawn cocktail and roasts always with carrots. Pudding might be a fruit pie with **Sarah's** special tip: sugar on the pastry to produce a lovely glaze. He was devoted to his daughters and **Gordon** and **Sarah** travelled the world in pursuit of **Bambi**. This was a two-way contract. There aren't many men in their seventies or even eighties who could count on a thirty-something year old attractive female companion. He loved boat trips, in Singapore, to the Tioman Island off Malaysia and would always search out a good view. He chalked up the Eiffel Tower, Montparnasse Tower, CN Tower and those in Kyoto and Tokyo. Incidentally he enjoyed travelling in Japan, saying that he 'liked it when they bowed to him.' No unfinished business there apparently.

Until his final illness, **Gordon** enjoyed great good health. Four months off his 80th birthday he climbed rocks in Utah's Arches National Park in his patent leather shoes and came slithering down far too fast. He followed this with a steep three-mile round trip to Delicate Arch, still in the same shoes. He was always immaculately turned out in jacket and tie, even, as **Bambi** remembers, when working under the car. He was a well-known figure in Shepperton, to be seen on his bike, or perhaps taking the boat down to the river. Many happy hours were spent in this modest cruiser, with sausages and beans cooked in the galley and **Gordon** devising a complicated, one might almost say military, combination of boat, car and bicycle to navigate the mighty River Thames. A spectacular amphibious experiment with his car during one launching is remembered well by family and friends.

He loved spicy food. Singaporean Chili Crab was a great favourite and he made frequent visits to the local curry restaurants. Though as we all know, coffee was taken at home. Excellent at DIY, he would never get anyone in if he could help it. He was careful with money when it concerned himself, but I and many others can vouch for his enormous generosity when it came to others.

'Even tempered', 'level headed', 'generous', 'hospitable', 'never a bad word for anyone', these are the comments I've heard. Of course I'm sure that he could sometimes be unmalleable, but it was set off with his essential humanity.

The nation is grateful to him as a soldier and an upright citizen. We are grateful to him as father, brother, uncle and dear friend. **Gordon**, **Jimmy**, thank you for your duty, love, friendship and happy memories. May you rest in peace.

DYER - Major (Retd) Geoff Dyer died on 8 May 2003.

Geoff Dyer left school and joined Scottish Provident Life Assurance Company where, apart from the war years, he worked until his retirement. In August 1941 he was sent to the OTC unit and, on commissioning, was posted to 86 Heavy AA Regt RA. He had various Middle East postings and while on leave in Cairo, met his future wife. He came home in August 1946 and married **Hilda** in December of that year. **Geoff** was called up for Z reserve in 1951 and decided to join the TA, serving with 482 Medium AA Regt (Essex TA). In 1961, following changes to many TA units, he joined 45 Sig Regt and was posted to HQ Sqn in Wanstead as a Capt and re-badged as RSigs. He was soon promoted Maj to command HQ Sqn. He was well liked and respected by all those who came across him. Like many Officers and SNCO's he made way for others when various TA Regts, including 45 Sig Regt were amalgamated to form 36 (Eastern) Sig Regt in 1967.

Geoff became a member of the East London branch of the RSA and during his time held various posts, including Treasurer, Chairman and eventually President until his sad passing.

Geoff of course had other interests outside of the RSA and was Treasurer for 26 years and President from 1996 to 2001 of the Forest Operatic Society.

Geoff will be sadly missed by everyone who knew him. His wife, **Hilda** died seven years ago and he never really got over that loss. He leaves behind two daughters **Christine** and **Alison** and their families.

PERKIN - Sgt Greville Stanley Perkin (Stan) died on Sunday 13 April 2003.

Stan was born on 12 August 1930 in Newport, South Wales. He enlisted in the Corps on 14 April 1948. He served in several overseas stations in Europe and the Far East, including 40 Div, Hong Kong, which was his favourite posting. Amongst postings in UK was 3 Div in Bulford, and he later became a member of the 3 Div Reunion Club. He also served in several units in Yorkshire, finishing off in 8 Sig Regt in Loos Lines, Catterick.

Stan left the service in March 1962, joining the Association within 3 months. For several years he worked in industry, including Wray's Bakeries in Scarborough. In 1968 he joined the MOD Police, and was posted to Catterick. In 1971 he was promoted Sgt and posted to COD Bicester.

In 1973, following the death in September 1972 of his eldest son, **Alan Greville** (also a member of the Corps), **Stan** was again posted back to Catterick, where he took on the duties of Acting Inspector. In addition to his police duties, **Stan** and his wife **Doreen** also fostered disadvantaged and disruptive children.

Meanwhile **Stan** was an active member of the Catterick Branch, becoming Social Secretary in 1987, a position held until his final admittance to hospital.

He was also Welfare Officer, not only for the Branch, but also the RBL, Catterick. He became a member of the RBL County Committee. For a time **Stan** also assisted the CAB, Richmond and the Veterans Agency, Leeds.

Whilst serving on the committee of the Police Federation, **Stan** became involved with the raising of moneys to assist the widows and dependents of RUC Officers killed or injured whilst in pursuance of their duties (RUPERT Bear badges).

Stan was responsible for the design and production of commemorative lapel badges, tie slides and cufflinks now worn by many members of the Association worldwide. These badges commemorate the last Grand Catterick Reunion, the 75th Anniversary and the 2000 Millennium.

In 1998, he was awarded the 50year badge and in November 2002 was made an Honour Member of the Association. In January 2003 the RBL, North Yorkshire presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of his services to ex-service personnel and their dependants. All prestigious awards.

A lasting memorial and reflection of **Stan's** life and the service he gave should be: 'He was a good, kind and nice man'.

Our condolences go to his wife **Doreen** and sons, **Graham**, **David** and their families.

'Certa Cito' **Stan** and God bless.

ROBINSON - Cpl Alan Robinson died on 3rd April 2003

Alan Robinson was born on 2 February 1921. He joined the Corps late in the war because he was working in a reserved occupation as a test engineer for EMI, who were building specialist signaling equipment.

At the end of the war, Catterick Camp, a bleak posting, was the home of some 25,000 soldiers with almost no entertainment except two small cinemas in Camp Centre. There were also many frustrated theatre people kicking their heels there whilst awaiting demob. Like **Victor Serebriakoff** (whose obituary appeared in the June 2000 edition of *The WIRE*) **Alan** was one of this number who responded to the then **Brig RTO Cary**, who took the initiative to build a professional theatre and form an all ranks Signals Theatre Club. **Brig Cary** discovered he had a largely disused gym in Loos Lines, and within a week he had volunteers, working under **Vic Serebriakoff**, transforming the building into a theatre.

Alan, whose interest was in stage work, rather than acting, was soon recruited. From November 1945 to April 1947 he dedicated all has spare time perfecting the stage lighting and settings. He built a theatre workshop in the stables behind the Theatre, where he installed two standby petrol generator engines and a mains changeover panel. The latter were needed to light the Theatre complex, otherwise the Loos area mains dimmed! Whenever he made a mistake during a changeover, one could discern all the camp lights dimming as far as Camp Centre!

From May to July 1946 **Alan** led a team of Club members in refitting the theatre with a foyer, box office and an auditorium. Comfortable seating was acquired for the latter and reliable electric heating installed. **Alan** was then able to discard the original antiquated lighting panel and build a new console. He

became known as the House Engineer, and eventually took over as Stage Director, helping to design and build some magnificent sets, particularly for *The Man Who Came To Dinner*. In all, **Alan** was involved in 23 productions from the pantomime, *Cinderella*, in December 1945 to his last show, *The Duke in Darkness* in April 1947.

The Signals Theatre became a household name via the national press in October 1946, when *The Daily Mail* and *Illustrated* magazine both ran feature articles on it. **Alan**, with other members of the stage crew were photographed at work. If readers of this obituary wish to be reminded about **Alan's** efforts, they will find that virtually all Volumes I & II of the seven volumes entitled *Chronicle of the Signals (Cary) Theatre 1945 to 1973* (which is in the Museum Archive) were collated from his memorabilia.

On demob, **Alan** remained a bachelor and returned to EMI, where he became Chief Instructor of their training school. He retained his interest in amateur theatre in the Harrow area, where he concentrated his efforts in his local church and took a leading part in arranging tours for senior citizens to National Trust properties and the like.

CHRISTIE - Capt TJ Christie MA MC (John) died at recently.

John and his brother, **Sandy** were born in Forres, NorthEast Scotland into a family of nurserymen. In childhood they led a very active outdoor life and this was the start of two principle lifetime interests horticulture and sport.

Educated at Forres Academy, he became Dux in 1940, and was an enthusiastic member of their football and cricket teams. At Aberdeen University, he was awarded an MA following a wartime course. He continued his sporting interests by joining the University football team and playing for the University throughout his time there.

After university he volunteered and was accepted for training in the relatively newly formed Commandos, where he served with great distinction. In 1944, as a signals officer with 1 Cdo Bde, he was awarded a Military Cross at the crossing of the Rhine at Wesel. The Citation for this reads as follows:

> ***Lt Christie** is the lines officer in the 1 Cdo Bde Sig Tp. He was in charge of the line party detailed to produce line communication across the Rhine after the Bde had made good the bridgehead at Wesel. It was considered vital that this line should be laid at the earliest possible moment. This task was extremely hazardous. All bridges across the Rhine had been demolished and there was considerable shelling and sniping of all bridge exits.*
>
> *As soon as a message had been received that the objective had been captured **Lt Christie** took a small picked line party down to the demolished railway bridge. At this point, the town of Wesel had not been completely cleared of enemy and the line party had to work in full view of an enemy machine gun post sited upstream on the east bank of the river.*
>
> *Ordering his small party to pay out the line, **Lt Christie** commenced climbing across the twisted bridge spans carrying the line with him. At times, he had to climb over girders 100ft above the river while at other times, he picked his path along spans which were partly submerged in the water.*
>
> *The pull on the quadruple cable whenever it touched the water was tremendous. Nevertheless by sheer courage and determination, **Lt Christie** crossed the full 1,500ft length of the demolished bridge under heavy shell fire and spasmodic sniping and machine gun fire, and thus enabled vital communications to be established before the first pontoon bridge had been commenced. This officer's devotion to duty and complete disregard for his own safety was an inspiration to all who witnessed it.*
>
> *Throughout the Campaign he has continuously shown a high standard of efficiency, and his work in line laying during the difficult operations over the Rhine, Weser, Aller, and the Elbe has, at all times been beyond praise.*

John continued with 1 Cdo Bde all the way into Germany. He later served in Egypt and Palestine with the rank of Capt. In civilian life, he has always been a strong supporter of the Royal British Legion.

Whilst stationed in the Petworth area during the war, he met **Joyce Pullen**. After demobilisation in 1947 he married her and settled in Petworth, where he joined the footwear business owned by **Joyce's** parents. Their son, **Ian** was born in 1948. **John** spent over 50 years in the footwear business, eventually retiring in 2000.

After a long illness, **Joyce** died in 1977, and in 1979 **John** married **Bunny**, with whom he shared a strong interest in bowls for many years. **Bunny** was a great source of support to **John** in the final few weeks of his life.

John will be remembered as an intelligent, generous, self-effacing and overwhelmingly nice man. He was a good friend to many people, very supportive of his family and a proud grandfather of **Fiona** and **Alison**. We will all miss him a lot.

SMALL ADS

FOUND AFTER KOREAN MEMORIAL SERVICE

A Royal Signals beret, bearing a badge with the King's crown, was found near the Great West Door of Westminster Abbey after the Korean Memorial Service on Wednesday 9 July 03.

The owner can claim it from **Terry Randall** (ex *HMS Ceylon*) by calling him on 02380 411 099.

ENGLAND'S LAST HOPE *by Louis Samuels*, is a light hearted collection of stories of the author's experiences during his two years' National Service in Royal Signals during 1956-58. Liberally illustrated, it is likely to appeal to those who shared the same experiences and who saw the same humour. Would make a good gift. Priced at £9.99, including packing and postage, *England's Last Hope* is available from the author. Send your cheque to Louis Samuels, 20 Richmond Close, Whitefield, Manchester, M45 7PW, Tel: 0161 766 3761.

THE ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS
Unit Histories of the Corps (1920 – 2001) and its Antecedents
by Cliff Lord & Graham Watson

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- Overviews of the Corps orbat at specific times in history
- Details of specialist units, including Cdo and Para units
- Histories of 35 Commonwealth and related Signal Corps
- Unit histories, both Regular and TA from past to present

Available at the Museum Shop, Blandford at £29.95 + £4.00 p&p.

A NATIONAL SERVICEMAN IN KOREA -by George Pagan

The story of a Royal Signals National Serviceman's stint in Korea 1950-52. Reviewed on page 320 of this issue.

This book is available at £8.99 + £1.00 p&p from George Pagan, 16 Dukes Way, Weaver Vale, Kingsmead, Northwich, CW9 8WA, Tel: 01606 40976.

All net profits go to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund.

THE 2003 BLANDFORD REUNION WEEKEND, SUNDAY

The Branch Standards provide the backdrop as the School RSM reads the first lesson at the Drumhead Service

A clutch of Seniors gets ready for the March Past

MajGen Tony Boyle leads the Officers

The Korean Veterans march together

The last Reunion Weekend as Master of Signals for MajGen and Mrs Sprackling, here flanked by his ADC and the SOinC(A)

THE wire

October 2003

The Royal Corps of Signals

CANADIAN FORCES COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS BRANCH CENTENARY CELEBRATION WEEKEND - *by Maj PJ Watt*

The Communications and Electronics Branch of the Canadian Forces celebrated the 100th anniversary of Military Communications in Canada over the Canadian Labour Day holiday weekend at the end of August 2003. The celebration weekend was centered on the Home Station of the Branch in Kingston, Ontario and was marked by the visit of their Colonel-in-Chief, **Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal**.

Maj Paul Murrell escorts HRH The Princess Royal as she inspects the Corps Band and Pipes and Drums

Her Royal Highness attended a number of private and public events over the weekend, which included a Centennial and Veteran's Parade and a Freedom of the City of Kingston Parade.

Conceived during the Boer War by **Capt Bruce Carruthers** of the Canadian Mounted Rifles, the Canadian Signaling Corps (Militia), was formed on his return on 24 October 1903 and as such, was the first independently organised military communications unit in the British Commonwealth.

SOinC(A) sees a demonstration of the latest Canadian equipment

To commemorate this Canadian innovation, representatives from the military communications branches in the United States of America, United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand attended the celebration weekend. As a mark of the close ties between the C&E Branch and the Royal Corps of Signals, the Master of Signals, **MajGen IOJ Sprackling OBE**, **Mrs Annie Sprackling** and the SOinC(A), **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC**, were invited guests of the Colonel Commandant of the C&E Branch, **Brig D Banks CMM CD** to attend the events. The highlight of these was the unveiling by Her Royal Highness of a commemorative cairn to mark the Centenary. The cairn, donated by the Royal Corps of Signals, has been installed outside the C&E Museum in Kingston.

continued on Inside Back Cover

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FRONT COVER

As part of the Canadian Forces' celebrations to mark the 100th anniversary of Military Communications in Canada, Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal unveils a Commemorative Cairn donated by the Royal Corps of Signals. The Master of Signals, Brig D Banks and SOinC(A) look on. Read more of this event on the inside front and back covers.

BACK COVER

In June, two Gurkhas visited the Children's Ward at the Bristol Royal Hospital as part of a programme of events laid on by the Gurkha Welfare Trust. The visit was organised to enable the children to meet Gurkha soldiers and to learn about life in Nepal. Here Cpl Sun (L) and LCpl Ashok (R) give an impromptu geography lesson to two children in the Ward. Read more in 21 Sig Regt (AS)'s report on page 445.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE ....

BALKANS SIGNAL SQUADRON MAKES A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION DURING POPE'S VISIT TO BOSNIA

98 (Balkans) Sig Sqn (locally known as Balkans Sig Sqn) played a major role by providing secure comms for the seven nationalities involved in a massive security operation during the Pope's visit to Banja Luka on 21 June 03. OP ELEISON was the first joint deployment of SFOR, European Union Police Monitoring Officers and Local Republika Srpska authorities. Using a vast array of equipment and 25+ signallers from 4 nations, this TA-led Sqn demonstrated their capability and flexibility in finding comms solutions for mounting a very complex operation at relatively short notice.

See Balkans Sig Sqn's report of OP ELEISON on page 458.

YOUNGSTERS FIND IT TOUGH GOING

Some of us oldies who reflect on how bad it was for us way back in nineteen hundred and something, will be interested to know that the youngsters of today sometimes have it rough, too. **Lt Kate Benjamin** RNZSigs, currently Tp Comd in 7 Sig Regt, gives a humorous (or serious?) account of DEPLOYEX 2003, the deployment of ARRC Fwd to Gemona, Italy. They did the business, and did it well, but with more than a little discomfort.

Read about this character-building deployment in 7 Sig Regt's submission on page 438.

TAFS, CMS and GAP – THE NEW APPROACH TO TA RECRUIT TRAINING

There is now a new approach, designed to standardise to TA recruit trg across all Regts and Corps. Who better to explain it, particularly from a recruit's point of view, than **Sig Karen Woodhouse**, a recent arrival in 68 (IofC & CY) Sig Sqn in her article in 71 (Y) Sig Regt's report on page 481.

CANADIAN SIGNALS CELEBRATE THEIR CENTENARY

The Communications and Electronics Branch of the Canadian Forces celebrated their 100th anniversary of Military Communications with a series of events in August 2003. Those visiting for the occasion included **Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal**, the Master of Signals and SOinC(A). See the feature inside front and back covers.

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Corps of Signals or the Ministry of Defence.

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VALEDICTORY – *by Maj Gen IOJ Sprackling OBE*

On 10 October 03 I hand over the reins as Master of the Royal Corps, to **General Sir Sam Cowan**. I am delighted for him and the Corps that he has been appointed to the job and I depart in the certainty that the Corps' future could not be in better hands.

After six years at the helm I have learned a great deal. The basics of soldiering are, of course, essentially unchanged. Strong leadership, training and sound administration breed the individual confidence and professionalism that underpins Regimental effectiveness. Comradeship and trust among officers, NCOs and soldiers see units through the difficult times. And Mess life and sport sustain the intimate social compact now near unique amongst the Armies of the world. These basics must never be put at risk. I am proud to report that, despite fast changing times, within our Corps they not only endure, but strengthen as the pressures increase.

But it is changing times that have driven my six-year re-education. Ironically, technological change and the vast new opportunities opening up to the Corps through information technology, is the field in which I have felt most at home. Indeed, it has been the lack of new equipment that I see as having shackled our soldiers, eager to exploit the future, to the technologies of the past. All I can say to them is that the 'brave new world' really is just around the corner, and that their many years of innovation and creativity in adapting the 'old' to deliver like the 'new' may prove in time to be as valuable as the 'new' itself.

The greatest change though, flowed from the ending of the Cold War at the start of the 1990s. Away went the familiar cycle of training against the prospect of major tank engagements with the Soviets on the North German plain. In came expeditionary warfare and a diverse and ever-increasing range of operational commitments. Much of this transformation started to bite at about the time I was appointed. I can only say I have watched in awe as an under-strength Corps has embraced the challenges involved, delivered to the highest expectation, and in so doing, placed itself at the heart of tri-service operational planning. I have not the slightest doubt that the combination of our greatly improving manning and new equipment soon to come on stream, will serve to promote the Corps to perhaps its strongest position ever, within the new, evolving, field army in the years immediately ahead.

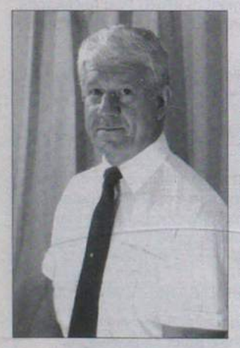
There have been many high-impact administrative changes too. Health and safety at work, human rights legislation, new accounting processes and responsibilities - these and many others have changed the conduct of business in the Armed Forces in ways beyond contemplation even a decade ago. I have watched in admiration as our hard-pressed units have successfully shouldered these added responsibilities and just pushed on with the increased soldiering that needed to be done.

All round I feel deeply proud of our serving Corps and could not be more confident of its leadership, or its vision of our future. I depart, thrilled by our prospects.

Of course, the serving Corps is the heart, but not the soul of the Corps Family. This wider family embraces all who have worn 'Jimmy,' worked with 'Jimmy,' or through family or friendship identify with 'Jimmy.' It includes those of our sister Corps in the Commonwealth and our longstanding connections in NATO. It is a Family most join in their youth, but whatever, all remain part of for life. It is with great pride that I have been part of the increasingly successful Reunion Weekends at Blandford, where New and Old Comrades meet, most for the first time. I have been privileged as President of the burgeoning Royal Signals Association, to attend meetings and functions and feel the warmth and comradeship, which is our inheritance. I have thrilled too, to see our stature with industry and commerce grow and our standing as 'thought leaders' in the defence community rise through the dynamic efforts of the Royal Signals Institution.

I shall miss all this, of course. But I shall feel grateful too, that on 'my watch' I had the singular privilege to host our Colonel-in-Chief, **The Princess Royal**, at her Silver Jubilee. I have every hope that her next 25 years at our head will be as close and successful as her last.

To you all and to my wife, **Annie**, who has given me unswerving support, thanks for a great six years.



EDITORIAL

In October, **MajGen Ian Sprackling OBE** steps down as Master of Signals. A man of great presence and personality, the General has, during his six years' tenure, made a major impact on the whole Corps Family. For the serving Corps, by visiting practically every unit (some, many times and frequently abroad) and by appearing at major Corps sporting and social events, he has contributed greatly to morale. He has also ensured that the White Helmets and the Corps Band are now on a more sound footing. In the non-serving Corps, he has reviewed, facilitated and supported improvements in RHQ, Corps Finances, the RSI, the RSA, *The JOURNAL* and, of course *The WIRE*. For his support and encouragement in the latter, I am indebted to him. As Master, we shall miss him, but, given his 'release', I'm sure that we will see just as much of him and **Annie** as we have before. I wish them both well.

At the end of August, Canadian Signals celebrated their Centenary. Formerly Royal Canadian Signals, the Communications and Electronics Branch of Canadian Forces held a number of events in Canada to mark the occasion. Representatives, both retired and serving, from sister Commonwealth Signal Corps attended, including Royal Signals, Royal Australian Signals, and Royal New Zealand Signals. Among the principal guests, was Colonel-in-Chief of all four Corps, **Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal**. As a former 'Colonial' myself, I was pleased to see how this occasion also celebrated the global nature of the Corps family.

Continuing my policy of visiting units, I was privileged to be in Bosnia and Kosovo in August to see Balkans Sig Sqn. The Sqn's lads and lasses were great people to be with, and together we achieved a lot whilst I was there. They now have a greater understanding of their magazine, of its aims and of its important role as a record of the Corps informal history, so their contributions should now be better focussed to achieve these aims. For me, I now have a much better understanding of this Sqn, its operational setting, how it works and its achievements.

Their setting is quite unique and their achievements have been considerable. A TA-led Sqn containing both Regular and TA/Reservist troops from UK, Canada, Netherlands and New Zealand, they have broken new ground. As to their achievements, you will read of one of these, OP ELEISON on page 458. Comd MNB/BRITFOR, **Brig Ben Barry OBE**, says of them: *I have complete confidence in them and their ability to support me in both of my roles. They will be a hard act to follow.*

I was particularly impressed with how well, as a multi-national group, the Sqn functioned. Despite their differing backgrounds, traditions and working methods, they get on well with each other, play to each other's strengths and do the business.

My thanks to all the Sqn and to other people I met for making the visit a success, and to **Lt Karen Ford** for masterminding the programme.

WE CAPTURE THE PALACE STREAKER

It was widely reported that a 17-year-old streaker at a recent Buckingham Palace garden party was felled with a rugby tackle by nearby Yeoman of the Guard. What wasn't so widely reported was that the said Yeoman was a Royal Signals officer.

Capt Ray Duffy, who retired from the Regular Corps in 1993 and is now serving with 34 Sig Regt (V), just happened to be serving on the day as a Yeoman of the Guard.

Onlookers cheered as he swooped on the miscreant in a movement that a few years ago might have gained him a white jersey. 'It was a reflex action, I suppose.' he said afterwards. 'I just ran forward and apprehended him. I think it helped that I have a background in Army rugby.' **Ray's** action appears to have saved The Queen from embarrassment.

It was later reported that the youth would not be charged and that Buckingham Palace now regards the matter as closed.

730 DAYS TO DEMOB! – *by Ron Larby*

The National Army Museum, Chelsea is currently holding an exhibition entitled '730 Days to Demob! National Service 1948-63.'

As well as being of interest to former National Servicemen, many Regulars of the same period will probably enjoy seeing weapons, uniforms and sigs equipt of the period, particularly if they served in one of the hot spots of the time, such as Palestine, Malaya, Korea, Kenya, Cyprus or Aden, all of which have their own showcases.

There is also an interesting book by **Keith Miller** of the NAM, in which he makes the point that NS men either regarded it as a complete waste of time or as a most rewarding experience. This would seem to be borne out by the conversations I had with other visitors during my visit. The former seemed to be those who had done mundane jobs in mostly home postings whilst the latter (of which I was one) went overseas seeing the world, sometimes in harm's way, but retaining memories of probably the most interesting two years of their lives. Apart from the first few weeks of basic training, that is.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS

AUGUST 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
LtCol MG Billingham	SHAPE Staff (BAe)
LtCol AJ Botterill	COS HQ SOinC(A)
LtCol GW Duncan	DCSA Eng Services/InfoSec1
LtCol JRE Janes	Systems HQ SOinC(A)
LtCol RD Meinertzhagen	14 Sig Regt (EW)
LtCol RG Nicholson	HQNI
LtCol JW Oakes	Shape ACE CommSec
LtCol A Robertson	HQ 2 Div
LtCol G Thomas	Infra & Networks HQ SOinC(A)
LtCol SJ Vickery	RMCS Courses
LtCol AJ Wood	D Info (A) - Strategy
Maj JS Adams	HQNI
Maj GN Addley	4 Armd Bde HQ Sig Sqn
Maj PR Barron MBE	Royal School of Signals
Maj NJ Bateson	Systems HQ SOinC(A)
Maj NA Beecher	251 Sig Sqn 10 Sig Regt
Maj JC Boyle	RHQ AFNorth (SPGP) Rheindahlen
Maj DA Brisco	DI (SI)
Maj NRN Caleb	Theatre & Formation Comms IPT
Maj MJ Chambers	30 Sig Regt
Maj AJ Clewlow	2 Sig Regt
Maj CD Cook	30 Sig Regt
Maj TC Cooper	16 Sig Regt
Maj SL Copley	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Maj DA Craft	R Sigs/Int Div
Maj TN Crapper	JSC&SC Defence Academy
Maj PEJ Drew	215 Sig Sqn
Maj SL Evans	213 Sig Sqn 39 Inf Bde
Maj JG Favager	Army Data Services D Info (A)
Maj AP Ferris MBE	264 Sig Sqn
Maj RS Gibson	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Maj GC Hailstone	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Maj T Hall	243 Sig Sqn
Maj FE Hargreaves	Special Projects
Maj LJ Hawkes	Trials HQ SOinC(A)
Maj RM Jones	Royal School of Signals
Maj JMP Leggate	G3 Ops Branch HQ Land
Maj CA Maycock	35 Sig Regt (V)
Maj SN Meadowcroft	222 Sig Sqn 3 (UK) Div
Maj A Middleton MBE	HQ ARRC
Maj SPM Nesmith	DCRS
Maj KA Reynolds	ATR Lichfield
Maj LD Roddy	Concepts HQ SOinC(A)
Maj J Rowley	2 Sig Bde
Maj DMT Shipley	Director Land Digitization
Maj JJ Smith	G2 Branch HQ UK Sp Comd
Maj AJ Stringer	Royal School of Signals
Maj DA Sunderland	1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) (V)
Maj RJ Webb	EC CCII HORG
Maj AM White	15 Sig Regt
Maj TO Wood	DCSA Svc Plans & Reqts
Maj SSM Youngson	Royal School of Signals
A/Maj IR Dobson	238 Sig Sqn 10 Sig Regt
A/Maj CP Shead MBE	SANGCOM
Capt DS Alexander	I&S 241 Sig Sqn
Capt RN Byfield	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Capt AEA Corkery	Royal School of Signals
Capt OTB Courage	228 Sig Sqn
Capt KE Emmerson	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Capt RL Francis	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Capt AL Hill	HQ Fleet
Capt JS Hiorns	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Capt WR Holbrook	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt SR Holt	TDT HQ SOinC(A)
Capt CL Jardine	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Capt JR Jennings	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Capt CJ Kell	30 Sig Regt
Capt LD Kemp	37 Sig Regt
Capt JR Knight MBE	RHQ AFNorth (SPGP) Rheindahlen
Capt GB Kamb	JCU (NI)
Capt JA Lyons	Royal School of Signals
Capt I McNelly	HQNI
Capt MP Parke	Royal School of Signals
Capt A Scott	HQ ARRC
Capt SG Scott	DCOS HQ SOinC(A)
Capt MS Tivey	16 Sig Regt
Capt G Tomlinson	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt PJ Waddell	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn (200)
Capt KT Wilson	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Lt DR Atkinson	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Lt BE Norton	225 Sig Sqn
Lt RN Wilson	Royal School of Signals

SEPTEMBER 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
LtCol TJP Bryning	COS HQ SOinC(A)
LtCol IK Bucklow	CIS Branch HQ RSA
LtCol MA Coupar	OCE HQ Land
LtCol MJ Fensom	Royal School of Signals
LtCol JD Forrest	D Info(A) - Decision Support
LtCol GJ McNeill	Infrastructure HQ SOinC(A)
Maj PJ Abram	RMCS Courses DA
Maj AR Aitken	RMCS Courses DA
Maj B Alderson	Joint Staff Div J6 HQ BF Cyprus
Maj DC Bell	Royal School of Signals
Maj AR Blackwell	HQ ARRC
Maj G Blondell	Royal School of Signals
Maj WJJ Brennan	JSSU Oakley

Maj DA Brisco	DI (SI)
Maj PA Buck	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Maj J Caesar	RMCS Courses DA
Maj APJ Coulston	RMCS Courses DA
Maj PS Cubbin	BATUS Main
Maj EA Dallyn	RMCS Courses DA
Maj DR Davey	2 Sig Regt
Maj IR Hargreaves	RMCS Courses DA
Maj AL Hayden	DCSA(G)
Maj JW Mackay	Royal School of Signals
Maj SR Mannings	RMCS Courses DA
Maj G Pickersgill	Royal School of Signals
Maj MJ Smith	RMCS Courses DA
Maj SJP Spiers	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn (200)
Maj JP Townsend	RMCS Courses DA
Maj CM Vaudin	RMCS Courses DA
Maj PJ Watt	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Maj SJ Whytock	39 Sig Regt
Maj DC Worden	RMCS Courses DA
Capt SJ Abram	Royal School of Signals
Capt W Anderson	Royal School of Signals
Capt IM Ballantyne	Royal School of Signals
Capt AR Campbell	CIS 251 Sig Sqn
Capt AKT Crapper	Royal School of Signals
Capt PA Cutforth MBE	Royal School of Signals
Capt PJ Day	Infrastructure HQ SOinC(A)
Capt MR Edwards	Royal School of Signals
Capt KE Eggett	36 Sig Regt
Capt HJP Hebblethwaite	34 (N) Sig Regt
Capt PA Horton BEM	ATR Lichfield
Capt SVD Hughes	101 Log Bde & Sig Sqn
Capt PRD Muir	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Capt DL Palmer	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn (200)
Capt NM Peet	Royal School of Signals
Capt T Phillips	14 Sig Regt
Capt KE Roach	DCSA Service Operations
Capt M Rouse	228 Sig Sqn
Capt DG Skimming	Astor Sqn (AE)
Capt RG Strawbridge	RMCS Courses
Lt ST Cadywould	RMCS Courses
Lt GP Darke	RMCS Courses
Lt SG Davis	RMCS Courses
Lt SAA Pritchard	Army Tech & Foundation Col
Lt EA Robson	Royal School of Signals
Lt LF Smith	RMCS Courses DA
Lt DP Spencer	RMCS Courses DA
Lt EM Swift	Royal School of Signals
2Lt CSD Kamara	RMCS Courses DA
2Lt AR Nicklin	RMCS Courses DA

WOS AND SNCOS

AUGUST 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 FofS PA Holland	Royal School of Signals
WO1 FofS MMM McCallum	LSP Oman
WO2 YofS J Budding	3 Inf Bde & Sig Sqn
WO2 YofS PJ Carley	21 Sig Regt
WO2 FofS RL Clifford	JCUFI
WO2 Fof S SI Meldrum	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO2 FofS M Roberts	JSSU Digby
WO2 NW Fletcher	TDT HQ SOinC(A)
WO2 JC Heaton	ADMIS Project ACGS
A/WO2 RD RG Dalton	35 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 C Cullington	HQ SOinC(A) TDT
A/WO2 KM Fogg	JSSU Digby
A/WO2 R Hare	11 EOD Regt
SSgt MK Abraham	16 Sig Regt
SSgt PC Asplen	16 Sig Regt
SSgt D Boughen	7 Sig Regt
SSgt JR Brooke	14 Sig Regt
SSgt BA Clark	35 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt LAJ Hill	225 Sig Sqn
SSgt C Holmes	JSSU Digby
SSgt J McEwan	259 Sig Sqn
SSgt DW Owen	RHQ AFSouth
SSgt EW Reynolds	521 EOD Sig Sqn
SSgt JM Thorne	Royal School of Signals
SSgt PR Watson	243 Sig Sqn
SSgt CW Wilson	RFQ AFSouth
SSgt AK Young	14 Sig Regt
A/SSgt DP Collins	2 Sig Regt
A/SSgt PK Coxon	35 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt AW Dawson	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/SSgt SW Foord	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/SSgt MJ Hunt	215 Sig Sqn
A/SSgt MA Jones	35 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt CKI Kielty	40 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt AJ Lockie	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/SSgt SJ Pengelly	14 Sig Regt
A/SSgt GGW Poppa	35 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt NW Rees	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/SSgt SJ Robinson	7 Sig Regt
A/SSgt AM Twizzell	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt MC Beckett	Royal School of Signals
Sgt CS Black	15 Sig Regt
Sgt MW Booth	30 Sig Regt
Sgt C Bowman	16 Sig Regt
Sgt MRJ Brundle	2 Sig Regt
Sgt M Collins	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt DA Daniels	21 Sig Regt
Sgt M Darby	RAF Digby
Sgt NR Elliott	94 (BY) Sig Sqn
Sgt MR Evans	Systems HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt J Giddens	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt KJ Gilchriest	UNFICYP
Sgt DC Greenstreet	HQ DSSS
Sgt R Hale	Royal School of Signals
Sgt DW Holman	15 Sig Regt
Sgt BA Humphriss	DEO Info Assur Bch Blandford
Sgt KR Ingley	OCE HQ Land
Sgt MA Jones	35 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt SD Kenny	71 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt DJ Kidd	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
Sgt ST Lake	15 Sig Regt
Sgt GJ Little	Royal School of Signals
Sgt SA Marritt	238 Sig Sqn
Sgt PJ Nealis	251 Sig Sqn
Sgt CR Pagett	15 Sig Regt
Sgt R Parr	Royal School of Signals
Sgt DW Powell	15 Sig Regt
Sgt LJ Punyer	UK National Mil Rep SHAPE
Sgt PR Rone	SHAPE Reg Sp GP (BAE)
Sgt DP Rycroft	2 Sig Regt
Sgt DA Skingley	16 Sig Regt
Sgt P Smedley	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt J Smith	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt S Stanway	7 Sig Regt
Sgt RN Teasdale	LSRC JHQ SOinC(A)
Sgt SJ Templeton	37 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt MS Thomas	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
Sgt JR Thomas	PJHQ (UK)
Sgt M Watkins	608 Sig Tp
Sgt DJ Windsor	21 Sig Regt
Sgt AJ Wright-McCarthy	15 Sig Regt
Sgt P Young	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt V Critchley	ATR Lichfield

SEPTEMBER 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 FofS K Sturman	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO1 RD PR Curtis	Royal School of Signals
A/WO1 RD RS Thorne	ATR Bassingbourn
A/WO! PE Stockell	HQ UK Sp Comd
WO2 YofS IG Hawkins	600 Sig Tp
WO2 YofS S White	LWC C2DC Warminster
WO2 FofS K Robinson	14 Sig Regt (EW)
WO2 RD PA Reed	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
WO2 VH Body	16 Sig Regt
WO2 DG Henderson	HQ DCSA - D Strat Dev
A/WO2 FofS SA Robinson	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO2 RD LD Balmforth	JSSU Cyprus
A/WO2 RD SA Behan	71 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 RD SG Fidler	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt FofS JG Setchfield	259 Sig Sqn
SSgt FofS GM Thompson	HQ SOinC(A)
SSgt LV Bath	7 Sig Regt
SSgt TJ Bickerstaff	202 Sig Sqn
SSgt MA Castle	21 Sig Regt
SSgt R Deegan	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt J Driver	Royal School of Signals
SSgt PS Gartside	252 Sig Sqn
SSgt SD Harrison	RHQ AFNorth
SSgt JW Lester	7 Sig Regt
SSgt LA Linton	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt JL Meek	16 Sig Regt
SSgt EM Musgrave	2 Sig Regt
SSgt MI Pavier	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
SSgt PB Sanderson	Royal School of Signals
SSgt AR Sims	37 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt AE Taylor	RMAS
SSgt RCW Thomas	33 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt RJ Bailey	Royal School of Signals
A/SSgt IR Dickinson	DEI Henlow
A/SSgt BA Flynn	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/SSgt M Gray	DISC SU HQ
A/SSgt SP Hulse	7 Sig Regt
A/SSgt AJ Mitchell	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/SSgt SC Wesseldine	Systems HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt PJ Alford	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
Sgt MJ Angus	15 Sig Regt
Sgt NA Baines	Royal School of Signals
Sgt BHJ Berrey	ATR Bassingbourn

Sgt DJ Berry	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt TM Bishop	38 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt J Brooks	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt CD Brotherston	19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt DB Cattle	Royal School of Signals
Sgt JP Drewett	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
Sgt KJ Eaves	Royal School of Signals
Sgt MGD Ebanks	7 Sig Regt
Sgt JP Ford	Royal School of Signals
Sgt DC Halbert	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt JM Healy	Royal School of Signals
Sgt MP Hobson	15 Sig Regt
Sgt ID John	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt KTM Joyce	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt SW King	Royal School of Signals
Sgt MR Knowles	16 Sig Regt
Sgt J Lawer	15 Sig Regt
Sgt PM Lund	BOWTAT 2
Sgt KJ MacDonald	Royal School of Signals
Sgt CH McGowan	32 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt RB Moore	30 Sig Regt
Sgt RW Musgrove	Royal School of Signals
Sgt SJ Nicholson	Royal School of Signals
Sgt RO O'Neill	15 Sig Regt
Sgt P Pendrich	94 (BY) Sig Sqn
Sgt MF Philpott	7 Sig Regt
Sgt GA Place	7 Sig Regt
Sgt DR Potts	Royal School of Signals
Sgt AJ Powell	238 Sig Sqn
Sgt DJ Richards	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
Sgt J Richardson	Systems HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt AJ Rodway	Royal School of Signals
Sgt DA Scaife	39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn
Sgt AW Setchfield	21 Sig Regt
Sgt NA Simmons	33 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt SR Smith	7 Sig Regt
Sgt DA Street	Royal School of Signals
Sgt WM Wardrope	Battlefield Co-ord Det (Air)
Sgt CM White	Royal School of Signals
Sgt JA Whittaker	19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt SJ Young	BMATT Sierra Leone
Sgt R Fox	HQ DSSS
A/Sgt KI Knowles	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt JP Lowes	HQ SOinC(A)
A/Sgt WM Morrison	16 Sig Regt
A/Sgt PR Roberts	Royal School of Signals
A/Sgt DR Wheeler	Royal School of Signals

RETIREMENTS

AUGUST	
Maj WR Kirkwood	01 Aug 03
Capt JCJ Hughes	12 Aug 03
Capt DT Wilson	18 Aug 03
SEPTEMBER	
Maj AS Saddington	02 Sep 03
Maj DH Jepson	06 Sep 03
Maj NA Walker	12 Sep 03
LtCol CP Donaghy	23 Sep 03
Capt RC Chalmers	26 Sep 03

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
CI **SSgt P Boughey**

Since the last Edition of *The WIRE* the Show Season has continued in true Groundhog Day fashion. From Bath to Catterick and Anglesey to the City of London, we've covered most of the country. More on all of that later.

Hellos and good-byes in the White Helmets are normally restricted to the winter months, but this summer season has proven a notable exception. It is with great regret, sadness but also with many fond memories that we say farewell to **Mrs Ilene White**, the Team Secretary and Event Coordinator on her retirement. **Ilene** has been 'Team Mum' for over 9 years. On Friday 25 July, **Ilene's** last day at work, a surprise party was thrown in the Band Bar at Blandford. As with all good surprise parties, the complicated and secret preparations were nearly blown a number of times, but at least **Ilene** seemed surprised when she turned up! After the inevitable joke presents and small mementos, she was presented with a crystal vase engraved with the Team logo. Then a rare honour, but showing the esteem in which she was held, she was presented with her very own White Helmet. Not something usually given out to people who have not completed a fire jump, but there is no doubt **Ilene** has certainly earned it. We wish **Ilene** and **Johnny** all the best for their retirement (Or at least for **Ilene's** retirement as she is making sure **Johnny** keeps working!)

Cpl Damien Chorlton realising that he should stop before he runs out of arena

As one era ends, so another begins and we welcome **Miss Mary Lightheart** to the Team as Office Manager and Events Co-ordinator. **Mary** joins us from the combined Sqn Office of 11 Sig Regt. When asked on her interview what she would bring to the job she answered 'craziness.' Should fit in well then!

As mentioned above, amidst all these changes, the season has continued apace. The Team has performed for crowds numbering

Cpl Baz Fullerton, Sig Marcus Kershaw, Sig Pug Holroyd and Cpl Gyppo Hooper sharing petrol costs

tens of thousands all around the country at all manner of shows. From the Royal International Air Tattoo at Fairford to local Cadet camps. From The Royal Bath and West Agricultural Show to small village fetes. And from Corus Steelworks in Scunthorpe to the Barnsley Police Blue Light Day. We really have covered it all this season.

It would be impossible to cover all the shows we have done this season, but some deserve particular mention. The Army Exhibition for Schools at Catterick was particularly successful. Teaming up with the Mobile Presentation Team and the Royal Signals Roadshow, we put the other cap badges in the shade. Frequently, Royal Signals were the only Corps or Regiment represented in the main arena and we certainly had the biggest crowds around our display stands. A fantastic job for the Corps.

Home Games always go down well with the Team, and the chances to perform back at Blandford for the Garrison Cocktail Party and the RSA Reunion Weekend are relished. The Cocktail Party show is traditionally an exceptional one and so it proved this year. The Team rose to the occasion well and put on an excellent display on both days.

Another show that certainly deserves a mention is Gatcombe Park Horse Trials. We are always happy to perform at the home of our Colonel in Chief, **Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal**. Luckily the temperamental weather held fine for both days of the Trials, and we were honoured that **The Princess Royal** took the salute for both performances. With shoulders back and chests filled, the Team left the Arena safe in the knowledge of a job well done.

Well, that's the season so far. At time of writing we are looking forward to the South-West Motorcycle Expo, held on the airfield at Blandford. Following that we will be building up to the Induction Course to be held in the first two weeks of November. As ever, if you are interested in a different, challenging and enjoyable tour then ask at your Admin Office for SOinC(A) PD 204 or call **Mary** on 94371 2365 (01258 482365)

STOP PRESS. The Team is exchanging the motorbike saddle for a boat seat in October to paddle 150 Miles along The Thames to raise money for the Cancer and Leukaemia In Children charity (CLIC). Any donations to this good cause can be sent to the Team HQ in Blandford Camp.

SSgt Paul Boughy and Sig Ricky Gaston ramp together

NEWS OF TRAINING

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **LtCol AP Hudson MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) DM Forrester**

1 (OUSTON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JGJ Howes CD RCSigs**
SSM **WO2 Nigel Roberts**

KOHIMA TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Dean Atkinson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Tony Caulfield**

The Tp continues to be a hive of activity providing personnel externally to field units on a variety of tasks, and internally supporting the myriad of tasks that keep Blandford Camp running. All this, whilst trying to ensure that the soldiers start trade trg with at least their Driving Theory test done.

There has been some turnaround in Tp cadre of late. We welcome **Cpl Jo Quinn** and her family, and hope you enjoy your time in Blandford. We bid farewell to **Cpl Bob Lovell**, **Keri** and the kids. Congratulations on your selection for promotion to Sgt, and good luck at Chicksands. We also say goodbye to **Cpl John Greenwood** who moves across camp to RSG.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Gibson**
SSM **WO2 Eric Williams**

BEAUFIGHTER TROOP

Tp Comd **WO1 Mark Giles**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dave Allan**

CANOEING CHAMPIONSHIPS - *by Sig Michael Simpson*

11 Sig Regt Canoe Club has been steadily growing in numbers over the last six months, with the emphasis on introducing young soldiers to the sport. It has been enthusiastically driven by **Bdr Andy McCullough** and **Cpl Stu Green** of External Development Tp, and meets several times a week. We practised on the River Teifi in Blandford which was nothing compared with what we were going to face in Llandysul, Dyfed in Wales for the Land Command and Army Slalom Canoe Championships.

With excellent weather and bags of nerves, the two novice teams of three men and three ladies competed for the first time alongside the open team. With our lack of moving water experience, the practice run down the slalom course resulted in my kayak holding more water than the river. The practice afternoon gave us all more confidence and the teams went on to achieve some very commendable results. In the Army Canoe Slalom Championships, **Sig Burgam** won the Ladies' Novice and the Ladies' Under 21 race and **Sig Simpson** came second in the male under 21. **Cpl Richardson** won the Novice event and **Bdr McCullough** came third in the Veteran's race. The team won the Novice event, with **LCpl Bale**, **Sig Baker** and **Sig Simpson** paddling. **Bdr McCullough**, **Cpl Green** and **Cpl Richardson** won the Team Open. Overall some excellent results and fantastic experiences, with **Bdr McCullough** being selected to represent the Army in the Joint Services Championships. The other paddlers from all Corps and Regts were friendly and chatty and this has convinced me to continue the sport when I get to my first working unit. I would advise anyone who has not tried the sport to give it a go.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Maj Miles Webb**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Tony Ward**

3 (Harrogate) Sqn welcomes **Maj Miles Webb**, **WO2 (SSM) Ward**, **WO1 Gaz Cole**, **WO1 Frank Roberts**, **Cpl Jim Quinn** and their families. Farewells go to **Maj Alan Hoensch** and **Pam**, **WO1 Chris Davies** and **WO1 Chris Naylor**. Good luck and best wishes.

LIGHTNING TROOP

OC **WO1 Gaz Cole**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Steve Bartleet**

THE LIGHTNING TROPHY

Sigs Phillippo and **Walker** were awarded the Lightning Trophy in recognition of their qualities as outstanding students. They achieved outstanding results in both the theory and practical assessments of their Phase 2 Sys Eng Tech (Radio) course. It is rare that this award is given and it is particularly unusual to have two recipients. Well done and well deserved!

Sigs Phillippo and Walker with the Lightning Trophy and Sys Eng Tech (Radio) Course SRBR02/009

ARMY TUG OF WAR CHAPIONSHIPS 2003
- by Sig John Sinclair

For 30 Phase 2's, Tug of War trg began in 11 Sig Regt in February 03. Working hard, we competed throughout the season, culminating in the Army Championships on 12 July at 47 Regt RA, Thorney Island. Two female and 3 male teams faced the RAF, RA and 7 Sig Regt.

Our efforts were rewarded with respectable 3rd and 4th places for the Female 560kg and 520kg events and a creditable 4th place for the Male 680kg event. Although no prizes were received overall, the Female squad received the Secretary's Cup. This surprise award was for effort and perseverance from the team who, in the eyes of the Army Tug of War Secretary, had made the greatest improvement during the season.

A special mention is given to **Sig Sophie Buckeridge**, who was awarded her Army Colours and has been selected to participate in the European Championships in Holland in October.
Unfortunately for many of the squad this was their last competition for 11 Sig Regt. Well done to all for their dedication and special thanks to Coach, **Cpl Buckle** for his time and enthusiasm. May you get continued success with next year's recruits!

4 (MILITARY TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC **Maj C Russell**
SSM **WO2 Dickey Dyer**

ROYAL SIGNALS LEADERSHIP COURSE 122

On Sunday 1 June, RSLC 122 kicked off with a BPFA, which saw the first two casualties of the course falling by the wayside. The course already was looking small, but thankfully **Mr Faithful** tipping up a day late, made it a record 11.

After a gradual acclimatisation to the physical aspects of the course, we were introduced to the syndicate's friends in the Brecon Beacons. It was a most enjoyable time, which saw RSLC 122 sitting smug on the bus on our way back to Blandford after having smashed the course record!

With all comd tasks completed, 122 took a relaxing dip in the river after another hot day before receiving our elite course shirts. A well-deserved amber nectar refreshment was served up in 21 Sig Regt (AS)'s finest drinking establishment before heads down on the bus home.

With the first 10 days out of the way, we enjoyed a few early nights with several essays, appreciations and presentations to complete. **Mr Shillito** and **Miss Field** soon wowed everyone with their IT skills after losing all their presentation work. **Mr Smith** and **Miss Patterson** soon found the ever helpful WRVS ladies' darker side after using her personal supply of paper.
She can still be found to be daily counting her 12 premium sheets.

We then saw the most enjoyable phase of the course as we headed to London for EX BOMB BURST. After completing most of our tasks with varying levels of success and adventure, 122 met up again on the third day with loads of tales to tell and free goodies to enjoy.

After BOMB BURST, it was time for a cultural tour of Chesterfield, and with the help of **Miss Patterson** we are all now barred. At least we are still welcome in Newquay, where the course had some well-deserved R and R. The ten remaining all finished the course and have survived to live another day.

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj Don Macaulay**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Neil Roome**

BATTLEAXE TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Simon Smith**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Mick Openshaw**

SATCOM SECTION - *by Sgt Hessel and Sgt Walton*

The rest of the Gp is now a lot happier now that Satcom Section has reverted back to wearing green again. Not that we have been idle - all of us have been on TSC503 Train the Trainers Course with BAE Systems in Christchurch. We did look very fetching in our blue overalls, white hats and steel toe-capped boots (photos at a cost). **Sgt Pat Paterson** and **Mr Dave Rayner** had to start playing golf on evenings and weekends only. The Section are currently updating the new material to provide the first course in September for the User Shakeout Demo whilst continuing to provide training on the VSC501.

SYSEX TROOP

Tp OC **Capt Mahendra Limbu**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Neil Pollitt**

Notes by LCpl Smith

Sysex Tp decided it was time to have a rest from our busy schedule and go adventure training. We left on 20 July full of anticipation for what lay ahead in the lovely village of Capel Curig. After looking over our five star accommodation, we all sat down with our orange juice (the camp was dry!) and talked about how much fun this week was going to be. Later that evening we were briefed on our programme of walking, climbing, mountain biking and canoeing. Later we went down to experience the awesome nightlife of the local town, with a few drinks and a few games of pool.

Sysex Troop enjoying the delights of Sunny Wales

The first day was full of incidents in the canoeing, with **Cpl Shackleton** sinking his canoe and almost drowning in a laughing fit. In the hill walking **LCpl Price** got a severe case of vertigo at 50m and had to be prized of the rock by **Cpl Fielding**. In the mountain walking/biking, the whole group had a great day and bought **Sgt Berry** drinks all night in appreciation of the great route he had recce'd.

On Day 2 the groups swapped round, as did the mountain biking/walking route, as **LCpl Smith** was to find as he walked most of the 19 miles of it. **SSgt Pollitt** looked very embarrassed when he fell off his bike whilst talking to some old ramblers.

On Day 3 the mountain biking/walking group was joined by **Capt Mahendra**, who had the first accident by falling off his bike on the first down hill of the day and nearly ended up under a Mercedes Benz. In the climbing, **LCpl Iddon** climbed the children's wall and was given a badge to sew onto his shorts.

On the last day we saw the worst injury of the week. While rock climbing, **Cpl Jones** hung on the rock for 10 mins without moving and when he did attempt to reach up he turned to the instructor with tears in his eyes, saying he had pulled a muscle in his six-pack. **LCpl Mitchinson** found out he had a fear of heights when, at 2 metres up, his legs started to give and he called to go home.

Overall everyone enjoyed the week and the whole troop was able to 'bond.' Now it's back to the routine of exercises and First Lines. How we all wish we were back in Capel Curig.

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj Guy Benson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Rob Melotte**

Although the Gp continues to be very busy, we support adventure training, sport and team development days. In this report we concentrate on 2 of these activities and give work a break. Soldiers interested in a posting to RSG should fill out Preference Posting Proformas and pass them to theirs RCMO's.

EXERCISE MERCURY DRAGON

EX MERCURY DRAGON was the RSG attempt at the 3 Peaks Challenge and took place over the period 8-10 June 03. The aim of the ex was to develop teamwork by exposing us to the arduous and physically demanding conditions that exist in attempting this event. To complete successfully the 3 Peaks Challenge, the 3 highest peaks in England (Scafell Pike), Scotland (Ben Nevis) and Wales (Mount Snowdon), must be conquered all within the space of 24hrs (including travel time between mountains). The clock starts from the base of the first mountain and stops and the summit of the last mountain.

The Trekkers were **Maj Guy Benson**, **SSgt 'Smuj' Smith** (Ex Leader) **Sgt 'Flash' Gordon**, **Sgt 'Yogi' Welch**, **LCpl 'Matt' King**; and the Admin Party, **SSgt (SQMS) Dave Butler**, **Sgt Paddy Ferguson**, and **LCpl 'Scouse' Traynor**.

We all assembled at the Blandford Garrison Gymnasium car park on the fine Sunday morning of 8 June on time at 06.45hrs. A 12hr journey by minibus to Fort William lay ahead of us. The journey remained incident free until an unplanned water stop at a Motorway Services somewhere in Scotland, led to the discovery of a damsel in distress. The lady concerned (who just happened to run a model agency) had spun off the road and her car had ended up in a shallow ditch. A keen recovery party led by **SSgt Dave Butler**, **Sgt 'Yogi' Welch** and **LCpl 'Scouse' Traynor** ensured that her vehicle was recovered from the ditch in no time at all. On arrival at Fort William, the campsite was set up near the base of Ben Nevis, and after a superb feast cooked by **SSgt Dave Butler** and **Sgt Paddy Ferguson**, the party settled down for an early night.

Next morning the Trekkers awoke to the smell of a freshly cooked breakfast - just what you need before attempting this sort of challenge. Then, after a few warm up exercises, we were ready to start. At 09.00hrs, led by **SSgt 'Smuj' Smith**, we started on up Ben Nevis and the challenge had begun. The climb took 2hrs 35mins and was incident free, although there was some concern about the amount of toilet stops the OC, **Maj Guy Benson** was having. He did reassure us that this was due to the amount of fluid he was taking on board and not old age. We believe you, Boss! There was snow at the summit even though it was a hot summer day. After a short refreshment break, we descended, reaching the base at 13.15hrs (4 hrs into the challenge). We then departed Fort William and headed south for Cumbria.

A 6hr drive saw us at the base of our next peak. We took up our kit and headed off for the summit of Scafell Pike. The weather had become overcast and it had been raining earlier, but this ascent was also incident free, and the Pike was reached at 21.10hrs. After another brief stop, we headed back down before nightfall, and at 22.25hrs (13 fihrs into the challenge) we were down, onto the minibus and off to the final peak of the challenge, Mount Snowdon.

The weather deteriorated during the journey. It had started to rain heavily and had become very windy. We arrived at the base of Mount Snowdon at 03.50hrs on 10 June. Whilst the Admin Party settled down for some well-earned sleep in a nice warm minibus, the Trekkers prepared themselves for the final leg and set off at 04.00hrs. The weather was still very windy but at least the rain had stopped. Again, the climb was incident free and strangely enough there was nobody else on the mountain. We reached the summit of Mount Snowdon at 06.14hrs completing the 3 Peaks Challenge in a time of 21hrs 14mins, well within the 24hr limit. After a very brief stop at the summit, we headed down, reaching the base at 08.15hrs.

The whole party then headed for Capel Curig for a well-earned cooked breakfast at a local café, and then back to Blandford, arriving at 16.30hrs. It had been a simple and enjoyable exercise to organise but an arduous one to complete. All members had adopted the right attitude and had remained focussed throughout, ensuring that the challenge was completed and the exercise aim was achieved. The Trekkers would like to thank all members of the Admin party for the superb job that they did in looking after us all throughout the exercise.

GORDON'S CUP

Saturday 14 June 03 saw the sun come out in all its glory and everyone heading off for the beach, except for the members of 4 Sqn Mil Trg Tp. This bunch of professional military trg instructors and hardy desperadoes had to forgo the pleasures of the beach and temptations of the flesh, as it was once again time for the Gordon's Cup Military Skills Competition. This is held annually as part of the CO's sports competition and consists of a number of different and demanding military skills events, including march and shoot, stretcher racing, assault course and a drill competition.

PRACTICAL/WRITTEN ASSESSMENT

One part of the Gordon's Cup is a military assessment test. The assessments were broken down into 3 parts: the NBC practical, First aid practical and the written paper. Each Sqn team of 20 comprised both male and females, and was divided into 3 groups, 10 doing the written assessment and 5 each in the NBC and first aid practical. Although the Sqns were aware what assessments they had to prepare for, it was not until they arrived that afternoon that they were informed who would be doing which assessment.

The written assessment test paper was compiled by the whole of Mil Trg Tp and covered questions on fieldcraft, weapons, NBC, first aid, map reading and general knowledge. This was overseen by **Pipe Maj Mick Elder**, who afterwards gave a comprehensive debrief which left a lot of worried looking faces as the team members obviously realised their mistakes, especially **Sig Rowan**.

Cpl Kev Bickford enhanced his well-rehearsed NBC assessment by depositing a smoke grenade, giving the written assessment group a brief interlude, as they could not see their papers. Our thanks go to the SAT who was acting as one of the casualties for the first aid stand. At least he had more to eat than everyone else with his added vegetable soup, cold though it was. The School Comd, **Col M Dyer**, asked one of the teams who they would chose to carry out the sniff test. This was met with mixed response and led to one good answer, 'Well Sir, I would choose the shortest member of my section.' (Unlucky for OC Sqn)

Cpl Geordie Cairns who, after many attempts at briefing the teams with the aid of a translator, managed to give the teams a challenging first aid assessment. The scenario was of the Balkans and a vehicle that had hit a mine with 5 casualties. The sec comd, who had been appointed only a few seconds prior to this task, had to think on his feet and respond to the given situation. It did not help that one of the casualties went walkabout and got lost, giving him more than a little anxiety.

All in all the standard was high, and we thank all those members of the Trg Sqns who worked hard (mainly in their own time) to give the teams the knowledge they required to make it an enjoyable Saturday afternoon for us.

MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION

4 Mil Trg Sqn, RSJCC's, input into the Gordon's Cup Competition consisted of a gentle meander through the Blandford countryside (with the constant verbal assistance from **WO1 Waters**) in the form of a March and Shoot.

The initial plan was cunningly devised by **SSgt Eastman**, who conducted the event with his own special form of crisis mngt throughout the day. The march (4.5 miles) culminated in a .22 shoot on the 25m barrack range, conducted by **Sgt Rory O'Neill**. The range had been dressed up (with the help of **Sgt Belcher** who had obviously raided the tip) to resemble downtown Blandford with oil drums, pallets and plenty of barbed wire.

Sgt Tapley and **Sgt Thomas** also tested the soldiers in their weapon handling in adverse conditions (blacked out respirators). Overall, a very successful day not only for the trainees but also for all the staff involved.

COMMAND AND STAFF TRAINER (GERMANY)

We are back! Before we are forgotten about, we need to keep the Corps up to date with what's happening with the Signals workforce at Command and Staff Trainer (Germany), (CAST(G)). All three of us, that is!

After being posted in from 1 Div, **Maj Chris Crowther** heads up the team as S02 CIS, followed by **SSgt (YofS) Trefor Davies**, and then **Cpl Neil Douglas** as Comms Cpl. Apart from a few battlegroup exs, all has been quiet on the Western Front, mainly due to OP TELIC. This has allowed **Maj Crowther** a little time to organise a Battlefield Tour to Minden, EX MINDEN ROSE.

BATTLEFIELD TOUR - EX MINDEN ROSE

- by Cpl Neil Douglas

Fought during the Seven Years War on 1 August 1759, the Battle of Minden was a significant battle for the British Army and its Allies. One single line of infantry took on three lines of French cavalry ranked in order of battle and defeated them, (probably something to do with the quart of beer they carried as part of their rations).

On 28 May we left for Minden in two vehicles, **Maj Crowther** with members of Land Warfare Collective Training Group (Germany), (LWCTG(G)), in the minibus and **YofS Davies** and myself leading in the car. We travelled to our first stand at Gohfeld, where The Hereditary Prince of Brunswick, under command of **Duke Ferdinand** was sent to Lubekke to clear the French who were covering their LofC towards Gohfeld. This was successful and forced the French into action.

We then travelled to various other stands, assessing the actions of the Allies and the French leading up to the Battle of Minderheide, (Minden Heath). This battle commenced at 06.30 hrs on 1 August 1759 and was over by 09.30 hrs. The aftermath was an embarrassing one for **de Contades** and the French Army, as about 7000 were killed and wounded, and 5000 taken prisoner compared with only 2800 killed and wounded of the Allied Army. **de Contades** was forced to abandon Minden (which surrendered on 2 August) and retired towards the Rhine. He was unable to offer any intelligible reason for his defeat and was then dismissed. **de Choiseui**, the French foreign minister wrote 'The thought of Minden makes me blush for the French Army.'

We moved on to the Minden Memorial, which commemorates those who fought at the Battle of Minden on 1 August 1759. 1 August, Minden Day is also an important day for some current regts of the British Army who trace their histories back to this battle. They parade with a rose behind their cap badge to honour the men who smashed **De Contades'** French Army.

We too then celebrated the day as we retired to the former British Garrison Officers Mess at Minden, now named the *Prinz Frederich Restaurant*. There we enjoyed a few sociables and lunch while looking back on an excellent Battlefield Tour and thanking **Maj Crowther** for organising it.

Unfortunately, it's back to reality for us all, as I will soon be enjoying the sights of the Brecon Beacons on my Det Comd's Course, while **Maj Crowther** and **YofS Davies** will be busy at work and play as they prepare for the Berlin Marathon!

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT (LICHFIELD)

This month sees the departure of **Maj Jon Townsend** as OC of 1 Sqn at ATR Lichfield to be replaced in the near future by **Maj Phil Baker**. It has also seen the arrival of **Maj Katrina Evans** as the new OC of C Sqn.

It has been a very busy period for the ATR with the celebration of the 125th Birthday of Whittington Barracks. The celebrations included a visit from the SOinC(A) as Reviewing Officer for the passing out parade. Also a 3-day recruiting visit from schools in the Midlands Region and finally a large military show, which attracted more than 35,000 visitors to the Barracks. The whole event was a great success raising a lot of money for charities whilst providing a great day out and a good insight to the Army for visitors.

The White Helmets on Parade.

VISIT OF BRIGADIER D McDOWALL MBE ADC SOinC (A)

The CO and all at ATR Lichfield were delighted to welcome **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC**, SOinC(A) on his visit to ATR Lichfield on 10

Brig McDowall inspects Smith Tp accompanied by the Tp Comd, WO2 McVitie

July 2003. He visited as Reviewing Officer for the passing out parade of Leitch Tp 28 Sqn RE and Smith Tp 1 Sqn R Signals. He also saw some of the recruits demonstrating skills they had learned over the preceding 12 weeks, including a gymnasium display, a weapons display and an NBC display. The recruits then demonstrated fire and movement, attacking an enemy position.

The parade was preceded by an impressive demonstration by the RSMDT, The White Helmets. **Maj Jon Townsend** commanded the parade, which being his last, went well. The Corps Band accompanied the parade with yet another fine performance. After spending time with the recruits and their families the SOinC(A) then went on to have lunch with the R Signals personnel stationed at Lichfield. All took the opportunity to debate many issues close to their hearts, and were grateful to hear the SOinC's views.

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL RECRUITING GROUP - CAREER WORKSHOP 2003 - *by Capt Steve Dickson*

School kids are put through their paces

As part of a concerted effort to target recruiting in the West Midlands, the Recruiting Gp combined their efforts with ATR Lichfield to produce a 3-day recruiting drive targeting 5 employment areas. These were; Combat (Infantry, Armoured Corps and Artillery), Engineering (RE and REME), IT/Comms (R Signals), Logistics (RLC) and Human Resources (AGC, RMP, QARANC and RAVC). 250 school children attended on each of the 3 days of the event, which was held on the sports fields of ATR Lichfield. It was a magnificent sight to behold in one site all the major weapon systems the Army can field .

Due to the hard work of SORLO and **Maj Liz Dallyn**, the Corps was well represented. 30 Sig Regt Recruiting Team were there with their information caravan and a good selection of satellite communications; 21 Sig Regt provided a JATE rigged Wolf Landrover; 14 Sig Regt provided a det and even let people in it for once! The main attraction, however, was an armoured Radio Relay (AFV439), which proved a massive hit with the school children. With over 700 school children visiting during the 3 days of the event, it is hoped that we have influenced a few to believe that a career in the Corps is for them. It was also pleasing to note that the R Signals display can now match and surpass some of our main competitors in the employment market in the Army.

EXERCISE ZULU DRAGON, 2 – 20 JUNE 2003 - *by Capt Karen Thomson*

In June of this year the ATR launched one of the number of major adventure trg expeds it holds each year. EX ZULU DRAGON was a diving expedition and included three battlefield tours.

We landed at Johannesburg to be met by **Sonja Swynford-Meyer** from Aliwal Dive Charters. We were taken in 4x4s with trailers to Isibindi Lodge in the heart of battlefield tour country in Kwa-Zulu Natal. Isibindi is a luxury game lodge 9km from Rorke's Drift.

Isandlwana is renowned in British Military history as a bloody disaster. At the base of this sphinx-like rock there are graves and memorials to those who fell in the battle on 22 January 1879. From here we moved to Rorke's Drift, seen as a British Imperial victory and where the greatest number of VCs has ever been won. The Zulu know this site as Shiyane, their name for the hill at back of the village. About 10km south of Rorke's Drift is Fugitive's Drift, where two British officers were killed whilst attempting to prevent the Queen's colours from falling into Zulu hands. By mid-afternoon we were on our way to Spion Kop via Ladysmith.

After a quick history lesson from **Raymond**, we headed to Spion Kop itself. At about 5,000ft, the group tried to appreciate what the soldiers of the day had been through. During the early hours of 24 January, 1,700 British troops climbed the hill and chased off the few Boers guarding it. They dug in and waited for the morning. When the Boer commander, **Louis Botha**, heard of the raid, he ordered his field guns to be trained onto Spion Kop and positioned some of his men on nearby hills. A further 400 Boers began to climb Spion Kop as the misty dawn broke. The British beat off these 400 but as the mist lifted they encountered a hail of incoming bullets and shells from the surrounding hills. After sunset, the British evacuated the hill, as did the Boers. Both retreats were accomplished so smoothly that neither side was aware the other had left. It was not until the next morning that the Boers again climbed up Spion Kop and found that it was theirs. The Boers had killed or wounded 1,340 British and taken 1,000 prisoners, at a loss of 230 casualties - unusually high for their small army. **Gandhi's** stretcher-bearer unit performed with distinction at this battle and **Winston Churchill** was there as a war correspondent.

With the battlefield tours over, it was time for the diving. After a short drive to the beach we boarded the RIB (Rigid Inflatable Boat) and broke through the high surf line. Once through, we made our way to the first site at South Sands. We dropped in at 16m and let the current take us on our drift. We saw lots of marine life including a turtle, manta ray, moray eel, Moorish idols and parrot fish. Because of the massive swell, quite a few of the group were seasick. We returned for breakfast, and a quick turnaround saw us back out on the boat at 12.00hrs for the second dive. As before, the conditions were less than favourable but the dive site made up for it. We dropped in to 18m, over Inside Edge and the current took us over Cathedral (a large arch) and over Raggie's Cave. To the delight of the novice divers, we had still not seen any sharks!

The drop onto Cathedral point saw the first sighting of sharks for some members of the first wave. Much to his dismay, **Capt Steve Dickson** missed the sharks completely due to diving with **Pte Karl Dyson** who had sucked a 15ltr cylinder dry in 20mins. **Capt Jez Jerome** and **Pte Karl Motum** also missed the second dive due to their stomachs not being up to it. The remaining few, who had by now got their sea legs, set off to Manta Point. Maximum depth was 22m for 36mins and again we used a divemaster (guide), **Tinus.**

After a long trip in the boat looking for sardine 'bait balls' eventually some action was found. The Natal Sharks Board runs a sardine hotline to aid divers to locate the run, and this helped. There were several other dive charters on the scene as we arrived and we soon saw the attraction - a huge humpbacked whale turning lazy somersaults and displaying its flukes for all to see. Several hundred dolphins cavorting near and under the dive boat followed this awesome sight. Very few sardines were seen but the remains of tens of thousands were evident and the clicks and squeals of the dolphins could be heard every time we got into the water.

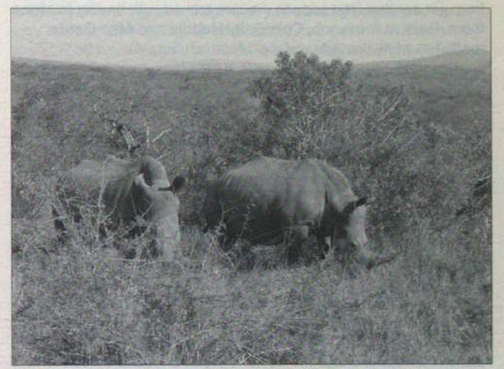
On the way out.

Now back at Aliwal Shoal the early starts began once more. A 07.00hrs departure to dive Cathedral Rock was well worth it, as everyone saw one or two big ragged tooth sharks (raggies). This dive was excellent - probably the best to date, and the improvement in the novices' diving was very evident.

When travellers debate the best spots in South Africa, Sodwana Bay is invariably mentioned. The coastline is a divers' paradise and well adapted for the thousands of divers that visit year round. Once the kit hire was sorted we took the courtesy tractor to the beach, eager and ready for some of the best diving in the world. It is predominantly soft coral over hard and the reef has one of the world's highest recorded numbers of tropical fish species, over 1,200 in total. It is like looking into a fish tank. Highlights of the dive were a very large potato bass (approx 1metre), puffer fish, trevallies, angel fish, parrot fish and the clown fish.

The last day of diving had arrived. Again we returned to 2-mile reef to a site known as Chains. As we had only one dive, the plan was 18m for 50mins. Highlights included a female blue spotted ray, a few small moray eels, a huge crayfish, round ribbon tail ray and a big puffer fish.

After the dive we were on our way to Hluhluwe Game Reserve. On our way through the reserve we spotted a giraffe, a couple of white rhinos and an elan. We drove around the Northern end of the game reserve and saw a herd of giraffes, zebra, a mother white rhino and baby, bush pigs, elands with buffalo, nightjar, genet and wildebeest. It was an amazing experience to see the animals so close and in their natural habitat.



White Rhino.

We arrived at the Zulu Village of Kwabekehtunge around 14.00hrs, and were invited by **Chief Thomas** to see a display of Zulu dancing from both the men and the women. The display included a very informative talk on the Zulu culture and day-to-day living. In the evening we were given the opportunity to sample some of the traditional dishes and a home brewed beer. We stayed overnight in mud huts adapted rather well for westerners.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol NP Metcalfe MBE QGM**
RSM	**WO1 D Mitchell**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DTH Wilson**
SSM	**WO2 Gill**

COMMANDING OFFICER'S SHOOTING COMPETITION
- *by LCpl Nikki Horton*

On a not very sunny morning in Northern Ireland, HQ Sqn's shooting team, led by **Cpl Quinn**, set off for Ballykinler ranges. The first phase was a two-mile tab, followed by shoots at the 100m, 200m and 300m points. With some huffing and puffing and a few of us wishing we hadn't had that last fag before the start, we made it round in 22mins 18secs. With no time to spare, it was on to the next event, the clay pigeon shoot. I decided to go first, thinking it better to get it over with, but I missed every shot. The best shot was **Cpl Dan Davidson**, with everyone else scoring well.

The next event was the FIBUA shoot, shooting in different positions at 100m, 75m, 50m and 25m points, and he final event was the falling plate shoot. 225 Sig Sqn finished in first place, 233 Sig Sqn second and HQ Sqn third.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SJ McConnell**
SSM	**WO2 Lappin**

EXERCISE INDIAN FINN 07 - 14 JUN 03 – *by LCpl Dan Cole*

On Saturday 7 June eleven members of India Tp prepared for a dawn departure to Scotland for a good old-fashioned slice of army adv trg. The main test of the week was the trek over the Cairngorms - over 1,200ft of pure hell for the older members of the gp, and a mere PT warm-up for the younger ones! Building up to that, we did a smaller walk of about 14km to get our feet accustomed to the terrain, to get **Cpl Alex Brown's** dodgy knees nicely stretched out and to test out Q's stylish but practical walking sticks.

We also had a day of mountain biking up in the hills, with **Cpl Dave Comb** and **LCpl Dan Cole** leading the way - in completely the wrong direction! However as **Cpl Turner** had just woken up from yet another little snooze, he was tasked with having to chase them. Back at the ranch, **Cpls Sally Hubble** and **Maz Cattle** made tea while the lads watched football. Superb.

Cpl Gough took us out for a day's rock climbing at Crag Bheag and although most of us did the climbs, the biggest challenge was fighting off the mossies!

After all these extreme sports events, our adv trg came to an end for another year. Everyone had a very good time and a good laugh and looked forward to their return to sunny N Ireland!

MORRISON CUP TUG OF WAR – *by Cpl Lawer*

On the evening of 9 June we, the 15 Sig Regt tug of war team, boarded the overnight ferry heading off to Blandford in our quest to become Corps string pulling champions! After some extensive trg on camp and at Blandford, we soon found ourselves weighing in as a team. We were only 3kg short for the 640kg category, but a staggering 47kg short for the 680kg competition. The 680kg was the first competition for the day and we soon found ourselves in the thick of it. Unfortunately, we emerged wiser for the experience but with no victories under our belt. Our efforts were thus concentrated on the 640kg competition, where we all felt we would hold our own. Unfortunately for us, no amount of aggression or manly grunting (mainly from **Sgt Paul Newall**) would aid us, and we became a stepping-stone for 7 Sig Regt to cruise to victory.

We also fell foul of 30 Sig Regt and it was beginning to leave a bitter taste in the mouths of the lads who had yet to win even an end. 11 Sig Regt were next, and after a well-fought bout, they took the first end. We pulled our hearts out and deservedly won the next (and our first) end, receiving much support from onlooking spectators. The third end was tense, and you could feel the expectation from the team as we took the strain and prepared for a quick drop. We got it and were away with the momentum, and even though we were halted and forced to give ground on a number of occasions, we held strong, taking the third end and the match. Sadly, this was to be our only victory but, judging by the evening's celebrations, we all felt we had done ourselves proud. We all now look forward to seeing the results we can achieve with further trg, and next year, we'll be back.

CRETE – EXERCISE MINOAN FINN – *by Sgt 'Stu' Shaw*

Crete, the island of mythic heroes, rich history and packed with adventure, was our destination for a full nine days of adv trg from 8 – 13 May 2003.

We arrived at Hania airport and proceeded to our resort, which we used as our base. Our first day was a gentle break to gauge weight and equipment. This consisted of a gentle incline up some hills near Loutro. The heat and weight soon made it apparent that many of us were carrying too much equipment! About an hour later, we all reached the top and were rewarded with a magnificent view. We also saw some raptor buzzards - impressive birds.

Hania Harbour

We reached the bottom of the Imbros Gorge and learned that during WW2 allied soldiers withdrew down these trails under constant aerial bombardment, often in poor condition and exhausted after days of intense fighting. It was hard to imagine these scenes whilst walking down the gorge. Brave men!

The next day started with a coastal walk to the village of Agia Roumeli. We stopped, had a spot of lunch and tackled a round trip to the Aradhena Gorge, finally returning to Agia. The Gorge was gorgeous (one of **SSgt Clish's** many terrible puns).

Descending the Imbros Gorge, the withdrawal route from the Battle of Crete

Our following morning commenced with a quick trip on a ferry (the most convenient way to reach our next goal) to the Samarian Gorge. Huge - one word which sums this up. Our plan was to walk up the gorge to the summit. It proved to be the best part of the exped so far. The views were terrific, and there were plenty of natural springs and shade on the way up. The last section was a weaving path to the summit, and it was a relief to reach the top! A spot of dinner and we moved on, this time to reach the summit and overnight stay in a lodge. There were some great views from the summit the next morning.

The next day was the final day of climbing and saw us reach the summit of Gigolos. Ski poles were a must! A lot of effort, but worthwhile. We woke up early the next day, and retraced our route down the Samarian Gorge, returned by ferry to Hora Sfakion and back to the resort.

We woke up with a few sore heads, but thankfully it was our R&R day. Some of the group hired scooters, visited the War graves or simply relaxed at the resort pool. The finale was the Cretan night. This was a meal and some traditional dancers. It was a strange dance. The men flew about like epileptic Irish dancers who'd lost control of their legs, and the girls danced like they had straitjackets on. After the meal, audience participation was called for, and our star was **Sgt Dell Richards**. It was a nice way to finish up!

The Commonwealth War Cemetery at Suda Bay

ROMEO TROOP CROSS-TRAINING - *by LCpl Burns*

In June Romeo Tp enjoyed another successful Tp trg event at Magilligan Trg Centre. The first day consisted of an ITD package, which the Tp all thoroughly … passed. The second day involved lessons on the Tp's role in the Province, using our personal Gazelle and ECM equipment. The third day was a mock op to put into practice the subjects learned earlier, and **Cpl Jethro Barker** got a chance to fly in a Gazelle. God only knows how she convinced the pilot. Morale was high with all Tp members, especially **LCpl Clarke** and **Cpl James**, after having settled their differences over the proper use of a seatbelt.

On the Tp range, **Cpl Logan** thought that the comd 'Rapid fire!' was a signal to Rambo the target with a burst of 30 rounds. This was followed by an attempt at performing an exorcism on **Cpl Jones'** shirt, at the Tp BBQ. We also had the Tp clay pigeon competition and were joined by the Sqn RSM, OC and SSM. They showed the lads how it should and shouldn't be done (to varying degrees), with OC taking all the lads' money off them and the RSM and SSM sharing the wooden spoon. The trg was much enjoyed by all.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj G Inglis**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Hogg**

EXERCISE ALPINE FINN

EX ALPINE FINN was a ten-day adv trg ex in Oberstorf, Bavaria, and included kayaking, rock climbing and trekking.

Ex Alpine Finn- the summit

The first three days took the form of a round robin of the three activities. Kayaking with **SSgt Gerry McGachy** seemed to be a very popular choice. **Sgt Brad Bradley** had a perfect opportunity to show off his skills to the ladies, but they all asked why PTO was written on the bottom of his kayak. Lets just say that, after a few hours, he was the daddy at capsize drills! **WO2 Jimmy Gordon,** who took us for rock climbing to the crags around Fussen, near the Austrian border. **Jimmy** and guidebooks hadn't ever connected, which was why we ended up climbing routes that should only be for the professional climber!

Meanwhile the hill walkers were being put through their paces around the hills of Bavaria. A quote that caught my ear, which I believe came from **Sgt Bradley**, was that 'If I want to take in a view like that ever again I will buy a postcard!'

The fourth day took the form of a well-earned rest day. Half the group took the opportunity to travel to the Garmesh PX and spend a small amount on kit. The other more sensible (in my eyes) half of the group decided to go to the local water park and proceeded to show the local kids how to really ride the waterslides in true Brit style!

The kayakers were set to qualify for their BCU Level 2. This was subject to **SSgt Gerry McGachy's** approval. He did manage to get a fair few members of the group to be competent on the rolling aspect of kayaking, which was a real treat! The climbers managed to get approved days for their log books and the hill walkers had the same towards their SMP.

A big thanks must go to **WO2 (RQMS) Steve Griffiths** for an excellent adv trg ex that was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON SUMMER BASH – *by Cpl Lancaster*

The summer season came to a climax with the holding of the Sqn's summer bash in June. This well-attended event proved both popular and a good reason for some serious fancy dress action. This was due to the organisers, **Cpl Phil Calloway** and **Sgt Matt Adams**, giving the revellers a free reign on costumes.

A scary mixture of gorillas, chickens, terrorists and cross-dressers enjoyed a barbecue, disco, raffle (**Cpl Calloway** suspiciously winning!) and general entertainment until the early hours. We are already hoping that next year will be similarly well organised.

ECHO TROOP GO-KARTING – *by Cpl 'Gaz' Nash*

On Sunday 22 June, ten members of the Tp ventured off for an afternoon's go-karting. After an extensive briefing we were split into groups of five for qualifications. The finalists were **Capt Morris**, **Sgt Rimmer**, **Sgt Coomber**, **LCpls Burchell**, **Hislop** and **Morris**. After a blistering six-lap final, **LCpl Burchell** was crowned the comfortable winner, followed by **Sgt Rimmer** and a lucky podium finish for **Capt Morris**, gifted to him by **LCpl Hislop**.

3 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

OC **Maj T Carmichael**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Buckingham**

A sad farewell to **CSgt Steve Mullen** R IRISH and his cat, both off back to his Bn. Good luck in the future, though no doubt we will see you again, as your duties bring you back to Portadown on a fairly regular basis. Welcome and good luck to the new Trg Sgt, **Sgt Graham**.

PRINCESS ROYAL DAY CELEBRATIONS 28 JUNE
- by Cpl Hayes

The big day for the Corps was celebrated in style in Portadown, starting off with live music and activities for the kids, and big kids, on camp. There was sumo wrestling, Test your Strength, bungee runs and a bouncy castle. The bar and barbecue provided much appreciated refreshment. The main event of the day was the 'It's a Knockout' Competition, in which 6 teams entered. The Officers' team ditched integrity and went instead for full out cheating – but still lost! Special mention goes to the Spt Tp team the 'Pooper Scoopers' for their impressive, if slightly disturbing, fancy dress. Good effort lads. But it wasn't enough to beat the 'Charm School Rejects' (the Clerks team) who were the victors, with the 'In Dependants' (the wives team) a close second.

Cpl Neillings picking up third prize for Syscon from Maj Carmichael

In the evening there was a live band and disco, and plenty of celebrating was done by all. A huge thanks to all those involved in the making the day such a success, in particular, to **WO2 (RQMS) Andy Buckle, Sgt Jeff Hirst** and **Cpl** 'Heppy' **Hepworth**.

BABY BOOM

On 7 August a phenomenon occurred in Portadown, when three babies were born to Sqn members of the in the space of 24 hours - the same number that we would usually expect to be born in a year! Congratulations to **Sig Emma Allen** and **LCpl Davey O'Neill** on the arrival of their son, **Kiernan**. Congrats also to **Cpl** 'Cookie' **Cook** and his girlfriend, **Linda**, who gave to birth to their first child, **Owen David** (not, apparently, named after **Sgt Dave Owen**). Finally congratulations to **Pte Buckberry** and **Trina** on the late arrival of their baby girl, **Catelin**.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt F Loxton**
SSgt **SSgt K McIntosh**

As always, summer has been an extremely busy time for the Tp.

In addition to the extra work presented by the Marching Season, we have also been kept busy with the ongoing work resulting from Normalisation. In the wake of all this activity we have seen an influx of new folk. Welcome to **Cpl Steve Shepherd**, **LCpl Michelle Thomas** and **Sig Andy Borwick**, who all join TM Section from Blandford. Welcome also to **LCpl Wallace** from 14 Sig Regt, **LCpl Newell** from 216 Sig Sqn and **Sig Tony Schriven** from 3(UK) Div Sig Regt, who will all be joining the glorious world of Syscon.

A belated farewell to **WO2 (FoS) Jim Ross**, who left Portadown to join his new unit, 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207) in the desert. Quite a change of scenery, but good luck and thanks for all your hard work. A big hello to his replacement, **WO2 (FofS) John Walsh**, who hit the ground running, successfully completing his first Marching Season. It's down hill all the way from here! Farewell also to **SSgt Jim Hawkins**, who leaves us for the RSSST. Good luck in your new unit. Welcome to his replacement, **SSgt Jim Burnham**

ROVER GROUP – *by LCpl Cooper*

For a few days very year, a little church in Drumcree becomes the centre of news all over the Province. With the increased military presence on the area, the Bde Comd likes to experience life at the sharp end out on the streets. Rover Gp provides the transport, protection and comms necessary for him to do this.

The most elite soldiers from 3 Inf Bde were pooled from HQ, Syscon, MT and the Admin Office to make up Rover Gp 2003. The responsibility to mould this rabble lay with Comms Tp Comd, **Lt Fiona Loxton**, on her first Marching Season in the province. Thankfully, help was available in this unenviable task from **Sgt McKenna** and **CSgt Mullen.**

After several days of gruelling training in the hot (!) North Armagh sun, we had been moulded into a slick vehicle-borne protection team. We were all particularly impressed with our new PR radios, especially **LCpl Craig Wilkinson** and **Cpl Geoff Jackson** - boys and their toys! Our first deployment was to Lurgan, where luckily all parades went off quietly, as did the Orangemen's yearly march to Drumcree Church a few days later. The Brigadier was on hand along with Rover Gp purely as onlookers when the parade was turned back from the Obstacle at the top of the Garvaghy Road.

The second week saw the annual lighting of the 12th of July bonfires at midnight on 11 July. With **Pte Buckberry** driving the second rover, we headed up to the Sectarian Intersection. The bonfire builders had thoughtfully built their bonfire right on the edge of the intersection with the Nationalist residents, so they could see it too! How very considerate of them. This night too, went off quietly, with the residents of the Obins Road relaxing in their gardens drinking and chatting. **LCpl Chris Athey** and **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Robinson** supplied top cover whilst our own RC Padre, **Danny Hernandez**, was on the streets distributing moral guidance and Smarties to all denominations. The bonfire was lit at around midnight, and with no trouble on the streets of Portadown area, we all got back to camp in time for de-briefings, hot milk (it was late!) and medals.

So a relatively quiet Marching Season for the Rover Group, a successful one for all involved and the Brigadier happy with his excursions over the July fortnight. See you next year!

SUPPORT TROOP

QM **Maj J Williams**
SQMS **SSgt K Johnson**

We welcome **Maj Jeff Williams**, **LCpl Andy Ravenscroft** and **Sig Chris Pawsey**. We say farewell to **Maj Wright-Jones**, who has moved to 15 Sig Regt, and **Cpl** 'Daz' **Owens**, who is posted on promotion to 2 Sig Regt. Congratulations to **Cpl Hooper** on his selection for promotion to Sgt.

DRUMCREE 2003 – *by Sig Young*

July has been a busy month for Spt Tp, co-ordinating the log support for the arrival of the Bns, before, during and after the Marching Season. Drumcree was a success this year, with no lock-in of tps and their families and with very little trouble at any of the marches. The honey-sucker team was pleased that the minimum number of portaloos were deployed. Next year they will be applying for rose-scented coveralls! We are sure that **LCpl Coelho**, **LCpl Thompson**, **LCpl McCruden** and **Sig Young** will be the first to forward their names to **SSgt Coles** for this elite

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC **Maj DA Craft**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P Marshall**

ATHLETICS

On 9 July a nine man team from 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn attempted to take on the best of the British Army's Minor Units. The day started brightly with a last place in the shot put and a second to last in the 800m by **LCpl Padley**. It did get better with Team Capt, **Sgt Ritchie Brown** coming second in the 110m hurdles and third in the Triple Jump. **LCpl Shaun Mildenhall** came last in the High Jump (by about a metre). The team did very well, considering the small size of the unit, and managed to pull off fourth place. Man of the Match for team went to **LCpl Ben Williams**, who managed to drag himself round the track an amazing twelve and a half times to come fifth in the 5,000m.

SWIMMING

The first race of the swimming season for 39 Inf Bde started in the middle of May, with the NI Swimming Championships at Thiepval Barracks. By this point the team had been training for several weeks and were feeling fairly confident. At the start of the competition nobody had any idea who had a good team, but as the races got underway it was clear that 39 were the strongest team for the minor units. After winning every race in the competition, the Unit qualified, along with 6 RMP, for the Army Championships the following month in Aldershot. These Championships ran straight through the middle of OP CRITIC 2, which meant that we were struggling for people to attend, and the team had to fly in and out on the same day. It was a bit more hi-tech than Lisburn, with touch pads and an Olympic standard pool. All we wanted to do while we were there was to beat the RMP again, as we had in the NI competition. In the end we came second, but we beat the RMP! Our victory drinks ended up being a pint of beer in the airport while waiting for the plane to arrive.

THREE PEAKS

To start June off, three of members of Comms Sec, **Cpl Dave Grimes**, **LCpl Al Allardyce** and **Sig Smith**, decided to have a little trek in the mountains by doing Britain's biggest mountain challenge, The Three Peaks Challenge. After a lovely pub dinner and just a couple beers on the first night, we all sacked it for bed ready for the weekend ahead. The first mountain we climbed was Ben Nevis. After a hard start and lots of whining, **Sig Smith** made it to the top! He and his team, The Mules, made up time by running the whole distance down and overtaking the enemy team (from Bde and Sig Sqn), The Donkeys. The next two mountains (Scafell Pike and Snowdon) were completed the next day. In the end both teams finished all the mountains in under 10 hrs, with an extra bit of incentive from **Capt Dickson**.

EXERCISE SALUTATION FINN

The first day was for travel to the ex area and initial ex admin. We took over our accommodation at 17.00 hrs, and the remainder of the day was spent on personal administration in Ambleside.

Day 2 started with an initial brief covering how the walking in the Lake District would be handled. Then we started on an easy day's walk, but after lunch the gradient increased and all found the going tough. I had to be helped by **SSgt Eddie Corcoran's** constant jibes about how this was supposed to be a hill walk not a mountain climb. **WO2 Jimmy Gordon** amazed us all with a display of Ju-Jitsu against a heavily armed gang of yobs (all about 10 years old).

Day 3 involved climbing the third highest peak, aptly named Hellvalle. Along the route the walkers kept up the good name of soldiers, especially **LCpl Ryan Parker**, who allowed the 32 American tourists to shelter in his waterproofs when the clouds drifted in.

Day 4 saw everyone off to Keswick for R&R and Day 5 was a medium route to remove the cobwebs after the night before. This route brought us to the slopes of Scafell Pike, but luckily not over the top. **SSgt Corcoran** made friends with some local villagers in Boot, as they had been missing one for quite some time.

Day 6 saw the group climb Scafell Pike simply because it was there. This route got your heart going, and at one point we had to use the 3 points of contact walking method. With a little encouragement, **Cpl Patterson** completed this route, despite being extremely scared of heights. He was said to have had at least three cigarettes saying 'it was in case it was his last'.

The happy group reach the top and enjoy the view!

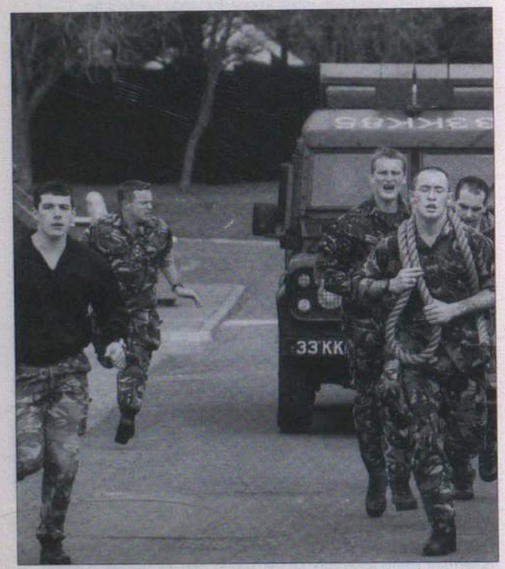
Day 7 involved a few dramas, as **Cpl Edwards** found that she could not climb anymore, as her knees were giving her a lot of pain. **WO2 Gordon** decided that, as we had reached the highest point of the day, he would send one team down with **Sig Humble**, and he would continue the scenic route with the hard core contingent. The weather started to close in and hail and snow came in for the rest of the route. Day 8 was a day of R&R in reward for the effort put in by all the team.

MERCURY CUP – TOUGH GUY

It seemed like just an ordinary day when I first awoke on the 26 March 03, but that was about to change. Nothing could have prepared me for the pain and anguish that was about to unfold. This was Tough Guy Day. The team consisted of **WO2 Nick Wood**, **Cpl James Alexander**, **Cpl Karen Tarry**, **Cpl Phil Rawlyk**, **Cpl Daz Barnes**, **Cpl Dave Driver**, **LCpl James Prince** and **LCpl Ben Williams**.

The team sweating blood in the stretcher race

The Tough Guy event involved a 2fi-mile stretcher race, a best effort bleep test, a timed snatch pull and finished off with a fi hour swim. As if that wasn't enough, the events were held after one another, which made it more of a test of endurance than anything else. The team put in a brave performance and did the Unit proud. Although we did not win the overall competition, we did manage to pull the snatch the furthest. A special mention has to go to **SSgt Steve Lynch**, who not only organised the whole event, but was caught laughing at our pain and bloodshed. A good day was had by all, and everyone involved found it very rewarding. I will be there next year.



The team pulling that Landrover, ably supported by the 2IC

EX COASTAL FINN

We were all ready to go at 08.30hrs on 21 July to have a relaxing week away doing adventurous training. We were about to have the worst sailing trip possible. What could go wrong? Well everything could. After doing a handover/takeover of the boat we set sail for Cambletown from Glenarm. 8 hours later we arrived without any trouble, and obviously the first thing that we all wanted to do was go out for a few beers.

Next day, bright and early we set out for a day of sailing, with **Lt Steve Bennett** as skipper. First problem of the day: no gas for brews or hot food! No problem, we can go without brews for about 8 hours. ' Boss, how fast are we going?' 'Not fast enough. I know, let's put the engine on.' At this point we had our second problem – the starter motor had burned out! Again no problem - we can rely on the wind and do some proper sailing. Surely, nothing more could go wrong? What little did we know! Within 2 hours the wind had dropped and we were stranded at sea. It didn't really matter if there was no wind anyway as a part of the mast had broken and we could barely sail. We eventually got anchored up at 03.00hrs - 18 hours later! In the end, all our misfortune was to our advantage. We had 2 nights out on the town, which was quite eventful.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Maj S Harvey R IRISH**
WOIC **WO2 (RQMS) DM Coates**

The RQMS department spent a long time preparing for the Bde Comd's Cocktail Party, held at Hillsborough Castle. Luckily everything went as planned and turned out to be a success. Thank you to everybody who helped us get through it. Following that it was the Board of Officers before taking some well-earned leave during the summer.

We welcome the new RQMS, **WO2 Paul Coates**; Tech Sgt, **Sgt Paul Binns** and **Sig Danny Rees**, straight from Blandford. Good luck to you, as we all think you will need it!

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt SR Bennett**
Tp SSgt **SSgt PP Corcoran**

OPS SECTION

We welcome the new YofS, **WO2 Mick Kilburn**, replacing **WO1 Nick Wood**; LCpl **Ollie Holbourn**, from 7 Sig Regt; and **Cpl John Atkinson** from 602 TAC P. We say goodbye to **Sgt Bri Rawlings**, who has left to start his Yeoman's course; to **LCpl Leon Mathieson**, who is posted to Civ Div; to **LCpl Al Allardyce**, who is posted to 7 Armd Bde Sig Sqn and to **Sig Gary Weller**, who is off to 30 Sig Regt. We hope you all have great times with your new jobs.

In May we started the preparation for the Marching Season with EX CELTIC AVENGER. This involved members of the section deploying to Ballykinler to either provide OXBOW cover or take part in public order trg. Then it was the Marching Season and this year was no different from any other with the OXBOW and CHANCELLOR teams out there once again. **LCpls Leon Mathieson**, **Steve Barber**, **Sigs John Bromhead** and **Craig Smith** worked like mad men giving the ground tps the best support. Well done lads, and roll on next year.

TM SECTION

It's been an average couple of weeks in the Tp but the lads have still managed to put in a good couple of sporting performances. First **LCpl Currim** managed to bag six goals for the football team in a 7 – 0 win over JSG. Then we had **Sgt Brown**, who won a thousand events at the NI Athletics Championships. **LCpl Lawless** and **LCpl Padley** also won their respective events.

We say hello to **LCpl Padley**, **LCpl Thompson**, **LCpl Mildenhall**, **LCpl Paul Glen** and **LCpl Stevie O'Halloran**, all of whom are straight from Blandford. We also welcome **Cpl Lorraine Dorrian**.

We say goodbye to **Cpl Frederick Tedby**, who has left for 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn; to **Cpls Jim Alexander** and **Mick Jennings**, who are heading back to Blandford and to **Graeme Forrest**, who is signing off to travel the world.

Congratulations go to **Cpl Rob Dilger** and **Sgt Richie Brown**, who have both recently become PADS and tied the knot; and to Baby **Hannah**, and very happy father, **Cpl Tony Morancie**.

On the job front, it has been a very successful and uneventful Marching Season so far and we hope this will set the trend for the years to come.

RIGGING SECTION

Early May saw the posting in of new Rigging SNCO, **Sgt Jordan**, replacing **Sgt Arnie Renforth**, who is now posted to Gibraltar. We also said farewell to **LCpl Bate**, **Sig Morrison**, off to Corsham on promotion and **LCpl Osborn**, off to Civilian life.

Congratulations to **Cpl McGrouther** on his marriage to **Donna**; and to **Cpl Dave Healy**, who has been selected for promotion to Sgt. Hopefully he'll be able to afford a caravan with wheels now. We welcome **LCpl Stubbs** and **Sigs Crawford** and **Dent.**

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC **Maj DC Gaul**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KJ O'Neill**

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt RN Wilson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Love**

Now just over half way through the summer Marching Season, the Tp look forward to it ending for another year so that normal work can resume. We eagerly await the unit move to Ballykelly, which now boasts brand new Tp and Sqn builds and more importantly, brand new Ztype, single living accn, which will be a welcome change from the crumbling, cramped rooms most soldiers find themselves in currently.

We welcome **SSgt Love** and his family, from 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt; **Cpl Milne**, from 4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn; **LCpl Robertson**, from RSS and **LCpl Hawkes**, from BFFI, and wish them all the best for their tours here. We say farewell to **Capt Wilson**; and **Sig Findlay**, who is on his way to Civ Div.

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE EQUESTRIAN CUP - *by LCpl Phil Baxter*

March saw the 8 Inf Bde Equestrian Cup take place once again. The team trained hard for weeks prior to this competition but as usual, with half the team committed elsewhere, we had the 'Does anybody know anyone who can ride a horse?' syndrome. **Capt Southern** led the way with **Cpl McCreadie**, and **LCpl Baxter** making up the serious riders, leaving **Sgt Hobson**, **LCpl Baxter** and **LCpl Hill** just looking forward to a day off work.

We spent the morning polishing tack, cleaning up horse-droppings and grooming the horses - the really interesting bits of the competition that you don't see on TV. Finally we were in the arena to get our horses inspected and to pose for the all-important team photos. With the riding about to begin, little did we know that our afternoon was already jinxed!

Firstly, the horse that **Capt Southern** was meant to be riding and had spent weeks beforehand practising on, had been declared lame two days before the event and the replacement bore more resemblance to small fat cow than a horse! Next, with **Cpl McCreadie** and all the other riders coming to the end of their ten minutes' practice in the arena, there was still no sign of **Capt Southern**. She finally entered the arena with about thirty seconds to spare. One of the other teams had stolen our horse's bridle.

The jumping was first, and **Cpl McCreadie** opened the afternoon with a clear round with the following riders achieving similar results. Then **Capt Southern** and the fat cow entered the arena. Within a minute the horse had thrown her at a jump, nearly crushing her. Amidst big gasps and then applause from the spectators, she bravely continued, only to take a wrong turn around the course and eventually get thrown again. The afternoon was definitely going from bad to worse.

The last phase of the competition was a relay race, with two teams racing against each other over a very dodgy obstacle course. After an even more dodgy explanation of the course and the rules, all the teams were left very confused. We overheard one of the other team capts saying, 'It'll be all right, we'll just watch the other teams to see how it's done.' This sounded like an excellent idea - until our team was picked to go first. No surprise there then! We had a pretty clear round, apart from **LCpl Hill** crossing the divide between the two teams racing each other, but at the time we didn't think too much of it. We spent the next half an hour watching the other teams from the sidelines. We duly noted that every single team had either missed an obstacle or cut a corner, which raised our hopes of a good score. But this was not to be.

Not surprisingly, the way our luck had gone, it turned out that missing obstacles and cutting corners were considered just minor offences by the judges, but crossing the line was sacrilege, so we were disqualified from that round. We came fifth out of five teams, but consoled ourselves by all agreeing that it was not the winning but the taking part that counted - honest!

EXERCISE BALTIC FINN - *by LCpl Cady*

EX BALTIC FINN III was a 10-day sailing exped to Denmark with a six-man crew, **Maj David Gaul** (OC Sqn), **Sgt Phil Marchant**, **LCpl Ray Cady**, **LCpl Andy Hawkes**, **Sig John Young** (Comp Crew) and Skipper, **Pte Matt Crosier**.

Five of us flew to London Heathrow where we met up with **LCpl Hawkes**, before continuing on to Kiel we got ourselves sorted and quartered

The first sailing day started earlier than I would have liked, and we left port expecting to head east with perfect sailing weather, sunshine and wind. This gave us all a chance to get to grips with the basics of sailing. We also made our first sighting of dolphins swimming alongside. As the day ended, we realised that the original plan of heading east had changed, and we came into port 50 miles west of our original start point.

Sailing out of Kiel

The following morning saw more sunshine, wind and a plan that changed only twice. As the day progressed, and with the wind in our favour, we tried our luck with the spinnaker. This turned out to be a bit of a drama, as the OC tried to paraglide with it, only to be rescued by **LCpl Hawkes**, with **Sgt Marchant** as ballast.

The next was one of our best day's sailing. We exceeded motoring speed just with sails, narrowly avoiding an erupting squall and finally docking safely. After an evening sampling the local hospitality, and **Sgt Marchant's** meeting with **Ursula** from Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, he and **Pte Crosier** invested in pizzas the size of dustbin lids to end the evening. We then had another day's motoring due to a lack of wind, and after a period of unsuccessful fishing we docked in Svendborg, to find the whole town in party mode at the *Harbourfest*.

Next was another excellent day's sailing, with sails all the way. We came into port on a Force 7 (believe me, that's strong) held

Making the most of the weather around Svendborg

professionally by the Skipper. We docked up straight away and took an early night, remembering the long haul back the following day.

The penultimate sailing day began well with good breeze, but this soon died and we had to rely on the motor the rest of the way. The last sailing day began early and consisted of a long leg of more motoring. Finally, there was the long journey home, which went smoothly with plenty of short breaks. Overall this was an excellent exercise and well-earned break from duties in Northern Ireland.

MT SECTION

MTWO	**W02 A Stronach RLC**
MT Sgt	**Sgt S Williams RLC**

OUTSIDE PERCEPTIONS OF THE SQUADRON MT

- by Pte DP Jones 1 R Anglians

When I was told that I was to be attached to the RLC/RSigs MT, I was a bit wary. I wasn't sure how they would take an outsider, but from the very first day they made me welcome (with brews all day).

Although the MT are a young bunch of guys and girls, they have shown they are very mature. I got into the swing of things quickly, doing Duty Dvr details (days and nights) and CIVPOP. In August, most of us were off to sunny Scotland for some well earned adv trg, which was good fun, with lots of hard work, laughs, and some sights (and good pubs).

October sees the Bde move to Ballykelly, so the strain on the tps will be very hard. Not only will we be transporting tps and offrs down to Ballykelly, but also we will still have the usual jobs that come from serving in NI. That said, I'm sure the team spirit will see us through the move.

Whilst I've been here, there have been a few hellos and goodbyes. The Tp extends a warm welcome to **Pte Hanking** and **Pte Bruce**, who have joined us just in time for the hard work ahead. We say a fond farewell to **LCpl** and Mrs **Bishop**, who have left us for sunnier climates in Germany, and to **Pte** (now LCpl) **Payne** who has decided to join them.

I'd like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all ranks for making my stay here a painless one (so far).

RQMS DEPARMENT

RQMS	**W02 D Inman**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt C McCabe RLC**

We say farewell to **Pte Mark Jarvis**, who is off to the ARRC in Germany. We say hello to **SSgt Dave Maw**; to **LCpl Paul Downs** and to **Pte Ned Hughes** and his family. Congratulations go to **LCpl Stu Eason,** who passed his Skill At Arms course.

The Dept has just returned from a week adv trg at the North Coast Activities Centre, Colerain. Activities included golf, gokarting and jet skiing. A good week was had by all and it was a well-deserved break from the normal turmoil of work.

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

HEADQUARTERS 2 (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

ARMY

Comd	**Brig JE Thomas MBE**
COS	**Maj John Rowley**

We welcome our new COS, **Maj John Rowley**, from 30 Sig Regt. Other new arrivals include the new SO3 G3 Plans (V), **Capt Mick Turnbull**. We say goodbye to the 'old' COS, **Maj Jim Forrest**, who was off to Fort Gordon, but is now off to Blandford on Promotion. We also bid farewell to SO3 G3 Ops/Trg, **Capt Grant Peden**, who has decided that a life surfing down under is preferable to stagging on in the Army. In between shooting scenes for *Point Break 2* he will also try to attend business school in Australia.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

Whilst we welcome the end of OP FRESCO, the resulting ICS equipt recovery plan continued to keep us busy. This was executed with rapier-like tenacity by the watch-keepers at Bde HQ and the vast majority of ICS equipt is now back with the rightful custodians.

OP TELIC 2 has seen another solid response by TA personnel with a cross-section from all TA units in the Bde having mobilised and deployed.

Planning continues for the deployment of 97 (BRITFOR) Sig Sqn to the Balkans in 2004. We are confident that they will build upon the success of the current Balkans Sig Sqn and further enhance the employability of TA personnel in the wider Regular Army.

EXERCISE POCKERIDGE DRAGON

EX POCKERIDGE DRAGON was HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde's adv trg (AT) ex for TY 2003. Held over the period 19 – 23 May, the ex was conducted in and around the North Devon area. Personnel were accommodated and fed at Fremington Camp, with assistance of the camp staff and Guards Adventure Training Wing (GATW). The aim of the ex was to develop teamwork and encourage TA/Regular interaction by conducting a range of AT activities.

The advance party consisting of **YofS Clint Barker** arrived on the Sunday evening to secure the cookhouse and a local pub. With this phase completed, the gp were assured of food and Guinness for the duration.

Day 1 saw the group thrown into a brisk 15-miler along the SW coast. Having been dropped off by GATW at Illfracoombe, the party of 8 led by resident JSMEL, **Maj Tony Shaw**, spent the morning convincing COS, **Maj Jim Forrest** to let go and get off the mobile phone.

In true Brit tradition, all weathers were encountered. Surprise of the day came when **Capt Biddulph** impressed the gp with his knowledge of bird life ('err… sparrow, I think!). Pathfinder prize of an OS map and compass goes to **2Lt Leeds**!

Day 2 began with aching feet and backs, and the realisation that the average age of Bde HQ staff was well into 40-something. The day offered caving, and after a 1-hour sleepy transit and a fat boys' breakfast (demanded by **Capts Peden** and **Taylor**), the team were less than ready. Having been assured that we would be taking the tourist route (later proved to be a lie), and having been goaded by a group of Brownies, the gp entered the caves. At this point that it must be pointed out that any future story offered by the DCOS, **Maj Dean**, on his caving experience are to be taken with a pinch of salt: he traveled 2m underwater, not 40m; we were in the caves for 40 mins, not 36 hrs; the afore-mentioned Brownies were only being kind when they offered assistance!

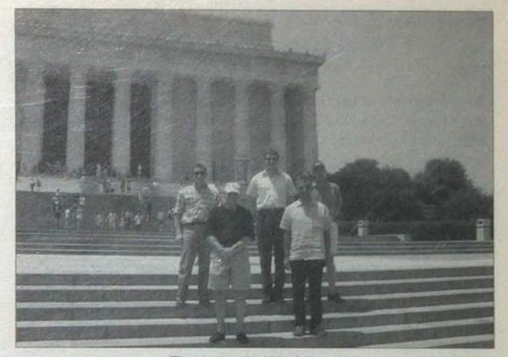
Maj Dean and his team of scaredy-cat explorers after the caving

The remainder of the ex was taken up with activities which saw the duo of **Lt Fell** and **Lt Nev MacMillan** excel themselves on the Tarka Trail Bike Ride and water sports day. Congratulations, by the way, to now **Capt MacMillan** on his recent promotion.

Overall the week was enjoyed by all who attended, and a new OIC Caving was born in **Maj Dean**. Thanks to GATW for all their support. Provisional booking for GATW Fremington has already been made for next year. So work must begin on the completion of the JSATFA for EX POCKERIDGE DRAGON 04.

VISIT TO 1108 SIGNAL BRIGADE

1108 Army Sig Bde, based at Fort Detrick, Maryland has been the sister Bde to 2 (NC) Sig Bde for some years, and a gp from HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde visit them biennially. So it appeared a good opportunity for the COS to do a recce before he was posted to the US (a posting that was subsequently cancelled). Heading up this year's visit was **Brig Thomas**, ably assisted by the COS, **Maj Forrest**, **Capt Bolam** and **YofS Clint Barker.** Sneaking on to the trip (to bolster supplies of DFs) was **Maj Fensom**, who pretended that he was going to be the new COS (anything for an in-flight meal).



The team do Washington

The visit commenced as we were met on arrival by Lt **Darius Daniel** and **Sgt Mark Kisner** in the 'A' Team van. Comd 1108 Bde, **Col David Lopez** joined the gp for what turned out to be an entertaining evening. **Capt Bolam** and **YofS Clint Barker** had to endure a dedicated flurry of disco dancing, having given the cover story of being talent scouts (you reap what you sow!). After a quick brief from **Col Lopez**, the gp headed off on a battlefield tour of Gettysburg. For anyone visiting this area, a tour of Gettysburg is a must. The complete Battle was re-told for us by our valiant hosts, **Leo** and **Jon**. In total, 5 hrs were spent at the site.

The third day began with a visit to **MajGen Martinez-Lopez** (Gen Comd, Fort Detrick). During briefings, 2 (NC) Sig Bde gave their version of current events and the 1108 Sig Bde gave theirs - and there was relief all around when it appeared that both were speaking the same language!

At this time, it was fortunate that 1110 Sig Bn (part of 1108 Bde) had a HO/TO of COs. The Americans certainly do it bigger and better. The party was treated to a full ceremonial HO/TO Parade (COS, please don't get any ideas). The day was rounded off with a visit to 1111 Sig Bn, where **Capt Bolam** bombarded the poor duty sig with all sorts of difficult questions. He was also quick to comment that the LAW 66 hanging on the wall seemed to him to be overkill for emergency destruction!

The final day consisted of a whirlwind tour around Washington, highlighted by a visit to the Arlington Ceremony. Here **Capt Bolam** and **YofS Barker** narrowly escaped enrolment in a travelling religious cult.

In all, an extremely beneficial visit, supplemented by superb hosting by all members of 1108, 1110 and 1111. A big thank you to all involved in the visit, particularly: **Col Lopez**, **LtCol Seaward**, **Lt Darius Daniel**, **Sgt Mark Kisner**, **Mr Dave Graham** and **Mr Leo Potts**.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col AP Bristow**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) GM Baird**

The Regt is still very much in the process of reconstituting. The Rear Party that didn't deploy on OP TELIC have all had their well earned summer breaks and now it's the turn of the war heroes to take their leave. To avoid re-writing the war stories of the Regt that appeared in the last issue of *The WIRE* and boring the rest of the Corps, this month's entry for the Regt is a tiny bit smaller.

Apart from returning a little civilianised after taking huge amounts of POTL, the soldiers of 1(UK) ADSR are looking forward to a fantastic 6 months. With numerous adv trg packages planned (from water sports at the Mohnesee Dam to Sailing round the Caribbean) and obviously the chance to do all those courses that you normally don't have time to do, hopefully the next few months should be ones to be remembered!

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj T Keates**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) S Mayell**

As the majority of the Sqn returned to Herford during March and June it was time to bid farewell to OC HQ Sqn, **Maj Martin Smith MBE**, who leaves us to become QM, Elmpt Station.

The day began at 08.30hrs sharp in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess for a management breakfast, which was also the first chance for the team to get together after being away for 4 months. The Sqn also said farewell to **Capt Mark Tivey**, to **SSgt Green** (after 22 years service) and to **Sgt Brundle**. After a full English breakfast and a few glasses of wine, the OC thanked those present and those who had left for the support given to him during his tenure in the hot seat. He graciously received a farewell gift from the Sqn, presented by **SSgt (SQMS) Overton.**

Maj Smith MBE receives his farewell present form the Junior Ranks presented by Cpl Grears

L-R WO2 (TCWO) Jim Pirrie, Maj M Smith MBE and Capt Brummy Lawes contemplate who will get the next round in at the farewell bash

The farewell function then moved to the Junior Ranks Club, *Gratton's*, where the remainder of the Sqn was waiting to say their farewells to the Boss. It was a great send off, enjoyed by all who attended.

The whole Sqn wishes **Maj Smith**, **Bernie** and **Frankie** all the best for the future and thanks them for their support over the past 3fi years. We also take this opportunity to welcome the new OC, **Maj Trevor Keates**, his wife **Sandra** and family back to Herford. We hope you have a great tour with us.

The vast majority of the Sqn departs on block leave for the summer months and a well-earned break. Farewells go to **Maj Steve Clarke RLC**, **Capt Mark Tivey**, **WO1 (RCWO) Carter**, **WO2 (SSM) Reid**, **WO2 (RQMS) Sloane**, **SSgt Green**, **Sgts Maskelyne**, **Cohen**, **Brundle**, **Cpls Andrews** and **Prickett**, **LCpl Patton** and any that we've missed. We welcome **Maj Simon Purser** (as Regt 2IC), **WO2 (SSM) Steve Mayell**, **WO2 (QMSI) Dave Wells**, **SSgt Caprio**, **Cpl Heward** RLC.

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AG Lucas**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Lloyd**

Once again we are writing *WIRE* notes from back in the comfort of our own home, Happy Herford! Sqn members started arriving back during the first week in May, and by 14 July everyone was safely back in BFG.

After 6 months of sweat, pain and lack of sleep (oh, and minefields!) what has the Sqn got to look forward to? Over the coming 6 months we have been promised no exs, plenty of time for courses, a number of weeks adv trg (already booked), oh, and lots of leave. Lucky 212 Sig Sqn have had 6 months off already! But the best part of the coming months is the unenviable task of turning around the Sqn's vehicles, getting well and truly back into the grind, 1st lines, PRE, Servicing and RSIT.

One thing is for sure though is the excellent way the Sqn has performed and the duties it has carried out over the last 6 months (toilet cleaning, guarding brew tents, taking on an infantry role, etc.) Anything thrown at 211 and we'll always come out smiling (Just) But note that it was 211 Sqn, not 212 as mentioned in *The WIRE. Oops! Sorry – Editor.*

On a final note, we say goodbye to **Sgt Rodway**, (who is on his Class 1 course. Good luck), **Cpls Geordie Allen** and **Rob Jones**, **LCpls Wilde**, **Jim Mackie**, **Stevie Leach**, **Waters**, **Sigs Dave Jones**, **Kay Price** and **Ian Round**. All the best in your new posts.

We welcome **SSgt (YofS) Chalkie Smith**; **Cpls Chippy Smith**, **Stevenson**, **Cree** and **Allen**; **LCpls Hickey**, **Longhurst**, **Smudge Wood** and **Evans**; **Sigs Beachem**, **Thomas**, **Reed**, **White**, **Bush** and **Wilson**. We hope you enjoy your stay in Camp Harewood.

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Buck**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) J McNeil**

Having survived the biological experiment of deep trench latrines and the ever-increasing Iraqi heat, the main body of 212 Sig Sqn returned from OP TELIC on 8 May 2003. This was closely followed by six weeks of minimum manning, as POTL and vast amounts of surplus other leave was enjoyed by the majority of us.

The highlight of the Sqn's recent activities has been the farewell do for the OC, **Maj Bryan Alderson**, and the SSM, **WO2 Dougy Douglas**. A good night was had by all, and we are sure that at least two personalities will have recurring nightmares featuring *The Police*, *Roxanne*, and a large quantity of cherry brandy.

For the past month we have been restoring both our armd and wheeled vehs to their pre-OP TELIC glory whilst also taking advantage of a quiet period to escape on courses and adv trg. Currently we have personnel down in Bavaria and across at the Mohnesse. We await their stories with trepidation.

The Sqn has now all returned from the joys of Iraq with the last deployed member, **Cpl Beanie Brown**, arriving back on the 11 August. With the arrival of the new SSM, **WO2 John McNeil** and the new OC, **Maj Buck**, our happy family will once again be complete.

3 (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol D Hudson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Kelly**

A busy time in the Gulf has given time for reflection at Bulford. Those manning rear details or awaiting roulement have been once again working on the vehs, but this time with a noticeable effect. Roughly three Sqns worth of vehs have been removed from the Regt and placed into Controlled Humidity Environment (CHE) at Ashchurch. This releases the remaining personnel to train…and train hard at that. Leadership, physical, trade, military and adventurous training all have a regular place in the Regimental programme.

Cpl Bowring, LCpl Rudkin, Cpl Berridge, LCpl Elcock, LCpl Evans and Cpl French show off their plank

This reduction in manpower in the Regt has seen the formation of a single field Sqn. 257 Sig Sqn has risen from the ashes and along with HQ Sqn form the entirety of the Rear Party. Both the remaining Sqns have had the opportunity to travel further afield and 'push their envelope' in the field of adventurous training.

EXERCISE IRON EURO

In late May, **CSgt Thomas** took 24 HQ personnel off to the sunny climes of Southern France for the opportunity to put the 'A' back into Adv Trg. The ex consisted of four week-long expeditions in sailing, mountaineering, cycling and kayaking. All events were challenging and as with all trg there is an inherent risk. **LCpl Dutton** unfortunately suffered a severe injury and the Regt sends its best wishes to him for a rapid recovery.

ADVENTURE TRAINING IN THE LAKE DISTRICT

257 Sig Sqn recently travelled to Borrowdale in the Lake District for a week of adventurous training led by **Lt 'Thomo' Thompson** and **SSgt Roy Turner**. Upon arrival at the campsite, everyone immediately slipped into routine, setting up tents and finding their way to the nearest pub. On the Tuesday morning, the students split down into three groups and started the activities: hill-walking (including an ascent of Scafell Pike) rock climbing and mountain biking. After the first day, it was clear that we had provided a challenge for the soldiers, as each respective group returned to tell each other how easy it had been in typical understated fashion. When the groups rotated next day, it became apparent that this was not the case. Sore hands, feet and bottoms all round!

The hill-walking route was an arduous 18-mile circuit taking in the summit of Scafell Pike via the *corridor route* and including an overnight stay at Angle Tarn. The changeable weather gave everybody the opportunity to test their navigation in the face of adversity, and I am sure if the pub had not been there at the end of the route, it could have been a different story.

Although most people fell off the climbing pitches at one time or another, a special mention should go to **Sig Lydia Newton** for her stack whilst mountain biking. This was especially impressive, considering she spent the majority of her time pushing rather than riding the bike. However, it should be mentioned that pushing was the preferred choice for almost all participants especially on the 25% inclines. Rock climbing took advantage of the plethora of good crags and routes for which the area is renowned, and provided an opportunity for everyone to pretend they were *Spiderman*. All climbers managed to complete a Severe climb whilst **Sigs Anderson**, **Prior** and **Holding** tested their spidy senses to the maximum on their successful ascent of an HVS 4C.

On the whole, everybody enjoyed the week as it gave many the opportunity to try new activities or brush up their skills with a view to gaining qualifications in the future. A special thank you goes to the organisers for their determination to get the expedition off the ground at such short notice.

EXERCISE IRON ANVIL 03

For the first time this year, 3 Div tps will be acting as ex personnel on the BATUS prairie. A major step forward and the culmination of Regt exs and operational experience will be put into practice for the benefit of 1 Mech Bde in a matter of weeks. 124 personnel from the Regt will deploy to BATUS in late August, hopefully to enjoy an Indian Summer, but more likely to experience the extremes of the unique prairie climate. Watch this space.

LEISHMANIASIS

With the return of 3 Div personnel from OP FINGAL, the Regt's contribution to the region has somewhat faded. However, thanks to the charity fund-raising efforts of the soldiers, the children of the region will not forget the Regt so easily. Nearly $1,000 was raised to help reduce the effects of Leishmaniasis (a disfiguring and debilitating disease) in the capital, Kabul. This money has now been spent on the provision of the most effective drug available, and it is hoped that it greatly reduce the effects of this disease in its main victims, children. The Maiwand Hospital, Kabul, wish to pass on their thanks to all who helped to raise this money for truly worthwhile cause.

OPERATION TELIC - *by Cpl Warner*

Cpl Davis and LCpl Watt cooling it in Basrah

QM(T) Dept in Basrah

In early 2003, the QM Dept deployed 3 of our finest staff, the only three who didn't manage to get to the med centre in time. They were **LCpl Jody Davis**, **Sig Paul Prior** and **Sig Julie Watt**. All 3 were deployed during OP TELIC 1, helping various Corps units to get to grips with their accounting procedures. It was no surprise to these 3 that, on returning in May 2003, 2 of them were to re deploy with the rest of the Regt on OP TELIC 2.

On OP TELIC 2 most of the QM Dept deployed on the pre-pre-pre-advance party, led by the QM, **Maj Duckworth**, RQMS (T) **WO2 Lothian** and **SSgt Castle**. On arriving in Iraq, we all had the pleasure of varying lengths of time at Camp Tenko, which qualified the QM Dept for pre-tour leave. When we returned to Iraq, we moved into Basrah International Airport with 1 (UK) ADSR, who then made a swift exit back to Germany, and left 3 Div to run the show. On 12 July the Div was renamed MND (SE). We were then joined by the rest of the Dept, **LCpl Aimee Acock**, **LCpl Julie Watt** and **Sig Melvin Butterfield**. Also joining us in support we have a number of TA and Reservists, **Sgt Tracey Downs** and **LCpl Vicky Cornwall** (who never gets to see the light of day due to her present post in the armoury).

During our time here it seems that everyone's birthday has come around. Firstly **Cpl Dave Hiscock** RLC, whose birthday lasted for well over a week. Next was **Sgt Billy Hazeldine**, then the QM and **SSgt Castle** (who changed his date of birth to coincide with the QM's), in a hope to get a better CR.

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol G Norton**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Manketlow**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Mick Campbell**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Stephen Shepherd**

TRAINING WING

OC	**Capt Alan Higgins**
RTWO	**WO2 (SSM) M Townley**

We say hello to **Capt Higgins**, from 2 Sig Regt, and wish him, **Meg** and **Maddison** a very warm welcome. Welcome also to **WO2 Paddy Townley**, **Sally** and **Demi** from 264 Sig Sqn. We say goodbye and congratulations to **WO2 Dave Mitchell** and **Petra**. **Dave** goes on promotion RSM, HQNI & 15 Sig Regt. We also say goodbye to **Cpl Dave Wheeler** and **Gillian**, and congratulations on **Dave's** selection for promotion to Sgt. They move back to UK in September where he will be employed as an instructor on the RSJCC team.

EXERCISE WOODLAND FLIGHT 02 - 03 July 2003

Under the watchful eye of **Capt Higgins** RTO and **WO2** (now WO1 RSM) **Mitchell** RTWO, the main body arrived at Haltern trg area early on Wednesday 2 July to be met by the DS and the rain, both of which were to stay for the duration. After the usual safety briefs, the platoons were issued ammo and rations prior to deploying to the stands for battle lessons. With the teaching phase over, they then established a harbour area and commenced harbour drills and routine.

The night nav, ran by **Sgt Young**, beckoned next, and a few hours of compass bearings and pacing later, it became apparent that maybe a bit more time should be spent practising map reading, especially the section which the CO joined, only 2kms out (not bad). Eventually all teams returned safely to their platoon harbours, with the enemy (**Cpl Matt Thomas** and **LCpl Craig Rathie**) paying a visit just to ensure that the correct drills were being carried out, then disappearing in to the night like ghosts.

At first light the rain was still falling as we went on to the final phase, the 3 stands to test what had previously been taught. Most sections gave a good account of themselves in difficult weather conditions. This proved to be good practice for the up and coming Station JNCO cadre in November, so watch this space.

MT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Tom Smith**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Gary Tanner**

We say goodbye to **Sgt Paul Millington** and his family on promotion to 231 Sig Sqn, and we say hello to **Sgt Lamont** and his family from 229 Sig Sqn, and to **Sig Kev Hamilton.**

EXERCISE JAVELIN SPIRIT 03

EX JAVELIN SPIRIT 03 was a safe and skilled driving competition held on Javelin Barracks for 7 Sig Regt non-driver trades, on 24 June 2003.

The competition comprised a series of ten stands designed to test and improve driving skills in the Regt. All Sqns (229, 231, 232 and HQ) entered, with guest teams from the WOs' and Sgts' Mess and the Offrs' Mess. Each team comprised four members, one of whom had to hold a Cat C licence. Although the day had a serious nature, an element of fun was introduced by way of some unusual stands, including the obligatory manoeuvring, cross-country, skid car, recovery and Matrix tests. As part of the Offrs' Mess team the CO, **Lt Col Graham Norton**, could not wait to get into the driving seat and show his prowess behind the wheel, with, we have to admit, some very respectable results. As expected, the WOs' and Sgts' Mess, with all their years of experience, showed the rest of the troops how it was done, taking away the individual team prize. 231 Sig Sqn did best overall, taking the best Sqn award (until next year).

MT COMPOUND RE-BUILD

Anyone who has been in the Regt recently, will remember the set from the film *Behind Enemy Lines*, otherwise known as the MT compound. Well all change, because, miracle of miracles, we now have a brand new veh park. In addition, we have spent some time and effort re-building the fish pond, building a rest area (not a bar) and erecting flagpoles and such-like, to make our MT the envy of the Corps.

QUARTERMASTER (ADMINISTRATION) DEPARTMENT

QM	**Maj Bob Taylor**
RQMS	**WO2 Sean Morgan**

It's been a busy period not only for the Dept but also for the Regt. **Cpl Frankel** got fully involved in the Chariot Racing, part of the Commander's Challenge 2. The All Ranks Summer Fete, in which we all got involved, was excellent, especially the part spent enjoying the barbeque and refreshments tent. We also had EX WOODLAND FIGHT 3 earlier this month, and **Sig Chris Walker** now has another war story to add to his collection. There have been a few early mornings for **LCpl Leanne MacLeod**, who recently took part in the Inter Sqn Swimming and Water Polo Competition. Hard work but the Sqn did well and came second overall in both competitions. While all this was going on, the now depleted Dept still managed to let the QM, **Maj Bob Taylor** and **Cpl Frankel** represented the Regt in the Rhine Area Cricket Festival, finishing runners-up.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1(FoS) Mick Swift**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Kev East**

We welcome back from Bosnia **Cpl Sheenan**, **Cpl Golding-Smith**, **LCpl Heathcote** and **LCpl Pickup**. On return, **LCpl Pickup** joined CIS and **LCpl Heathcote** went to 229 Sig Sqn. Returning from OP TELIC 1, we have **Cpl Williamson** and **LCpl Clements**, and deploying on OP TELIC 2, are **LCpl McCaig**, **LCpl Petch**, **LCpl Dott** and **Sig Devlin**. We wish them a safe return. We say well done and goodbye to **Cpl Sunderland**, who has been promoted to Sgt and posted to 16 Sig Regt.

LCpl Fatiaki and others ran back from Kosovo over 11 days raising over £5,000 for Mencap. Well done to all those involved!

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj H Jenkins**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) S Littlefield**

DEPLOYEX 03 - *by Lt Kate Benjamin RNZSigs*

THE WORKING HOLIDAY OFFER

'We are looking for smart young people to travel to beautiful Gemona, (Italy) for a three-week working holiday. All travel expenses are paid for on a top rate German transport fleet. Free sauna provided. All meals and beverages provided, served by highly-trained chefs. Accommodation is free of charge with large, spacious rooms and bedding, with regular cleaning maintenance. Work hours are flexible and local village facilities are within 5 mins walking distance. For all enquiries about this memorable experience, contact SSM 232 Sig Sqn, ***WO2 Littlefield.'***

THE ACTUALITY

DEPLOYEX 2003 saw the deployment of ARRC Fwd to Gemona, Italy. 232 Sig Sqn, 16 Sig Regt CIS elements and elements of 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn deployed to provide a CIS backbone in support of the ARRC staff. This was by no means a small feat. After 3 weeks in the sweltering heat I felt that if I didn't get my Tp staffy home soon, he would melt away. But let me tell you how SSM 232, **WO2 Littlefield** had duped me into bringing my troops to Gemona.

Starting with 'smart, motivated young people' and 'beautiful Gemona', the first we definitely were (no arguments there), but as to the latter, by all appearance and accounts it seems to be beautiful, but none of us can actually confirm this, as we have not yet been able to escape the armed guards and concrete barricades to see the real thing!

The travel was definitely all paid for, but if, for three whole days, being caged in a small rat hole with five other people in some of the warmest weather my blood has ever experienced and not (no not even once) being allowed off, is the best of German civil transportation, then my thoughts are quite un-printable. To make matters worse there were 6 toilets and 6 wash closets for 170 people! This was actually considered barely acceptable until we ran out of water! The train came with only one form of air conditioning – windows, and it had a nasty habit of stopping dead during the heat of the day. I say this with deepening woe, as we are yet to repeat this experience for the journey home!

Now the 'free sauna.' What our ad does not mention is that we hopped into the sauna (AKA German rail) late Tuesday morning and as yet, I don't think we have managed to turn the bloody thing off!

Let me comment on the meals. Now team, these have been outstanding. Well done to the cooks! Great choice, plenty of fruit and all things tasty. But, if the cooks could have done a deal with God to get Him to turn the heat down during dinner, I might have been able to stop sweating into my bowl of pasta. Beverages were certainly provided and there was plenty for everyone, but variety was limited but to *Guizza*, the local Italian bottled water. All very well if you are a goldfish, and all you drink is water. Yup, the whole ex was dry!

Accommodation was free and definitely spacious, but what the ad failed to tell you is that they managed to squeeze nine of us into each room, that the rooms had no doors or curtains, and that the stench from the Italian toilets (a completely different saga that would take far too long to explain) hung around all day like a lost friend. Bedding in the form of a mattress cover and pillow was provided, so I guess that kind of qualifies. But although the cleaning maintenance was regular, it was regularly done to a poor standard, leaving just enough water on the floor to make me do a Kelly Slater all the way to the shower!

'Work hours flexible…' Hmm, yes they certainly were. They flexed themselves from a 16-hr working day, to a 22-hr working day, to a 38-hr working day - as the 2IC himself will vouch. And I think that we were actually surrounded by the local village and it probably does take less than 5 minutes to walk there. But as we weren't allowed to, I can't tell you any more about it!

To all the guys who worked on the Main build, the EXCON build, RSC build, Radio Relay, the CIS geeks and Sqn Spt assets, a real big thank you! You lot really pulled out the stops and achieved some fantastic results outta the old white Ptarmigan elephant. To the SSM 232 (all good humour) I won't thank you for the experience just yet, but it certainly was memorable!

229 (BERLIN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Capt SY Richardson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) D Welch**

We say goodbye, good luck and thanks to **WO2 (SSM) Crawford**, on 'promotion' to RHQ; to **SSgt (YofS) Si Boase**, on promotion to 35 Sig Regt (V); to **Sgt Daz Kidd**, on promotion to 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn; to **Sgt Duncan Lamont**, off to Regt MT, to **Sgt Abbott**, defecting to Gene Bay; to **Sgt Angus** and **Sgt Wright-MacCarthy**, both off to 15 Sig Regt

We welcome **WO2 SSM Daz Welch**, **SSgt (FofS) Mick O'Hara**, **SSgt (YofS) Ian Fawcett**, and **Sgt Dunbar**,

Congratulations to **LCpl Patch Buckingham** on her recent marriage. We hope you will be very happy and your new name is much easier to spell.

CHARLOTTENBURG TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt A T Limb**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt L Johnston**

Goodbyes and good luck go to **SSgt Shaun Littlefield**, on promotion to SSM, 232 Sig Sqn; to **Sgt Poppa**, on promotion to SSgt to 37Sig Regt (V); to **Cpl Simpson**. **Sig Taylor** is now qualified to operate B Tp's satellite equipment so he's off to them.

And so we welcome **SSgt Johnston** (and all his contacts!) from SQMS Dept as Tp SSgt. From 264 Sig Sqn, we say hello to **Sgt Oz Rowley** and family. We also welcome **Cpl Watt** and family, **LCpls Dave Laing** and **Jas Jasjew**, and **Sigs Bentley**, **Carlyle**, **Roscoe** and **Coverley**.

OPEN FOUNDATION CANOE COURSE

On 13 July 2003, **Sigs Baron**, **Brimfield** and **Miller** deployed to Sonthofen to complete the Open Foundation Canoe Course to Level 2. The first morning was exciting as we were issued all the kit needed, and after a 30-minute introduction, we were in the water paddling. Unfortunately this was around in circles, but by the end of the day, we were improving.

The second day introduced more challenging strokes moving the canoe sideways - what about forwards and backwards? On this day the heat was quite intense, and many people capsized on purpose to cool down. On the third day we were taught how to sail the canoe, and on the next day we took a trip down the river. This was more exciting as the lake was becoming boring.

All in all, the course was challenging but helped improve our teamwork and leadership skills.

KREFELD CUP SWIMMING AND WATER POLO
- by Cpl McNally

Picture Elmpt Station swimming pool - bright sunshine, clear blue pool glistening in the sunlight, with 7 Sig Regt descending on it for the inter Sqn Krefeld Cup Swimming and Water Polo Competition.

The swimming was first, with the men's races alternating with the females. We started of well, with a couple of firsts and seconds. Well done, **Sigs Amy Bowler** and **Sam Hayward**. Then **Sig Noble** got in for the backstroke and it was like watching Tizwaz and the dying fly. Then it was me for the 33m butterfly - I came third, which was horrendous. We fared better in the relays but finished third overall much to the disappointment of the team, who had put in 100% effort.

With water polo next, we thought we had a good chance as most of our team was in for the Regt's for BA(G)s. Our first game was against HQ Sqn, who had **Cpl Chilly Chilvers** (Army, Corps, etc, etc) as their star. In the first quarter there was no score, in the second, 1-1 and in the third and fourth we just couldn't stop - final score 4-1 to us. Then, against 232 Sig Sqn good game with 3-1 to us. All we now needed to do was win the third one, so I kept the same team on until we were comfortable. Unfortunately, **Capt Sally Richardson** was sin binned for foul play, but we swam out the winners with a 5-1 victory. So 229 Sig Sqn are the 2003 Krefeld Cup Water Polo champions.

Well done to **Sigs Alex Green**, **Steve Boyle**, **Dan Brown** and **Ducky Duckworth** and to everyone else who put in a fabulous effort.

WILMERSDORF TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt KA Benjamin RNZ Sigs**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Curry**

RELAY ROAD RACE, JULY 2003

The day started with a parade at 08.00 hrs and a briefing by **SSgt Curry**. We were then split into groups of four, one being the DS. The DS were instructed not to help us in any way - they were there for safety only. The remaining groups were to follow instructions and look for certain items using a map and an answer sheet with clues on them. There was a time limit.

My group consisted of **Sig Sam Hayward**, **Sig Gaz Hall** and **Sig Tim Churchill**, with **LCpl Luke Mitchell** as acting DS. The groups left at ten-minute intervals with our group leaving at 09.10 hrs headed for SPAR in Elmpt. Here we found all but one of the items on the list. Our next stop was at a memorial of Jesus Christ, where we found the answer to the next clue, and we were on a roll. We'd been going only 35 minutes and already we had 2 answers. Our next answer lay in the Electrotechnik store with the price there right in front our eyes. We had been going 50 minutes and we were already on number four!

For the next answer, we spent 30 minutes driving round Elmpt looking for the swimming pool but, with no luck, we moved on to the next question, which was a blue sign hanging over the road as you came into Brüggen. We drove past that and scribbled what we thought it said and continued on with our adventure. The next answer lay facing the Watermill in Brüggen, 'a fat lady hard as rock!' – a statue facing the watermill.

Then on to the Nature Park in Brüggen, where we had to count bricks on two pillars. (In our answer, we later found that we under-counted by 17 bricks.) With the next question being 'give the name of the burgundy shop in Brüggen' you can guess how much fun we had looking for a shop that was this colour. We found four.

Question nine was too hard to translate so we passed and continued on to number ten, which involved eating ice cream! This was fine by all of us. We needed to find a place that sold cheap ice cream, so we came to the conclusion that the best place to go was **LCpl Luke Mitchell's** house, where it was free! Question eleven was to find a big black train in Brüggen - not easy, but we found it and continued on.

With only 1hr 30 mins to go, we raced round trying to find as many answers as we could, looking for houses with cats, lamp posts with flags, trees in a line, bridges, and even phone numbers for the Designer outlet. After finding the price for a Black and Decker Sandstorm, and with only three minutes to spare, we decided it was time to head back.

After our de-brief on the day, **Sgt Davis** and **Cpl Carlisle** were declared overall winners.

14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**Lt Col NJ Borrill**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Jolly**

REGIMENTAL TENNIS COMPETITION *- by Lt K Bermingham*

On the afternoon of 9 July the sun made its annual guest appearance over Brawdy and the wind subsided (partially at least). This was most fortunate as it provided almost perfect conditions for the annual inter-Sqn doubles tennis competition and the singles knockout tennis tournament.

The doubles competition was the major event of the afternoon, with each Sqn having to nominate their two star players (by involuntary selection or other suitable means). After displays of textbook forehands, awesome smashes, cheeky backhands and devastating serves (not to mention a fair share of duff shots followed by a series of suitably chosen phrases) 237 Sig Sqn were declared the winners, with **LCpls Mayes** and **Fielding** convincingly winning every match they played.

The Champions. L-R LCpl Fielding, LCpl Mayes and Maj Craig, the umpire

The Singles knockout was also a hard-fought affair. No one was willing to stand up to **WO1 (RSM) Jolly** (by name and mostly by nature) and after what proved to be his seventh match of the day, he eventually won. It should however be noted that his opponent in the final, **Sig Pinwill**, was dressed for, and quite possibly playing, baseball.

The senior umpire for the day was our resident US Intelligence Officer, **Maj Jim Craig**, who had been chosen for this highly responsible position due to his surprise appointment as Tennis Supervising Officer (TSO). Having judged the second match, he discreetly approached the event organiser and quietly asked, 'Which lines am I supposed to be looking at?' Thankfully this belated bit of on-the-Job- training did not significantly interfere with the outcomes of the matches, and he managed to perform his role with such authority and aplomb that the winners genuinely thought that they were receiving their prizes from some resident US tennis guru!

The afternoon was brought to a close with strawberries and cream and, of course, Pimms. The verdict on the refreshments was mixed. Whilst **LCpl Clifton** munched his way through yet another bowl of strawberries, **Sig Shrimpton** looked with disdain at his glass, saying 'I ain't drinkin' that. It's got veg in it!' Anyway, despite its shortcomings, it was a great afternoon and it can be stated, hand on heart, that the red glow on everyone's cheeks was sun and not windburn, maybe enhanced ever so slightly by the odd glass (or two) of Pimms.

EXERCISE DRAGON'S CADRE *- by LCpl Ward (Top Student)*

EX DRAGON'S CADRE, held at Swynnerton and Sennybridge, 10-25 July, was a Regtl Cadre Course designed to develop the soldiering skills and confidence of some of the sigs in the unit with the top student receiving promotion to LCpl at the end of the course. Rumours of a beasting and hard work may have been responsible for whittling some of the 32 nominations for this course down to the 20 who actually started the course. However, despite the early morning BPFA and ACFT at the beginning the course 'to put us in the mood', the majority of the 17 who finally completed the course really enjoyed themselves.

The course began at Brawdy with classroom-based lessons on basic soldiering skills and ended up with the students delivering an individual ten-minute presentation on various topics, such as famous battles and leaders.

On the Sunday afternoon, after being split into our three sections, we deployed to Swynnerton for the trg phase. After a long, hot coach journey, we were rewarded by a couple of loops of the combat trail in the dark – fantastic. The rest of the week was just as action-packed, with various walk-through/talk-throughs of section attacks, harbour drills and patrolling. We tested our new knowledge by occupying a harbour patrol base for the last two days of this phase. As well as tactics trg we also completed an assault course and a log race. We were also invited to 'find our drill voice' with the help of **SSgt MacMullan** on the Swynnerton drill square.

The following Saturday was the initiative test day, EX MERSEY MAYHEM, which, as you might expect, took place in Liverpool. With only the civilian clothes we were wearing, our ID Card, a letter of tasks and a 'To whom it may concern' letter of explanation, we set off. To score points we had to use our initiative to complete a number of wide-ranging and occasionally bizarre tasks, such as getting onto live TV or radio, getting onto the pitch at Anfield, attending a live birth (was that bump real, **Sig McKenzie**?) and meeting a celebrity - cue: 'Oi, Luv! Aren't you that bird off *Brook Street*?' to **Jennifer Ellison** by a starstruck **Sig Luxford**. The day ended with a BBQ back at Swynerton, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

On Sunday we moved to Brecon and the start of the real fun, putting all we had learned so far into practice. After completing live firing on the Monday, we conducted a series of patrols that evening, with all of us experiencing the 'loneliness of command' as we rotated through the appointment of section comd every four hours throughout the night. We were pitted against a live 'enemy', who kept us all on a tiring, adrenalin-pumping roller coaster ride over the next three days with numerous ambushes and contacts.

The final attack on the Wednesday was the long-awaited FIBUA phase in Cilieni Village and was watched by the CO, Sqn OCs and Regtl hierarchy. Having taken and held the village for 24 hrs, we were then forced to bug out after sustaining a mortar attack at 05.00hrs the next morning. Our relief at reaching our transport at the ERV was short lived, as soon afterwards the veh was ambushed. A hard fight ensued, which resulted in us defeating the enemy, who could clearly see we weren't the same inexperienced and untrained group that had arrived in the area a few days earlier! Following a well-deserved breakfast at the farm and the inevitable ENDEX, our friendly neighbourhood Chinook kindly obliged by taking us back to Brawdy. Then all that was left was the final pass-off parade and the party, with a chance to laugh over the course video and photos.

5 DIVISION CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING COMPETITION
- by LCpl Williams

The Regtl Clay Shooting Team left Brawdy on Tuesday, 15 July for Donnington Bks, Telford, ready for the 5 Div Clay Shooting Competition the next day. At the shoot there were ten stands simulating every type of flight of clay pigeon imaginable. Considering the inexperience of the team (which included four

who had never shot before) the Regt competed gamely. The day's Billy the Kid was **SSgt Ed Mortimer**, who came a creditable third in the individual novice class with a score of 56 out of 100. The wooden spoon (for reasons best left unexplained) was awarded to **WO2 Dagnall**. The rest of the scores are as follows:

SSgt Mortimer	56	**LCpl Williams**	43
Lt Rhodes	53	**WO2 Dagnall**	36
Sig Kenyon	46	**Sig Smale**	26

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

OC	**Maj NGC Yardley**
SSM	**WO2 J Ainsworth**

ADVENTURE TRAINING WEEK, PEMBROKESHIRE 2 - 6 JUNE *- by LCpl Clifton*

Day One – Kayaking, Pembroke Moat/Mill Pond. After learning we were going kayaking in Pembroke Moat but not having been given a grid reference, it was time for a bit of squaddie initiative. In order to find Pembroke Moat, there was a good chance that we would have to find a moat somewhere in Pembroke. Now as moats usually surround castles, our logic concluded that we needed to do a bit of castle spotting. Unfortunately in this part of Wales there are enough castles to keep any self-respecting medieval estate agent in business for a good long while. After one or two visits to the wrong locations, much to the delight of **Nick Wilkinson**, we eventually found our particular spot of water to drop our small yellow boats in. Once the safety brief was given, by our resident kayak instructor, **Cpl Sean Todd**, it was time to get wet. Out of all the strokes and techniques taught, it was the 'T' rescue that was put into practice and perfected to (excuse the pun) a 'T'. However, any career aspirations **LCpl Dan Clifton** had of becoming a lifeguard were severely cut short, after countless failed attempts to rescue **SSgt Andy Davies**. Whenever **Andy** capsized, the shout of 'I'm coming!' from **Dan** was normally followed by a rather large splash. No matter how much fun our group had kayaking, it didn't seem to compare with the other two groups. A bold attempt to kayak from Haverfordwest to Pembroke Dock was thwarted by a strong river current, which seemed to ignore every geographical rule of the river flowing down to the sea. The water appeared to be flowing the other way round - it could only happen in Wales! Needless to say, a rescue had to be made about halfway down the river.

Day Two – Coasteering, Paintballing, Stackpole Quay, Heatherton. The previous night's merriment in the local seaside town of Tenby took its toll on some individuals taking part in the next day's activities, mainly due to some the blurry-eyed soldiers being forced to take on an extra bit of trekking in the early hours of the morning. I'd never heard of coasteering before this week, but I was soon to find out it is the best hangover cure in the world. For those like me who don't know what coasteering is, it's rock climbing, swimming and jumping off high rocks in a manner that would make lemmings proud. Next on the agenda was paintballing. After several different scenarios such as capture the flag, storm the fort and bodyguard, we were asked by **WO2 (SSM) John Ainsworth**, 'Right-oh, Lads, pound in the pot. Last man standing wins and takes the lot.' Guess who won?

Day Three – Mountain Biking, Planned Route. The old cliché of officers not being able to read maps isn't just exclusive to them. We managed to get lost about 250m outside camp gates. Who knew they built a new housing estate just outside the camp gates? We didn't! To find our way back on course, we took a short cut across country, with helpful directions from a local builder. Well, it was supposed to be adventure training. Once back on track we passed through St Florence. I just hoped that it wasn't an omen for the way my bottom was beginning to feel. After a lot more unpronounceable Welsh village names, we arrived at Saundersfoot, where the heavens opened with the sort of rain that made Noah think about popping down to the timber yard! Rain in Wales? Who would have thought it?

Day Four – Coasteering/Powerboating, Stackpole Quay/Neyland. Coasteering was always going to be interesting as we had two people in the group who weren't over keen on either water or heights. The latter was RAF, so I suppose that makes sense. Having said that, neither of them jacked, nor did the rest of the group give up on them. So really it helped to encompass three of the main aspects of adventure trg: confronting personal fear whilst pushing your own limits, and team building. In the afternoon we went power boating from Neyland to Dale, which is about ten to fifteen miles along the coast. Another chance to get wet again after just getting dry. To say the lads enjoyed being thrown about in a powerboat all afternoon is an understatement. The most common phrase being shouted out above the roar of the twin engines was 'I can't believe we're getting paid to do this!' The most common question of the day was 'Does anyone know when the next powerboating course is?'

Day Five – Trekking, Going Home – Pre-Planned Route/Brawdy. Due to the previous night being the last night in Tenby, those who found themselves on the trekking with **Sgt Paul Kinsey** were not really looking forward to this day's activities. Fortunately the first stop was Tenby for tea and toast. The next piece of good news was that we would be walking for only half the day. Sadly, but predictably, the rain found us again, so waterproofs were once more the order of the day. The local tacky gift shop were most grateful that the damp trekking party deemed their establishment worthy of our attention. Much of this appreciation may, however, be down to us buying a six-foot high inflatable champagne bottle from outside the shop, which had been there since the 1999 New Year's celebrations! The looks of the Guard Service on our arrival back at Penally Camp seemed to indicate that it was the sort of thing they expected to be brought back on the last night.

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol CJ Thackray**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Fisher**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Guy Richards**
SSM	**WO2 Gaz Greaves**

TRAINING WING

Trg Offr	**Maj Wally Drain**
Trg WO	**WO2 Andy Jones**

Another busy period has seen more changes in Trg Wing. **Sgt Ross Thubron** (along with **Kirsty** and **Ethan**) is off to Blandford to start his Yeomans Course and **Sgt Jackie Herbert** has moved to the families office. We welcome the Regtl Trg Offr (and 2IC), **Maj Wally Drain**, and his family. All the very best to **Cpl Karl Stenning** on his recent well-deserved selection for promotion.

The end of May saw EX GREEN GAMBIT 03, which took place at Sennelager Trg Centre. I think we broke only a few soldiers, and those who did finish had a thoroughly good time soldiering and blowing away all those garage cobwebs. After a week's build-up trg, they took part in an ex with a final assault on the Urban Dry Training Area (FIBUA) and it took the platoon a hard 3fi hours to clear through.

June saw off another bout of ITDs, including an offrs' pistol APWT. July approached and the Regt has since deployed on some well-earned adv trg, which will see them completing canoeing, climbing and hill walking, with a few visits to local amenities. Preparation is now well under way for future ITD trg, the Station Cadre course (run in conjunction with 7 Sig Regt, 280 and 252 Sig Sqns), Regtl exs and pre Sgts and Cpls courses. But before all that starts we're all having a bit of summer leave.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1 (FofS) Colin Hamilton**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Tony Black**

The loc of this year's Tp adv trg activities came as no surprise. The British Mohnesee Sailing Club is situated amongst some of the most enjoyable biking roads in north Germany. The week's activities available were windsurfing, paddle boarding and sailing. These were chosen by members of the Tp on a 'how wet will I get' basis. It wasn't long, however, before we discovered that when you're new to this sort of thing there is no limit to the amount of time you can spend counting fish. Best endeavour for the week must go to **LCpl Harvey**, considering that prior to this week's activities, she had only ever come into contact with water in the bathroom. Every day, there she was in the middle of the lake before anyone else had even put on their life jackets. Although everybody had a good time, it's safe to say that not a single member of TM Tp will be competing in the next Aquatic Olympics.

QM (TECHNICAL) DEPARTMENT

QM(T)	**Capt Mark Tivey**
RQMS	**WO2 Al Ironside**

A warm welcome tor **Capt Mark Tivey** and his family, to **LCpl Taff Davies**, the weightlifter and to **Sig Jerry Anderson**, the footballer. We say farewell to **Capt Paul Horton**, his wife **Sue** and Alfie the dog, on posting to 37 Sig Regt and to **Sig Claire Killhooley**, who left us for civilian life. We wish them all good luck

June caught up with us and the LSI was here, but with several months of hard work and motivation from **WO2 Al Ironside**, and **Sgt Glen Cavanagh**, we passed with flying colours. We have been busy putting the accounts on to Unicom and putting up with its user-friendly interface. We have also continued to enjoy several more sporting afternoons, where we have dabbled in a few more activities, the favourite of **Cpl Bozzy Boswell** being Laser Quest, were he remains undefeated. At the time of going to press, we have people away on adv trg and summer leave, and we all look forward to September, when exs start and we are all back into trg and working hard. A big thanks goes to everyone in the Dept for all their hard work over the last few months.

MT TROOP

MTWO	**WO2 B Batley**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Tremain**

We say farewell to **Sgt Mick Makin**, who leaves us to join 7 Sig Regt; to **Sig Needham**, who is off to 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn; and to **LCpl Reveley**, who has moved to 230 Sig Sqn. Good luck and farewell to you all. We welcome **Sgt Leader** from ACIO Doncaster, and **LCpl Swanick** and family from 1 Armd Div Sig Regt.

MT Tp have been working hard during the last few months, prepping for inspection after inspection and gaining good results in all. Most of the Tp are now on summer leave to recharge their batteries ready to start the ex season supporting ARRC HQ.

Sig McCann has returned from a KAPE tour trying to recruit young people for the Royal Corps. The rest of the MT personnel have been stagging on at the port of Emden, welcoming back the Gulf vehicles. Finally, the Tp Mascot, Ester the dog, has been promoted to SSgt. This now means that **Sgt Tremain** can't tell her what to do any more (not that she ever listened in the first place).

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Dominic Sharkey**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M Angove**

The Sqn welcomes **SSgt (SQMS) Bob Goldsmith**, who takes over duties as SQMS from SSgt (SQMS) **John McNeill**, who leaves on promotion to 1 Armd Div Sig Regt. We have fared particularly well on the latest promotion boards. **Cpls Tyrrell, Hampson, Lomas, Johnson** and **Nuttley** are set to make the huge transition to Sgt after success on the board. **Cpl Wayne Russell**, the busiest man in the Sqn as our senior clerk, has finally gained deserved recognition for his efforts and is due to leave us on promotion to Sgt in the near future.

Our numbers have been increased by a select number of bronzed warriors returning from OP TELIC. We are not saying that there are war stories galore, but we are developing a surplus of sandbags due to the constant 'when I was...' and 'one time, in Baghdad...'. Lucky Sods!

The Sqn would finally like to congratulate **Capt Nat Baker** on his recent marriage to **Lisa** in Las Vegas. Living proof that even guys who are going bald and wear glasses do eventually get married!

KAPE TOUR *- by Sig Hartshorne*

Early one Sunday morning in Elmpt, **Sigs McCann, Gilroy, Vance**, and I were off to UK for a KAPE tour. As soon as the blissful sound of Radio 1 and the typical UK wet weather appeared to greet us, we knew we were home again.

Our first port of call was ATR Bassingbourne, where three of us had carried out our basic training. But memories of doom and gloom were soon blown away when the sun decided to show up for the next two weeks and we didn't get shouted at once! We got down to the graft with other RSMPTs from 21, and 30 Sig Regts. 6,000 kids were visiting the display every day for three days and we showed them what the Corps is all about, even getting them to do various comd tasks.

Over the next week, we started the Southeast Schools Challenge, which included a lot of physical endurance for the kids - and for us. This included moving to seven locs in seven days. On this display we set up a lineman's challenge, where the kids had to crawl under a large cam net, set up a pole crossing and go under another cam net. (For some reason, the suggestions of further stages in the challenge, such as pint-downing were refused.) They then had to race back under to tear down in quick time.

After two weeks of entertaining energetic and enthusiastic kids, we were exhausted, but impressed with representing the Corps and ourselves. The KAPE tour was a success and one that I advise others to do, given half a chance. If nothing else, it can be used as nature's own contraceptive. That many children around over a short period can be a very scary thing!

VAMPIRE TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Sarah Clifford**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Wilkinson**

Once again it has been a very busy period for the Tp. The rest of Ptarmigan went to the Gulf and we received a visit from RSIT. Sometimes life just isn't fair! But we did very well, with **Cpl Andy Nuttley** at the top of the pile with the best det and an excellent report.

Now the ex season is drawing near, with EXs INSTANT WHIP and ARRCADE FUSION just around the corner, leading to an increased workload. The Tp has still managed to find time to have some fun, including a week's sailing in the UK. It was the first time most of us had sailed and everyone enjoyed it and took something away from the experience.

We say welcome to **Cpl Johno Johnson** and **Sig Stu Frankle**, who increase our numbers to an almost full Tp. A sad farewell goes to **Sgt Howard** on his posting on promotion to 255 Sig Sqn. Farewells also go to **LCpl Quinn**, who leaves us for 3 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn soon after his return from OP TELIC.

EXERCISE CATHODE EMISSION 03 *- by LCpl Atkinson*

The ex started with a night move from Javelin barracks to Kiel Yacht Club, where we set about getting some much-needed sleep whilst the vehs were guarded by the well-rested minibus posse who had slept all the way up.

Leaving Kiel early next morning, we set off on our last leg of the journey, taking us to the ex location in Aalborg Kasserner, in the north of Denmark. The only problem encountered for this journey was when it was discovered that not only do MacDonalds in Denmark not serve breakfast - they don't open until 10.00hrs! We arrived at Aalborg Kasserner at 12.00hrs and started a limited set-up and posted a crypto guard, manned by the same minibus posse. This allowed the remaining personnel to get a few hours' sleep before venturing into Aalborg itself for an evening mixing with the local populous.

On Monday the setup proper was carried out without any significant dramas, apart from the essential Sky TV link not coming in. Tuesday was spent testing, configuring, and ironing out any problems on the deployed equipt for the ex proper to start the next day. This all went quite smoothly, except for the 7 Sig Regt Talon det, who had satellite problems of their own to contend with, much to the annoyance of the Det Comd, **Cpl Wright**. The ex then proceeded pretty much to plan from then on, with only minor problems such as Switch 015 going down and Central 368 having crypto problems.

Many people noticed that the Danish cookhouse served up a variety of dishes comprising some form of meat with either boiled new potatoes or pasta for every meal apart from breakfast. This was quickly remedied in the last days of the ex with the introduction of mixed vegetables.

The highlight of CATHODE EMISSION was the calling of ENDEX and a parade with an international flavour, followed by a barbecue, including the ubiquitous potatoes and pasta. On departing from Aalborg, a comment was made concerning the awesome Danish security arrangements, most notably the 24 hrs a day un-manned guardroom.

We returned to Kiel and gate-crashed the yacht club barbecue, before having a good night's sleep and setting off the following morning to a most welcome homecoming at Javelin barracks. On the whole the ex was very rewarding for all who took part, especially on the CIS interoperability side of things.

EXERCISE YOSEMITE YOMP BACKSTOP
- by SSgt Dom Graham

7 members of 16 Sig Regt attended EX YOSEMITE YOMP BACKSTOP from 18 June - 14 July. The ex was to complete the arduous John Muir Trail (JMT), regarded as one of the world's hardest treks. The JMT covers three national parks in California (Yosemite, Sequoia and Sierra National) and can be attempted in either direction. We did it from north to south. The trip was unaided and involved all members carrying in excess of 70lb throughout the 16-day trip.

The trek started from Yosemite National Park and was to culminate in the ascent of Mount Whitney (America's highest peak) some 220 miles away in Sequoia National Park. To complete the JMT would mean all 7 members having to cross 8 high-altitude passes ranging from 10,500 to 13,500ft.

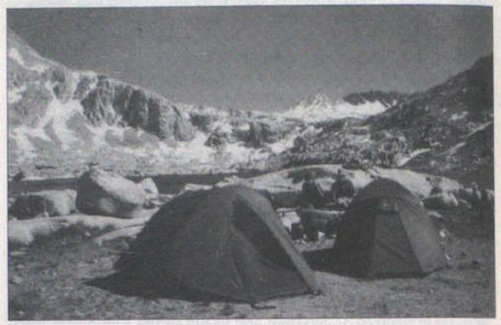
We started with the first climb of 6,000ft out of Yosemite Valley to Sunrise Creek. This climb proved to be the first real test of the group with most wishing they had not packed so much personal kit. We eventually arrived at camp on the first day at 10.00hrs after a small 6-mile, 2,000ft scenic route detour arranged by our illustrious JSMEL leader, **Lt McLeod**.

The next two days were spent going through to Donahue Pass, the first major pass encountered when completing the JMT from north to south. At 11,000ft, it is not one of the highest, but provides a challenging uphill section. As you get to the top of the pass the snow cover is very extensive, so navigation by compass (or GPS) is essential. After we had completed Donahue Pass, the weather turned bad, so a rough night was in store. The next morning we awoke to find around 7 inches of snow outside the tents.

With the first phase of the JMT nearly complete, we made our way down the mosquito-infested valley to Edison Lake. Arriving at Vermilion Valley Resort (VVR), we were greeted by other hikers doing the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT). This trek takes around 5 months to cover 2,500 miles from Mexico to Canada. All introduced themselves with really cheesy names (obviously picked up on the PCT) like T-bone, T-Tree and T-cut.

The second phase looked much harder on paper. There was a total of 6 passes still to complete and 9 days to do it in. By now **Sig Szjeok** was showing his true purpose in life by being able to analyse every hill and climb by just looking at the map, and becoming so skilled, that at one stage he could even predict how long it would take us in minutes and seconds. The next two days were spent completing two of the first four passes (Seldon Pass and Silver Pass). Views on both of these passes are some of the best on the trail.

Day 11 saw the long climb to get as near as we could to the top of Muir Pass. At 12,500ft, most hikers regard Muir Pass as the toughest pass to climb, with long snowfields and endless switchback climbs. Climbing it was the first sign that things over the next 24 hrs would start to get worse. To get over the pass would mean a big effort of 6 hrs' solid uphill work. A quote from **Sig Szjeok** summed up the feeling in the group 'My back hurts, my feet are sore and I'm always hungry, and just to make things worse, I still have 2,000ft to climb!'



At the base of Muir Pass, 12,000 ft

Over the next 24 hrs the condition of **Sig Szjeok's** blisters had worsened so much that they had started bleeding and no matter how many painkillers were administered the pain was too much. Other members were also experiencing exhaustion and fatigue, not good when you are 12,000ft up. It was decided that from Mather Pass, the group would leave the trail and head for a small village called Independence. With only one major pass left, everyone finished off whatever rations they had left, or if they couldn't **Lt McLeod** made sure he did. It was from here we made our way into what seemed like Death Valley (either it was already dead or was going to die).

Ironically, we arrived at Independence on 4 July, only to find that no buses were running until 6 July. Not to be put down by this, **Lt McLeod** showed everyone how not to get a lift. After 40 minutes of flashing his ID card and admin instruction to every driver in town, it was decided that the only way we would make it to the next town would be to either walk or call a taxi. We took the latter option!

It was a huge disappointment not to make the assent of Mount Whitney, but with most of us carrying injuries, it was the right decision. Overall the trip was a tough introduction to trekking in the US and it provided us with the satisfaction of attempting one of the most challenging treks in the world. Another disappointment was not meeting any wild bears. Los Angeles beckoned for some well-earned R&R. But that is another story.

EXERCISE INDIANS' REVENGE

After a stretch of hard graft, IS Tp finally managed to organise some down time in Bavaria. This was made possible thanks to **WO1 Rudenko**, who took on the challenge of getting all the cone heads away into the countryside.

On the first day, we awoke to find that we were scrambling 15km over mountains (a nice and gentle break in). It was obvious that from that day, **LCpl Pete O'Connor** had made the decision to be the rear marker for the 2 weeks. As the week progressed and the mountains became steeper, **Pete** also took an interest in staring at his feet whilst tabbing up Everest.

Our illustrious leaders **Capt Rutherford**, **WO2 Waters** and **WO2 Evans** dominated the hills. Morale was great, the birds singing, etc. as we prepared for what we were told was a nice, pleasant ridgeline walk with the CO. This turned out to be 7 mountains back to back and you could almost hear the character being built with every step.

The second week unfolded to be more relaxed with a wide range of activities on offer. These varied from Dachau Concentration Camp and the Salt Mines to White Water Rafting.

Under Control

After being all walked out for another year and pleasantly unwound. The Tp is now all ready to go back to work doing what we do best. On return to work we can look forward to multiple exs, starting with ARRCADE FUSION and concurrently other supporting roles in UK. During the height of the busy season we can also expect to find ourselves in Bosnia for 6 months! Who are the lucky devils?

View from the bridge

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**LtCol I Hooper**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) GC Smith**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

Regt Ops has been ticking over at a comfortable pace as the new team is now firmly established on OP TELIC 2. Welcome back to **Capt Sideras**, who has been topping up his tan in the Gulf. **Capt Lindsey Courage** has now joined the ops team as **Capt Heidi Hughes** has escaped to the 220 Sqn hangar to take up the post of 2IC. Sadly we must say farewell to **Sgt Callum Black**, who is off to 15 Sig Regt. Hello to his replacement, **SSgt Tait**, who joins us from 238 Sig Sqn.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj R Lovett**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) D Taylor**

The Sqn has now returned from the Gulf and has seen a complete hierarchy changeover. Farewell to **Maj Spencer Mannings**, who has handed over to **Maj Bob Lovett**. **Capt Lindsey Courage** hands over the 2IC slot to **Capt Heidi Hughes**. Welcome to **WO2 (SSM) Dave Taylor** who has taken over from **WO2 (SSM) O'Neill**, who departs on promotion to Northern Ireland. Sqn Ops says farewell to **WO2 (YofS) Mark Bentley** and **SSgt (FofS) Gaz Walton** and hello to **WO2 (YofS) Mick Murphy** and **SSgt (FofS) Mark Ebdon**. Departing the Sqn, but not moving too far away, we say cheerio to **SSgt (SQMS) Sid Barrass**, as he moves over to Trg Wing, and hello to **SSgt (SQMS) Steve Pope**, who comes into SHQ Tp from Delta Tp. So long from the Squadron MT to **SSgt** 'Jobbo' **Jobson**, who departed Colerne with his promotion and has taken up his new role as SQMS at Brawdy. Welcome to his replacement, **Sgt John King**, from 33 Sig Regt (V). Finally a warm welcome to **Sgt Barney Gray**, who joins the tech wksps.

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt K Hannaford**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt A Dutton**

Life in the Tp is slowly returning to normal, post OP TELIC. The work on the dets continues in preparation for the exs that start shortly after summer leave. A warm welcome to **Sig Dave Butterworth** and **Sig Emma Gilbert**.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt P Wright**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D Burdus**

Farewell to **LCpl Kelly Berry**, who goes to 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt and to **SSgt Steve Pope**, who takes over as SQMS. Good Luck! Congratulations to **LCpl Lori Ridsdel** who is expecting a baby any time soon.

Welcomes go to **SSgt Dan Burdus**, who joins us from the Trg Wing, to **LCpl Merrick** from 20 Bde, to **Sig Copland** and **Sig Hardy** who join us from 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt, and to **Sigs Murphy**, **Lewisham**, **Stafford**, **Moy**, **Thurrel** and **Owen**, who are fresh from the factory.

GOLF TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt I Bangurah**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt C Hook**

It has been a strange couple of months for Golf Tp, with many members arriving back from service in the Gulf at different times. We are now almost back to full strength with the guys and girls, all refreshed from POTL, poised at the Tp office door with summer leave applications! Work continues, with the majority of vehs having arrived back, and requiring turnaround. Farewell to **Capt Catherine Jardine**, who is off to Blandford, where she takes up the role of Officer Recruiting. Goodbye also to **SSgt Paul Beattie**, who returned early from OP TELIC, to take up his new role in 19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, only to re-deploy immediately back to the Gulf. Welcome to **SSgt Chey Hook**. **Cpl Chaffer** heads off to Blandford, **LCpl Sheppard** for life as a civilian (good luck), and **LCpl Taylor** to Herford. **2Lt Izzy Bangurah** is still on his Troopies course and will take over the reins on his return to Colerne.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj S France**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M Brown**

A select group of personnel from 244 Sig Sqn, led by **Maj Steve France** are deployed on OP TELIC 2. In what is likely to be an ongoing commitment, plans are well underway to reduce the

numbers to a tp by mid-October. In the meantime, the remainder of the Sqn have seized the opportunity to consolidate itself with in-house trg and prep for exs due to commence later in the summer.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt C Hill**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Cain**

Alpha Tp says goodbye to **LCpl Steve Giroux**, who has left for 14 Sig Regt and to **LCpl Hall**, who is off to 1 Armd Div Sig Regt. **Sig Gould** left for pastures new in Civvy Street. New arrivals include **LCpl Kev Webster** from the Sig Pl at Warminster, **LCpl Al Weaver** from 249 Sig Sqn in Bulford (having also had a spell working with 264 Sig Sqn), and **LCpl Heath Greville**, from Germany. From RSS Blandford, are **Sigs Vicki Peck**, **Steve Knighton**, **Phil Brown** and **Daniels.**

The Tp organised an orienteering/volleyball event followed by lots of beer and headed up by **Sgt Bishop**, **LCpl Kev Webster** and **Sig Bramfit**. The prizes went to Team Chaz, and best effort to **Cpl Dan Slaughter**, as he was the only one who didn't cheat. Team Chaz also cleaning up by winning the Volleyball, but not the drinking! The Tp also supplied a good portion of the inter Sqn Tug of War team.

Regt Orienteering Team

Thomas Dorking, a work experiencer, arrived on trade trg week so we decided to liven his day up with a bit of BV trg on the driver trg area. His only comment was 'Can I have one for Christmas?' - Bless him.

Thomas Dorking (Left) shaken but not stirred

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt L Fish**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt M Pay**

Over the past few months the Tp has been busily involved in the deployment of pers and equipt to OP TELIC 2. We welcome **LCpls Spencer** and **Powell**, **Sigs Fewtrell**, **Barnard**, **Davis** and **Salvidge** from the factory. Unfortunately we have had to say farewell to **Sigs Oxley**, and **Lake** and **Sgt Jones**, who all got a send off at the *Fox and Dogs*. **Sig Bogart** seems to have monopolised the market in orienteering and also represented the Regt in a shooting competition at Bisley.

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Z White**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt G Smilie**

Members of Hotel Tp were involved in an ex in June that saw some 35 members of the Regt taking part in hill-walking and nav in the Black Mountains and Brecon Beacons. Having been informed that it would take the form of a nice couple of days in some picturesque scenery, it felt more like 264 Sqn selection. After an evening of nav refresher trg, we set off into the Black Mountains as a gp, consisting of **SSgt Gav Smilie**, **Cpl Janine Teague**, **LCpl Tracey Walker**, **Sig Jenny Nicholson** and **Sig Shrubsole**. We took it in turns to navigate, and **SSgt Smilie** decided he knew a shortcut (which seemed good at the time) but ended up being a vertical drop through ferns – you just can't get the staff these days! The following day saw another long, testing route in the Brecon Beacons, including the infamous VW valley. With the hill-walking complete, fourteen volunteers remained to assist a local unit practise their military drills for the day, by serving as enemy. Split into five groups for various stands, we assisted in various terrorist scenarios, holding up cars, getting our hands on some Gucci weapons and driving cars into other cars. There was some surprisingly good acting by some of those involved – some were just a little too good at screaming and pretending to be scared!

OPERATION TELIC 2 - *by 2Lt Chris Hill*

Between 11 and 16 June 2003, elements of the Sqn deployed on OP TELIC 2 to replace the worn out 220 Sig Sqn. On arrival in theatre, we had our first taste of the weather, a toasty 32°C, a temperature that wouldn't have been too bad during the day, but a little warm at 01.30hrs.

Instead of being greeted by an air-conditioned coach to drive us to Kuwait for the acclimatisation period, we were greeted by 220 Sqn's SSM and **Cpl Fred Hazard** with a Bedford. Next followed the guided tour of the JHF(I) via the SQMS Dept to our new home at the top of 84 steps on the fourth floor of the admin building at Basrah International Airport (BIA). After the initial welcome by our 220 Sqn colleagues, we had to hit the ground running to start the handover. (Quite possibly the first time in many a week that 220 Sqn personnel have had to work as their suntans were better than **George Michael's** and **Peter Stringfellow's** put together!). The RDC shift seemed to adapt quite quickly to their new surroundings and both **Cpls Johnny Brookwell** and **Matt Burton** could be seen smiling contently all day, and no doubt they shall probably paint the RDC walls in Corps colours.

Life in Deployment Tp was not as easy. Firstly, the lack of CESs delayed the initial handover of the vehs. Secondly, trying to get hold of the det comds was also quite hard, as they were all at the Marble Palace in Kuwait topping up their suntans. So after a challenging few days sweating away, we've managed to take over the FOB Det in Al Amarah with **LCpl Jamie Smith**, **Sig Dan Slessor** and **Sig Sidorowicz** being deployed. **SSgt Mo Pay** has now got a Tp he can be proud of. Already the inspections are coming thick and fast, much to the delight of the crews who are more than happy with being active!

At present Deployment Tp is still providing 1 FOB brick of 2 vehs, 3 spec task vehs (1 of which is up country in Al Amarah supporting 1KOSB BG, who have taken over from 1 PARA BG). All are providing ground-to-ground and ground-to-air comms across HF, VHF and UHF bands. Finally we have our industrious MAOT det, manned by **Cpl Dave Walker** and **Sig Bill Harris**, who are more than happy at the moment gallivanting around the country in search of new HLSs. It is amazing that every HLS they recce is somewhere near Shaiba's Pizza Hut! The Sqn is now an effective asset within JHF and is looking forward to a sunny and enjoyable tour in Iraq

QUICK IMPACT PROJECT (QIP) - *by Lt Zoe White*

There is currently a pot of gold provided by Dept for International Development (DFID) for projects conducted for 'the good and benefit of the people of Southern Iraq'. In order to distribute this money quickly, personnel in theatre are invited to look for areas they consider would benefit the local community as a whole and come up with a plan to best implement the solution. QIPs have been completed for activities such as supplying uniforms for the Basra Police Force, employing street cleaners, renovating community buildings such as banks and rebuilding schools and medical centres.

The QIPs that 244 Sig Sqn have decided to concentrate on are school based. As project manager, **Lt Zoe White** conducted a recce of the city in mid June with the help of CPA and Div and found two schools on a piece of ground in the Northern Basra rural area of Al Garmah. The first meeting proved to be more like a semaphore lesson, with much waving of hands and a charade-style demonstration from both the teaching staff and ourselves. On later visits it transpired that much of this animation had been an attempt to point out the effects of the occupation by Fedhayeen soldiers during the war. Evidence of this was also seen with the discovery of mortar rounds amongst the rubble in the school.

With regards war damage, the smaller school, Hamoraby Primary, had suffered only one direct hit to a corner wall, but had incurred blast damage from the more heavily attacked adjacent Al Karmah building. This school has lost 6 classrooms, 2 storerooms and suffered serious structural damage to load bearing pillars and walls. The majority of the work required though, is due to neglect, as there has been little work done on the schools since being built by the British in the 1930's. Therefore much of the work involves the replacement of glass in windows, re-hanging doors, re-plastering and re-painting all surfaces. The remit of the project manager is to employ a contractor for the work required and direct the rebuild operations. A real life *Changing Rooms*, but with an irritating bird from Gibraltar instead of a ginger weasel from Scotland. The beauty of these projects is the impact that employing a local workforce has on small areas. There will be in excess of 350 people employed during the rebuild process, ensuring that the QIPs are indirectly affecting many more people than just the initial numbers of school children. Also the provision of clean running water will go a long way to improving the health of the pupils.

Hamoraby and Al Karmah are typically resourceful schools and are split into six actual registering schools with the 1,400 pupils attending at different times of the day. Every visit to the schools has elicited a warm and friendly, if inquisitive, welcome from both pupils and staff. By the time this goes to press the work at Hamoraby and Al Karmah should be complete and the search for another suitable QIP will be on.

JULIET TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Yamkumar Gurung**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Surje Gurung**

The arrival of Gurkhas at Colerne marked the rejuvenation of shooting in the Regt. We competed in the Corps SAAM and secured third place in the Corps, as well as qualifying for Bisley from within 5 Div. Five members of Juliet Tp succeeded in getting into the Army 100 at Bisley this year. That's 20% of Juliet Tp and 5% of the British Army entries! The five qualifiers were **Capt Yam Gurung**, **SSgt Surje Gurung**, **Sig Prabeen Gurung**, **Sig Sekendra Gurung** and **LCpl Khagendra Tamang.**

Juliet Tp was also heavily involved in the QG Sigs and Oxfam (GB) led charity event EX TRAILWALKER (UK) in late July. The team competition, covered over 100km to raise money for charities. The Tp worked at one of the eleven checkpoints en route, providing medical and feeding support. Their sleepless and vital efforts enabled competitors to complete the event and it is anticipated that it will raise in excess of £100,000 each for both Gurkha Welfare Trust and Oxfam (GB).

Members of J Tp on the March...

...and Shoot

In late June, **Cpl Sun** and **LCpl Ashok** visited the children's ward with **Brig Jackman** at the Bristol Royal Hospital as part of a programme of events laid on by Gurkha Welfare Trust. The visit, which took place prior to the Beating of the Retreat by the Band of the Bde of Gurkhas, was organised to enable the children to meet two Gurkhas and to talk about life in Nepal.

EXCHANGE AU PAIR SCHEME - *by SSgt (YofS) Tharby*

The aim of the scheme is 'to develop individual interoperability and basic language skills where appropriate at unit level whilst enhancing bilateral relationship in support of Military Tasks.' I read through the lines and saw a great opportunity to visit another country for two weeks with maximum tourist opportunities and at minimal cost.

When informed that my destination was Latvia, I asked 'Where?' It being a member of the former USSR and a well-known source of mediocre Eurovision Song Contest entries, I was sceptical. On my arrival I was met by **Capt Egils Kupcs**, Camp Comd of the Latvian National Armed Forces Signal School, the Latvian equivalent of RSS. I was informed that the school was small. Two buildings and a football pitch, however, is very small, so there similarities with Blandford end.

As part of my visit, I was requested by TRADOC, the Latvian equivalent of ATRA, to analyse and assess the school's trg programmes. During my time in Latvia I visited various military units and a number of famous tourist locations. I found the Latvians to be very friendly, very keen to speak English and very keen to join NATO. A thoroughly enjoyable experience and one that I would commend to others.

GYMNASIUM

SSI	**SSgt (SSI) R Clash**

Bristol Rovers FC visited the Gym here at Colerne for the second time in two years for a week of pre-season trg. The Rovers had a

pretty disappointing season last time out and arrived at Colerne with a much-strengthened squad and a new impetus. The week consisted of football trg in the mornings, led by the Rovers manager, **Ray Graydon** and PT in the afternoon, led by **SSgt (SSI) Russ Clash**.

The first day of trg saw the Rovers' squad attempt the BPFA with some excellent results. A number of players achieved 300 points, with the first player on the run coming in at 7.35. Other activities during the week included combat swimming, superstars, minor team games, comd tasks, Speed Agility and Quickness (SAQ) trg and clay pigeon shooting. The superstar's competition provided great amusement when the gym staff team beat two of the Rover's teams in the free kick competition. The highlight of the week was definitely the stretcher race, with the local media watching on. The players completed a gruelling two-mile course in sweltering conditions, which tested the players to their limits. The week was thoroughly enjoyed by all those concerned and the Regt has now built up a very good relationship with the Club. Their intention is now to use the facilities throughout the year as an alternative training venue. We wish The Pirates every success with the forthcoming season. PT Staff involved in the week included **LCpl Lee Southernwood**, **LCpl Laura Hopkins**, **LCpl Pete Simon** and **Sig Craig Shell**.

Recent events in the Gym have also included the Colerne Activities Week (in which 280 school children attended activities each day) the Army Novice Triathlon Week and the Inter-Sqn Tug of War. Bath Rugby Club have also been using the facilities as they prepare for the forthcoming season in the Zurich Premiership.

This month we have to say goodbye to a long serving member of the gym staff, **LCpl Laura Hopkins**, who is posted with her husband, **Cpl Si Hopkins**, to 30 Sig Regt. The Gym now looks forward to a busy period of Inter-Sqn Competitions, culminating in the Inter-Sqn Boxing in January 04.

REGIMENTAL CANOEING - *by WO2 (RQMS) Howson*

On arrival in the Regt, I discovered that there was no Canoe Club but that keen canoeists, **SSGT (YofS) Ian Wilson** and **LCpl Matt Lucking** were already in the unit. With a bit of press-ganging and some advertising on Regt Orders, several members of the Regt began to join the new Club.

Within 3 weeks of the Club establishing, we entered the Army Slalom Championships in Llandysul, Wales, where **LCpl Matt Lucking** finished a very credible sixth overall, resulting in his selection for the Army squad to compete in the Inter-Services Slalom competition in October 03.

No sooner was the first competition out of the way, it was full steam ahead to get a team formed and trained to go to Monmouth to contest the Army Sprint and Marathon Championships. Finding volunteers to learn to paddle the highly unstable K2 racing boats I had 'borrowed' from various units was no mean feat. Getting them to be confident, stable and competitive seemed impossible. Nevertheless, July came and the team set out to Monmouth. After two days intensive trg, the10-strong team entered a weekend of exciting races. This saw the K2 partnership of **LCpl Sarah Riches** and **Sig Jo Lyle** win silver medals in the Ladies' 500m Sprints, a feat matched by myself and **SSgt (YofS) Ian Wilson** in the Men's K2 500m and 1,000m Sprints. The second day of racing was the marathon, and the two K2 teams built on their successes of the previous day by each achieving another second place and subsequent selection for the Army squad for the Inter-Services Sprint and Marathon races at Home Pierpoint in September 03. In the Class 4 (aka '2- man barge') event, **LCpl Williams** and **Cfn Tony Wilson** came first in their marathon race, bringing the total number of medals gained by the team to ten silver and two gold.

In the months ahead the club aims to build on these initial successes and ultimately train teams to compete in the 2004 Devizes to Westminster race.

REGIMENTAL ATHLETICS - *by Capt Alec Masson*

The success of both the Regtl men's and women's squads this season in Army athletics has been outstanding. Not only has the team been successful, but a number of individuals have gone on to compete at a higher level. In the world of Army Athletics, the Regt was only matched by 3 CS Regt, who have nine International runners and throwers in their ranks, one being **Kelly Morgan**, the England and Commonwealth javelin thrower. Listed below are the achievements that individuals and teams, both male and female, have been achieved during the 2003 season. A total of 20 athletes competed for the Corps in this year's inter-Corps competition.

The Regt's Athletics team, male and female, were the 5 Div Championship winners and the Morrison Cup winners. In the Army Championships, the female team secured Female Army Champions and the male team were Army runners-up.

At the Army Individual Championships, wins were secured in the Female Junior 200m (**LCpl McEwan**), 1500m (**Sig Smith**), 5,000m (**Sig Chepkwony**), Junior 110m Hurdles & 400m Hurdles (**Sig Lewis**), High Jump (**LCpl Williams**), Junior Shot Put and Discus (**Sig Campbell**), Female Shot Put and Discus (**LCpl Tagilala**) and Junior Hammer (**Sig Young**).

At the Wiltshire Championships, wins and new county records were secured in the 5,000m (**Sig Chepkwony** and **Sig Harvey**). Also, wins in the 110m Hurdles, 400m Hurdles and long jump (**LCpl Williams**), 400m Hurdles (**Sig Cartwright**) and Javelin (**LCpl Taglilala**).

The following individuals qualified for the Inter-Services: **LCpl Williams**, **LCpl Tagilala**, **Sig Cartwright** and **Sig Young**. **LCpl Williams** finished in second place in the Army Decathlon, and **Sig Cartwright** finished second in the Heptathlon.

In addition to the success on the track and field, **OCdt Neil Swift** has drawn his sabbatical year of full-time Triathlon trg to a successful conclusion by winning the Army Olympic Distance Triathlon Championships held in Bournemouth in July. Three weeks later, as part of the Army squad, he helped to secure an Army victory and step up for the winners medal. **OCdt Swift** starts at Sandhurst in September.

ARMY

31 (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col SG Hutchinson MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Paterson**

ALL CHANGE

It has been a hectic couple of months in 31 Sig Regt (V), particularly in RHQ, as, with a couple of exceptions, every man and his dog from the permanent staff has changed over. Firstly **Lt Col Paul Wenlock** has relinquished comd after 2fi years of sterling work, culminating in a hugely successful Summer Camp split between Gibraltar and Thetford. We take this opportunity to thank him for the hard work and long hours (over 75 MTDs a year over and above his day job) he has put into the Regt. He will be sorely missed. Taking over is **Lt Col Simon Hutchinson MBE**, fresh from MCM Div and strongly denying the fact that the large turnover of permanent staff had anything to do with his pulling strings as SO1 (Soldiers).

Other changes have involved the Trg Maj, **Maj Dick Gamble**, donning his leathers and riding off into the distance to a recruiting job in London District. His replacement is **Maj Steve Smoothy** from the RCMO job in Blandford. The QM, **Maj Krishna Gurung** has gone to Nepal for 5 months of Ghurka leave, after handing over to **Capt 'Blod' Godwin**. The Adjt, **Capt Fiona Stewart**, has somehow managed to get herself a 2-year posting to Melbourne.

We have said goodbye to **W02 (YofS) Smith**, who has gone to the BOWMAN Project. His replacement is **W02 (YofS) Monger**, fresh from teaching gunners how to use their radios at Larkhill. **W02 (FofS) Pearson** has left us, to be replaced by **W02 (FofS) Palmer**, fresh from 2 Sig Regt and OP TELIC. We also said goodbye to the RAOWO, **W02 McGowan**, who left us to take up a similar post closer to home.

Elsewhere in the Regt, **Maj Sarah Streete** has left after 2 years as OC 56 Sig Sqn to work in HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde for a short while before taking comd of 97 (BALKANS) Sig Sqn early next year. HQ Sqn also has a new OC in **Maj Steve Hudson** from 94 (BY) Sig Sqn. He takes over from **Capt Peter Knowles**, who will revert back to being 2IC HQ & MTO, after deciding that 2 TA jobs on top of being a policeman was more than enough. OC 94 (BY) Sig 1 Sqn, **Maj Hugh Robertson** has left us to assume comd of 71 (Y) Sig Regt (V), leaving **Maj Simon Walker** with the reins.

SSgt Fardy has gone to 30 Sig Regt as a SQMS and has been replaced by **SSgt Brooksbank** as PSI of 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn. **SSgt Gronn** has arrived to fill the gap as PSI 56 Sig Sqn and finally, **SSgt Morris** has left us as PSI LAD to go to the BOWMAN conversion team at Ashchurch and will soon be replaced by **SSgt Green**.

EXERCISE CAPITAL BROADCAST

With 39 people on OP TELIC 1, 12 on OP TELIC 2, 35 on courses in lieu of Camp and 95 soldiers in Gibraltar on EX MARBLE TOR with 94 (BY) Sig Sqn, Regtl Camp 03 was never going to be massive. However, when it was being planned and facilities were being bid for, we were unaware that these other draws would be made on the Regt's manpower. So on EX CAPITAL BROADCAST, we found ourselves in the fortunate situation of having 56 soldiers on Camp with a whole Regt's worth of facilities to play with.

The Anglian Government Forces (AGF). LR Sgt Butler, W02(YofS) Monger, SSgt Wringe, SSgt Gron and Capt Rodger.

After deploying to STANTA and completing a PACER and some trade skills revision, the Officers were hit with their first task. This was to provide Comms, Security and Life Support to the UN transitional Authority in Breklanistan (UNTAB) as it negotiated a ceasefire between the Anglian Government Forces (AGF) and the Breklanistan Liberation Front (BLF). No sooner had they got their heads around the problem, the usual happened and the whole mission was brought forward 24 hours, so they had to move 'now.' After a certain amount of pandemonium, **Maj James Gagen** gripped his tps and they were off. As usual it wasn't long before the UN-sponsored ceasefire was looking shaky, and as tension in the area increased, so did the operational tempo.

The Breklanistan Liberation Front (BLF, Sgt 'Adjutante' Dunlop and W02(RQMS) 'Gen Mustapha Mujuhadeen' Hadley

The first major task was to assist UNTAB to get a group of AGF deserters to leave the demilitarized village of Eastmere. As UNTAB negotiated, the tps were put through an intensive FIBUA trg package by the Perm Staff in the guise of 8 Tactical Intervention Training Squad (8 TITS). This included a demonstration on house clearance, methods of entry, throwing Chorley grenades, defence of a house and practice in house-clearing techniques.

It soon became clear that UNTAB was not succeeding in persuading the AGF deserters to leave, and before the shocked gaze of the tps and observers, a UNTAB observer (the RSM) was shot dead by the AGF. This changed things completely, so now the tps (under command of OC LAD) had to destroy the AGF deserters. The assault was carried out with speed and gusto, although 2 Sec got a little lost and had to pick their way through a fairly vicious barbed wire entanglement. After a short but intensive battle, the AGF were defeated and the tps were able to return to their normal mission in support of UNTAB. The FIBUA phase was best summed up by **Lt Kinrade** who, when asked her comments, said 'I haven't a clue how well it went, but it was bloody good fun.'

Next, before an intensive field firing package, it was off to Colchester for a couple of days, where all but one passed their APWT, the TM relived his pistol days from 264 Sig Sqn and **Sgt Dunlop** missed a sight that the rest of the Perm Staff will remember for the rest of their lives.

Advancing to contact.

Back in STANTA the ex started to hot up as the ceasefire looked increasingly fragile. There were live firing ranges both day and to hunt down and kill dissident AGF fighters in both urban and rural environments, there were protests by high-ranking AGF Generals

and hospitality visits by BLF tribal leaders bringing food. There were also IVCPs to deal with, anti-UN protests, IEDs, refugees, drive-by shootings, and a visit from **Lt Col Seaward**, Comd US 1111th Sig Bn and a notional UN Security Council Rep. To cap it all there was even an NBC battle run.

All of this activity meant that the ceasefire was irrevocably broken and UNTAB had to evacuate. Unfortunately for UNTAB and the tps, their HLS was compromised, and after mortar fire had destroyed their vehs, they were attacked in force and forced to move by night to an ERV. Unfortunately **Capt Anthony Lamb** failed to see the obvious bridge in the dark and led his tps through a particularly deep river.

Before the tps could consider themselves safe, there was the final task of defending the ERV against a determined attack by the AGF. This took the form of a Tp defensive live shoot, which went on for 2fi hrs! With the enemy all dead, it was time to extract to Bodney Camp to meet the Bde Comd for some well-earned tea and medals (and a few beers).

Capt Knowles and Cpl Light provide covering fire.

32 (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col EM Blyth TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) JH Greenwood**

23781574 SERGEANT JACKIE DOLLEN – A HISTORY LESSON

1961 was a gloomy year for Europe. **Winston Churchill's** dire predictions of 'an Iron Curtain falling across Europe' had become all too tragically true as the Soviet Union commenced and completed the Berlin Wall. It was an equally gloomy year for Scotland, as our football team was put to the sword 9-3 by a rampant English team at Wembley. It was, however, a very good year for 52 (Lowland) Sig Regt (V) as, only 15 days after that catastrophic sporting result, **23781574 Sig Dollen J** passed, for the first time, through the doors of 21 Jardine Street. It was to be the start of a very long and profitable partnership. As an aside, this fact rules out the possibility that **JD** could ever have been Field Marshall Rommel's driver – even **JD** was a mere babe in arms, when the Desert Fox was scampering across the deserts of Libya.

JD's first medical in May 1961 showed him to be of sound health and 'good physique'. This was one characteristic that was never to change. His physical fitness has been one of his outstanding assets. He consistently out-performs other members of the Regt who are less than half his age and he regularly competes in the Glasgow Half-marathon. 1962 was another controversial year, the Cuban missile crisis raged off the southern coast of Florida and the last tramcar ever to run in Glasgow pulled into the sidings at Auchenshuggle. Such pandemonium had no effect on **JD**, who by this time, was quickly into his stride and had already attained his B3 Lineman qualification. In 1967 as **Jock Stein's** Lisbon Lions triumphed in Portugal, the TA experienced drastic reorganisations and reductions. Nevertheless, **LCpl Dollen** was still with the Regt and by this stage the Ministry of Labour recorded his civilian occupation as Labourer with the Cleansing Department of the Glasgow Corporation. These cleansing skills were to come in handy in later years with the TA. One former recruit (now the Regtl Ops Offr) will substantiate this, as he was once taught by **JD** to clean a toilet in a most interesting and original manner.

As **Cpl Dollen** entered his twelfth year with the Regt, the Yom Kippur War raged in the Middle East and Scotland took on Brazil and **Pele** at a packed Hampden. Although Scotland lost that day, it was to be a successful year for **Cpl Dollen**. He received his Efficiency Medal and qualified as a B2 Lineman. In later years, **JD** was to be one of the very few individuals privileged enough to wear the distinctive brown leather Liney's belt. In 1974, just as **Nixon** was leaving the post of President of the USA following

'Who goes there?' Jackie keeps guard

Watergate, **JD** was taking up the post of PMC of the Junior Ranks Club. A good example of his powerful influence came along during Annual Camp one year in Scarborough. A nervous young new recruit (now the QM (V)) went out for a pint at a local pub with the experienced Cpl. At 10:30pm the raw recruit nervously glanced at his watch, painfully aware that it was closing time. **Cpl Dollen** was having none of it. Not only did he arrange for a lock-in until 3am, he also arranged for transport back to Camp courtesy of the pub-owner's shiny new Jaguar. I believe that's what they used to call panache.

1976 saw soaring temperatures and *Shang-a-Lang* with the Bay City Rollers (in fact many remain convinced that **JD's** dress for annual camp that year was tartan hot-pants, platforms and a tartan scarf tied elegantly around his wrist) On an equally impressive scale, it was the year that **Sgt Dollen** received his first Lord Lieutenant's Certificate. This was an early recognition of the value he had brought to the Regt. The next year, as the Queen celebrated her Silver Jubilee, **JD** celebrated promotion to SSgt. In those days, voluntary reversion to a lower rank was common practice, and in 1979, as the Soviet tanks rumbled into Afghanistan and Devolution failed to win support in Scotland, **JD** voluntarily reverted to Sergeant. However, this came only a few weeks after he received the first of many clasps on his Efficiency Medal. Into the 1980s and by this stage **JD** was now the caretaker, a job that dovetailed perfectly with his TA duties. It also allowed him the opportunity to take his dog for a walk around the TAC in the late evenings. Unconfirmed reports seem to suggest that these walks were engineered only to allow the dog to 'mark

it's territory' in the Offrs' Mess – but I'm sure that **JD** was too much of a gentleman to let that happen.

As **Mikhail Gorbachev** was heralding a new era of Glasnost, **JD** was picking up the second clasp on his Efficiency Medal in 1985 and by the time he had picked up his third clasp in 1992, the collapse of the Iron Curtain was already a distant memory.

As well as experience and professionalism, **JD** has always had a bit of a reputation for showmanship. This was clearly evidenced when one year, the Regt took on the Southern Upland Way. At the end of one long hard day's walking, the team was ensconced in a small pub in Dunbar, and soon after their arrival, a certain SSM was belting out a noise on the Karaoke. As the SSM worked through her melody, she marvelled at the enthusiastic reception of the assembled audience. However, unknown to her, the rapturous applause was not for the singing, it was for **JD**, who was stood behind her, and showing off rather a lot of that marvellous physique referred to earlier. In 1997, as the Tories were being swept away from office and Scotland finally got Devolution, **JD** inevitably picked up the fourth clasp to his Efficiency Medal. But even then, that was not the end of the accolades, in 2001 as sleaze ruled the Scottish Parliament and **First Minister McLeish** resigned, **JD** received both his Volunteer Reserves Service Medal and, arguably the greatest acknowledgement to his service, the Commander-in-Chief's Certificate of Meritorious Service.

Sgt Jackie Dollen once again shows the young 'uns how it's done

It is not easy to summarise **JD's** TA career and the positive effect he has on those around him - indeed much of what could be said has been said already. However, in world often obsessed with numbers, these statistics perhaps best sum up **JD's** contribution to the Regt. He has spent over 6fi years in out-of-camp trg and in excess of 14 months on annual camp; he's had 24 FE medicals; he's seen over 20 RSMs and COs come and go; he's got four clasps to his efficiency medal; two Lord Lieutenant's Certificates; one Volunteer Reserve Service Medal and the C-in-C's Certificate of Meritorious Service. The world is now a very different place from when **JD** joined the TA, but throughout these changing years his professionalism, fitness, example and, above all loyalty, were a permanent fixture in the Regt. He is quite literally part of this Regt's history.

On your retirement from the Regt and the TA, **Jackie**, Good Luck from us all.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj D Gordon**
SSM **WO2(SSM) K Swan**

It is with great relief that 52 Sqn find themselves at the start of the annual July stand-down after an extremely busy first 6 months of the year. Even though Regt Trg Weekends have been few and far between, the Sqn has still been very busy with all the normal springtime activities (CORPSAAM, DIVSAAM, EX TARTAN TERRAIN).

Individuals have also kept busy with **LCpl John Shearer** and **WO2 (YofS) Helen Jephcote** returning from OP TELIC and **Cpl Gary Cambridge** going to take their place. Those from the Sqn who contributed to OP FRESCO include **Lt Davidson**, **2Lt Fernand**, **Cpl Nursimiloo**, **LCpl McDonald** and **Sig Mitchell**. At the time of writing, they are currently taking part a the treasure hunt called OP FRESCO ICS RECOVERY, and the Sqn permanent staff are breathing sighs of relief that they won't have to entertain anymore house guests.

EXERCISE FIRST CALLOUT

EX FIRST CALLOUT was one of the first exs to be conducted by a CCRF anywhere in the UK. 52 LOWLAND Regt are the unit on which the CCRF for the Scottish Lowlands is based, and on the first weekend of June, half of the Bn mounted their first ex. It was half the Bn because the other half had just been mobilised on OP TELIC.

JNCO CADRE, GARELOCHEAD TRAINING AREA

- by Cpl C Vaughan

The weekend of 20-22 June saw the annual Golden Boot inter-tp competition rear its ugly head yet again. The Friday started well with a gentle evening stroll before stopping for the night in what looked like a Scandinavian Sauna. Whilst everyone got ready to bed down for the night, we had our first injury of the weekend. **Cpl Carol Vaughan**, whilst attempting to find her sleeping bag in the dark interior of the Landrover bashed her face on the gun rack giving herself a lovely black eye.

Saturday morning arrived without further incident and the troops gallantly fought their way through the black clouds of midges to the RV point, where we stopped for a well deserved breakfast only to find that it was training rations again. We think there's some sort of conspiracy going on between **SSgt Ross Dunn** and the local Co-op. He supplies the good stuff to them and we get the leftovers.

So, with rumbling bellies we marched on to the first set of comd tasks. Two teams were created, and each was issued with a laminated sheet covered in row after row of Egyptian hieroglyphics, which had to be memorised and reproduced on paper some 45mins to an hour later. And so we saw a dozen or so squaddies wandering around in circles mumbling to themselves, repeating over and over again things like 'squiggly line, square with seven, upside down windmill, smiley face' ...scary! At the appointed time each person in the team took their turn to present themselves to **2Lt Laura Fernand** and reproduce on paper as many symbols as they could remember, in the right order. It was truly amazing just how many they got right. But 10 mins later everyone was scrubbing away at fingers, hands, wrists and any other surface that could have been used to write on.

Next, they made us add up numbers, but the brain cells were already burned out from the hieroglyphics so there's not much to tell there.

Lunch was.... training rations again! By now, with us weak with hunger, the cries of 'When can we go home?' echoed round the hills!

Finally, because he couldn't stand the wailing caused by empty stomachs, a few empty heads and those who were being eaten alive, **Maj Donnie Gordon** decided that if we performed one half-decent section attack, we could go home and lick our wounds. We did him proud, and led by gallant a **Sig Zambonini**, we charged up the hill in true spirit and promptly got slaughtered at the top by the enemy. But, just like in the movies, the day was saved by **Sig Andy Donald**, who ran down the enemy, and by **SSgt Rab Nimmo**, who turned up with nice cold cans of lager before we headed home for some half decent food and bit of a party.

The Sqn is now looking forward to Annual Camp, and would like to say fond farewells to **Sigs Zambonini** and **McLuckie** who are off to BATUS, and welcome back the SPSI, **SSgt Gair Sorley** and hope that his recuperation continues.

Between now and Camp we have a Sqn Trg Weekend at RN Rosyth, a Family Fun Day both for our own kids (large & small) and for our local hospital, Hairmyres. Watch this space for the results of the Regtl Athletics Meeting.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj A Bruce**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) R Clarke**

EXERCISE SALTIRE SPLASH

Forty members of 61 Sig Sqn (V) kicked off the first weekend in August by journeying 190 miles (or 5 hours on a coach) to RAF Machrihanish, on the Mull of Kintyre for a fun-filled adv trg weekend.

The sun came out and the rain held off until Sunday morning. The advance party drove up with canoes, bikes, ropes and a RIB, and told the locals in the pub that they had come up with their boat to celebrate **Sgt Spittles'** stag night. The PSAO, **Capt Peter Campbell**, gladly masqueraded as his dad (or was it granddad?), keeping them all in order. After the long journey for the rest of the Sqn on the Friday night, a couple of drinks were had in the bar, followed by a few hours' sleep in the best accn anybody could remember - single rooms.

On Saturday morning, after a rousing speech from OC, **Maj Andy Bruce**, we split into four groups and headed off for the activities on what was his first Sqn trg weekend. The remit was to rise to the challenges, bond well as a team and to have fun. The OC spent the day in **LCpl Tait's** gp.

LCpl Costello's gp couldn't believe that the 2IC, **Capt Dods** couldn't swim. He took his first (and probably only) swimming lesson, when **2Lt Laura Fernand** make him take a swim test in Lussa Loch before she let him in the canoe. It took ten mins of wading through knee-deep freezing water to find any deep enough to do the swim test.

OCdt Hall's group were very impressed with the abseiling organised by **SSgt Forbes**. The first time he abseiled down the 70 ft tower, **OCdt Hall** looked very white and a bit shaky, but the second time he had a little more colour. **Sig Walker** and **LCpl Andrew** were imitating Milk Tray Man as they zoomed straight down the rope. The safety group at the bottom couldn't believe the sound of **Cpl Harvey's** bodily functions, which travelled all the way down to them as he leant back ready for off (clearly a bad case of nerves).

Sgt Spittles bravely took three groups mountain biking, clocking up over 25 miles. A number of prima donnas who claim to be regular cyclists, whinged about the state of the gears of the bikes, but no one really believes the CO and Sqn 2IC are regular cyclists anyway.

SSgt Harvey and **Sgts Kelly** and **Fair** spent the day piloting the RN bomb disposal team's RIB around Campbeltown Loch and the fringes of the Irish Sea, teaching man overboard safety drills. When **SSgt Harvey** jumped overboard, **Captain Dods** was reminded of the scene in *Shallow Hal* (which he had seen on the coach on the way over to Machrihanish) where **Gwynneth Paltrow** jumped in and emptied the swimming pool. The CO, **Lt Col Blyth** also gamely donned a dry suit and followed the PSI overboard. But as **LCpl Costello** observed, a civvy company would charge a fortune for an activity like this and they certainly wouldn't let you chuck your boss overboard!

Sgt Crawford and **SSgt McGinlay** organised a tasty barbecue and the bar was duly opened up on Saturday night. The Colonel got to meet and mingled with many of the recruits as well as old hands. His briefing on Sunday morning was brief, as he had both a sore head and sore legs due to his efforts the day before. Then it was back onto the coach to sleep off the effects of a hugely enjoyable weekend. A big thank you from the Sqn to **SSgts Forbes** and **MacPherson** and the other SNCOs for organising a great weekend.

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col CR Owen**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) RG Dalton**

SUMMER SOJOURN

The long hot summer has begun and life in the Regt has taken on a more relaxed pace with block leave and a series of sailing, trekking and other adv trg expeds mounted to take advantage of this traditionally quiet and regenerating period.

EX MARITIME DRAGON

35 Sig Regt, along with seven other crews from across the Corps, took part in the annual Germany Sail Trg Week, based on the British Kiel Yacht Club (BKYC). After a non-eventful journey from Coventry to Kiel via Herford, we arrived at BKYC and took over our new home for the week, the yacht *Gannet*. After stocking up on a few essentials such as food and beer, it was time to find out what the boat and crew could do with a trial sail round Kiel Fjord. This was an exciting first introduction to sailing, with the winds reaching the strongest they would do all week.

The following morning, it was down to business and the first of several long legs, sailing up to Sonderborg, Denmark. Along the way the wind died and the engine was started, not for the first nor last time during the trip. The boat was skippered by the Adjt, **Capt Charlie Roberts**, but as the CO, **LtCol Calvin Owen** is a qualified Day Skipper, the trg and skippering was shared out between them. There was also **Sgt Jean Parr**, as a qualified Competent Crew to lend a hand and the three novices, **Lts Janet Lawrence** and **Paul Rodenhurst** and **Sig Helen Discombe**, all going for their Competent Crew qualification. Last but not least, the honorary member of crew, **OCdt Rachel Clayton** from BUOTC, travelled out with us but was seconded to another crew on arrival.

Gannet and her crew

The week saw hot and sunny weather and generally light airs. In the series of races hosted at Horsens Yacht Club, the crew achieved a very respectable third position, and got a very small trophy. This added to our overall place in the race series and we improved as a crew as the week went on, finally achieving a respectable fifth place overall.

Despite the racing, the focus remained firmly on enjoying the sailing and even more enjoying the social aspects. As usual, there was the odd sore head each morning, and towards the middle of the week we lost **Helen Discombe** to another crew, as her socialising skills were needed on **Maj Bob Appleton's** boat.

The mix of racing and sailing produced some very highly honed sailing skills, with each member of the crew learning a lot from the week. None more than the three novices, who gained their Competent Crew certificate and were later caught buying the Day Skipper course book from the yacht club. Hopefully this will be the start of a new sailing era for the Regt and, with future expeds already in the pipeline, including a two-week trip to the Canaries, this looks certain to continue.

Shortly after the sailing event, the Regt also mounted a trekking exped to Bavaria (not Spain as we had forecast in an earlier edition of *The WIRE*). This is still ongoing and will conclude on the 15 August, after which we hope to have an article for the next edition. Please stand by for some more exciting news, including **Capt John Middler's** memories of his exped to the Canadian Rockies!

ALL CHANGE

If I get to the top first the stick's mine! The RSM's handover/takeover

So many personnel movements have taken place during the last few months, that we now have major changes in the Regtl middle management structure. The RSM **WO1(RSM)** (now Capt) **Yogi Cauldwell** has now handed over the reins of power to **WO1 (RSM) Russ Dalton** and family, fresh from 30 Sig Regt. **Yogi** is now settling into his new appointment with 16 Sig Regt, and we all wish him well. We have said farewell to **WO2 (FofS) Steve Brown**, who has moved to 11 Sig Regt and have welcomed back his replacement, **WO2 Ray Edge** and family from 1 Sig Bde. No doubt **Ray** will re-new old friendships from when he last served with 48 Sig Sqn. **WO2 (RQMS) Steve Cherry** sadly retires in September and has handed over to **WO2 (RQMS) Ollie Lambert** who comes, together with his family, from 40 Sig Regt. Elsewhere we have said farewell to **SSgts Andy Lloyd**, **Dave Owen** and **Tosh Hodgskins**. They have moved to 15 Sig Regt, Latina and 16 Sig Regt respectively.

Finally we extend welcomes to **SSgts Brian Clark**, from 16 Sig Regt; to **Giuseppe Poppa**, from 7 Sig Regt; to **Sgt Coxon**, from 16 Air Asslt Bde Sig Sqn and to **Cpl Craig Campbell** from 14 Sig Regt (EW). **Maj Mick Boxall** has finally got his posting and he hands over to **Maj Butch Maycock** at the end of August, just in time for annual trg on Dartmoor. To all our new arrivals, welcome to the Regt and we hope you and your families have a happy, fulfilling and rewarding tour. To all those who have gone, your impact on Regtl life will not be forgotten - our best wishes for the future in your new appointments.

Finally, all members of the Regt join families, friends and colleagues in extending a warm and welcome return to all of those who returned safe and sound from their OP TELIC duties. It's good to have you back.

HAPPY WANDERERS

Returning to adv trg, the weekend 11/13 July saw most Sqns deploy to various locs from W Midlands to the Welsh Valleys. 48 and 89 Sqn took part in a joint venture on EX WYDDFA DRAGON, setting up camp at Ynysmaengwyn Campsite. They were joined, appropriately, by a number of new recruits currently undergoing TAFS, who gained an excellent insight into the fun activities often engaged in by members of the TA. The weekend, organised and executed by **SSgt Waggy Wagstaff** and **Sgt Tom Fellows**, involved many exciting pursuits, including abseiling, rock climbing, high zip wire (the death slide) a barbecue and culminated in an energetic and exhausting trek to the summit of Cader Iris.

Sig Stewart Linden was so exhausted at the end of it, that when he pitched his tent, he spent at least 40 mins trying to get his camp bed in sideways, until the SPSI intervened to point him in the right direction. To spare him the blushes, I will not go into his performance on the High Zip Wire, except to say that even Tarzan would have been proud at his jungle call, which saw sheep scattering over the valleys in all directions. However his journey to the recruit course is another story!! Meanwhile efforts by the girls to be rescued by the Welsh Mountain Rescue Team ended in dismal failure. Someone should have told them you need to be up a mountain first and not in a pub close to a campsite! *Blodwyn's* Disco was good, although it was a pity the music didn't extend further than **Tom Jones** and **Shirley Bassey**.

Don't be bashaful. LCpl Marieanne Meek and Sig Clark after the basha build

SSgt Charlie Walker and **LCpl Chris Fulthorpe** are thanked for all their catering and admin efforts that can only be described as fantastic, even though **Charlie** would prefer to forget his encounter with a Welsh pothole. Later that month, 89 Sqn invaded Bramcote to apply some of the survival skills learned over the adv trg weekend to do a spot of basha building in the woods surrounding Gamecock Barracks. Here it was good to see **LCpl**

Marieanne Meek fresh back from Iraq and already into the swing of TA trg. Needless to say her basha was considered the best.

TAFS

No it's not about Welsh recruits, but our Territorial Army Foundation Scheme recruits who have just completed the new style recruit course (CMS TA) at Grantham and Lichfield. Clearly we are going through some teething problems, as the new scheme has introduced many requirements that did not exist before. These include inoculations and a variety of attendance and confirmatory certificates, that at first sight seems like a lot of red tape. But it is all in a good cause, it is established to protect the student in particular, and it does work, even if it can frustrate admin efforts. Prep for the course is now quite straightforward - two prep weekends, some fitness trg and you are ready to go, subject to a vacant slot. **Sigs Stewart Linden**, **Stewart Field**, **Sam Fulthorpe** and **William Granegan** were as keen as mustard and anxious to prove their worth and pass off with flying colours. But the journey to their course centres at Lichfield and Grantham did not pass without incident, as **Stuart** will testify after he cleaned up his Sqn's Corsa. They did not disappoint at the Trg Centre however, and all, without exception, passed their respective courses and are now proudly showing off their certificates and walking on air. In particular, **Sam Fulthorpe** is delighted at being awarded Best Shot on her course and has already volunteered for next year's skill-at-arms competition. All four are now looking forward to concluding their recruit trg in the final part, which takes the form of a Trg Gap capitalising upon and enhancing the skills learned on the CMS (TA). This will take place during our annual trg at Dartmoor in September/October and all four are committed to attend. To all of you very well done on your achievement so far.

No crying in this chapel. Sigs Stewart Field, Sam Fulthorpe and William Granegan following the pass of parade

33 (LANCS & CHESHIRE) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**LtCol DW Somerville MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) M Browitt**

REGIMENTAL SHOOTING TEAM

This has been a highly successful year for the Regtl shooting team under the guidance of **Maj Stan Quayle** and **WO2 Williams**. The first outing of the year at the CORPSSAAM held in Pirbright, was very much a learning curve, the only success coming in the LSW shoot, where **LCpl Richie Hill** was the runner up. However, **2Lt Liz Mathews** showed a natural flair for firing the 9mm pistol which bodes well for future events, while the other team members gained valuable experience for forthcoming matches.

The team hit top form in time for the DIVSAAM at Warcop and lifted five trophies in all, including the Parachute Cup (Other Arms), the Section Match Cup, the FIBUA Trophy, the MTR (moving target) Trophy and the overall Champions Cup (Other Arms). A special mention should be made of **Maj Stan Quayle** and **LCpl Richie Hill**, who made it into the top 30 list of shots and **LCpl Elliot**, who played a large part in boosting overall team scores.

The outstanding performance at the DIVSAAM proved to be the springboard needed for further success in the TA SAAM at Bisley where, despite being handicapped by team members mobilised on OP TELIC, the three-man team of **Maj Tony McFarlane**, **WO2 Williams** and **LCpl Richie Elliot** played a blinder by winning the Mercury Trophy and becoming the first team from 33 Sig Regt (V) to become RSigs TA Bisley champions.

42(CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Dave Titheridge**
SSM	**WO2 Rooster Coburn**

THE UKRFA SNCO's INTERNATIONAL MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION

The UKRFA SNCO's International Military Skills Competition was held at the Altcar Trg Area and Ranges over the weekend 2-4 May 3. Despite the intense op pressure experienced by all VRF, the UKRFA SNCO's Committee ran a demanding and enjoyable competition, followed by a beating retreat by the North West Territorial Infantry Band, prize giving and an all ranks function.

The competition attracted 24 teams, including 17 UK teams, 2 Dutch teams and 5 Belgian teams. There were 12 skills stands ranging from the traditional trailer race to comd tasks and a shooting competition on the ETR range. The weather, which at the start had been fine, deteriorated rapidly by the end of the competition but did not detract from the overall enjoyment.

33 Sig Regt (V) entered two teams, from 42 Sig Sqn (V) and 59 Sig Sqn (V) respectively. The 42 Sig Sqn team was led and trained by **SSgt Tim Mounfield** with the team spending many hours polishing military skills and improving fitness. This dedication paid off on the day, with the team winning the overall trophy for the UK competition. They were also the fastest team on the speed run and provided the individual winner in the orienteering competition (a superb performance by the team Capt, **SSgt Tim Mounfield**). The Regt did well overall, with 59 Sqn putting in a credible performance and coming runners-up in the Mixed Team event.

OPERATION TELIC - *by Sig Richard Lewis*

During OP TELIC I was attached to 42 (NW) Bde HQ in Preston, working in the G1 Ops Cell which co-ordinated casualties coming in from the Gulf and other theatres. The ops room was manned 24 hours, seven days a week. Our main tasks were receiving NOTICAS Reports. Once these reports were received, the ops room tasked the relevant personnel, Casualty Notification Officer/Casualty Visiting Officer (CNO/CVO), and other emergency contacts throughout the 42 (NW) Bde area of concern. My tasks included logging of all phone calls, updating the database and sending SITREPS and returns up the chain of command.

Once the war started the Bde Ops room was tasked to set up Reception Arrangements for Military Patients (RAMP for patients to be admitted to the NHS system. This involved setting up and tasking a Medical Reception Team (MRT), which was on call 24 hours a day. It was then the ops room task to keep records and databases of all patients admitted in the Bde area. This included arranging for NOK to visit and be accommodated in the Bde area.

During my tour I've learned a lot about the running of an ops room and the structure and comd of a Brigade. I've learned what happens to a soldier when injured on an op tour and the systems available to help the family. This tour has also improved my skills in log keeping and inputting data, updating and sending signals and faxes and dealing with SITREPS in real time.

On a more personal note I enjoyed my time with 42 (NW) Bde Ops cell as it has given me an insight into how the Regular Army operates. I have also met many new faces and made some good friends.

(The Sqn deployed four soldiers to the Gulf on OP TELIC and currently has **Sgt Hazel Trotman** and **Sgt Paul Duffin** serving with 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt)

DEFENCE TRAINING CENTRE, SLOVENIA
– by 2Lt Matthew Trump

Forty-four students from nine countries studied English and French at the fourth Inter-allied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR) held in the Language Academy of the Defence Trg Centre in Poljce, Slovenia over the period 14 – 25 July 03. Reserve officers from Canada, UK and the US served as instructors. **Capt Richard Koss** from 42 Sig Sqn (V) and **Major Lin MacLean** from Tayforth OTC, were the UK representatives on the teaching staff, while **2Lt Mathew Trump** of 42 Sig Sqn (V) was part of the PR team.

LtCdr Giuseppe Imbalzano, Italian Naval Reserve CIOR President, welcomed the students and instructors to the two-week course of intensive language training focusing on NATO military terminology. The students were then split into three groups, beginners, intermediate and advanced. **Capt Koss** and **Capt Rodney de Roij**, a Canadian Reserve officer, were responsible for the beginners group.

The PR effort centred on the VIP day on Saturday 19 July. A number of distinguished visitors attended, including **Miran Jazbec**, Slovenian State Secretary in the MOD, Polish Ambassador **Janusz Jesionek**, US Deputy Head of Mission, **Dean Hass** and the British Military Attaché, **Col Lyndsey Wilson**. The day received extensive press coverage, including National TV news that evening and an article in *Slovenska Vojska*, the Slovene equivalent of *Soldier* magazine. For me this was an excellent opportunity to put into practice the skills acquired on the Unit PR Officers course, which I attended in June.

The students were Reserve officers from : Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Many of them had attended the course last year, held at the Polish Naval Academy in Gdynia. Two of the students, **Col Lyudmil Haralanov** from Bulgaria and **Maj Lalaj Xhevit** from Albania, were sponsored by UK RFA, and taught by **Capt Koss**.

Capt Richard Koss teaching Col Lyudmil Haralonov and Maj Lalaj Xhevit while 2Lt Mathew Trump (seated centre) takes notes

The Defence Trg Centre is located in the small village of Poljce nestled in the foothills of the Alps. The area has a long military history, with a former Gestapo prison (now a psychiatric hospital) located just ten minutes walk from the centre. We were given a private tour of the local museum and were surprised to find carved into one of the doors, the name of one **Capt Watts**. He had also carved the names of the schools he attended (incl Manchester University) and his home address in Manchester. He survived the war, but has since passed away. But we were told that his daughter is planning to visit the museum in the near future. Also located near the Centre is a pub with a collection of militaria, including a Mk II Bren gun, which may have been dropped by the RAF to support the Partisans in their struggle against the Germans. On a final note, the Slovene hospitality has been excellent and the weather glorious. I am very much hoping that I can come back next year. Rumour has it that it will be held in Bulgaria.

OPERATION OCULUS – BALKANS SIGNAL SQUADRON
- by WO2 Andy Owen MBE

Balkans Sig Sqn (BSS) was a bit of an experiment by any stretch of the imagination, but it was formed, brought together and trained in March 03 and deployed on 01 May 03. It is a pan-Balkan multi-national unit, including 85 UK soldiers, 11 Dutch regulars, 8 Canadians (7 reservists) and 5 New Zealanders. The UK component are mostly TA, with a sprinkling of regulars filling specialist roles. The largest proportion of the TA contingent are from 33 Sig Regt (V). Twenty-five of members of the Sqn are in Kosovo, three in Corsham and the rest in Banja Luka working directly in support of the Multi National Bde and UK battle-group. The Sqn is fulfilling a totally new role and has responsibilities spread from Croatia and Bosnia through to Kosovo and Macedonia.

The job is almost totally on commercial equipt and very IT heavy, with 2 major secure WANs, numerous small LANs and well over 600 stand-alone PCs scattered across the Balkans to support. It is not unusual to spend half a day driving to find that the problem was just another confused multinational officer! In addition to the IT, the other major system is the satellite inter-connected telephone network.

The first job the Sqn had on arriving in theatre was to find out what equipt it had. This would have been easier if there had been a list, any sort of list, of what it was supposed to have! The old adage of 'if in doubt, make it up as you go along' came to the fore, and thus we did. What equipt we did have was certainly put to good use and the Sqn's Dutch tactical satcom teams carried

Members of 33 Sig Regt deployed on Op Oculus. L-R: WO2 (YofS) Mark Jones, Sgt Jim Bland, Cpl Alison Brierly, Sig Jimmy Walker, Sig Walsh, Sig Standley, WO2 (FofS) Andy Owen MBE, Sig Angie Dowling, Pte Jones

out more deployments in the first month than the previous team had done during their entire tour.

Whilst there seems to have been a constant stream of visitors to Banja Luka, the biggest challenge to the Sqn came in July, when **Pope John Paul II** visited the town, along with a few thousand of his followers. A major military operation was mounted to ensure stability and the staff required comms to everywhere, with at least 2 fallback systems. At this point, **YofS Mark Jones** really started to earn his keep, with Dutch radio nets, multinational secure sat phone networks and an entire dismounted HQ to produce from thin air. But that's what YofS's do! The Sqn was seriously stretched, having never been manned to provide this level of tactical comms, but sufficiently encouraged by reminders that 'you've done basic signalling skills, now crack on,' everyone from the drivers to the OC pitched in to do the business. 5 days later, the bottom line read: 'One Pope safely in and out of the country and one happy Bde Comd.' (Seven members of 42 Sqn are currently serving in Bosnia with Balkans Sig Sqn) *See also 98 (Balkan) Sig Sqn's report on OP ELEISON on page 458 - Editor*

EXERCISE MARBLE TOR 6 - *by Sig Adey Starauschek*

31 Sig Regt split their 2003 annual camp between Gibraltar and Thetford, with 94 Sig Sqn (Berkshire Yeomanry) leading the Gibraltar camp (EX MARBLE TOR 6). **Sig Starauschek** and **Sig Rees**, of 42 (City of Manchester) Sig Sqn (V) were also included.

We left RAF Lyneham on a C130 Hercules (a new experience for most of us) and arrived at 14.30hrs local time on Saturday 12July, then checked into our accn at Devil Towers Camp. The first thing that struck us was the heat, sometimes too hot for what we were doing, but good prep for anyone who gets to be deployed on OP TELIC. We had Saturday night free to explore the town, but most opted for an early night.

On Sunday afternoon there was a sports competition to help us acclimatise! C Tp team, comprising **Sgt Dean**, **LCpl Hulin**, **LCpl Whittaker**, **Sig Starauschek**, **Sig Allan**, **Sig Espirt**, **Sig Kyte** and **Cfn Gilbert**, won all their games - and the competition.

Our introduction Gibraltar started with a 3-day adv trg package. For **Sig Starauschek** the first day was spent exploring Gibraltar and seeing the apes for the first time, the second day sea fishing and the third sailing in one-man boats. Then it was back into green kit for a mil skills package conducted by the Royal Gibraltar Regt. This included contact drills, GPMG, LAW 94, close quarter battle and POW handling. The highlight was a tactical platoon sea crossing wearing full kit, webbing and rifle, followed by a tab up the rock in wet kit. Unfortunately, this coupled with the heat, was too much for some, and many were on sick parade by the end of the ex.

Sig Starauschek (left) sea fishing with Sgt Dean and LCpl Jones

Then followed a well-deserved 36hr R and R period, during which the C Tp team nipped over the border to Spain to visit the sites. Next, it was an early start to take part in the famous Gibraltar Rock Run. **Sig Starauschek** came in at 32min 34sec, with **Sig Rees** failing to complete after catching lazyitis. The run was followed by day of OBUA training, after which, we were pretty tired.

The next day was the start of a 3-day inf ex, which began with tunnel warfare. Although Gibraltar is only 3 miles, long there are 37 miles of tunnels, most for military use only. These provide an excellent trg facility, especially for ops in Afghanistan. Tunnel warfare was great fun, but very intense. After a night with virtually no sleep, it was up for day of tabbing and more tunnel warfare before moving back to harbour to prepare for an attack on the OBUA village at dawn. Back from the close quarter recce at 03.00hrs we got a little kip before moving at 04.30hrs towards the village to mount the attack at first light. At ENDEX, we were welcomed with the news that we would have to spend another R and R day in Gibraltar, due to the RAF flight back being delayed. Back in UK, most agreed it was great experience, even though it was hard and hot work at times.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the OC and his wife, **Amanda** on the arrival of a new daughter, **Laura** on 4 August, and to **LCpl Christine Jackson** on her marriage to ex-Regular tech, **Doug Pepper** in Gibraltar on the 11 July. **Christine** has just returned from the Gulf, being one of the first TA soldiers to deploy with 1 Arm Div HQ and Sig Regt, so she has some justification to relax in the far more convivial surroundings of the Iberian Peninsula.

36 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **LtCol PN Willmott TD**
RSM **W01(RSM) MA Giles**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Pete Minshall**
Acting SSM **SSgt Graham Carroll**

Saturday 21 June saw the Sgts' Mess farewell the outgoing RSM, **WO1(RSM) Paddy Morrow**, who is off to Civvy Street at the beginning of August after completing 22 years' colour service. **SSgt Gaz Topps** organised the evening and had put a lot of thought into it. **Paddy** was left reminiscing his youth as the flute band music played during the evening. **WO1 (SVWO) Eddie Kikas** presided over the evening and managed to spare **Paddy's** blushes during the speeches as he went over the highs and lows of **Paddy's** career. Thankfully there weren't too many skeletons in the cupboard! **Paddy** moves to Devon to set up home and start up his business. The Regt wishes him and **Arlene** all the best for the future and thank you for your efforts during your time as RSM. The Regt extends a warm welcome to our new RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Mark Giles**, who joins us from Blandford. We hope **Mark** enjoys his time with the Regt and, given that he has served with the TA before, it shouldn't be too much of a shock to the system.

A big welcome to **Maj John Torrell**, our new Trg Maj. We all hope you have an excellent tour with the Regt. Congratulations go to **LCpl Evans** on her recent promotion. A sad farewell to **Capt Francis**, who departs soon for the land of milk and honey in Germany. We wish him all the best.

Annual Camp is the next beast on the horizon, so it's with swords drawn and shields at the ready, the PSIs prepare to defend themselves with the onslaught of daft questions and statements. We'll keep you posted.

continued on page 473

NEWS FROM THE GULF

19 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj GW Wilson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) SA Gordon**

HANDOVER FROM 7 ARMOURED BRIGADE

The Sqn took over comms from 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn on 20 June. We now have the challenge of producing the commercial solution for Iraq (known as PROJECT SYNERGY), before handing over to 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn in November. The soldiers of 209 Sig Sqn have had to adapt to the state-of-the-art, commercial off-the-shelf technologies involved with both the Operational Strategic Communications Architecture (OSCA) and that of the newly arrived PROJECT SYNERGY to provide effective comms to the Bde Comd and his staff.

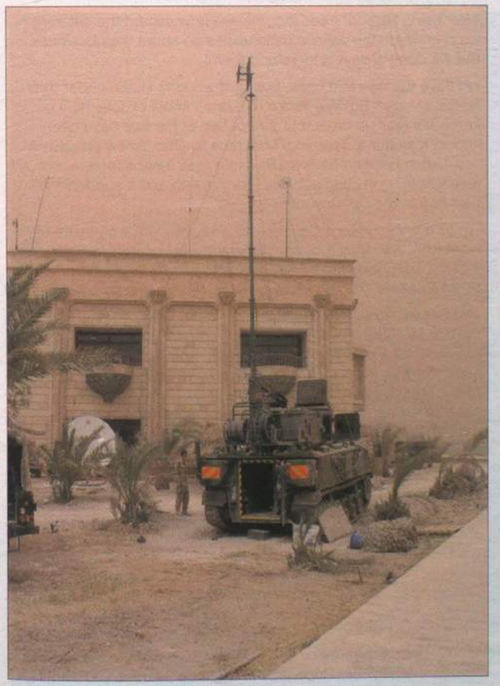
SQUADRON NEWS – *by LCpl Carvell*

19 Mech Bde, now at Allsopp Lines, comprises elements from 1 KOSB, 1KRR, 1QLR and 40 Regt RA, who have been arriving throughout the month of June. They will be supported by two sqns and the RHQ of the Light Dragoons and 3 RMP Coy. The flag change between the previous residents, 7Armd Bde (the Desert Rats) and the incoming 19 Mech Bde took place on 28 June. **Brig Moore** thanked 7 Armd Bde for all their hard work. The final handover of control in southern Iraq switched from HQ 1 DIV to HQ 3 DIV on 12 July.

After spending almost 7 days in the desert acclimatising to the intense temperatures (some days reaching high 50's C°) and dealing with daily sandstorms, arriving at Allsopp Lines (formerly known as Basrah Palace) was real luxury. There is air-conditioning in most of the bedrooms and soft mattresses instead of the wooden floors and camel spiders we had before. The food is good, although the non-alcoholic Stella Artois on offer has not gone down so well. The welfare package includes 15 computer terminals with internet access, satellite phones and BFBS TV, where soap addicts can keep on top of *Eastenders* and *Corrie* whilst on tour. Coming soon to fill the dark Arabian nights will be film showings, quizzes - and even Bingo!

The Bde has been enhanced by over 150 TA and Regular Reservist soldiers from all parts of the British Isles, all of whom seem to have adapted well to the huge changes in lifestyle. They offer the Bde a vast range of civilian qualifications and experience, which will prove useful in the quest to restore quality of life for the Iraqi people.

As the Unit now settles into an almost normal work routine, thoughts inevitably turn to home. The R&R dates for most people are now being finalised, so families will soon know when they will expect to see their loved ones again. As usual, letters, parcels and support from all the family and friends back home are always appreciated. 19 Mech Bde seeks to continue the outstanding relations with the inhabitants of Basrah that 7 Armd Bde have created, and to continue to bring peace and stability to the Southern Iraq region. Future plans will include re-establishing the telephone exchange network across the province.



A radio relay station outside Basra Palace

SIGNALS ON PATROL – *by Lt Gavin Darke*

As part of its HQ defence role, the Sqn has been conducting daily clearance patrols across the Shatt al Arab waterway. The aim of these patrols has been to demonstrate a presence on the Eastern bank, to discourage sniper attacks and to stop illegal oil smuggling. The patrol also acts as the Sqn quick reaction force to give public order support to the guard platoon during demonstrations and riots.

The peninsula the patrols have been covering was once a densely populated area. But once Saddam's summer palace had been completed, he ordered the settlements to be demolished so as not to spoil his view of the woods on the far side of the peninsula.

Boat patrol on the Shatt al Arab Waterway

The end of Saddam's regime has facilitated the return of the Marsh Arabs to the area, and new settlements are springing up as they return. During the Iran-Iraq War, the area was heavily fortified and changed hands several times during that conflict. The legacy of unexploded ordinance in the area therefore poses a threat to patrols operating there. Much of the ground being marshy, most of what has landed remains live.

Another duty that the patrol carries out is manning boat stop-and-search checkpoints along the Shatt al Arab. This is greatly contributing the fight against illegal oil smuggling, which currently steals a quarter of a million dollars a day from Iraq's economy, reducing profits for the oil refineries and increasing unemployment for Iraqi workers. The patrols have received a lot of publicity and have been accompanied by several reporters. The BBC, Norwegian News and BFBS TV have also filmed the patrol in action stopping several illegal oil tankers and patrolling the far shore.

The patrol crosses hazardous, inhospitable marshes daily. The area is remote, so the patrol needs to be completely self-sufficient. If we encounter trouble, it would take at least thirty minutes for an airborne response force to arrive. It is testament to the quality, initiative and courage of R Signals soldiers to conduct operations, out of role, in hostile conditions, with the minimum of fuss and, as ever, to the highest standard.

The 209 Signal Sqn Patrol Section comprises **Lt Gavin Darke**, **Cpl Sean Fielding**, **Cpl Jo Wiggins**, **Cpl Steven Cater**, **LCpl Pete Cater**, **LCpl 'Fossie' Foster** and the section's GPMG support gunners, **Sig Johnny Howells** and **Cfn 'Tommo' Thompson**.

The Section expresses its gratitude to the Telemark Bn of the Norwegian Army (who supply the supporting boats) for their efforts in trying to drown the patrol at every opportunity!

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

BALKANS SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj C Edwards**
SSM **WO2 Dixon**

For those who might be puzzling over our apparent name change, we now include other nationalities (Dutch, Canadians and New Zealanders) so 98 (Balkans) Sig Sqn is known locally as Balkans Signal Squadron (BSS).

We have said goodbye to **YofS Jones** and **FofS Owen**, who have been replaced by **FofS Dawson** and **YofS Hellier**. We bid you both welcome. May your success be long and your tasking orders short.

UK NSE (BOSNIA) TROOP

Tp Comd **SSgt Green**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Downer**

Despite many changes and changeovers the Tp is continuing to run well, despite compulsory PT and the odd virus.

UK NSE (KOSOVO) TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Jacques**
Tp Sgt **SSgt Stebbing**

Well into routine now, the Tp has decided to show KFOR that we are not just good at comms. The CO's challenge was the mil skills 25km Dancon March. Two 8-man teams completed the challenge, which included boot runs and command tasks. This Tp won the first challenge and came second by 11 seconds in the last. Tp honour is running high and we are now looking forward to showing our stuff again at the next challenge. 5 members of the Tp also completed a half marathon in Pristina, with times ranging from 1hr 30 mins to just over 2 hrs.

Although manning is tight, 6 members of the Tp managed to get away for a well-earned rest (so called) and enjoy some adventure training in Brac. This included kayaking, rock climbing, windsurfing and scuba diving.

We have all been involved in assisting the BFBS *Groundforce* team building the patio and entrance are of the new Brithouse. First time winner of *Big Brother*, **Craig**, was present and gave direction on what was to be done. The outside bar area was predominantly completed by our Tp. Our reward was coverage on BFBS and also a great deck to sit and enjoy our well-earned drinks on. *As I discovered that pleasant evening on Saturday 9 August, when I met the Tp. Many thanks folks! – Editor.*

Finally, well done to **SSgt Kev Cooney** and **Sig Karl Brown**, who were the only British Forces representatives against the massive Scandinavians at the Camp Ville weight lifting competition. They gave a good account of themselves if only by being brave enough to enter.

MNB (NW) SIG TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt J Bronson**
Tp Sgt **MSgt Peeters**

Multi-National Mumbles - *by Cpl Simmonds*

After being here for three months, we now accept the different ways in which the various nationalities go about their business. But we don't always understand them!

We have the very laid back, but hard working Dutch under their fearless leader, **SgtMaj Tarko**. We don't know exactly how he keeps his team in order, but one or two of his sigs have been known to suffer a 'Tarkoing' from time to time. A few privileged non-Dutch persons have made it into their inner sanctum, but will reveal nothing in case of disciplinary action and a sudden mad rush to join the Dutch contingent.

We also work with the Canadians. They too, are a pleasure to work with. And they too, do it differently, but always in such away that the job gets done. They all like to have a laugh, particularly **MSgt Peeters**, who dropped rank to take his position here.

The Brit element makes use of the 5-a-side football pitch inside the hangar three times a week. After coming third and sixth with the two teams entered in a 16-team competition, we have felt the need to continue. Matches are played very fast and extremely hard. Tensions come out. **LCpl Elahi** has thrown more than one strop for being taken out illegally, and **LCpl Dixon** continues to run into the walls. We all enjoy it though.

Many of us have been on adventure trg in Brac, off the coast of South Croatia. It's a unique location and we stay in a hotel in a small village. The activities are fantastic. Every day you are learning something new, whilst having a laugh in a very relaxed atmosphere. A mix of both civvy and military instructors leads to both the fun and feeling of achievement. For anyone serving in Bosnia in the future, I would urge them to get down to Brac. Nobody has come back disappointed. The beer is good, too.

OPERATION ELEISON 17 – 22 JUNE 2003

The Orthodox-dominated and strongly Serb town of Banja Luka hosted the 83 yr old **Pope John Paul II** on 21 June 03. The purpose of the visit was to beatify **Ivan Merz**, who was born in

Sgt de Jongh with the min Popemobile

Satellite equipt vehicle operated by the Dutch det

Banja Luka in 1896. It included an open air Mass at Petricevac Square, which had previously been the site of a massacre by Catholic Croats. Catholics currently make up only about 25% of Banja Luka's population. So, with thousands more Croat Catholics expected to cross the border, and threats of demonstrations and attempts on the Pope's life having been received, it was a potentially hostile situation.

Whilst maintaining as low a profile as possible, SFOR was tasked to provide back-up security and support to local Police and Republika Srpska authorities. Balkans Signal Squadron (BSS) established a Joint Comms Centre (JCC) in Banja Luka Police HQ, providing the infrastructure, a comms support team and 24/7 guard for the 6-day op.

The primary means of comms from the JCC was the satellite secure data and voice system, provided by MNB (NW) Sig Tp. Additional phones were installed as a secure back up over PTT lines. A JCC VHF comd net was configured using RRB and various radio dets from NL 13 Mech Bde. This allowed for the establishment of an all-informed alternative secure net to keep the Comd in touch with the UK, Canadian and Dutch BGs at his disposal should he choose to go mobile. There was also a ground-to-air VHF net for use by the air support provided by Apache, Merlin and Griffin helicopters. There were 2 separate TACSAT bde nets - one as a BG back-up and one for use by the MPs. In addition, all deployed users were issued with satellite phones. Finally, US visual surveillance equipt was employed with a downlink installed, allowing the Comd a full view of unfolding events on a large screen in the JCC.

The JCC was established on 17 June, allowing time for comms to be tested before Bde op rehearsals, complete with role-plays and scenarios, on 18 June. Signallers lived in tents in the Republika Srpska Police HQ grounds, working shifts when the JCC went to

US Humvees supplying downlink for the surveillance eqpt

24 hr manning on 19 June as the build-up to the main event on Saturday commenced. The op involved ground troops and EOD teams establishing the security of the town, and ensuring the influx of worshippers did not become problematical. An estimated 50-60,000 assembled in Banja Luka to attend the Mass.

The JCC was a unique deployment for a number of reasons. TA led, but comprising many regular soldiers, it combined signallers and equipt from 4 armies. But the total number of nations involved numbered 7, once Italian Carabinieri units and EU police representatives (who were also present at the JCC) were counted. OP ELEISON was the first joint deployment of SFOR, European Union Police Monitoring Officers and Local Republika Srpska authorities. The necessary CEI to keep these distant and different units in secure and stable communication was considerable, and involved BSS in an enormous task whilst continuing with their day-to-day business of running Pan-Balkan UK and MNB (NW) comms.

BSS personnel (Regular and TA) taking part in the op were:

UK Army	Dutch Army	Canadian Army	US Army
Capt J Kendall	**Sgt Maj Tarko**	**MCpl Graham**	**Chief Knot**
Lt K Ford	**Sgt De Jongh**		**Sgt Hughes**
WO2 M Jones	**Sgt Venghaus**		
Sgt Downer	**PFC Roeterink**		
Sgt Booth			
Cpl Clift	VHF detachment		
Cpl Young	from 13 Mech Bde		
Cpl Sprayson			
LCpl Robinson			
LCpl Parry-Hall			
LCpl Everitt			
LCpl Munden-Griffiths			
Sig Dowling			
Sig Walsh			

BALKANS VISIT - *by Bernard Redshaw, Editor*

I was privileged to be in Bosnia and Kosovo in August to visit Balkans Sig Sqn. The purpose of the visit was to promote and explain the aims of *The WIRE*, particularly its role as a record of Corps history; to enable me to gain a better insight into how the Sqn operates, the operational setting in which it works, and its multi-national working; and to highlight to the rest of the Corps the Sqn's working and its achievements.

The very busy schedule, devised for me by **Lt Karen Ford** of MNB (NW) Tp, had me running most of the time, but I managed to talk to most of the Sqn and the many other Corps people deployed there. I was also able to see and understand the environment in which they work, including the (in)famous Banja Luka Metal Factory (BLMF). Space does not permit me to cover all of the people met or places visited, but the following gives a flavour of the impression I came away with.

My thanks to all whom I met and shared experiences with for the time you spared me and genuine interest you showed. My apologies to anyone I have had to miss out of this article. I still remember you.

THE BANJA LUKA METAL FACTORY

Described by one inhabitant as something aproaching a colonial garrison, the Banja Luka Metal Factory (BLMF) is a fine example of military ingenuity. As the name implies, it is the site of a huge metal engineering works complex and covers an area of one square kilometre. Dominating the site is the vast steel-framed factory building the size of Paddington Staton. Inside, four massive gantry crane rails run from end to end, and although much of the machinery and some of the steel stock remains, there is still enough space for a 5-a-side football/hockey pitch, a QM store, a Provost Office, a Chapel, a Post Office, the *Brithouse* coffee shop, not to mention garages for 9/12 Hussars' vehs.

Outside the factory building, accommodation is provided in 'corimecs', a series of metal boxes (rather like shipping containers) 5m x 2.5m x 2.5m, stacked two high and in blocks of 10 -24 units. Most are fitted out to sleep 2 people. Similar corimec boxes are bolted together to form dining blocks, ablution blocks, laundry units, stores and unit offices. Why are they called corimecs? Well, the Italian manufacturer's name, CO.RI.MEC, appears on most of them, so that's good enough for the present occupants!

Corimec Accommodation Block

Welfare is well provided for at BLMF. The Canadians, Dutch and Brits all have their own form of NAAFI shops, coffee shops and bars, and all are open to the other nations. Free laundry facilities, TV, DVD players, Internet and phone access are provided for everyone. As well as the football/hocket pitch inside the factory building, there is a fully-equipped gym and a 1 km jogging track outside. BFBS runs a Forces' radio station that carries a combination of BBC Radios 1, 2 and 4 programmes.

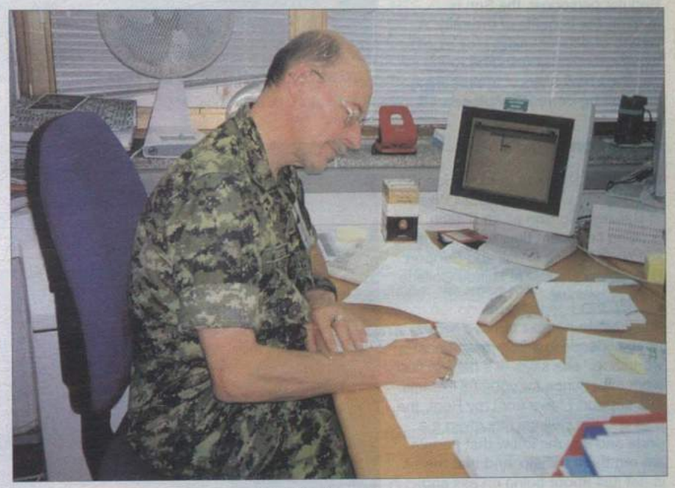
The Brithouse

5-a-side Football/Hockey Pitch

ONE OF THE CANADIANS

Canadian Army **MSgt Edwin Peeters**, Tp Sgt, MNB (NW) Tp joined BSS in March 03. A charismatic an enigmatic character, he has had a long career in the Army.

Edwin was born in Antwerp and emigrated with his parents to Canada whilst still a child. He caught the Sigs bug when he joined the school Cadets, becoming passionate at working with radio sets. After school, he quickly joined the Reserves (TA), but continuing his education meant moves to parts of Canada where there were no Reservist Sigs units, so he changed cap badges a couple of times, joining an Armd Recce Regt and an Arty Bty - but always in comms jobs. At the age of 27, he joined the Regular Army and was back into the Signal Corps, serving with the UN in the Golan Heights, the Canadian School of Sigs and a NATO unit in Canada. He retired from the Regular Army, whilst serving with a Reservist Sig Sqn, but re-joined the Sqn as a Reservist to become its SSM.



MSgt Peeters at his desk

For this tour, he had expected to be serving in a Canadian unit, but is delighted to be in a multi-national environment. How does he relate to the younger Sqn members? 'Age and experience is a perfect balance to youth and enthusiasm,' he says.

Edwin's civilian job is a manager in a games casino, and his hobbies are SCUBA diving and fishing. He is married with two daughters and one son. He is hoping to get one more operational tour in before he retires. He's hoping for Afghanistan.

THE DUTCH CONTINGENT

The eleven-strong Dutch contingent work as a team operating two highly mobile satellite terminals.

Their leader, **SgtMaj Tarko**, is very proud of his team and the importance of their role. 'We are currently Priority 1 in the Bde,' he says, 'and we are very pleased with the support we get from the Sqn.'

They are right. Although UK troops regard the Dutch as rather laid back, they respect them highly and value their contribution. This respect is returned by the Dutch team. 'There are too many rules in the British Army,' they say. 'Sometimes we think they have lost sight of the purpose of some of them, but the soldiers themselves are skilled and highly adaptable. We share with them a common language and a common aim. We get on well together.'

SgtMaj Tarko and some of his satellite team

THE NEW ZEALANDERS

LCpl Andrew Measey and **Sig Robert Bamber**, two of the New Zealanders serving with Balkans Sig Sqn had a welcome break from their routine duties in Banja Luka recently. New and unfamiliar HF/VHF equipt had just arrived to be installed at the BLMF HLS. By chance it was the same equipt used by RNZSigs. The Sqn Foreman, **WO2 (FofS) Dawson** knew the skills he had available to him, and in just under 4 hours the pair had the gear unpacked, installed and operational. They then went on to train the RAF operators on the kit, and it now supports all Heli movements in and out of Banja Luka.

'We enjoy working with the Brits,' they said, 'We learn a lot from them, but it was nice, for a change, to be able to show them something.'

With its mix of multi-national, TA and Regular personnel, the Sqn is reaping the benefits of diversity. A wealth of different skills and experience is being shared to generate new ways of approaching and solving comms problems.

Kiwis Sig Robert Bamber and LCpl Andrew Measey with the newly-installed Harris AN/PRC138 equipt in the HLS control tower

GOING FOR NVQs

Sig Angee Dowling from 80 Sqn, 33 Sig Regt (V) works in the ISM Wksp at Balkans Sig Sqn as an IT tech. She is using her spare time to do an on-line NVQ Level 3 Install and Support IT Systems Course at Halton College of FE, Cheshire.

'It's great to be able to have hands-on experience in a fully operational workshop.' she says. 'It's hard to find work experience for courses like this. The support I have from my Regt, the Sqn and the College has given me pride and lets me know that people are out there to help, and that the TA is not just about going on exs and firing weapons.'

Serving with her in the Sqn are **LCpl Hutchison**, a computer tech at Halton College and **Sig Walker**, who has already completed his NVQ 3 at Halton, both of 80 Sig Sqn.

Sig Dowling at work in the ISM Wksp

THE BRIGADE COMMANDER'S VIEW OF THE SQUADRON

Brig Ben Barry OBE, Comd MNB and BRITFOR said of Balkans Sig Sqn: 'The Sqn has done extremely well. There is an excellent mixture of people, both regular and reservists. The reservists bring with them a particularly useful range of skills.

They arrived faced with a task they were neither trained nor prepared for, namely to run a deployed multinational force forward tactical HQ, but they did it extremely well. They seamlessly fitted in with an assortment of very different people, including EU Police, Republika Srpska Ministry Officials, US, Canadians and Dutch.

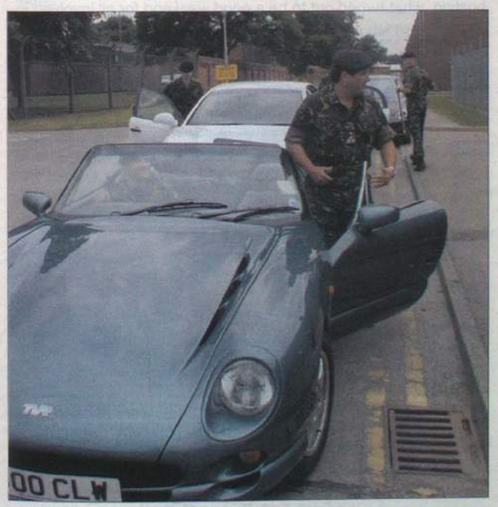
As Bde Comd and Comd BRITFOR, I have complete confidence in them and their ability to support me in both roles. They will be a hard act to follow.'

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **LtCol SK Macrostie MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A Dick**

The Regt are now fully returned from Iraq and have celebrated with a sports week prior to summer block leave. The highlight of the week was the all ranks summer party for all, including many from other units, regulars, TA and reservists alike, who deployed with the Regt to Iraq. The other major events over the period were the SOinC(A)'s visit and the Kohima Veterans' weekend, for which we just made it back in time from the Gulf to attend. This was the penultimate such weekend, as next year's event (the sixtieth anniversary of the battle) has been deemed to be the last. However, it is anticipated that the Regt will continue to mark the anniversary in some other way.

'Am I just getting old or do the recruits seem to be younger these days?' – CO addresses the Regt at the OP TELIC Party.



SOinC(A) tries out a new staff car

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Stu Gillespie**
SSM **WO2 Neil Cooper**

The Sqn has had an extremely busy time over the past few months and it's good to be back in York. Whilst supporting HQ JFlogC on OP TELIC, we had many soldiers from different units who did an outstanding job for us. Thank you for all your help. It's encouraging to know the high quality of our soldiers is Corps-wide. There have been many valued members of the Sqn who have left us recently, but a special mention goes to **Capt Emma Bruce**, who leaves for 7 Sig Regt happily married to **Rydian**. Good luck for the future. The mayhem doesn't stop now we're back; we're knee deep into CORMORANT and relishing the challenges ahead. Bring it on!

RECRUITING DUTY - *by LCpl Marvin*

On 8 June I was deployed with The Royal Signals Mobile Presentation Team (RSMPT). We gave an IT presentation for the Army Exhibition For Schools Season, which went via Edinburgh, Glasgow, Catterick, ATR Bassingbourne and ATR Lichfield to RAF Fairford.

It was the first time I had ever done recruiting, and I wasn't sure what to expect. But I was welcomed warmly by the members of the RSMPT and the other Signals recruiting teams involved in the Army Exhibition For Schools Season, so I quickly got the hang of it.

Morale was always very high and we had loads of laughs, notably when we paired up with RAC. The highlight was being challenged by them to a dancing competition. We boogied to *YMCA*, winning hands down with a little help from our choreographer, **LCpl Jim Nash**! It wouldn't have been so bad if it weren't for the sleepless nights. **Cpl Dave Sheppard**, get that snoring disorder sorted mate (oh, and a slab in!).

All in all I feel that the Army Exhibition for Schools Season was a success. I was working with a fantastic group of people and I would like to say thank you to all of them for making me welcome. I had a fantastic time.

SNCOs V ORs FOOTBALL MATCH

On Thursday 10 July a football match was held to carry on a 214 Sig Sqn bone of contention between the SNCOs and ORs. Before the big day **Sgt** 'Brummy' **Ford** put the SNCOs team through their paces hoping to avoid previous 10 – 0 humiliations. On the other hand, the ORs decided to sort trg and tactics out on the day. On match day the weather turned out to be the hottest on record for July, and to top this off, the seniors' team had been given a team strip with the breathing properties of an NBC suit. The seniors stamped their authority within 3 minutes with a goal from **SSgt Wilf Wilford**. This was added to by numerous others throughout the game, twelve in all for the seniors, most notably two halfway shots from **Sgt Ford**. The ORs did stage a late comeback, ably assisted by veteran **Sgt Beswick** and **Sig Sutton**, who actually managed to miss more than he put into the net, including a penalty. After an exhausting one-hour first half and a tiring second half, the seniors were victorious with a final score of 12 - 7. The ORs promise a re-match and revenge later in the year.

SBLO SIGNAL DETACHMENT – *by Sgt E C Howard*

It was in the middle of November 2002 that the first SBLO (Senior British Liaison Officer) Sig Det deployed to Stuttgart to take part in EX INTERNAL LOOK. Initially the Det was made up from members of 30 and 2 Sig Regts, the 30 Sig Regt personnel setting up the deployed JOCS system, whilst 2 Sig Regt's people got off to HMS Collingwood for the relevant JOCS courses before deployment.

You can imagine how happy 2 Sig Regt's Det was when it found out that its part in the ex was going to be very small. In fact it was deployed under the OP VERITAS umbrella to support the SBLO staff with OP TELIC planning, and the job was going to last 6 months, not 3 weeks (Goodbye Christmas!) After passing on their vital knowledge about the JOCS system, the boys from 30 Sig Regt departed at the beginning of December, and from then on it was 2 Sig Regt's show. Another departure at this point was **Sgt Lee Glaves**, who handed over to **Sgt Ed Howard** so that he could go off and get married. The things people will do to get off a deployment! For the last 6 months the Det has maintained secure voice and data facilities for deployed staff at Stuttgart embedded with the US European Command HQ, enabling them to take a full part in planning for OP TELIC within their AOR.

The Det took part in coalition trg on the ranges with the new German rifle and pistol, Humvee driving with US troops and trying their hand at the US Army fitness test. All this good fitness trg was wasted however with a series of social events, including a Det barbeque attended by US and coalition nations. The Det is currently winding down for the long awaited return to Blighty in mid June.

Top Row: Sgt Go Howard, Sig Kenny Welburn, Sig Mike Clarke
Bottom Row: LCpl Matt Parvin, Sig Dean Parr, Cpl Ian Bostock

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj R C Young**
SSM	**WO2 D Abson**

With the OC refusing to miss out on quality tanning time in the Gulf (see picture in last issue) and **YofS Lewis** and **FofS Morrison** both posted to equally sunny climes (Dundee and Leeds) it was a skeleton SHQ that returned to York to run the 219 Sig Sqn travel agency. With exiting last minute specials on offer to the Falklands, the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kenya, Canada and Tampa Bay on offer, our stunningly glamorous travel agent, **Sgt Phil Oulton** has been down to the RAO's on a regular basis to see if he can get a commission. **Cpl Lowes** is counting down the days until **SQMS Andy Egan** gets back and has the enviable task of bringing the Sqn's kit back onto the books. The previous favourite 'you'll get it in theatre' now doesn't seem as convincing.

With the amount of tours needing to be filled and kit needing to be turned around we will soon be adopting contortionism on Sqn PT in order to live up to our 'Be Flexible' mantra.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Caesar**
OC (DES)	**Maj A Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2 D Abson**

The past two months have seen the Sqn return from the Gulf and take some well-deserved POTL. We have since returned to work and have recovered our vehs and equipt from both Marchwood and from Ashchurch, where 608 Sig Tp were kind enough to assist us in the refurbishment of the PTARMIGAN vehs. Many people are now cutting away to take up or return to their long leave in Nepal. By the time they return and by the time you read this article, we will have said goodbye to the Squadron OC, **Maj Julius Caesar** Saheb, **Lisajane** and their two daughters, **Olivia** and **Georgia**, who will be handing over to the new OC **Maj Ade Clewlow**, **Mefalda** and their son **Sebastian**, at the end of August.

TRAILWALKER 2003

For people that don't know, Trailwalker is the Queen's Gurkha Signals and Oxfam fund raising event, held in the scenic backdrop of the South Downs. The event itself has teams of 4 walking and running an astonishing 100km in 30 hours (a feat in itself - excuse the pun). Members of 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn deployed from York on Tuesday 22 July to act as an advance party, to set up check points and carry out the essential admin required to run any successful event.

The main body of personnel travelled down from York on Friday 25 July to Petersfield, and members of the Sqn were then sent out across the course to man 4 of the 11 checkpoints. **Sgt Dave Knowler** assisted in the running of the start point, whilst **SSgt (FofS) Arun** was out there somewhere, and **SSgt (YofS) Allen** was left back at York to hold the fort.

All the teams were hampered by the bad weather so the current record of 9 hrs 52 min was under no threat, but this did not lower everybody's spirits, which remained high. Of those competing, approximately 66% finished the course, all with very sore feet and limbs. Despite the weather, this year's event was attended by over 250 teams and will hopefully raise approximately £50,000 for the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

Because of Sqn deployment to OP TELIC, we weren't able to enter a team, but in the true fashion of wives supporting their husbands, the 246 ladies competed. The team lead by the ever-capable **Mrs Lisajane Caesar** completed the route in 22 hrs 23 mins. The 246 Ladies 'B' were not far behind in a time of 25 hrs 44 mins. The event was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who took part.

Thanks must go to all Queen's Gurkha Signals personnel for hosting, what turned out to be a good weekend for all involved.

Um Qasr Port, May 2003. The Regimental LEs were pleased at the size of their booty! L – R: Capt Si Tyler (Tfc Offr), Capt Dave Aspinall (OC LAD), Capt Dougie Craig (MTO), Capt Mick McKenna (QM), Maj Steve Clarke (OC HQ Sqn), Capt Steve Potterton (RAO), Maj Rab Young (OC 219 Sig Sqn), Capt Andy Forbes (ToT)

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Steve Clarke**
SSM	**WO2 Paul Haughton**

QMS DEPT

QM (T)	**Capt Mick McKenna**
RQMS (Gen)	**WO2 Pete Griffiths**
RQMS (Tech	**WO2 Dave White**

OPERATION TELIC THEATRE CENTRAL REPAIR POINT
– by SSgt Dean Cartledge

Techs from TM Tp deployed to the Middle East throughout February, some well prepared and some not so well prepared. Most were employed as Det techs amongst the various PTARMIGAN installations and OSCA nodes, but for a select few, there was the requirement to maintain a Theatre Central Repair Point (CRP) located at the infamous Camp Kohima in Kuwait. Initially the set-up was small, consisting of just a Radio ERV with limited manpower. Our numbers grew when we were joined by techs from 7 & 16 Sig Regts, as well as those mobilised from a variety of TA units. By the end of March, our routine was firmly established. Each day saw a new challenge, with fastballs from the TOT coming in thick and fast to make cables - most of which are still awaiting collection in the ERV, since returned to York! Eventually life at the CRP appeared to be getting into a normal routine, with **Cpl Anton Clark** contemplating life without his girlfriend and maintaining his scrapbook of letters and cards, and **LCpl Joe Binder** searching the ERV in vain for his contact lenses - which he has since found at home. I kept myself very busy sorting out the nightly entertainment programme of shower then bed Monday to Saturday - Sunday being straight to bed.

When offensive operations ceased our main effort turned to the recovery of our comms fleet. Joined by **Maj Plumb** and members of his RSIT team, the CRP grew into what can only be described as a desert oasis. The majority of the 2 Sig Regt Gp assets (in excess of 100 installations) were to pass through the CRP. There they would be turned around and technically recycled in preparation for being returned to Ashchurch, where they would get a more technical sorting out. As the combined CRP team got into full swing, the workload grew, the working hours increased and the temperature rose. Our aim was to turn around the fleet in quick time to enable the efficient and swift draw down of the Regt Gp.

The final chapter of the CRP was its own draw down. The RSIT team headed north, the TA attached were re-deployed within Iraq and the remainder returned home. But not before having to endure 48hrs in a concentration camp (AKA Theatre Departure Centre), where rumour has it the Regt FofS surrendered after 36hrs.

In the end, a vital job well done and a big pat on the back for all those involved. You know who you are.

TRAINING WING - *by Sgt Steve Sparrow*

The Trg Bn is now back to full strength after the return of the bronzed bulks of **Sgt Biff Bithell**, **Cpl Curly Watts** and **Cpl Balaram** from OP TELIC. The rest of the wing were kept busy on rear Details, with the Trg WO, **WO2 Si McGaw** taking up the reins of Unit Welfare WO, and **Sgt Steve Sparrow** having a stint of hard graft with the Regtl Recruiting Team. The wing has once again reverted to full steam ahead, planning the training of the Cambrian Patrol Team, organising a full and demanding package for EX KEY LEADER, and the Regtl Sigs Leadership Course.

BAGHDAD CREW - *by LCpl Seaun Marsden*

OC	**Lt Andy Nicklin**

Towards the end of May, 11 members of the Corps from 2, 16 and 30 Sig Regts and 600 Tp left their very cushy lifestyles in Basra, Umm Qasr and the Kuwait APOD to move to Baghdad. I swear I could hear someone mumbling 'I was in Baghdad when you were in your Dad's bag!' It could even have been the Sqn OC, **Maj Rab Young**, who was talking about WW1.

Most of the Det were fortunate enough to fly north, but some people had all the luck and got to drive up. The advance party of the OC and **Cpl Jim Brown**, took the Mosca Det – after a few days of debating whether it could all fit on a C130. The boss's map recce had indicated a hundred kms of 'road under construction'. What the boss neglected to mention was this meant 'road not yet planned!'

A week later, the second convoy of 3 DROPS wagons and 2 Bedfords towing 1624 gene's, (one of the Bedfords ended up being towed by one of the DROPS, including genes), was being fearlessly led by **SSgt JC Cordery** and **Cpl Marty Warner**. As you can imagine the going was quick and the 500km journey was over in no time - a mere 11fi hours. The DROPS vehicles had an overnight stay in Babylon just outside Baghdad. **JC** was extremely disappointed when he found that Babylon did not deliver as much as the name had promised. However, the 501 Det were very welcoming after a long drive. *Apocalypse Now* did come to mind, and we wondered how long it would be before we came to get them.

Whilst waiting to be picked up at the airport, we chatted to some of the guys from 1 Para who were guarding the British Embassy. They gave us a quick low-down on the current situation and advised that we made ready. Personal security was a major issue in Baghdad, and we set a very high standard from the outset, much to the amusement of the staff officers, who seemed inclined to believe that body armour was better in the boot. It didn't take long before all followed our example, and **SSgt Cordery** was instructing all concerned.

We were then taken to our new home. The Iraq HQ of the Senior British Military Representative, **MajGen Viggers MBE**, was being set up in one of the old regime's villas. Covered in marble and lots of tacky décor, the villa was a welcome break from a 12 x 12 in an old hangar and the rats. **Lt Andy Nicklin**, sorted out a couple of small houses of our own, just far enough away from the staff to enable us to have a quiet life. He almost had a heart attack when one of the staff officers suggested that he should live with them. This was the ultimate test of his limited diplomatic skills!

Life was looking up, but this new-found bliss lasted only a short while. Within a few hours of arriving, we were up to our eyeballs in CAT 5, sweat and dust, setting the Det up. **Cpl Andy Page**, set about getting the VSAT dish onto the roof, **LCpl Shaun Marsden**, chilled out in the villa complaining 'I've never even seen an MD before'. The rest of the crew were running around doing the humping and dumping and generally getting very hot. The temperature in Baghdad was only a few degrees hotter than down south, but it was enough for the lads to feel it.

The Det settled in well and in a matter of days we were well on the way to getting our accommodation sorted. We enlisted the help of a couple of Canadians to acquire some decent air con, and anything else they could get their hands on. **Sgt Dan Pletcher** and **Sgt Maj John Heinrichs** were adopted by the Det and became part of the furniture. In fact, I think **Cpl Jim Brown** signed

Baghdad Crew 2003. Front Row: Cpl James Brown, Sgt Dan Pletcher, Lt Andy Nicklin, Greg Trosper, Sgt Major John Heinrichs, SSgt JC Cordery, Cpl Marty Warner. Back Row: LCpl Bradshaw, LCpl Shaun Marsden, Sig Liam Marshall, Sig Ian Noble, Sig Tom Wood, Cpl Andy Page, LCpl Matt Maxfield

them over to the new crew on a 1033! It was at this point that our accommodation became the envy of the staff officers cramped into their small room, and **Lt Nicklin** felt truly justified.

To add a little competition to Det life, it was decided that the lads would put photos of themselves on HOT OR NOT.com. The point being that ladies all over the world, could look at your photo and give you a rating from one to ten. This gave some of the lads hours of fun. **Sig Tom Wood** and **Sig Liam Marshall**, loved it so much that they couldn't be torn away from the Internet terminal for days. The best match of the tour was **LCpl Maxfield**, whose girlfriend was ready to meet all from the Det but him. Unfortunately the final results were poor, with myself as the number one. Notable absentees from the proceedings were **Lt Andy Nicklin**, and **SSgt JC Cordery**, who were both more worried about attracting the wrong kind of ladies, or were possibly too interested in women from the Foreign Office!

By now life was good. We had our accommodation sorted, the Det was running smoothly and morale was high. Then, before we knew it, the next crew was knocking on the door, telling us to go home. The hand over went smoothly and the 7 Sig Regt crew took up where we left off. All in all, it was definitely the highlight of everyone's tour. We hope that we have set a good grounding for the Baghdad Holiday Resort of the future!

OP FINGAL TOUR - *by Sgt Dave Pope*

On 26 November 2002 the Regt was tasked to provide personnel to relieve 30 Sig Regt of their operational commitment in Afghanistan. The Det consisted of 12 personnel from the Regt to provide strategic comms and support to the staff element in HQ BRITFOR serving in Kabul.

The tour started off with the long flight from RAF Lynham and stopping off at exotic places on the way such as Cyprus, Thumrait and finally Kabul International Airport 28 hours later. It was pleasing to know from the start that on arrival at the airstrip there would be nobody to meet us apart from the dusty 6,000 feet plateau and the cold night air! After being bundled into the back of a cold Daf we arrived at Souter Camp, our home for the next four months.

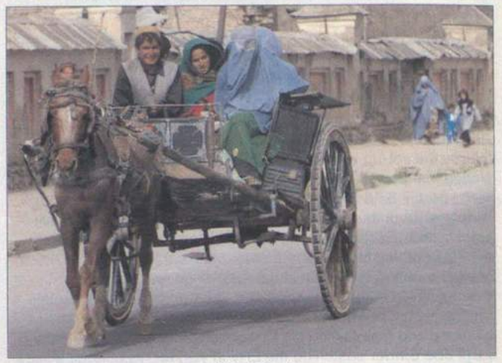
The Det's feet didn't touch the ground for the first month, with a rebuild of the HQ needed, as well as taking over a vast selection of comms systems that the majority of us hadn't seen before. A new LAN system was installed by **LCpl Walker** (with his vast experience and knowledge gained from his 4-hour course) with **Cpl Bradley** having to re-trade overnight from tech to inst tech to lay fibre until he was blue in the face.

The Det also provided 3 personnel to serve at Bagram Airbase, headed up by **LCpl Adkins**, to provide British staff support and comms to be in contact with PJHQ Northwood, while working along side their American counterparts. **LCpl Finlay** provided the Det with his armoury of survival knifes and weaponry that any gung ho US comd would be proud of! The third member, **Sig Poole** was happy to help the Det out with fitness, especially with his tough training regime of polishing off a box of 24 Kit Kats. Something to do with 'carbo bulking' we were told.

In his wisdom, **Lt Ed Boag** decided to organise a Camp triathlon to raise money for a Civmic project that was taking place in theatre. Surprisingly a large number of volunteers came forward to make it a very successful day. **Sig Henstock** excelled in beating the boss in the 10km bike ride - extremely embarrassing for the OC Sigs Det, who told him previously to sort out the problem with his feet and keep them out of the pantry!

Cpl Elaine Ralf shows Afghan girls how to use their first computer

Cpl Elaine Ralf volunteered her spare time in helping build a LAN project for a local school, though she did mention that it was hard work trying not to accept the live meat filled kebabs that were dished out at lunchtime.



Kabul Cart

The tour took a new title of OP FORGOTTEN when ops in the sandy place decided to hot up, but credit must be given to the Det for keeping their chins up when they were informed that they would be extended by a further 6 weeks. Luckily we had crazy nights of bingo and quizzes to keep us entertained, as well the mandatory nightly rocket attack alert. Finally our day arrived, and we flew back to the UK via Bucharest to prepare for a four-month tour to Tampa Bay. Life's tough at 2 Sig Regt, don't you think!

SENIOR BRITISH MILITARY ADVISOR (SBMA) SIGNALS DETACHMENT, TAMPA

As part of OP VERITAS, a Det from the Regt has been deployed to the United States Central Command HQ (CENTCOM) in Tampa, Florida since last summer, and is now running at a steady state, with just the occasional JOCS meltdown to keep us on our toes! After the excitement during OP TELIC's early days, work has now taken on a solid routine, with a perpetual round of shift changes and long duty hours providing the SBMA his comms with both PJHQ and the forces deployed on the various ops with the US Forces around the world. **Cpl Sutcliffe** has been struggling to get any sleep at all when **Sig Ingledew** is on nightshift.

That said, we have managed to fit in a few R&R excursions in between the shift patterns. Most members of the Det have now sampled the free entry to Busch Gardens and Sea World shows. Other memorable excursions have been a canoe trip down the Hillsborough River, where several of the crew got a little too close for comfort to some alligators and a large snake! The weather has been very hot, but we have also had plenty of powerful thunderstorms.

The present crew took over in mid-June, swapping wet and windy York for sunny Tampa. Within the first week, **Sig Peak** managed to get trapped in a lift and ended up in hospital with an itinerant kidney stone. That, and the lure of lap dancers and lager has ensured that **Sgt Knapman** has been losing more hair than usual trying to keep a fatherly eye on **Cpl Bradley**, **LCpl Finlay** and **Sig Hopper**.

Several of the Det attended the US CENTCOM Change of Command ceremony in the august company of **Gen Franks**, **Gen Abizaid** and **Robert De Niro**.

Golf Fever seems to have taken the Det recently, with **Cpl Sutcliffe** winning the prize for highest score at the Coalition Golf Competition. Even the girls are taking an interest, and with 2 golf courses, free lessons and kit on loan from the base...and all that sunshine, who can blame them? Enjoy the UK winter!

10 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **LtCol PW Glibbery**

It has been a busy few months at RHQ, with the CO, **LtCol SA Leigh** handing over comd to **LtCol PW Glibbery** on 11 July. We wish **Col Simon** good luck in his new post as COS RSS Blandford - at least his wife, **Mandy** will get to spend more time with him. We extend a very warm welcome to **Col Paul** and **Tracey**. Other new arrivals include the new Asst Ops Offr, **Capt Yam Rana**, and the new Tech Adjt, **Capt Peter Hodson**. This means we say good bye to the 'old' Tech Adjt, **Capt Philip Cutforth MBE**, who has left for Blandford and the CISM course, and to the truly 'old' Asst Ops Offr, **Maj Ron Kirkwood**, who leaves us on a well-earned retirement and a new civilian career as a consultant.

LtCol Simon Leigh hands over to LtCol Paul Glibbery, with Bruno the Bear looking on from his new pedestal

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Nick Beecher**
Sqn SSgt **SSgt Rick Owen**

A one for one exchange for the Sqn this month. Sadly we say farewell to **Maj Keith Roach**, who after two tours with us, serving as the Sqn Yeoman, Ops Offr and OC, decided it was time for a change and has wangled himself a posting to DCSA Corsham. Everyone in the Sqn wishes him and his family the best of luck for the future. And a warm welcome to our new OC, **Maj Nick Beecher**, who joins us from Blandford.

We saw **Maj Roach** off in style on 31 July, with over 60 people from the Sqn AOR making the journey to Aldershot to say goodbye. **WO1 Cardwell** had flown in from Germany especially for the evening. But many wished they hadn't made the trip when **Maj Roach** and his bottle of *raki* started making the rounds of the tables. Some members of the Ops room staff are still looking the worse for wear. **Cpl Hart's** performance as Mr Vice gave all LCpls present something to aim at in the future.

Deserving of a mention this month are **Sgt Nicola Coombes**, who successfully passed her RSSC and **Mr Anthony Madgwick**, who has been successful in his application for a new post at Portsmouth Naval Base.

As anyone who has served in BFFI will know, there are two main evening pastimes there, the bar or the gym. **LCpl Kev Hebenton**, who has been doing a sterling job for the Sqn in Syscon, gave away his own personal preference when informed that he was on a PTI course on his return next month. After we had established that the line hadn't gone dead and that **LCpl Hebenton** was still conscious, he assured us that it wouldn't be a problem, but did anyone know the way to the gym.

BRUNO RETURNS

Bruno the cable bear was discovered in the ruins of Berlin in 1945. To keep him from falling into Russian hands the bear was taken into Military Custody, loaded onto the back of a truck, concealed as signal equipment and moved to Harewood Bks in Herford. From there he was moved to Kray Bks in Essen. It was here that a visiting Siemens engineer recognised **Bruno** as belonging to his firm. Negotiations were started which eventually saw him returned to Siemens in Berlin. However, as part of the deal and as an expression of gratitude, the MD, **Herr Friedrich Muhi**, had a replica of **Bruno** made, and in 1958 he was presented to 10 Sig Regt. Since 1983 he has resided at HQ Land, Erskine Bks, Wilton where the RHQ was based until 10 Sig Regt's disbandment in 1987.

Lift-off at Wilton

10 Sig Regt was reformed on 4 July 2002 with its RHQ at Basil Hill, Corsham. So, on 2 May 2003 **Bruno** was prepared for transport from Wilton to Corsham by members of 243 Sig Sqn, led by **SSgt Danni Thwaite**, with the assistance of LAD, 1 RHA based in Tidworth. (**Mrs Rosie Miller** the Sqn's Chief Clerk is married to **Sgt Gary Miller**, REME. No prizes for guessing where he works!) The CO, **LtCol Simon Leigh**, commanded the operation throughout and Councilor and ex-Mayor **James Rhid-Tutt** was also there to say farewell. This was a special occasion for **Mr Rhid-Tutt**, as he was the Clerk of Works at Erskine Bks responsible for the placing of Bruno when he arrived from Hounslow in 1983.

Newly arrived at Corsham. 'Aaah! I'm feeling like a new bear already!'

Unlike his previous moves, which had included Regimental Parades, an Escort to the Bear, and the Corps Band, **Bruno** this time enjoyed a quiet springtime drive through the Wiltshire and Hampshire countryside in the back of an open-top 4-tonne Bedford. On arrival at Corsham, he was safely installed on his new plinth and the CO cracked open a few bottles of Champagne with Regimental personalities and those involved with the moving of the Regimental Mascot.

A few weeks later, the CO decided that RHQ Military personnel should appreciate their new resident better and ordered that they give Bruno a good hose down, scrub and brush-up, so as to recapture some of his former glory. The job was done surprisingly well, and in a good light **Bruno** could now easily be mistaken for a young polar bear!

Bruno, welcome back to your Regiment!

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col IPF Vingoe**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Hancock**

With many of the tps back from OP TELIC, life returned to normal in the Regt, although things remained busy, with the Regt! Open Day, TRAILWALKER (UK), numerous exs and ongoing ops.

TRAILWALKER (UK) 2003

TRAILWALKER (UK) 2003 took place in Petersfield on 26/27 July. The race totalled 100kms with over 250 teams taking part in aid of Oxfam and the Gurkha Welfare Trust. The girls' team (pictured) braved the worst weather conditions of any previous event to come second in the ladies' event, finishing together in a time of 22hrs 12mins. The old and bold 'Team Cygnet Old Boys', consisting of **Capt Sean Keilty**, **Capt Graham Pardew**, **SSgt Ginge Dyson** and **Cpl Merv Ovendon**, took the Veterans' race title in a time of 16hrs 20mins – not bad for a team with a combined age of 165 yrs! Congratulations to all of the participants and to the members of the Regt, whose hard work and organisation made the event such a success.

The Ladies Trailwalker Team L – R: Cpl Caplin, Cpl Parma, Sgt Lake and Cpl Cattell

BRAMCOTE OPEN DAY - SUN 06 JULY 2003

The Bramcote Open Day is when the Regt is open to the public, promoting our commitment to support Service, Local and National charities. It is held for the local community, in conjunction with the Mayor and Chambers of Nuneaton and Bedworth, and raises funds for the charities and projects supported by 30 Sig Regt. The event itself was a great success with the weather firmly on our side. Some 5,000 members of the public were entertained by the White Helmets, the Corps Band and a local field gun crew run, to name but a few. Added to this, the fun fair and some 70 stalls were taken up by local businesses, charities and Service associations. All in all, a fantastic day was had by all, with over £10,000 raised for charity.

ALDERNEY VISIT - 15-25 JULY 2003

EX RAMPANT LION is the Support Sqn annual ex, conducted to celebrate the Regt's Freedom of Alderney, develop community relations and assist with community projects on the Island. Just under 40 members of Support Sqn, led by the OC, **Maj Ray Cory** and **WO2(SSM) Jim Coupland**, travelled for hours by road and over the sea, arriving to a large welcoming committee of islanders and tourists. During the week that followed, a lot of hard work by the Sqn ensured that many community work projects were completed. And on the social side, quite a few sporting gauntlets were thrown down. The cricket and football were won convincingly by the Sqn, but not so the golf and games night, which were dominated by the Island semi-professional golfers and darts players. The sporting element of the trip culminated in the final barbecue and the arrival of the Island tug of war team.

LCpl Prem, Cpl Simpkins, Sig Butterworth, Sgt Netra, Cpl Redfern and Cpl Jones doing community work on Alderney

FAREWELL TO COLONEL COMMANDANT BRIGADE OF GURKHAS, GENERAL SIR SAM COWAN KCB CBE - *by Cpl Khagendra Pun*

14 June 03 may not be of any significance to many people, but it will always remain as a memorable day in the history of the Queen's Gurkha Signals. It was the day when all QG Sigs personnel got together as one in Gamecock Barracks, Bramcote to bid farewell to the Col Comdt Bde of Gurkhas, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** and **Lady Cowan**. To mark this historic day, other distinguished officers were also present, including the Col of the Regt, **Brig SMA Lee OBE** and Comd Queen's Gurkha Signals, **Lt Col IPF Vingoe**. **Gen Sir Sam** and **Lady Cowan** were received by the Col of the Regt, Comd and **Maj(QGO) Hitman Gurung** MVO, GM QGSigs on arrival. **Gen Sir Sam** and **Lady Cowan** walked around the field and talked to every group of people. During his speech, the General Saheb, emphasised values and standards, vigour, quality, tradition and loyalty of the Gurkha soldiers in the British Army. A cultural programme, including typical Nepali folk dances, followed the speech. It was indeed a remarkable day for the Regt and, I am sure, that everyone present had an enjoyable time. All ranks of the Regt would like to wish

General Saheb and his family a very prosperous and peaceful life after his long, distinguished career. Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals!!!

Gen Sir and Lady Cowan with Maj (QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO, GM QG Signals

EXERCISE GOLDEN RAM DRAGON - *by Capt SAA Pritchard*

Life goes on despite OP TELIC! 12 aspiring mountaineers from 30 and 2 Sig Regts went to the Écrins Massif in the French Alps this July. The instructors, **John Howie**, **Maj Murray** and **Sgt Jessop** provided an excellent array of activities for the soldiers to get stuck into: hill walking, rock climbing, via ferrata and snow/glacier travel. Several snow-capped peaks were climbed, including the Dôme de Neige on the Barre des Écrins (4,015m) and Pic de Neige Cordier (3,647m). All the exped received glacier travel trg, and **Cpl Mark Kadlec** even got to practise ice axe fall arrests for real! All of the 'first six' will fondly remember being lowered into a crevasse a little too quickly for comfort, having topped the Barre des Écrins. **LCpl Chris Haddrell** soldiered on uncomplainingly with bandaged feet, whilst **Sig Chris Wood** must have done himself an injury by smiling so much. For the rest day, the customary mingling with the indigenous populace led **LCpl Mac MacKay** to pick up French. It would have helped if he actually knew some words before perfecting the cheesy accent! Admin well-dones go to **LCpl Adley** REME, for resolving our minibus problem, and to **Sig Sale**, who spent his evenings managing the 480+ pieces of trg equipt. Tragically, days after we climbed the same route on the Barre des Écrins, several mountaineers were killed, due to a serac collapse. We are thankful that all of our folk returned well, having completed a demanding and physically tiring exped.

Cpl Kadlec and LCpl Adley take a short break after several hours of glacier travel

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

The Sqn has seen busy times over recent months, with soldiers deploying to various corners of the globe. There are currently two dets in the Congo, manned by **Cpl Green**, **LCpl Pennock**, **LCpl Anderson**, **LCpl Greener** and **Sig Hitch**. A Tp-level ex in Canada is being run by our newest Tp Comd, **2Lt Nathan Streetly**. Three 501 dets, headed up by **SSgt Anita Smith**, are providing links on OP TELIC and we are also manning a small HQ in Qatar, run by **Lt Caroline Staples**. There now looms on the horizon a beast called CORMORANT, and we are starting to send personnel on courses prior to the field trials. Our thoughts go out to **2Lt Andrea Davis** who, after transferring to the Corps from the AAC has just been sent on her Sys Mgrs Course. Talk about a baptism of fire!

EXERCISE SEA DRAGON

EX SEA DRAGON was a two-week low level adv trg event at Penhale Camp near Newquay on the North Cornish Coast. There was a good range of activities organised by **Capt Sarah Irwin** to keep everyone occupied, including sailing, surfing, rock climbing and hill walking. Sailing had mixed success, with a near capsize from **Sig Ash Ward** and a two-night sailing exped with **SSgt Smith** in appalling weather, which left people feeling too ill to deploy for evening merriment in Newquay. The rock climbing was definitely not for the feint of heart, and a few people chickened out of the 100ft abseil. The finale of the two weeks was a strenuous day on the beach learning to surf.

Getting that sinking feeling. L - R Sig Heap, Cpl Ward, Sig Howes, Sig Charlton and LCpl Scott.

EXERCISE BEARS TARGET

Those not deployed on ops had the joy of EX BEARS TARGET, 258 Sig Sqn's yearly shooting camp. The week started well with some bleary-eyed SNCOs' arriving at the armoury after the Sgts' Mess Summer Ball, but it only got better from there. The ex involved a number of good shoots, getting the ITD out of the way first, which proved harder for some (**Sig Holmes** and **Sig Coates**) than others. There was a pistol and shotgun range, and the transition to field firing, which started with the fire team assessment. There were plenty of enthusiastic faces that morning, especially from **Sig Charlton**. Once this had been completed, we could then move on to the more exciting shoots such as the IBSR, CQB and section in defence ranges. These were all run by **Capt Bill Anderson**, **SSgt Jim Watt** and the rest of their team from Heartbreak Ridge. The last day of the ex ended with a competition March and Shoot in the morning, followed by a more relaxed afternoon consisting of a 'tactical' river crossing, and a raft construction competition and race followed by a barbecue.

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

Having enjoyed the limelight of being JTFHQ Sig Sqn, we reluctantly handed the responsibility over to 256 Sig Sqn in June 03. As JTFHQ Sig Sqn, we deployed on almost every major Tri-Service (Joint) ex/op over the past 18 months, including OP TELIC, and each time we provided comms of the highest standard, a credit to all members of the Sqn.

We have now taken the role of the Spear Head Element (SLE) and continue as the OP BASILISK sqn, which are by no means less challenging and demanding roles. As for the immediate future, about 40 personnel are deploying on EX AFRICAN SHIELD

being held in Pretoria, South Africa in October/December 03, and 15 personnel have been earmarked to deploy in October 03 to the Balkans for a period of 6 months as part of Balkans Sig Sqn.

EXERCISE SMILING DRAGON

One of the Sqn's highlights was EX SMILING DRAGON, a sailing weekend in preparation for an exped to Thailand and the Andaman Sea. The ex, organised by **Capt Mark Stoter** and **Cpl Stu Southan**, involved a JSASTC Vic 34 yacht, which everyone thought was too small. A few sea-dogs frequented *Emma's* Night Club for a few big Chinese meals and, of course, a few beers. Everyone enjoyed the sailing and got a lot out of the weekend. They especially liked the idea of everyone getting together to see what the weaknesses were and what little gadgets were needed for the bigger exped. We now can't wait until we deploy on the big one on 5 August 03.

X-RAY TROOP - *by LCpl Dhan Thada*

HQ LAND maintains a rapid deployment capability on a short NTM for deployment throughout the world, known as the Spear Head Land Element (SLE). It is highly likely that the SLE will provide the Land Component Comd HQ in a JRRF deployment. The main role of 30 Sig Regt in SLE is to provide a tp with new modern comms equipt held on R1 (-) (RTM within 24 hrs). The SLE contains a tp with various dets, the main one being the VSC 501-satellite det, which plays a vital role providing both secure and insecure high data and voice comms. There are two small satellite dets known as LOCT (Liaison Officer Command Team), and one WOTAN det and one CNR det, which provide secure and insecure data and voice comms using HF radio. X-Ray Tp is ready to deploy anywhere in the world at very short notice.

Sig Ghanendra demonstrates how Superman flies!

34 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col G Hearn**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Newton**

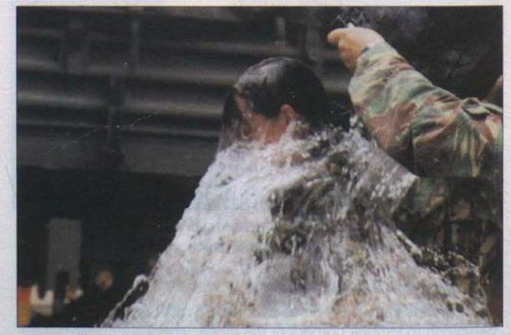
MY 15 MINUTES OF FAME – *by Capt Raymond Duffy*

For the first five minutes, it felt good to be treated as a celebrity. But this feeling of elation soon wore off!

I should explain that besides being the PSAO, 90 Sig Sqn, I hold another interesting appointment. This appointment, which sometimes causes confusion and quite a lot of interest, is that of Queen's Body Guard of the Yeoman of the Guard (not to be confused with Beefeaters who are Yeoman Warders and employed in the Tower of London). I am proud to report that I, together with six other ex-RSigs colleagues, am part of this, the oldest ceremonial bodyguard in the world. Formed by Henry VII in 1485, it continues to this day to parade on royal ceremonial occasions when the Monarch is present.

The incident that brought me my 15 mins of fame involved the streaker who dashed across the grassed area to the front of the Royal Tent during a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. Being the nearest Yeoman to the streaker, it was left to me to bring him down, and together with a colleague, escort him away from the Royal Enclosure to be removed by the Civilian Police. Much was made of my previous experiences on the rugby field (Long since passed I'm afraid!) The incident happened very quickly and things soon got back to normal, however the interest continued for a day or two – just long enough for me to feel glad that 15 minutes of fame only happens only once in a life-time!

Our very own streaker-tackler, Capt Ray Duffy



How to wash our departing Adjt, Capt Sam Harrild

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Chris Jones TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Neal Dixon**

We bid fond farewell to **Capt Sam Harrild**, who moves on to warmer and more scenic climes in New Zealand. We wish her all the very best for her new, army-free life.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Mark Finch**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Carr**

A fond farewell to **SSgt Ian Middlemiss**, his wife **Charlie** and their little fellow. Good luck in your new job and don't forget to drop in when visiting the folks in Bradford. Our best wishes also go to **Cpl Warrington**, who leaves the TA after 10 years loyal service to spend more time with his partner **Alison**, and to **SSgt Mark Carrick**, **Sgt Woody Wood** and **LCpl Dave Barrett** on their tour on OP TELIC2, we say, 'Remember to use factor 15.'

745 ACCESS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Keith Holdstock**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Mark Carrick**

Sigs Patrick Bryant, **Edwin Evans**, **Kieran O'Neill** and **Bing Serasinghe** deployed to Norway for a two-week stint providing part of the enemy forces for an ex there. They were last seen heading, map in hand, for the Swedish border. Hello to **Sgt Keith Geddes** and **Sig Ben Evans** serving with BRITFOR.

Over the past 30 months the Tp has raised money for Guide Dogs for the Blind. **Sgt Andy Oxley** was the driving force behind the fundraising and presented a sum of £1,600 to representatives of the Association during a drill night. Well Done!

The Tp is now busily planning the Open Day for the 50th Anniversary celebrations of Hull Branch, RSA.

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Jez Bailey**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Les Middleton**

We welcome the following recruits to 50 Sqn: **Sigs John Bailey**, **Bob Livett**, and **Michael Scott**, and following his transfer from 49 Sqn, **Lt Shane Ferris**. We thank **Cpl Steve Greenway** for his many years of service and wish him well for the future.

During a recent Sqn trg weekend, the CO had the pleasure of promoting **Cpl Tony Standing**, well-deserved for his hard work with both the Debdon and Darlington Tps, and his efforts over the years assisting with ACF camps. **Joanna Burke** has been promoted to OCdt status. Her trg continues apace. She has already passed her MTQ 2 exam, and her place is booked for September at 'Camberley College.' Best of luck with TACC.

The CO presenting OCdt Jo Burke with her tape

OPERATION TELIC

The 50 Sqn soldiers mobilised for OP TELIC 1, **Cpls Paul Standing** and **Ruth Grainger**, and **Sig Graham Black**, have just returned safe and sound. We congratulate them on their endeavours and a job very well done. An additional lucky volunteer for OP TELIC 2, **Cpl Al Urwin**, has received his brown envelope, and has already mobilised to join the five previously nominated. Best of luck to you all.

EXERCISE TROJAN'S RESPONSE (CCRF)

Because of existing longstanding commitments, there was a limited involvement by the Regt to this CCRF (Civil Contingency Reaction Force) CPX, based out of the Feldom Trg Area. We were represented by 50 Sqn's **Lt Paul Denning**, and HQ Sqn's **Sig Steve Parry**. The scenario for the ex was a terrorist attack on Billingham (which caused some distress for **Sig Steve Parry**), and a chemical attack on Catterick Garrison (which caused no distress to **Lt Paul Denning**).

The formation of the CCRF is to address a potential terrorist threat in the UK, following attacks in the USA. The CCRF is an excellent organisation, which will be invaluable should this country ever suffer similar horrors to 11 September, and provides another opportunity for us all to do our bit. If you are not already signed up for CCRF, get involved and you could be enjoying the next stage of this ex at the end of October!

SECOND LINE INSPECTION

Having suffered somewhat at our previous Second Line Inspection, it was with some trepidation that we all prepared for this round of inspections. However this time it was a different story. The inspection team went away more than satisfied with the quality of the maintenance at 50 Sqn, proclaiming it to be the best in the Regt! This result would not have been possible without the 110% effort from the whole Sqn, but special thanks should go to a few individuals: **FofS Dave Cook**, **SSgt Carol-Ann Philips**, **Sgt Micky Gemmett**, and **Cpl Ian Paterson**. With such an excellent result, not only did the Tp Comd at Darlington, **Lt Paul Denning** 'ring the bell' afterwards, but by proxy, **Maj Jez Bailey** did too.

EXERCISE HELL'S HIGHWAY

As one of the prime organisers, OC **Maj Jez Bailey** arranged with co-conspirator, OC HQ Sqn, **Maj Chris Jones** this year's Regtl battlefield tour to the Normandy Beaches. The tour afforded us the opportunity to follow the landings and subsequent engagements of 50 Div during OP OVERLORD. At times it was very poignant and thought provoking, as we followed their exploits.

EXERCISE ROBIN'S CANTER

In prep for this year's Annual Camp the Regtl Trg Team arranged a mil skills trg ex based around the OBUA village at Whinney Hill. The 50 Sqn contingent was small but perfectly formed, with **Lts Paul Denning** and **Shane Ferris**, **OCdt Jo Burke**, **Sgt Al Newman**, and **Cpl Ian Paterson** holding the our end up. Concurrent with the main trg programme a separate ex was held for current Regtl recruits, which included **Sigs Rama Sinha** and **Sarah McAlister** from 50 Sqn. Again, a fast pace of trg kept us all on our toes, with stands on Sewers, Def of a Comms Site, OBUA, ROE, CNR, Mine Awareness, and Convoy Drills. Following a round of trg during the day, the ex format changed to a confirmation phase, with a night ex to put us all to the test. **Cpl Paterson** was heard to say at close of play on Sunday, 'I had been looking forward to a weekend of Jewish Male Singing, but this mil skill ex more than made-up for it!' Once again, many thanks to the Regtl Trg Team for all their hard work.

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Richard Lenton**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ian Ward**

The last few months have proved to be a busy time for 90 Sqn. With the deployment and return of personnel on OP TELIC and the deployment of personnel on BFOR 98, the continuation of normal Regtl activities has become quite a challenge for the remainder of the Sqn. Nevertheless we have still performed to our usual high standard.

EXERCISE SUMMER FALCON

For 741 Tp and HQ Sqn there was a unique opportunity to fly high when they were co-located at Teesside International Airport as part of EX SUMMER FALCON. For this ex particular emphasis was placed on the 'Defence of a Communications Site'. However, certain defensive measures were deemed a little extreme when

visitors found themselves unable to get in or out of the loc. For those who managed to get through the gate, a very stringent guard post lay ahead. **Capts Steve Wayman** and **Simon Land** decided to test what would happen if they failed to offer the correct password. As they lay face down in the mud, they had plenty of time to reflect on the wisdom of this experiment. Flushed with the success of securing two prisoners, **Sig Paul Yarker** then contacted the Site Comd requesting permission to commence the interrogation process immediately. Both offrs were later released without charge!

OPERATIONS TELIC 1 AND TELIC 2

SSgt Alex Durnall, Sgt (now SSgt) **Evans, Cpls Kev Pountain** and **Stu Wilson** and **LCpl Paul Kenny** have all now arrived back safely from OP TELIC 1. The unbearable heat of the Gulf did prove a tad hazardous for some. In an attempt to get some respite, a number of soldiers paid regular visits to an anonymous air-conditioned veh in order to chill for a while. **Cpl Kev Pountain**, who lingered in the veh for a little longer than recommended, reacted dramatically when he returned to the heat of the scorching sun. Within seconds of emerging from the cool veh, he passed out! Luckily his injuries amounted to little more than bruised pride.

Best wishes for a successful tour are extended to **Sig Mark Turnbull** as he deploys on OP TELIC 2.

BFOR 98

Three members of the Sqn have taken the opportunity to travel as part of BFOR 98. Some appear to be travelling more than others. Whilst **Sig Kevin Hoad** and **WO2 Ian Huntington** have deployed to Bosnia, **Capt Simon Smith** appears to have secured the military equivalent of a Phileas Fogg posting. Whether his worldwide travels last longer than 80 days remains to be seen.

SQUADRON DINNER

This year's Sqn Dinner was held on board the second oldest warship afloat in the world, *HMS Trincomalee*. She is permanently berthed at Hartlepool's Historic Quay and made an excellent venue for the annual All-Ranks Dinner. In accordance with Naval tradition, toasts were drunk sitting down. The taller guests quickly realised that there was a very practical reason for this as the deckhead (constructed of very hard and unyielding beams) was extremely low. As the evening wore on, some seemed to remember this fact less and less. **Sig Mel Gettings** enjoyed the experience of being on the water so much that she is leaving the TA for a life on the ocean waves, in Her Majesty's Navy.

OBUA WEEKEND – *by Sgt Rossy Ross*

During the weekend of 26-27 July the Regt participated in an OBUA weekend at Whinny Hill in Catterick. 90 Sqn took part in a variety of trg exs, incl Mine Awareness, House Clearance, and were shown anti ambush drills with a view to using these skills on the Saturday evening ex. Under the command of **Maj Richard Lenton**, the patrol went off for a drive in the country and as they returned to the village, the most fashionable group of guerrilla fighters ever seen (the permanent staff in their Saturday night shirts and rifles) ambushed them. This allowed **LCpl Mettie Metcalfe** to cover the rest of the patrol running away bravely, as he returned fire from the open cupola of a Bedford and lobbed smoke grenades everywhere. The patrol escaped by pepper-potting down a ditch and across a stream, which the vertically challenged **LCpl Sarah Belt** claimed was more like a river. Once back at the village, where they had been tasked with securing the hotel, the patrol set about clearing it room by room. It was progressing well until **Cpl Graham Belt**, acting as a subversive element in a rather fetching fleece and porn 'tache combo, took a few pot shots at the hotel, drawing fire from just about everyone. He deserved an Oscar for his hammed-up, over-the-top death scene!

The Sunday was spent weapon cleaning, followed by a visit to the Molotov Cocktail Range. The objective here seemed to be to scare the target and napalm as much of the surrounding greenery as possible, despite expert instruction from the Regt 2IC, **Maj Graham Jennings**.

Maj Graham Jennings teaching 90 Sqn how to suck eggs, Molotov Cocktail style

The weekend finished with an inter-sqn competition – a timed race over the OBUA village's confidence course. 90 Sqn won, beating arch rivals 49 Sqn by seconds. Elements of 49 Sqn were heard to claim that they lost due to a penalty picked by the CO, but none had the guts (or common sense!) to claim this in the open.

DOMESTICS

Congratulations go to **SSgt Evans**, and **LCpls Andy Mason, Millie Millington** and **Tate** for their promotions finally coming through. Congratulations also go to **Maj Richard Lenton**, for having suffered long enough in the TA to achieve his TD.

Maj Richard Lenton receiving his TD from Brig Shaw

Goodbyes are extended to **FofS John Walsh** and **Sgt Groundsell**, with good luck for their new posts. They will both be sorely missed. Welcomes are extended to our new (very tall) **FofS Tibbet** and to **Sgt Warring**. Long may they be with us. And finally, we send our best wishes to **SSgt John Metcalfe** and wish him a speedy recovery from his recent ill health.

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WO1 (SVWO) Eddie Kikas (Left) welcomes WO1 (RSM) Paddy Morrow into the Sgts' Mess on the occasion of his Dining Out

A relaxing week in Capel Curig, saw a walking, climbing and mountain bike-riding adv trg ex. We all had a great time, thanks to **Sgt Leigh Griffiths, WO2 (RQMS) Gaz Tuff** and **Cpl Ian Phillips**. The TA soldiers enjoyed themselves immensely and begged us to stay much longer than the weekend. When it was explained that it meant having to stay in Wales, everyone was packed and on the bus before we had finished.

EXERCISE MERCURIAL DIAMOND 03

A team of 6 personnel from the Regt took part in EX MERCURIAL DIAMOND 03, a 10-day sailing exped in the Baltic Sea around Germany and Denmark in a Naiad 331 yacht from British Kiel Yacht Club.

The event was split into two elements. The first few days were spent on basic seamanship and teaching the RYA Competent Crew syllabus to budding crew members. The remaining part consisted of various types of races, ranging from short round the can racing to a long overnight passage race from Aarhus to Svendborg.

The ex was a huge success for the Regt. All personnel who undertook the Competent Crew test were successful and Team 36, led by **WO2 Terry McIntyre**, showed excellent consistency on the race course winning the Dickson Telescope for first place overall.

44 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Bob Davis**
SSM	**WO2 Ward**

The past two months have been a busy period for the Sqn, with weekends ranging from a patrol competition to a battlefield tour in Belgium.

The period began with a team from 749 Tp taking part in the Mountvoy Trophy, a Regtl patrol competition. The team was led by **Capt Stuart Rowson**, and put in a very creditable performance, winning the stands for NBC, Observation and Mine Clearance as well as the March and Assault course. They finished second overall, having dropped valuable points on the river crossing comd task where, in spite of an excellent time, they came last by dropping **Sig Steve Mitchell** into the river. Blame for this was split equally between **Sgt Marshall Jones**, who had tied the knot that came undone and **Capt Sturart Rowson**, who commented 'Yes, it will definitely hold' only seconds before it didn't. However, the loss of points was made up for by seeing **Steve Mitchell's** attempts to balance on the lower rope three feet or so above the water, whilst holding onto an upper rope which was no longer secured to anything.

Following Mountvoy, the Sqn returned to more usual activities, deploying on EX EASTERN FRONT, a tactical comms ex. We then saw a number of changes in personnel, with **Capt Stuart Rowson** and **Sgt Marshall Jones** moving from Southend to Grays as 2IC and SQMS respectively. **Sgt Gordon Bathurst** returned to Southend as Tp Comd of 749 Tp.

In July the Sqn headed to the waterfalls area of Brecon for adv trg. The activities included Gorge Scrambling and Raft Building and Racing. Gorge Scrambling (called Canyoning in France) certainly defied all logic, involving finding a gorge full of water and then heading up it, using the most difficult route possible. After scrambling and climbing our way up the gorge for the best part of the day (including a brief interlude of caving), a few of our number were quite chuffed with themselves to have remained relatively dry (this did not include **SSgt Craig Marlow**, who was first to find just how deep the water was, apparently as a result of trying to assist the TA!). But our joy at remaining dry was short lived, as we spent the latter part of the afternoon climbing waterfalls and then jumping off the top of them. Top marks in this respect must to **Sigs Max Cooper** and **Chris Hayto**, both of whom gamely threw themselves off the top of waterfalls despite their being unable to swim.

Saturday concluded with a swamp race, involving **Sgt Sally Howson, Cpl Paul Allen, LCpl Juliet Bland** and **Sig Chris Hayto**. The four of them would have had to pay good money to watch that kind of mud-wrestling.

Having identified that we had non-swimmers amongst our number, the obvious activity for Sunday was Raft Building and Racing. The quality of raft construction varied enormously, from **LCpl Rob Himsworth's** team sinking within thirty seconds of entering the water, to the OC's raft (with design contribution by **Cpl Paul Allen**) surviving most attempts to sink it. An eventful time was had by all, culminating in an attempt to fit all of the Sqn onto a raft designed for five people. Mention should also be made of **Sgt Mick Woods** and **Sig Guy Hurst**, who provided excellent admin support throughout the weekend.

Having returned from Wales and dealt with the various hand-over matters relating to Southend, a number of the Sqn headed to Belgium for a battlefield tour of the Ypres Salient. Again, an excellent time was had by all, and our thanks go to 45 Sqn for their hard work in organising an excellent tour.

Back into green kit, all eyes are now focused towards Annual Camp and ensuring that the Sqn's assets are ready for deployment. Undoubtedly, another busy month is in the offing.

45 (ESSEX) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Mark McKenzie-Bell**
Acting SSM	**SSgt John Pickett**

BATTLEFIELD TOUR – YPRES SALIENT - *by Sig Edner*

The weekend started with everyone meeting at Grays TAC on 1 August for a few beers and a social start to the weekend. After a late night, some members struggled with the 05.30hrs start on the Saturday morning, but with enough pushing, all were present on the coach to leave at 06.00hrs for a long and difficult journey to Dover and smooth Channel Crossing. Sailing at 08.00hrs, with continental breakfasts a plenty, some caught up on lost sleep.

Off the ferry and back on the coach, we finally arrived at the Ypres Battlefield, where a full day had been planned. The day saw us visiting many sites, including Kemmelburg for an orientation of the Battlefield, Gheluvelt, Hooge Crater and the World War I reserve trench complex at the museum at Sanctuary Wood. When the day had run out, many were looking forward to the evening to be spent in Lille for a little more socialising. A late night saw more stragglers and strugglers on the Sunday morning, but after a quick run around, all were present and the battlefield tour continued. A morning's viewing Essex Farm, the dressing station and the largest British cemetery in the world (Passchendale) saw 36 very tired members of the Regt. After a few hours in Ypres town shopping, and it was on the coach for the drive to Calais to return to England.

Overall the weekend was well organised, very educational and good times were had by all. Many thanks to **2Lt Lee** and Midas Tours for organising the event.

54 (EAST ANGLIA) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Phil Taylor**
Acting SSM	**SSgt Ozzy Osbourne**

EXERCISE ROARING TIGER, 25-27 JULY

Although **Maj Phil Taylor** and **Cpl Brocklebank** had valiantly undertaken the recce for the hill-walking route the day before in thick fog and torrential rain, the weather took pity on us for Saturday's activities. We set out under a clear blue sky and the day was already heating up.

Those tackling the scenic 5-mile trek across a ridge in the heart of the Peak District were split into two groups and began with an hour-long scramble up the access path alongside a small stream. At the top, a well-earned rest on a rocky outcrop afforded a view across the valley and for miles around, and only the knowledge that the other gp was well on its way ahead of us could spur us to leave such a tranquil spot.

Tramping along the ridge line, we listened to **Maj Taylor** explain the history and geology of the area, with its peat bogs and huge granite slabs, and eventually, after two hours of walking, we came to the end of the ridge. Here we were faced with a long and winding path to the bottom. Deciding that we were too tired (and too adventurous) to take the simple yet lengthy route, we took a line between where we were and where we wanted to be at the bottom of the hill, and headed off directly down the side. Scrambling through thick heather and over small hedges, we finally hit the pathway and collapsed on the bridge, which was our meeting point, eagerly delving into our bags for our lunch.

The other activity of the day was mountain-biking, and it was on this bridge that we met the group who had already biked. They arrived in groups of two or three, covered from head to toe in mud and sporting gashes to their shins and calves. They fell off their bikes and sat on the bridge regaling us with stories of carrying their bikes up hills and through woods before being able to mount them and begin the descent. They had been given the choice of an easy or hard route, and even those who had opted for the easy route looked white with fear. **SSgt Julie D'Urso** was still shaking ten minutes later, and together with **Cpl Karen Carter**, decided that maybe hill walking was more her style. **LCpl Scholten** was bearing puncture wounds to his shins which were dripping blood onto his shoes and he had been forced to turn his trousers into shorts following a fall, which had left them in tatters below the knee. Yet he still proclaimed that he was going back for another go!

The activities finished where any good adventure training should, in a small rural pub, where we eagerly tucked into Mars bars and beer to get our energy levels back up for the mini-bus trip back to Totley.

DEAR DIARY - *by Cpl Eddie Allen*

20 July 03. Who would believe it! There I was driving recruits back and forth from RHQ for Recruit Trg and after the second successful journey I was on the last trip. With Bedford in sight and having just gone past RAF Chicksands, I went to change up into fifth gear. Suddenly I had a joystick, not a gear stick. On checking the diff lock, I found that this was the same. We drifted to a stop and I looked across to **Rct James Rolfe** and said 'Dear diary' (or maybe it was something stronger)

With such a short distance to the TAC, we called the PSI to see if he would do us a favour. We were in luck. **Sgt Jase Woosnam** was in and said he would be with us in half an hour. When he arrived, we lined up the Rovers and hooked them up - great! We sat in the rear Rover waiting to go. We waited and we waited. Then we realised that his Rover had also broken down as well!

Now with two Land Rovers about as useful as an ashtray on a motorbike, we realised that we had to call the RMP for recovery. After calling a taxi to a grid reference, we sent **Rct Rolfe** home and there we sat. We started to get hungry so we called another taxi to bring food and drinks. **SSgt Julie D'Urso** offered to call the helpful **Sgt Andy Letts**, but he didn't live up to his name, so after a few hours and a number of calls from the RMP, a recovery truck arrived. The driver looked at both vehs to find that I had sheared the gear selector off the gearbox on mine and the other one was possibly a clutch problem.

Eventually, after arriving at the TAC the driver said, 'Do you mind if I take a picture of this? It is quite unusual to pick up two Land Rivers at the same loc!' Ultimately we all saw the funny side.

ARMY

37 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol RG Mather**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) A Keen**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Riley**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) PE Hall**

CO's CHALLENGE – 15/16 JUN 03

HQ Sqn's CO's Challenge was to produce low maintenance gardens for the residents of St David's House, an organisation that provides sheltered accommodation for the elderly and infirm, many of whom are ex-military.

SSM **WO2 Phil Hall** and PSI **SSgt Jenks Jenkins** planned the operation months in advance, and were supported to the tune of £800 worth of supplies donated by a number of local garden centres.

The Sqn worked well, revamping the 16 individual gardens and an internal water feature, taking 2 days and 27 personnel to complete it. So how on earth does **Charlie Dimmock** of *Ground Force* do it with just three people? It was the hottest weekend of the year and staff from the home regularly brought out refreshment trolleys. As fatigue set in and time was running out, **Capt Henderson** deployed his secret weapon, **Cfn Jay Lieu**, to operate the wheelbarrow. After raising concerns that it wasn't on his FMT 600, he received a quick demo and soon got the hang of it. Everyone was then ankle deep in bark chippings. **Cpl Steve Martin** showed no mercy when he was instructed in the use of the strimmer. The only problem was that he didn't know a flower from a weed.

R-L: Resident, Bert Evans ex Royal Warwickshire Regt inspecting the Flower Quarter Guard of Sig Andy Sole, Sig John Fitzgerald and Cfn Gemma Walsh

To give some idea of the size of the project, a total of 5 tons of garden waste was removed and taken to the local tip. This would have been impossible without the free use of a tipper truck supplied by **SSgt Paul Freeman's** company.

After completing the project, the Sqn presented St David's House with a Canopy Summer Bench, and the residents were very grateful for all the hard work that had taken place. This was a very successful community project, and received much local press coverage.

The staff also organised an Army theme day, dressing in up WW2 clothing. Entertainment was provided for the residents, and several Sqn members were encouraged to volunteer and impersonate celebrities. **LCpl Wayne Farwell's** impression of Frank Spencer was uncomfortably realistic and he didn't even have to misshape his beret. Even **Sgt Glen Draper's** singing sounded much better than expected as his microphone had been switched off!

EXERCISE PYRENEES DRAGON

A 17-strong party of 37 Sig Regt permanent staff and a few stray volunteers spent their annual adv trg trekking in the Pyrenees.

An overnight minibus drive got the team to their base camp at Esterre, a small village on the French side of the mountains, not far from the town of Luz-St Sauveur. The afternoon was spent on a local walk, avoiding horseflies, and finishing up at a village fort, once the last British stronghold in France. It had been a long and hot day, but the effort was rewarded with an inspirational Spam salad meal in the evening to restore morale.

A more challenging 22 km route followed the next day. The trek in the Pont d'Espagne National Park included some lengthy climbs with some fantastic scenery. Sights included glacial lakes, North American-looking valleys, huge waterfalls and beautiful lone walkers.

A less lengthy hike, but equally rewarding, took the team up to the Refuges des Sarradet, a mountain hut at the base of a long glacier. A small group climbed the glacier to the Brêche de Roland, a 40m gap with 100m high walls cut into the Spanish frontier ridge. The ascent of the glacier had taken 35 mins, but with the aid of gravity, ice and some tough backsides, the descent was over in just 3!

Perhaps the most spectacular scenery encountered was on the trek to the Cirque de Garvanie. This is a huge natural amphitheatre with a number of waterfalls from the melting glacier, the most impressive being Le Grande Cascade, apparently Europe's largest. Some improvised river crossing skills were called upon during the descent, when an ice bridge that we had previously crossed on the ascent, was found to be collapsed. **SSgts Bromley** and **Newton** come up with the most unnecessarily daring and dramatic method.

Some good hikes, some spectacular scenery, a bit of climbing, some dodgy French spoken, some dodgy French cuisine eaten, a few boules thrown, a bit of sunburn suffered, and a lot of Monty Python acted out. All in all, a successful exped!

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj PH Fowler-Smith**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) JR Krikorian**

OPERATION TELIC

Sgt Ian Hayley, **Cpl Jim Wingfield**, **Cpl Judy Dunn**, **LCpl Flynn** and **LCpl Stu Adams** received letter instructing them to report for mobilisation on OP TELIC 2. With a flurry of activity, they organised themselves and set off on 2 June to RTMC eventually to join 19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. After their trg and a few days leave, they deployed to theatre and the sweltering heat of the desert. After filling a mountain of sandbags, they are now settling into their various jobs. **Cpl Judy Dunn** has reverted to her civilian role, putting systems in place in the Bank of Basra! We wish them a very successful and happy tour and look forward to their return later this year. You are all missed very much.

Corporal Niall Temple has now returned from OP TELIC 1, where he was serving with 52 Fd Sqn Wksps of 39 Engr Regt RE. Very nice to see you back **Niall** and we look forward to all your stories! Watch out folks: **Cpl Ryan** has also returned. He is still on FTRS with 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, but will be visiting us on leave in August!

CO's CHALLENGE

The CO's Challenge this year was to do something constructive in the local community and arrange for maximum publicity for the Sqn. **Cpl Jim Wingfield** suggested that some work needed doing around the War Memorials in the London Rd Cemetery, so investigations were made and a work schedule agreed with the Coventry Council Bereavement Services. On the Saturday the team set about washing down the Memorials, tidying the surrounding area and scraping, rubbing down and painting three large sets of gates. A big thank you goes to the team for a really hard day's graft. A photographer from the *Coventry Observer* eventually managed to locate us, and the following Thursday, **LCpl Dave Montague** managed to get a small script and photograph in the local paper demonstrating how to use his bucket and scrubbing brush.

On the Sunday it was decided that we would set up a recruiting display in the city centre whilst concurrently running a collection for the Air Ambulance Appeal, a charity that is of benefit to the whole community. **Sigs Jones**, **Postlethwaite**, **Allcott**, **Liddall**, **Davidson**, **Keen**, **Harrop** and **Shaw** were posted around Coventry City Centre and managed to raise a total of £250.94p. Congratulations go to **Sig Liddal** for the highest collection of £94, and 'well done' to the whole team.

The RSM visits the Sqn at The London Road Cemetery War Memorial Clean Up

EXERCISE PHOENIX ADVENTURE

EX PHOENIX ADVENTURE was the annual Sqn adv trg weekend, and was spent in the Symonds Yat area of the Forest of Dean. The weather forecast indicated a rather wet weekend, but fortunately the forecaster got it wrong again, and the Sqn set off on Friday night to set up camp prior to the weekend's activities.

A fantastic day was spent Kayaking on the River Wye and Caving, led by Civilian instructors from Forest Adventure. According to the instructors, the Sqn managed to break the record for the number of capsizes on the trip down the River Wye. **LCpl Dave Montague** and **Sig Lawrence Jones** tried to wind up **SSM Krikorian** by attempting to capsize, but **Monty** only managed to get himself in a pickle and was seen desperately holding onto the branch of a tree hanging over the river as he could not swim. He later found that the river was only about three feet deep!

There were a few nervous moments for some individuals, who became a bit hesitant when they realised that they were going into a small hole in the ground and were expected to scramble through tunnels which they had heard could become flooded. However, everyone managed to bite the bullet and crack on, and managed to return exhilarated with smiles all around.

The weekend was rounded off on the Sunday with the Sqn Orienteering Championship, which was organised by the SSM. The course included around 45 checkpoints with various points allocated to each. The teams set off in various directions and were not seen again for about two hours. **Lt Matthew Longcake** and **Sig Willy Pannocchia** were the first team home, accumulating the most points to make them Sqn Orienteering Champions.

Congratulations go to **Sig Ian Liddall** and **Sig Michelle Harrop** on winning the Runners-up prize. Well done to everyone for completing a very competitive course.

The OC hides behind Sig Pannochia as they try to torpedo the photographer

UK/US EXCHANGE PROGRAMME 2003 – *by SSgt (PSI) Jez Bromley*

A 27-hour journey was the cost of filling the vacancy left by **Sgt Ian Hayley**, who had to deploy on OP TELIC. Thanks **Ian**! The voyage took me, **Sgt Roz Thwaites**, three members of 33 Sig Regt (V), **Lt Sammy Samosa**, **SSgt Karl Davies** and **Sgt Tommy Hankin**, and one member of 39 Signal Regt (V), **Sgt Paul Milner** via Washington and Minneapolis to Bismarck, the capital of North Dakota. This was an adventure in its own right and one that was in serious danger of escalating in a bar at Dulles Airport.

Cue the host, **Sgt First Class (SFC) Tom Newton**. This seven footer picked us up in his 'Green Machine' from the baggage claim and threw us into the *Comfort Inn*. **Tom**, in fact, was to become a gentle giant, but only after some manipulation by his boisterous visitors. **Tom** is essentially the PSI and works at HQ level of 34 Inf Div Eng Bde (Allegedly).

Somewhat rested, the gang reluctantly drew their field kit from 'Supply' and set off in the Green Machine for the pastures of Camp Ripley, Minnesota. Camp Ripley is the US equivalent of Chilwell. However, Ripley is 30km x 12km and has bears running around in its woods. Morale picked up when the gang discovered that they were not to be living in the field but in barracks, it shot through the roof when they heard about the PX, and it became orbital on learning that the following day they would be departing for Minneapolis and the *Mall of America*.

The *Mall of America* is the largest shopping mall in the US and was certainly not going to be beaten by six Brits determined to overdose on 'retail therapy' and ready to take advantage of US prices. A visit to *Hooters* was on the wish list and was soon ticked off with relish. And if shopping was not your forte, then you could always relax on the roller coaster inside the Mall.

Back at Camp Ripley, **SFC Tom Newton** organised a number of events to keep the menacing Brits happy. He was learning fast. The first activity was relatively tame, but a drive around the Trg Area in a 'Hummer' was essential and most enjoyable. **Sgt Tommy Hankin** found out why the clutch pedal is so large, whilst the passengers in the back of the vehicle were also given a closer inspection of it!

There was time to drop in on the local Artillery Bty that was live firing their 155mm beasts. Their practical demo was appreciated and then the troops were privileged enough to 'take the tail'. As part of the initiation ceremony, they got to keep their primers but not necessarily the adrenalin deposits in their underpants!

The Armd Engineers gave an impressive demo of their mine-clearing ability. No one could escape the constant pandering of the Brits. The aviation were persuaded and we were soon winging around the skies in a Huey Kiowa, a four-seat helicopter with much the same capability as our Gazelle - only bigger and better!

The military phase of the exchange came to a close, so all that was left to do was to accept the CO, **Col Aberly's** invitation to join him on his boat for an evening's sailing, chatting, enjoying the beautiful scenery and weather and of course, a drink or two.

On the long journey home, a flight to Washington via Minneapolis gave us enough time to visit Arlington Cemetery and to take a twilight tour of Washington DC. This was a fitting and humbling conclusion to a fantastic and memorable exchange visit.

38 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **LtCol S Richardson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) AM Maxted**

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

ADVENTURE TRAINING - *by Cpl Zoe Schofield*

This year's adv trg was held at Halton Camp 8-10 August. The aim of the weekend was to provide physical and mental challenges to the Sqn, whilst developing team spirit and esprit de corps. The weekend started off with caving. The temperature was blistering so we were pleased to be going underground to cool off. However, there was a look of concern from one or two of the Sqn members.

We split into two groups and set off down our respective entrances to the cave complex. Then the Instructor, **John**, gave us two options for the next bit, wet or dry. No discussion was necessary, as we all ploughed straight through this pool of water. Very refreshing! The caving lasted approx 2 hrs as we weaved in and out of tunnels, clambering up and down, getting increasingly wet and muddy. At some points you thought you would never get through, and at one point we had to use a rope to help get down a steep slope.

Still dry and clean, the group awaits muddying in the caves

We were taken to a place known as 'the cheese press'. It was about 6ft wide, but very, very low and only one route was possible, unless you were a piece of paper. Most got through, but one or two got a bit stuck in places and a couple couldn't get through at all because they were too 'muscular' (**Sgt Mac** take note). Both groups emerged relatively unscathed, albeit a little bruised, caked in mud and soaking wet.

The big drop. Abseiling

Having returned to civilisation, we made our way to Ingleton, where we had lunch, and watched a bit of amateur cricket whilst drying in the blazing heat and waiting for the Hon Col to arrive, prior to setting off climbing. Although hill walking wasn't one of the activities, we managed to get some in. If we didn't think the hike up to the cave entrance was far and high enough, everybody certainly found the crawl up to the crags a challenge. Sun tan cream was liberally applied and the climbing and abseiling activities began.

The DS had set six ropes up for climbing on three different sections of the wall, each section becoming more technical than the previous. Further along the rock face, they had secured a nice flat section, quite a bit higher than the easiest climb, for the abseil. Not quite everyone had a go, but the bravery award had to go to one of our recruits, **Rct Coy**, who at first was so scared, she had tears streaming down her face when she was persuaded not only to trust the ropes, but also to lean backwards over the edge of a vertical drop. She showed excellent grit and determination, to the embarrassment of one or two other more seasoned Sqn members. By the time she reached the bottom, she had enjoyed it so much, she straight back round and to have another go, and then did the hardest climb that was available. Brilliant!

The weather was still warm, so it was back to camp to experience our SQMS' barbecue techniques - a Hawaiian theme. After a quick shower and change, it was off to enjoy the evening and a few well-earned beers. The Hawaiian night seemed to be more of a bad taste night with people wearing all sorts of terrible things, that at one time or other had been their favourites.

On Sunday, Morecambe Beach beckoned, for volleyball, rounders and sand castle building competitions.... If only it wasn't raining! Never mind, we didn't do too badly.

A great weekend was had by all. Great weather, excellent activities with superb DS, a fulfilling barbecue and a few cold beers. Fantastic!

EXERCISE BLUE SUMMER 2

EX BLUE SUMMER 2 was a Regtl comms ex held over the weekend 26-27July. 64 Sig Sqn deployed its CP to Fulbeck Airfield and a det each to Sobraon Barracks and Worksop College. The journey into loc was more eventful than it should have been. **Sgt Kev Mayfield** recognised a problem with his fuel gauge when the vehicle jerked to a halt 3 miles before reaching the M1 motorway. Fortunately, carrying generator fuel sometimes has its benefits and, in this case the problem was rectified and the good sgt's neck was saved.

On arrival at Fulbeck Airfield, the SCP det worked late to prepare for morning comms, completing the full set-up of the CP, less the antennas and masts. These could be quickly set up the following morning, so the det had a reasonable 4hrs sleep! However, the morning brought a few complications when it was realised that we were missing a few vital bits of equipt. The two culprits, **Sig John White** and myself, **2Lt Steve Stacey**, were therefore sent back to Sheffield to retrieve the missing bits, grateful that it was only a short drive. Once it was all sorted out and traffic was moving efficiently, the Tp Comds were able to escape for a while to test comms with our new Saint dets. This involved driving round the area, building up a comms feasibility diagram, and having been tasked by the Trg Maj, **Lt Tom Howes** felt it should be done thoroughly. In doing so, he delayed our dinner for a number of hours!

Late on Saturday night we were given instructions to move the Saint det to co-locate with ourselves. Not a problem, we thought. However, due to a slight mix-up, somebody was to end up without rations or cooking equipment. All else on the weekend was largely uneventful.

REGIMENTAL SKILL AT ARMS MEETING

OC 64 Sig Sqn (V), **Maj Andy Whalen**, made his intentions clear early: 'All trophies available at this year's REGSAAM will be returning with 64 Sqn on Sunday evening.' With this in mind, we selected our team well in advance - well Friday night of the competition is better than Saturday morning. Despite this last-minute selection, there was a certain confidence about the team. We had our seasoned ex-inf soldier in **Sgt Mark Marshall** (our source of knowledge) and members of this year's CORPSAAM Team. In addition, the other Sqns seemed to be struggling, suffering either poor attendance or other commitments.

Our initial shoot went badly, high winds and bore-sighted weapons producing a number of low scores. **Sig Chris Garner** was an exception, scoring well. Some range staff must be easier to bribe than others! But everybody else did well on the second shoot, or more accurately, the other Sqns did so badly that our scores appeared good. Either way meant that the trophies were looking destined for Sheffield. With this in mind, we needed a reasonable shoot on the final range to seal victory for the Sqn. Once again the winds were strong and scores low - maybe we'd blown it! Fortunately not. We produced the highest scores on all

three shoots and **Sig Hales** had proven himself to be the finest young shot. We did miss out on one trophy, but I'm sure we'll get it back next year.

The winning team

The weekend was rounded off with a fabulous barbecue and much merriment.

US NATIONAL GUARD EXCHANGE 2003 - *by Sgt Mark Marshall*

It all started with a briefing for **Sgt Hull** and myself at RAF Uxbridge in mid March, which included an insight and history of the US National Guard. We were all a little envious of two officers who were told that they would be visiting Hawaii as their part of the exchange, but when you are one out of a total of only 50 people chosen from the whole of the TA, we quickly put this back into perspective.

Having acquired our hosts, **SSgt Kramer** and **Sgt Chernes'** contact numbers, I rapidly set about making the first contact and introducing myself. This proved to be of great value, as by the time we met, we already knew a lot about the personnel, the places we would be visiting, the type of environment, climate and just what kit we would require throughout our stay. One of these items was a Hawaiian shirt for a party that would be held on the middle Saturday.

After a stress-free Virgin Atlantic flight of eight hours, followed by a two-hour wait in the immigration queue, we collected our bags and were met by a USNG rep to receive an official yellow envelope. Inside were our internal flight details and authority from the Governor of Minnesota to travel and train within that State. We eventually landed at St Paul Airport, where we were met by our hosts, and some good firm handshakes exchanged. With the ice truly broken, we set off into the Minnesota night to spend our first hours at a local guard armoury (their term for drill halls). Here we were treated like long-lost relatives, their genuine friendliness and interest taking us by surprise. We had now been on the move for over 24hrs and our senses were telling us so. But, after some refreshment at a local bar it was back to the armoury for yet more refreshment and countless games of dice, to which I came out the clear winner, much to the disappointment of my hosts. After a good night, I gracefully took myself to bed for a whole 2 hrs.

Reveille was 06.00hrs and I was surprised to hear and then see the level of activity in and around the complex. I quickly sorted my world out and promptly presented myself to the whole of B Det, B Coy, 134 Sig Regt, giving a brief description of my unit, its role and the part I play in 64 Sig Sqn. Intros over with, it was down to work, checking all vehs before the 180-mile drive north to Camp Ripley.

On Sunday at 04.50hrs (yes, 04.50hrs!), all stood in formation ready for PT. It was hot, damned hot, for the physical test of a series of push-ups followed by sit-ups and a timed 2-mile run, all of which are measured against your age and gender. Thankfully, I passed. Then the week's trg began.

134 Sig Regt had a mission stating that for three weeks in the month of July at Fort Polk in Louisiana they would conduct live trg in support of a local Sig Regt to enable that Sig Regt to deploy to Kazoo later this year for 10 months with the key skill levels required. Thus, each det in each coy in the Regt were to check all kit, hard-wire the whole Regt around a hub, configure all PCs, and once verified, deploy out onto the trg area. They were then to check all antenna arrays making sure their shots go in OK, recover to the admin area for a full turn around, complete a full inventory and load all vehs, trailers and kit onto the rail head in Camp Ripley in readiness to be transported south. This whole procedure took 8 days to complete, so by this time I was eager to see some of what Minnesota had to offer. On the second Wednesday we were permitted to recover back to Minneapolis, where we spent two wonderful nights, courtesy of my hosts at their respective family homes. The hospitality showed no bounds. Then, before we knew it, there we were at St Paul Airport collecting our return tickets back to Washington DC.

Once back at Dulles Airport, we very quickly realised that for the last day and a half we would be on our own, and there was no mention of what to do in the admin instructions. We booked into a small motel on Arlington Blvd, just over the road from the cemetery. No time to waste. First the Vietnam Wall, with over 58,000 names on it and a life-sized statue of three Vietnam soldiers depicting three scenes of the war. The Lincoln Memorial followed, then down to the Korea Memorial, and past the glass lake to gaze up at the Washington Memorial. Then into the Space Museum, to catch a glimpse of *The Spirit of St Louis*, Charles Lindbergh's plane. A quick dash to the Natural History Museum and then on to the White House. The next morning included a visit to the Pentagon and a guided tour of Arlington Cemetery, taking in Arlington House, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Kennedy graves, the Marine Corps Memorial and lastly that most decorated US soldier, **Audie Murphy**. The cemetery guide remarked that, at this rate it is estimated that Arlington Cemetery will be full by 2025!

Both **Sgt Hull** and I had a fantastic exchange trip! Thank you!

39 (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col AH Campbell-Black**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Stillie**

With the CO in the chair for 6 months now, and the new RSM and Adjt getting to grips with their new roles in the TA world, the pace of life at 39 has picked up speed. The Regt welcomes **WO1 Morrissey** from the EO Dept at Shrivenham. We are now beavering away planning for the forthcoming Annual Camp in September in Rhyl. We will keep you posted.

HEADQUARTER (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Dawes**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Clarke**

EXERCISE CALEDONIAN ROSE 2 - *by Pte Thompson AGC.*

The weekend of 4-6 July 2003 saw HQ (NSY) Sqn deploy to Sennybridge Trg Area on EX CALEDONIAN ROSE 2, an Inf Skills

weekend. On arrival we had a ride in a TCV, followed by a short tab (600m) to our bivvy area. The local partisan force bumped us twice during the night, and, coupled with the inevitable stags, sleep was a distant dream.

Next morning the Sec Comd, **Cpl McCarthy**, gave us our patrol orders, and as C & D fire teams, we moved through a series of stands. This involved moving on foot and map reading around the trg area.

The stands were Judging Distance (OC LAD, **Capt Greenslade**); Fire Control Orders (**SSgt Ward**, REME PSI); AFV Recognition, using scale models (**Cpl Rendall**); Patrolling (**Sgt Verrinder**); Comd Task (**WO2(SSM) Clarke**); and Observation (**Cpl Brown**)

The comd task entailed a contaminated river crossing. As my two buddies had completed the task before, they were struck dumb. This put me under a bit of pressure, but I achieved the primary aim and received a well done from the DS on the stand.

Cpl McCarthy's team on the comd task

We then went back to the harbour area to prep for the night activity, which was a close target recce of the enemy loc for both fire teams. **SSgt Daz Ward** and **Sgt Scotty Doyle,** DS accompanied us as UN observers. The partisans were in good spirits, especially when they executed the POW (**Capt Greenslade**). We then withdrew to prepare for the morning event.

After the Sec Comd delivered the patrol report, a plan was prepared to assault the enemy camp. Apart from the sheep giving away our approach, this went well, and the enemy was neutralised by our superior firepower and tactics. Then it was time to pack everything away for the trip to our peacetime loc, and the inevitable tea and medals. All in all an enjoyable, although tiring weekend.

5 (QUEENS OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Rich Belbin**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Hall**

THE SKINNERS AWARDS 2003

During his to the Regtl Bounty Weekend at Longmoor, the Master Skinner, **Mr Christopher Stuart-Clark** presented both the Male and Female Skinners Awards to two members of the Sqn. It was a first for any Sqn to achieve both awards. The Male Skinners Award was presented to **LCpl James Osborn** and the Female to **Sig Rachel Morris**.

Mr Stuart-Clark, an Oxfordshire Gentleman, said it was an honour to be presenting his first awards to two members of the Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars. The PSAO, **Capt Bob Sheldon** took note of this and arranged for him to be given a copy of the Sqn book, *The Story of the Oxfordshire Yeomanry.*

Mr Stuart-Clark presents the Male Skinners Award to LCpl James Osborn

Mr Stuart-Clark presents the Female Skinners Award to Sig Rachel Morris

US/UK EXCHANGE PROGRAMME 2003
- by Sergeant Paul Milner

Chancing my luck, with both my wife and work, I applied for a vacancy on the US/UK Exchange Programme. Success came my way, and I spent an amazing time with 34 Eng Bde, in Bismark, North Dakota. The greatest test of endurance was getting there - 29 hours of flying and delays, and everywhere we went almost everyone wanted to meet and chat with us. The Yanks just love the Brits - even me!

Over the 14 days we were made extremely welcome, and we visited a variety of different units and worked alongside the Americans. The main activities were spent working with their Comms Tp and even though the equipt was not familiar to us, we Brits still had the edge on them. We took part in a major ex and had a ride in an Abrams tank - very loud and very fast! We also had the opportunity to fire artillery and took part in a live firing ex.

My crowing point was a day on the range, using an un-zeroed M16, and beating their top shot. The normal exchanges of plaques took place - and guess who presented the largest!

The exchange was a wonderful experience. I would recommend that if you can find the extra time off work and get your wife's permission, volunteer, and make the most of two weeks in the States.

OPERATION TELIC 1

The Sqn welcome back **Sgt Gordie Shields** from his 6 months operational tour with 1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt. Thanks for your most entertaining Blueys!

OPERATION TELIC 2

We wish **Sgt John Smith**, **LCpl James Osborn** and **LCpl Jonathan Godwin** a safe and enjoyable tour on OP TELIC 2, Keep the Blueys coming and encourage **John Smith** to write!

Congratulations to **Sigs Nick Thompson** and **Rachel Morris** on their promotion to LCpl. Well done to you both!

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Carla Lankester**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Lambert**

SCRAMBLING - *by Sgt M P Curbishley*

Discussion at table was about who fancied going up the Old Man of Coniston, the tourist way or the not-so-conventional way, when breakfast was called to order for the QM to read out a list of those who were going to volunteer for the non-conventional route. They would need climbing harnesses and helmets. This band of brothers was to be the QM (lead), **WO2(YofS) Spence Wolf**, **SSgt Daz Ward**, **Sgt Mick Curbishley**, **Sgt Gringo Inns**, **Sgt Scotty Doyle** and **LCpl Jonno Johnston**.

Both groups were ferried to their start points, with the nervous silence punctuated only by the cry for 'windows' because of the QM's gastric entertainment. Our group's drop-off was to be as close to the start point as possible, so when the driver stopped at the bottom of a near vertical tarmac road, lots of reassurance and encouragement was given to ensure he carried on. The soul-destroying hill was conquered, allowing us to be dropped off at the bottom of our first little climb.

Sgt Gringo Inns gets beasted by the QM, JHW.

Harness and helmets donned, we started our first climb. Those up front noticed the QM miss the obvious pathway and start tackling boulders and vertical slabs. This was to be the pattern for the rest of the day with two climbs before lunch, including a waterfall. Lunch was taken at a tarn that was so inviting in the heat that all went for a swim, including **Jonno**, who was kindly encouraged by **Daz**.

Dressed in **Daz's** spare trousers, **Jonno** was muttering 'Commando' and doing strange lunge exs as we set of for the last climb of 250m. This was our sternest test yet and involved safety ropes, but it still left plenty of time to enjoy the fantastic views and weather.

More fear-inspired climbing techniques were put to use, until we all beat the hill. A victory photo was taken, and this time the QM tried the self-timer watched by about 15 people. In all, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the experience and the views, with pink skin telling us the weather was good, too. All that was left was a walk to the pub in Coniston to meet the other group.

57 (CITY & COUNTY of BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Bill Ruthven**
SSM	**SSgt Addison-Scott**

A fond farewell and best wishes to **Maj Bill Ruthven**, our illustrious leader who was mobilised in July. Welcome to **Maj Ruth Empson**, who has stepped into the breech, and a warm welcome to **Lt Karen Hanlon**, who has transferred to us from 43 Sqn, and to **SSgt Langridge**, who takes over from **SSgt Fidler**, who will be missed!

EXERCISE BRISTOL BIMBLE

57 Sqn's adv trg event took place on the North Devon Coast during the first weekend of August this year. The weather was fantastic throughout, much to the delight of the sun-worshipers amongst us. The weekend comprised sea kayaking, cycling the Tarka Trail (28 miles of it anyway), a coastal path walk of 17 miles (at least that was the intended distance). The final activity for some was a day's climbing, abseiling and coasteering at Hartland Point. The abseil was a mere 220 ft.

The following are a few comments on the Tarka Trail bike ride:

Our first task came at the road crossing, which we attacked with military precision. **Sig John Iles** was our point man, staying at least 20 yards in front, peddling up and down at break neck speed. This gave him a sense of achievement.

Arriving at the *Puffing Billy* public house in good time, we all had an ice cream and continued further up the trail to the next road crossing. This was some 15min ride away. The notorious packed lunch filled our stomachs and the liquid refreshment completed the meal.

Ready for abseiling: Sig Sophie Cave, Cpl Andy Doherty, Lt Karen Hanlon, Sig Hana MacDonald, Sig Robert Sprackman, Sig Ray Card and Cpl Ali MacGill

Cpl Emma Wells displayed her talents in comms skills. Her mobile was strapped to the handle bar of the bicycle, and text messages were received read and returned - all on the move. Passing through the tunnels gave us the opportunity to practise our bell ringing. It was a tune you would die to hear. Hot saddles became the highlight of the ride, with **SSgt Chris Klass**, **Cpl Emma Wells** and **Sig James Green** displaying how the pain threshold could be stretched, by cycling the return route! **Lt Simon Durtnal** improved on his videoing talents, filming on the move. Say no more!

The return journey was temporarily suspended, because a stop in Biddeford was essential to see how the locals survived. The liquid refreshment was a great reward, but **OCdt Jo Godfrey** and **Sig Rebecca George** found it all so stressful, they had a catnap while sitting at the table. Tarka Trail was enjoyed by all. A reward was another ice cream stop before walking back to camp from Fremington Quay.

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol SCR Malik TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) SPJ White**

THE NEW TA RECRUIT TRAINING PROGRAMME

In November 02, a new trg directive was issued by Land that fundamentally changed the way recruit trg in RSigs was delivered. After the closure of the Blandford TA Recruit Trg Sqn in March, the Regt implemented the first of these changes in April 03 in time to prepare the first recruits for their Core Skills Course (CSC) at ATR Pirbright. One of the recruits undertaking the trg from the start of this new regime, **Sig Karen Woodhouse** of 68 (IofC & CY) Sig Sqn, takes up the story:

At the end of March 03, the face of TA recruit trg changed in order to ensure that recruits from all Arms and Corps received the same standardised basic trg across the TA. Recruits joining the Regt are now put through a whole new syllabus, consisting of two TA Foundation Stage (TAFS) weekends at regtl level, followed by two weeks Common Military Syllabus (CMS) at an ATR. This is then finished off with six GAP weekends at regtl level, which are divided into two blocks of three.

The TAFS weekends were well attended at Woolwich Garrison, where we met **WO2 (RTWO) McHenery** and his trg team as well as recruits from other sqns. Attendees to this first weekend had spent differing amounts of time in the TA, so for some, the weekend was good revision of skills and for others, it was the first time they had worn their uniforms. Both weekends were packed with lessons and PT. Having spent two weekends covering the role and structure of the British Army, Equal Opportunities Policy, Pay 2000, management of kit and uniform and drill, we were now ready to attend an ATR.

At the end of May, I arrived at ATR Pirbright a little nervous and apprehensive of what to expect, but those fears soon vanished as recruits and instructors were introduced. Ten of us were allocated to Alexander Tp under the comd of **Capt Hull**, **Sgt Quinn**, **Bdr Smith** and **Cpl Barclay**. It was also nice to see some familiar faces from the TAFS weekends as well as meeting recruits from other Corps.

Lessons were varied and diverse over the two weeks. We learned how to handle and fire the SA80 rifle, taking practical lessons on the SAT, 25m and 100m ranges. We carried out the BPFA, CFT and numerous forced marches up and down 'Concrete and Heartbreak' Hill. These were as steep and drawn out as their names suggest! Lessons were also spent in map reading, first aid and NBC. For most of us, it was the first time we had been in a respirator testing facility or 'the gas chamber' as was familiarly known amongst our course. All I'll can say on that point is that it was an experience I'll never forget!

During the course, there were two exs in the field, where we learned about cam and concealment, judging distances, giving fire orders, patrolling, sentry duties, personal admin, snap ambushes and observation skills. During the night, the camp came under enemy fire, and we were able to put our newly learned fire and manoeuvre skills into practice.

On the Saturday morning, the course had come to an end. It was a strange feeling as good friendships had been made, and though it had been tough, no one wanted to leave and return to their jobs in Civvy Street. We were definitely hooked!

However, things did not end there. Two weeks later, some of us were able to meet up again on the next phase of GAP trg with the Regt. On the first block, we were able to put into practice and develop the skills we had learned at Pirbright. Map reading, NBC and patrolling skills were all combined in a practical ex. We were also given the chance to work hard in full NBC IPE to experience the limitations of working in a hot environment.

The following weekend was spent learning arms drill, something TA recruits have never done in the past. After bruised shoulders and foresights in eyes, ears and faces, the course was looking quite presentable on the parade square at Woolwich Garrison. Later on we took part in a nav and night nav ex in Pippingford Park. This was thoroughly enjoyed by all whilst developing good skills and confidence throughout.

On the final weekend of the first block of continuation trg, we met with the padre, **Maj John Scott**, to talk about some of the issues we may face during our TA careers. A lively discussion followed. More lessons were spent in first aid, before practice began for the pass out parade on Sunday. The DS looked very smart. We had never seen them in blues before, and it was perhaps one of the hottest weekends of the year. After numerous rehearsals, we noticed that friends and family were arriving at Napier Barracks to watch the parade. Our course did arms drill and the TAFS course displayed their basic foot drill. It was good that the TAFS and GAP course met up like this, as for us it was a good opportunity to see how far we had come since beginning of the new trg cycle, and for TAFS it was good motivation for them to see what was still to come.

All that remains for me now is the second block of GAP continuation trg. This will involve two weekends on the range to attempt the APWT and a final ex, where 'anything' is to be expected, bringing together everything that has been learned over the three phases of the new TA recruit trg programme.

At the time of writing, the Regtl Recruit Trg Team have just finished delivering, very successfully, the first of this next batch of 3 weekends on the Pirbright range complex, and trg team and recruits are looking forward to the finale over the next month. Just to cap it, the latest trg directive changes the syllabus again, so it's back to the drawing board for the RTT, and game on for another total revision of the programme! Hey ho!

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

We welcome **WO2 (RQMS) Steve Behan** and his wife. And we say farewell to **WO2 (YofS) Jase Budding** and his wife **Mandy**, who leaves us to move on to Northern Ireland. Thanks for all you have done for the Regt.

60 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Capt Angus Evers**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Terry Ward**

RECRUITMENT - *by Sgt Paul Chambers*

Recruitment at 60 Sqn has seen an upturn due to the extra effort conducted over the past few months. The number of actual recruits going through trg is currently 29, with many more waiting for selection (about 38 at last count!). With the start of the new trg system of TAFS, CMS(R) then GAP, the pressure on the instructors has meant that some weekends contain two or even three elements simultaneously! This in turn has brought about its own fair share of difficulty, as certain skills are in short supply, particularly PTIs and Drill Instructors.

The past six months in Recruit Tp has seen most of its members mobilised on OP TELIC 1 and our only qualified PTI on OP TELIC 2. For a while the Recruit Trg Team was reduced to one person (**Sgt Chambers**) until suitable 'volunteers' were allocated from the Tps. This was, of course, after a reasonable amount of badgering by the 2IC (now OC) **Capt Evers** and upsetting the Tp Comds!

Planning the next phase of recruitment includes at least five Universities/Colleges, several sixth form classes in Grammar Schools and a host of stands in retail outlets. The last year has proved that to recruit effectively, Recruiters need to be permanently in the public view - meeting and greeting, rather than media or poster campaigns. If large numbers of recruits are to be

enticed to attempt the Selection Day, then waiting for potential recruits to walk in off the street is not a suitable method.

Now that **Cpl Ford** and **LCpl Staunton** have returned from the Gulf, recruiting will progress once again. I would like to thank **Sig Popple** for his help in opening doors, **Sig Green** for standing in when asked to and **LCpl Hales** for her short time with us.

68 (INNS OF COURT AND CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Jonathan Manley**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Terry Gardiner**

WEDDING OF SGT RICHARD TURNHAM AND LCPL STEPHANIE PRIDDLE

Members of the Sqn were delighted to provide a Guard of Honour at the wedding of **Sgt Richard Turnham** and **LCpl Stephanie Priddle** in Sherbourne on 12 July. Despite adverse weather conditions (temperatures of 30°C and a cloudless sky!) the ceremony, held in the delightful Castleton Church, passed off well.

Miss Priddle looked resplendent in her bone corset wedding dress. Not to be out done however, **Sgt Turnham** looked every part the gentleman in his dress uniform.

Sgt Turnham has been a member of the TA since fighting alongside the Iceni and Queen Boudicca against the Romans. He however, continues to protest that he joined in 1987. Absurd! He is currently Tp Sgt, C Tp, based at Lincolns Inn, where his passion for military history and veh identification continue to enthrall all and sundry. **Mrs Turnham** joined the TA and the Sqn in 1996 and is still an integral member of C Tp, where her knowledge of medicine is always in demand, almost as much as her wealth of experience as a det comd.

After the ceremony, the wedding party retired to the grounds of Sherbourne Castle for drinks above the lake, before a veritable feast was laid on. Speeches were concise (not something normally associated with **Sgt Turnham**, once he gets onto a subject he knows anything about) yet moving. The marvellous wedding cake belied the rest of the wedding by being decidedly non-military - consisting of cakes decorated with Sgts and LCpls stripes! The day was rounded off with some spectacular dancing interspersed with strolls around the exquisite grounds of the Castle.

All in all, a wonderful day that we hope the Bride and Groom enjoyed as much as we did. We wish them all the best, and hope that **Mrs Turnham** can cope with being told what to do for at least 2 hours a week (preferably between 19.30 hrs and 21.30hrs on a Tuesday), for we can rest assured that whilst he wears the stripes, he does not wear the trousers!

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

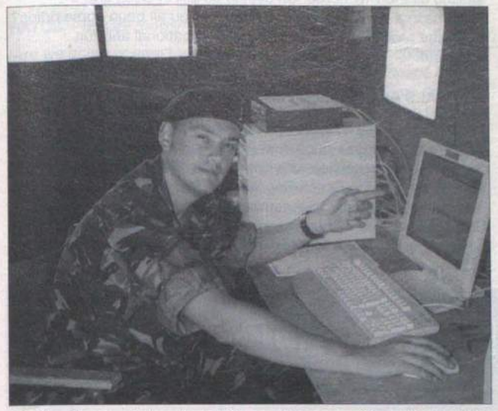
OC	**Maj Michael Wood**
SSM	**W02 (SSM) Jim Swain**

REGIMENTAL EXERCISES

The Regt deployed to Shorncliffe in Kent during June 03 where the Sqn demonstrated its new comms equipt, Whitman. The demonstration was organised by our SPSI, **Sgt Dave Catlett.** In late July 03 we packed our inf style kit and headed off to Pirbright to undergo skills that we need in order to get the best benefit out

Mr & Mrs Turnham. He may wear the stripes but not the trousers

of Annual Camp, this year in the Czech Republic. We were soon put through our paces by the Regtl Trg Team - a good weekend which blew away the cobwebs.



Sgt Ian Brazier during the Whiteman Demonstration at Shorncliffe

SQUADRON TRAINING

Following the Regtl Trg at Pirbright, the Sqn, along with the ACF, participated in a weekend of inf tactics. This comprised section attacks, defensive positions and patrolling etc. The OC, **Maj Michael Wood**, who planned and controlled the ex, was very pleased with how the members of the Sqn and the ACF threw themselves into all the different scenarios.

REGIMENTAL RECRUIT WEEKENDS

The Sqn have three recruits who have attended the Regtl Recruit weekends in June and July 2003. Recruiting is going well and we already have 2 for the recruit selection weekend in October 2003.

FINALLY

We welcome **SSgt Cy Kenny** and family, who joined us as our SPSI in August. We also thank **Sgt David Gall**, our pay Sgt and **Mrs Margaret Nutbeem** for all their hard work leading up to a successful SPS Inspection.

265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Penny Wood**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Stephen Shelley**

On the social side, there have been a number of very successful events, starting with the now famous 884 Tp Ball in Brighton, organised by **Sgt Pam Stocks**. Although numbers were slightly lower than in previous years, it was still an excellent event and was attended by the OC, **Maj Penny Wood** and the CO, **LtCol Simon Malik**. As well as the annual prize-giving to members of the Tp who had excelled during the year, it marked the dining-out of **SSgt Kevin Hancock**.

The Mess dinner in July likewise had a sad tinge, giving members of 265 the opportunity to dine out **LtCol Simon Malik**, who had joined the Regt as Tp Comd in 884 Tp way back in nineteen hundred and something.

A successful Sqn potted sports evening in July was followed by the OC's invite to the Mess. It was an opportunity for all Sqn members and new recruits alike to view some of the historical items and paintings held within the KCLY Mess as well as receive a couple of free drinks!

Trg has been varied. In preparation for our new role under OP MEDWAY, Sqn members are having to learn and develop new skills as well as demonstrating existing capabilities to other Sqns. EX PHOENIX KESTREL at the end of July gave us the first opportunity to do this, and our team led by YofS (des) **SSgt Emmett Vincent** and assisted by **Sgt Stuart Ridgewell**, gave an excellent presentation of our equipt currently in use.

EXERCISE SHARP SIGNALLER 2

The weekend of 11-13 July was the first opportunity during this bounty year to pass our qualifying ITD tests. The weekend, under the direction of the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Keith Wrate**, was planned by **Sgt Kenny Foxwell** who, having completed his range course during last year, made an excellent job of his first ex. Accn for this weekend was completely different. We were offered the use of our Honorary Colonel's farm near Shrewsbury in Shropshire.

The advance party, led by **WO2 (SSM) Steve Shelley**, left on the Thursday evening and by the time we arrived, various stables and outbuildings had been converted into excellent sleeping, cooking and admin facilities. In his first role as SQMS, **Sgt Steve Wise** took as much kit as our four-tonner could accommodate, and we were welcomed on arrival with hot tea and the opportunity to enjoy it alfresco under the stars.

The weather was excellent and, sun tan cream applied, we deployed to Llansillin Range early on the Saturday morning. By lunchtime, all the shooting had been completed. The position of top shot was highly contested between **Lt Alex Downing**, Regtl Shooting Team Capt, **Lt Col Simon Malik** and **WO2 (SSM) Steve Shelley**.

Led by **Cpl Dickie Dundas** and **Cpl Sharon Risley**, the afternoon's entertainment consisted of DNBCC and BFAT trg before moving off the range for our CFT.

Joined by **Col Julian Ratcliffe**, we moved to the bridle paths around Much Wenlock and led by our Sqn PSI, **SSgt Wilcox**, ably assisted by our PTI, **Sgt Keeble** encouraging from the rear, we moved off into the sweltering heat. On return to the farm, we were welcomed by cold dips in horse troughs and even colder beer to wash down the barbeque prepared by our Chef, **Cpl Steve Christie**.

NEWCOMERS' IMPRESSIONS - *by Sig Kerry Corrigan & Sig Charlotte Fox*

I feel that it is only fitting that I let you all in on how we came to write this article. With our both being two of the newest members to our Tp, and having just completed the last ever Recruits Course at Blandford, a message came down from high that we were being invited to contribute to *The WIRE*. So here follows an account from two newly qualified TA soldiers of our Range Weekend at the Hon Col's farm in Shropshire.

The four-hour journey there on Friday evening was certainly an experience. To those who feel that the TA is a dangerous career, they should have spent those hours with us on that coach, which would have confirmed it. The accn at the farm undoubtedly cheered us up. Being used to 'bashering up' in damp woods, we were presented with the luxury of a barn, complete with four walls and an intact roof.

After breakfast was served at 07.30hrs, we all piled into the DAFs for the journey to the ranges. Our krypton factor mission for the morning was to erect a newly manufactured 9' by 9'. Dragging it out of its bag was no easy feat. Task complete, we joined everyone at the 200m point for a safety brief from **Sgt Foxwell**. We then settled down to prepare our weapons for the APWT. Being newest to the TA, I had never encountered butts before. (well, not these sort of butts) It certainly made me appreciate the electronic system.

Throughout the day we had various background activities. BFAT testing was complete with lifelike mannequin. There was also a NBC trg area. It is always useful to revise our trg, and Saturday's activities were no exception. The 90 degree heat without doubt, made sure we coped well under stressful conditions, particularly when it came to the practical NBC stage. Our only respite came when we got to paste and patch in the butts - squaddie tans all round! APWTs complete, after unplanned breaks to shoo sheep from the ranges, we departed to our CFT start point.

This CFT was by no means traditional. Courtesy of the PSI, we embarked on a countryside sightseeing tour with a difference. Off road for the duration, coupled with the extreme heat, made for a tough hour's phys, although the strain was not seen on the Hon Col, who looked like he was going for a stroll in the park. At this point, we must just say a huge thank you to the Hon Col for inviting us to his farm.

Back at the farm we all took an impromptu bath in a horse trough. The chance to cool down and clean up for the evening's social event was tremendously welcome - but in future I'll try to remember to make sure I'm first in line! The barbecue commenced, complete with a fridge for a few cold ones. Then the previously hot day turned chilly, so a bonfire was lit. Some people stood chatting around it until midnight, but after the physical activity of the day, we were tucked up in bed rather early.

Sunday morning saw no rest for us. Again the PSI had organised a harbour area CTR lesson. Conveniently located at the top of the highest hill for miles, our poor CFT weary limbs climbed it rather reluctantly. It was worthwhile though, because we all learned something new. With the Sunday morning clean-up completed, we waited patiently for our coach. After an hour and a few phone calls, we learned that it would be three hours late. Our hosts were kind enough to let us stay on, and even went the extra mile by bringing us cake and peach juice in the shade. Then to top off an already lively morning, we had to wait another 45 minutes while the driver took a mandatory break. His comment on arrival kept us smiling all the way home. On seeing us still in C95s and the Bergens in a big pile he said, 'Oh! Have you all been horse riding? I saw the saddle...' All in all, a highly educational and fun weekend.

ARRIVALS AND FAREWELLS

We are sad to say farewell to **SSgt Kev Hancock** who, although only serving the Sqn since June 1999, has twenty years service in the TA, including service with both RA and RE. Following our annual camp in the Czech Republic, **Lt Col Simon Malik** will give up comd of the Regt in September of this year. As an ex Sharpshooter, he will be missed. A welcome addition to the Sqn however, is **Lt Simon McMenemy**, who joins us from 68 (ICCY) Sig Sqn as OC 884 Tp.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj Alan Blackwell**
RSM **WO1(RSM) ACE Burdge**

The last few months have seen the Sqn deployed largely to Canada to support the Bde war-fighting trg in BATUS. The articles that follow offer a few snapshots of life and work in Canada. It is a rare opportunity for a unit from the Corps to be able to train along side the Battlegroups of their Bde in Canada, and the Sqn is definitely a stronger unit for the experience. Autumn sees the Sqn working up for a six-month deployment on OP TELIC 3 in late October.

BATUS - ATTACHMENT TO ROYAL REGIMENT OF WALES - *by Sig McAskill*

In May I was offered an attachment to the RRW Battlegroup as an AFV432 dvr for their Mortar Pl. As the deployment day drew nearer, I became a bit apprehensive as I did not know what to expect and I knew none of the soldiers in the Pl. I was the only sig working with the Battlegroup. But when I arrived, my apprehensions quickly disappeared and I was made to feel very welcome by the RRW lads.

I was in Canada for a day before we deployed on to the prairie for the 33-day EX BUFFALO JUMP. The first 2fi weeks were live firing practices and even though I was only the dvr, I joined in all their lessons, quickly learned the drills and couldn't wait to get my first round down. About a week into the ex, I got my chance. I was nervous and excited, and I could feel myself shaking as I held the round in my hands. As a sig, I had never before experienced this! On orders, I dropped the round into the tube and then on 'Fire!' I pulled the pin and got the round down. The explosion was deafening, even though we had our ear defenders firmly on. After that, I was addicted and couldn't get enough - I was always willing to jump in the back and have a go.

The live firing phase passed all too quickly, finishing with EX TRACTABLE, a combined arms final ex to practise everything we had learned in the company of all the other units. We got through it easily.

The rest of the ex was a TESEX phase. The Pl's vehs and personnel were kitted out with vests and sensors and they cracked on. Unfortunately there was no actual firing during this stage, our rounds being simulated with lots of orange smoke by fire marker teams. So we were not involved as much as we had been on the live firing ranges. Unfortunately I was taken ill for the majority of this phase and I missed it, which was very disappointing. However, I was told that the Mortar Pl performed well and managed to survive on several occasions!

At ENDEX, I met up with the lads again and we worked on the vehs to turn them around and ensure they were in good order for the next ex. Once this had been done, there was just enough time for a bit of evening R&R before returning to Germany. All in all I thoroughly enjoyed my time working with the Inf, something that a sig would not normally do, and I would jump at the chance to do it again.

The RSigs Safety Staff with their GMC

BATUS - *by Cpl Storey*

'Are we going or aren't we?' was the question on our lips five months ago. This was soon answered, as within the space of a month the majority of the Sqn deployed to BATUS. From the workshop, **Cpl Andy Porter** was the first to go, with high hopes of having a good time and getting to see plenty of Canada and the US. Two weeks later when I arrived there, these hopes had been dashed and all he wished for was time for a pint before he collapsed in his pit. He was a team comd in the targetry group, spending all his waking hours finding holes in a prairie the size of Luxemburg and putting a target into each one.

My first task on arrival was to sort out my veh. I was to become a driver/rad op/safety supvr for the duration of two BUFFALO JUMP exs, driving one of the new GMC safety vehs, a very large red and white automatic truck. By the time I had got used to driving such a large veh, it had a big dent down the side, but at least I wasn't the only one. These trucks did have their bonuses, like air con, FM radio and comfy reclining seats, which enabled us to travel in style!

After lots of prep, D Day finally arrived and the real work began. The QRH Battlegroup deployed for 33 days of intense trg. This consisted of live firing and TESEX, the closest you can get to the real thing. This also meant very long hrs and hard work for all members of the Sqn deployed in the various safety gps. For many of us, it was the first time we had seen the business end of our Bde at work. Starting with special-to-arms exs and building up to a five-day battlegroup live firing ex, I saw many weapon systems in action for the first time. After 33 days we were more than ready for a rest. However 4-5 days was considered enough before we started all over again with the RRW Battlegroup.

Soon it was all over and nearly time to go home. But first came the mad panic of handing back kit and getting vehs serviced. Days sat in queues for wash-downs and service bays were interrupted only by cries such as 'Has anybody got a buckshee ANR headset?' Morale was kept up however by **Cpl Porter**, who proudly announced he had won the BATUS award by clocking up the most mileage – 13,095km. The 'holiday' finished with a nine-hour flight, followed by a two-hour drive back to work!

ON SHIFT IN THE OPERATIONS ROOM - *by Sig Beavis*

When we arrived in BATUS Canada in early April, there were still severe blizzards, but we were told that there had been a heat wave a few days before. The weather on the prairie remained as unpredictable as this for the rest of the tour. This got me to thinking that the next few months were going to be really harsh, but at least we were working in a nice warm Ops Room!

After a quick tour of the building that we would spend our next four months in, we dumped our bags off in the accn and went to meet the lads and lasses that we would be working with. We were met by **Cpl Spearpoint**, who took us to the bar where we got to know our workmates in an informal environment and heard all the horror stories about the Canadian Police downtown! Our first few days were a bit daunting, having to get to grips with using their civilian comms kit (Motorola and OCCN) with which we were not familiar. We also had the YofS yell at us a few times during the first week because the VP is a lot different and took some getting used to.

Our main job in the Ops Room was to ensure that all the Battlegroup and OPFOR vehs were given safe route clearance into and around the live firing and TES templates. After settling in, we realised how vital our work was to be, having to deal with the casualties on the prairie, that would range from broken bones to snake and spider bites. Thankfully there weren't any life-threatening casualties whilst we were there. The routine for the day was two twelve-hour shifts, which would involve manning the nets, driving details and dealing with user problems.

During the TESEX phase, a temporary Ops Room was set up in the EXCON building on the prairie in order to assist with the ex analysts and to give route clearance in and out of the template. We had in the Ops Room a 'chunder' book which detailed all the mistakes made and the best acts of stupidity. **Sigs Parker**, **Huxter**, **Brookes**, **Williams**, and myself all competed in this.

At the end of our tour at BATUS, we felt we had gained a lot of experience and confidence in our abilities and in particular, an invaluable knowledge of some civilian comms equipt. We had a lot of good times out in Canada and it is true what they say about Canadian women – trust me. We are now back in Germany, where our true skills lie, getting the fleet of AFV43s ready for OP TELIC 3 or STS.

BATUS FINAL THOUGHTS

Sig Lane wrote: I really enjoyed working in 7 Gp, as I learned a lot. When someone got bogged in, I got to attend. When there was an accident, such as 432 reversing over a GMC, we had to be on the scene. Luckily no one was hurt.

A casevac report came over the net one day, and when we listened to it we realised that we were close enough to attend. So off we went from one end of the prairie to the other. Half way there we got a call from 0A that the doctor needed picking up on the way, so we had to make a small detour. Once we had picked up the doctor we were back en route making our way cross-country, dodging blinds as we went. We arrived safely and even managed to beat the helicopter that had the other doctor on board. Luckily the casualty wasn't too serious.

LCpl Preston wrote: I was placed in 6 Gp - electronic targetry. We were given 27 days and a team of 22 people to set up all of the ranges required for the season. There were over 800 mechs to be put out, weighing from 45kg to120kg, so the work was very tough, not only physically but also mentally. A day's work averaged between 12 and 20 hrs, which after 4 months, really drains you.

Between the exs we managed to get 5 days off, which I spent in Edmonton (the home of the largest mall) and it was great. **Sig Priest**, **LCpl Bull** (1LI) and I definitely made the most of the trip and spent a lot of our time in *Hooters* being waited on by gorgeous women with very little on. The lads loved it.

Now I'm back I do miss the place and especially the people. I left knowing that we worked hard and did the job better than anyone else has for years. I currently hold the record for bog-ins and managed to survive the mosquitoes, but overall it was fun.

Sig Brookes wrote: Although not out on the prairie, our jobs were still important as we had to control movement, making sure people weren't sent into live firing templates. But mishaps still happened (e.g. a Warrior reversing over a red top).

The prairie, we found, seems to have its own weather patterns. We experienced snow, which lasted a week, lightning storms, hail, and even a mini-tornado passing the local town of Medicine Hat! The worst, though, was the intense heat, which did nothing to deter the mosquitoes, who enjoyed their servings of squaddie cuisine.

After 4 months of directing traffic, humorous incidents (the Cpl who was casevaced with a suspected snake bite, only for it to turn out to be cramp, shall remain nameless) and good-natured banter with the Canadian soldiers working with us, it was time to return to Germany with plenty of souvenirs (cowboy hats and mozzie bites were very popular) and an eye on our next tour.

Sig Jonah Jones wrote: After the necessary briefings and dvr trg, I was introduced to the group I would be joining, 2D Gp. Along with the rest of 2D group, my job was to act as safety staff for recce vehs. I drove **Sgt Pete Ward**, so he could act as safety for the vehs we were chasing. I quickly realised that the prairie is littered with rocks and ditches that always seem to pop up at the wrong time!

In all BATUS was an enjoyable experience, which gave me a chance to get an insight of what the Battlegroups do on ops, and it also gave me a chance to take in the culture of Canada.

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Maj G Addley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) D Watson**

Since the return from OP TELIC, it has been another hectic period for 204 Sig Sqn. All those who were attached to 7 Bde have finally returned and we just await our vehs to make the Sqn complete again. We are all now looking forward to our well-deserved summer leave, prior to starting the trg year in November.

SHOOTING CAMP

Despite being busy with everything else, we found time to fit in a week on the ranges. The whole event was organised and run by **Sgt Tim Ralley** and was a stunning success. We managed to get the vast majority of Sqn to fire their APWT, as well as completing familiarisation trg on pistol and GPMG with the chance to fire these weapons. As always, there were several background activities and everyone was kept busy for the duration.

The week culminated in a small march and shoot competition. This consisted of a march of about 3 miles, followed by a Sec shoot at balloons from 100m. The event was won by a team from Oscar Tp (much to **Lt Limbrey's** disgust), although up until a few days ago, **Major Vickery** was still complaining about the scoring system as his team placed half way down the order.

ADVENTURE TRAINING

Not content with improving our military skills, the members of 204 Sig Sqn took a week out of an extremely busy schedule for adv trg in Bavaria. This was split into two blocks with half the Sqn being away at any one time. The activities conducted consisted of walking, climbing and canoeing. For the R&R period, the majority decided to go white-water rafting. This was great fun despite the river being at a relatively low level. By the end of the 14km course, the majority had worked out how to stay in their boats, although **LCpl Whitham** and **Sig Wilkes** still preferred to swim! Overall, it was a good trip that allowed the Sqn to relax, away from work, in beautiful surroundings.

NIJMEGEN MARCHES

Once again the Sqn entered a team in the Nijmegen marches this year. Team members were easily recognisable around Osnabruck in the preceding few weeks, as they would be limping around, complaining about **Lt Limbrey's** (Team OC) ability to measure distance.

When it came to the main event, the team was selected and duly set off for Nijmegen to join up with the thousands of other people who also fancied walking 100 miles carrying weight. The Team did very well, although 2 members had to drop out with injuries. All the remainder completed the course and proved it by limping around Quebec barracks for the next week quietly moaning to themselves.

OC HAND OVER/TAKE OVER

The final week prior to block leave is always a busy period and this year was no exception. To make things even busier, the OC, **Maj Vickery** handed over the Sqn to **Maj Addley** during this period. **Maj Addley** arrived on the Monday evening and was thrown straight into a Bde planning cycle on the Tuesday morning. The HOTO proper, started on the Tuesday with the usual tours and visits etc, and culminated with **Maj Addley** signing for the Sqn on Friday, just prior to it disappearing on leave.

We would like to say farewell to **Maj** (now Lt Col) **Vickery** and wish his family well in the future at Shrivenham, and to welcome **Maj Addley** and family to the Sqn.

1 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC **Maj PEJ Drew**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) AJ Strudwick**

SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING – Penhale Camp Newquay

After a hectic time in barracks preparing for deployment to BATUS, Canada on EX IRON ANVIL 03, some members of the Sqn managed to make a break for Newquay to take part in some adv trg. With limited resources, **Lt King** put together an excellent package, which resulted in all participants needing a holiday after their strong work hard/play hard approach.

After some success at surfing, members of the Sqn were looking 'knarly' and it was said that the OC managed to 'catch a tube' that was 'radical'. **Sgt Ruscoe** certainly made a lot of friends with his activity, which was described as a selection process by mountain bike. But credit must go to **Sig White**, who had previously never been on a bike! The hill walking, ably led by **LCpl James**, was a success, with the navigation practice proving to be good revision prior to being let loose on the prairies of Canada.

The week culminated in a barbecue and a chance for the Sqn to say farewell to the OC, **Maj AJ Botterill**, who leaves us on promotion to Blandford. The Sqn wishes him and his family all the best for the future. In his place, we now welcome **Maj PEJ Drew**, who arrives as we deploy to BATUS for what will undoubtedly be a testing time for us all.

ATHLETICS

The Sqn's athletics team enjoyed a busy but successful week in June. After a brief trg period, they took part in the Army Athletics Championships at Tidworth Oval on 11 June. Although this was an individual competition, the whole team took part, competing in their respective events with some well-deserved individual successes. **SSgt Linton** took silver in the pole vault, with a vault of 3m and **WO2 (RQMS) Hayes** took bronze in the 400m hurdles with a time of 1.04.22.

Next came the Morrison Cup at Blandford on 13 June. The team had been improving dramatically and success in the Minor Units competition was a realistic possibility. Because of the Corps' heavy operational commitments, only two Minor Units were able to compete, ourselves and last year winners, 280 Sig Sqn. This meant that in many of the events only two athletes were competing, enhancing the sense of rivalry between the two teams.

The competition was tight, with us and 280 evenly trading off victories and losses, until 280 Sqn's runner pulled out of the

3,000m Steeplechase, leaving us with a 2 point lead to go into the final event, the 4 x 400m. This was one of our stronger events. We won it by a clear margin to take the Competition by 30 points to 26. Special mention should be made of the season's best performances by **LCpl Masters** in the steeplechase, **Lt King** in the 400m and **Sig Loynes** in the 1,500m.

On the back of this success, members of the Sqn were selected to represent the Corps in the Inter-Corps Championships at Tidworth on 18 June. **WO2 Hayes** was sixth in the 400m hurdles; **Sig Johnston** won the B-string javelin and came third in the long jump and **Sig Boyes** ran a personal best to come fourth in the 800m. **Sig Loynes** and **2Lt Bowman** had also been selected, but were unable to compete. The Corps achieved second place, behind RLC.

With many novice competitors having gained greatly in experience and confidence during this year's short but intense season, the team is now in a very strong position. If we continue to build on this, we stand a good chance of improving on the year's successes to defend our current ownership of the Minor Unit's Morrison Cup.

BENGAL TROOP TRIP TO LONDON - *by LCpl Wilson*

On the 22 May 2003 Bengal Tp ventured out of Tidworth Garrison and into the big open world. Of course the parent figures of Tp OC, **2Lt Yarroll** and **SSgt McDonald** were with us. For the whole of the 2-hour coach journey, the heating was broken, resulting in everyone leaving the coach 2 stone lighter - except for **LCpl Winzar** and **Sig Stevens**, who, having eaten everyone's scoff boxes, left heavier.

On arrival in London, some of us went with **Cpl Crabb** for a wander around Trafalgar Sq and some of us went with **Sgt Dave MacDonald** to look for a pub and sample some London Pride – unsuccessfully, because the pubs weren't yet open. At 11.00hrs we watched the Changing of the Guard. After this, we tried to get a Tp photo outside 10 Downing St, but, because of security, we couldn't get near it.

The rest of the day was a visit to the Imperial War Museum, where a few of the JNCOs were to give lectures on various subjects. The subjects were The Holocaust by **LCpl Winzar**, The Enigma by **LCpl McLaughlin** and World War II Armd Vehs by **Cpl Crabb** (who didn't need to research his topic as he drove them during that war). All in all a good day was had by everyone.

DEFENCE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES AGENCY (GERMANY) 252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

S02 S&T Dev **Maj G Pickersgill**
Trg WO **W02 (SSM) D W Stewart**

JOINT UNIT TITLE HANDBACK PARADE

As a move in the ongoing integration process into DCSA(G), a joint parade was held to hand back the unit titles of 252 Sig Sqn, RSigs and 11 Sig Unit, RAF.

The Handback Parade

The parade took place in front of HQ UKSC(G) ('The Big House') on a blisteringly hot Thursday, 10 July. There were two reviewing officers, **Col DA Hargreaves**, representing the Corps and **GpCapt A Maxwell**, the RAF. The parade was commanded by **Sqn Ldr Phil Slee**, RAF as members of DCSA(G) (both military and civilian), their families and friends looked on. The origins and histories of both unit titles being returned for safekeeping were read out by **Maj Garth Pickersgill**. The parade was followed by a reception in the RAF Blues Club, a perfect ending to a perfect day. All members of the former 252 Sig Sqn and 11 Sig Unit now form the military element of DCSA(G).

ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT HUMAN RESOURCES

Adjt **Capt C J Udell**
SSM **W02 (SSM) G Steel**

As the reduction in military manpower proceeds, the normal comings & goings of personnel affect us as they do all other units. We welcome **W02 (SSM) Gaz Steel**, his wife **Joanne** and their children, **Ryan** and **Zara** from 15 Sig Regt, and hope you enjoy your tour with us. We say farewell to **W02 (SSM) Dave Stewart** and his fiancée **Natasha**, soon leaving the Army on pension.

OPERATIONS MESSAGING JHQ RHEINDAHLEN

The responsibility for the Rheindahlen Comcen has passed from Army to RAF. Army personnel previously employed in this post are now being either moved to vacant LSNs in the Sqn or have been posted a colocated unit, 7 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt or 280 Sig Sqn.

COMMISSIONING OF WO1 (YOFS) GG MOODY

22 months after his successful selection, **WO1 (YofS) Graham Moody** was commissioned into the rank of Captain on 27 June 2003 by Head of DCSA(G), **Col Paul Eaton.** Following the commissioning ceremony, **Capt Moody** was invited to dress in the appropriate Officer pattern Barbour jacket and green wellies. Having successfully removed the cork from a champagne bottle with a sword (if you wait long enough, it will pop out of its own accord), he was wined and dined in Churchill Officers' Mess by his now fellow DCSA(G) Officers. We all wish **Capt Moody**, **Polly**, **Scott** and **Bethany** all the best and good luck in his new traffic appointment with 7 Sig Regt.

EXERCISE CHATURANGA, 20-29 JUNE 2003

EX CHATURANGA is an assault course competition with some shooting thrown in, not to mention a couple of stretcher runs. Sounds straightforward enough, but when you first glimpse the local team from Belgian Para Commandos with physiques like Jean Claude Van Damme, you begin to realise just what you have let yourself in for!

Trg started in early April, with the intention to enter three teams from DCSA(G). **SSgt Loz Moore**, being in his fourth consecutive year, devised our trg programme. This included a weekly trek to the JHQ ranges, regular boot runs and a bash around the assault course.

Following a last-minute interview with BFBS Herford, the team headed off to Tournai, Belgium. The first 3 days there were taken up with course familiarisation, practice and firing Belgian weapons. The competition itself took place on the ensuing three days. In recognition of DCSA(G) 252 Sig Sqn, the only Brit

entrants, the union flag was raised alongside those of other the nations competing. **SSgt Loz Moore** had cleverly entered one team per day and most importantly, in early morning slots, as the temperatures soared towards lunchtime.

Before entering the competition every entrant had to complete two confidence tests, a climb up a 30m tower and abseil down from it, followed by a rope crawl over an 8m high valley. Fortunately, the Adjt, **Capt Eric Udell** arrived on a programmed visit just when a recurring ankle injury got the better of one of the team members. Summoning up his previous Airborne spirit, he ended up competing with thirty seconds' notice. Before you could say 'Are you up for it, Sir?' he was off with Team 1.

Cpl Dean clears the Gate Vault in style

Friday saw our only mixed team competing. Because the Belgian Paras were too fast for any respectable team, the mixed event consisted of mainly Belgian Police SWAT teams, who were excellent shots though not so fast over the 36 obstacles. The four-person team required one female member, and ours was the legendary **Cpl Niki Dean**, a Chaturanga veteran. Things went fairly smoothly, apart from **Cpl Scotty Wilson** slipping on the balance beam and **Sig Saunders** forgetting to use his feet on landing from the five-metre rope wall.

Saturday was for the oldies. The all-male team was looking battered, with **Sgt Ritchie Evans** having badly injured his left shoulder on the first day, **Cpl Mick Wall** his right shoulder and **SSgt Loz Moore** having eaten the Sausage and Cheeseburger Stand out. This left **Sig Carl Houston** to carry us round. As a result of hard practice and techniques employed, this team ended up with the fastest time of the 3 Brit teams, finishing in a respectable 11th place out of fifty-something teams.

The competition results were by no means disappointing. **LCpl Danny Thwaites** won the Sniper Competition and the Brit contingent received a trophy in recognition for continued fidelity to the competition. Despite high calibre opposition from across Europe, DCSA(G) 252 Sig Sqn proved it was possible to compete successfully.

Any unit interested in entering next year's 20th Anniversary Chaturanga is recommended to do so. The Belgians are excellent hosts and there is a great esprit de corps between teams. Details can be obtained from **SSgt Loz Moore** or **Cpl Mick Wall** DCSA(G) 252 Sig Sqn, on Herford Mil 3662 or 3480 respectively.

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj Mark Everill RLC**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) RC Douglas**

With the Sqn now fully recovered from OP TELIC and associated POTL, attention has now turned to in earnest to trg. Manpower and equipt continue to flood in (every day there seems to be another Sig who I don't recognise!) and the Sqn is really beginning to take shape. The remainder of the year promises to be very busy, as we will be conducting 3 exs of our own in addition to supporting Bde CAST and 2 FTXs aimed at preparing the HQ and Sig Sqn for the High Readiness year in 04. As this goes to press, the Sqn is heading off on some well-deserved summer leave before coming back in late August to tackle the challenges ahead.

OP TELIC REPORT – *by Sgt Paton*

All our people have now returned from their four-month deployment in the Gulf. The deployment started on 13 January 2003 with OC, **Maj Everill** and **LCpl Weston** accompanying the staff of HQ 102 Log Bde as part of the advance party. They arrived in Camp Arifjan, just south of Kuwait on 15 January. We were just a little concerned that although their deployment to Kuwait was supposed to be kept under wraps, the entire English speaking world seemed to know about it from the national newspapers.

The rest of 262 were soon to follow, with **SSgt Craig Dudley**, **Sgts James Paton** and **Tony Waddington**, **LCpls Jo Reader**, **Richie Baldwin** and **Steph Robinson** in hot pursuit. All of the advance party enjoyed Club Class treatment on board a British Airways Boeing 777. Free food and drink – what a way to fight a war!

FORWARD SUPPORT GROUP

On 21 February, members of 262 Sqn joined soldiers from 2 Sig Regt to form the Forward Support Group (FSG) at Camp Coyote, just South of the Kuwait-Iraq boarder. This small group of about thirty Sigs personnel supporting the twelve Bde HQ staff began setting up the FSG. Once set up, we quickly settled down to our daily routine.

The Sigs element of the FSG was made up by **SSgt Dougie Icke** from 2 Sig Regt and his faithful band of 'chosen men'. **Cpl Rob Bromwich**, likened to 'the scrounger' (from the film *The Great Escape*), had the uncanny capability to acquire useful bits of equipt from a seemingly barren desert. These included a wheelbarrow, a fridge and an air conditioning unit. Once in loc, we set about preparing local defences, digging shelters and trenches, laying down wire perimeter fences and providing our own guard. This was all in addition to providing the comms and IT support for HQ 102 Log Bde staff.

On the night of 19 March we were geared up for the big event, which had now kicked off a few miles north. We soon found ourselves donning NBC suits and piling into shelters and trenches. We hoped it would be 'Ice cream in Baghdad' in fifteen days but it was actually more like 'Sickness and Diarrhoea in Umm Qasr' in ten days.

After much deliberation, the award for the 'Golden Bedpan' went jointly to, **Cpl Rob Bromwich** and **LCpl Steve Weston**. They really got through the toilet paper and we're sure that if they'd been in the US Army, they would have won some medals.

The ATacCS team, consisting of **SSgt Dudely**, **Sgt Paton** and **LCpl Weston** also had assistance from the Systems Support Team from Blandford, who made themselves available throughout theatre. Our thanks go out to **Maj Range** and his team, including **WO2 Adie Ellis**, **Sgts Knight**, **Andy Turner** and **Murphy**, **Cpls Richie Wilson**, **Berry**, **Cpl Berteshaw** and some chap known simply as '**Scotty**'. Thanks for the hand, guys. **SSgt Craig Dudley** insists that he worked the hardest out of all of us and would like this to be known to everyone. Do we believe him? Answers on a post card please!

WEE BEASTIES OF THE FSG

We found lots of creatures during our weeks spent in the desert, ranging from scorpions to geckos and other large lizards. At FSG, we found desert rats in abundance. They're better described as large beige hamsters, but with long tails and big black eyes. There was one furry chap that we christened 'Mr Jingles' from the film *The Green Mile*. Mr Jingles would often make an appearance in the cooks' tent, and after a few unsuccessful attempts to catch him with the old 'box propped up with a spoon' trick, we decided to let him be. Obviously, Mr Jingles had seen this trick many times before.

We became quite fond of our furry friend as he made regular visits to receive the odd tasty morsel from the big friendly squaddies. Unfortunately, that's where the children's storybook tale ends. One day Mr Jingles (by now quite a portly little fellow) decided to tell a few of his little friends about the big happy tent that gives away the tasty treats. And so, one evening, while we were all sat eating our evening meal, Mr Jingles made his usual appearance scurrying around from table to chair and from boot to boot, occasionally glancing up at the big curious faces, peering down at him. But suddenly, there were five 'Mr Jingles' scurrying around, scrapping and clambering all over webbing, around table legs and over rifles and respirator cases. In the twitch of a whisker, Mr Jingles became 'vermin' and spades were quickly handed out to begin a little culling. Mr Jingles spent his last happy moments sat on his podgy backside, his puffed up cheeks filled with cake. He looked up expectantly at the big friendly giant (alias **Sig Mick Swann**) who looked like he was going to give Mr Jingles 'something special'. He did. With a thwack, Mr Jingles became a mini street pizza.

BULLYING OFF FOR THE FINAL CHUKKA

Soon after the beginning of hostilities, members of 262 found themselves joining Tac HQ, which was to base itself in the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr ahead of HQ 102 Log Bde Main. **Sgt Chicco Towers** headed up the small group of Sigs personnel, whose job was to pave the way for the rest of us who were to follow soon after.

Much of Umm Qasr had not been fully secured when TAC HQ arrived, but the guys soon sorted themselves out to prepare the site. The local population seemed quite happy to see us, and CQMS **CSgt Mark Arch** established a loyal group of Iraqi locals, who thought he was the nice bloke who dished out the sweets. On the other hand, **Sig Mick Swann** (**CSgt Arch's** assistant) was the bad guy, who used to get them to do the sweeping up. Your name has been noted on Umm Qasr's most wanted, **Mick**.

The end of April saw the arrival of members of HQ 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (261), whom we were very glad to see. The handover takeover began, and the end was in sight. Soon we were heading home from Kuwait City International Airport in an RAF VC10. This was most disappointing for January's original 262 Sqn advance party, as we had to hand in our BA Club Class return tickets. A big bearded RAF Air LoadMaster was not quite as attractive as the friendly Cabin Crew of BA. But still, we were headed back to Germany, and that was all that mattered.

THE FORMATION OF A TROOP – *by LCpl Mark Reay*

Alpha Tp, the driving force behind comms for 262 Sig Sqn, was officially formed on 26 May 2003. Although this was the official formation date, a few members of the Tp waste no time in telling us they've been here in Gütersloh since Day One.

As we fell out from our first parade, under the guidance and leadership of **Lt Marc Bentley** and **Sgt Julian Towers**, we set about turning the Sqn compound into our new home. After much deliberation, and against the wishes of those who had joined us from the now disbanded 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)), we decided not to paint the garages to resemble a Norwegian Grotto! Having made our home, we are now settling into a semblance of routine that would make a passer-by think we've been around for years - although that may just be the 110 Land Rovers!

As everyone in the Corps is aware, social events are supposed to provide an opportunity for soldiers to 'bond'. It is therefore no surprise that in the small amount of down time the Tp has had, we've managed to squeeze in a couple of BBQ'S, with much of the entertainment being provided by the dulcet voice of **Sig Thaddeus Morgan**. And now as the summer months are drawing to a close, we are settling down to the task of putting Alpha Tp firmly on the map.

EXERCISE WARRIOR HALBERD – *by LCpl Dickinson*

On the 7 July Alpha Tp and elements of Support Tp enjoyed a deployment to Achmer Trg Area near Osnabruck on EX WARRIOR HALBERD. From the start, there was some reluctance in the bus to don the cam cream, with **LCpl Mark Harris** applying his to look like a ballet dancer from a cheesy CSE show (so radiant!). Once the troops were off the bus a five-day infantry fest lay ahead.

The first night in the harbour area was marked by continuous snoring from **Sig Ian Potter** and the sound of **Cfn Irvin Popplewell** frantically scratching mosquito bites. The troops were tired after their 10km insertion tab and 5km navex, so basic discipline lapsed on the first night, and the area looked like a gypsy camp. Things had to change next morning, but somehow during the night some had misplaced their motivation and had developed ailments unknown to medical science.

The second day saw lessons in patrol skills and harbour routine taught by **Lt Marc Bentley** and old hands, **Cpl** 'Flan' **Flannagan** and **Cpl Paul Hague**. All this was supplemented with great brews provided by ex dogsbodies, **LCpl Mark Reay** and **Sig Steve Barrett**. Yet more navexs followed, which delighted the troops. As

Prisoner of War

the ex progressed, some very funny looking feet started to develop, with first prize going to **LCpl Matty Anderson**, whose plates looked like a WW1 veteran's.

The third day developed into a progression day and sections were split off to practise CTRs to be put to use that night. After each section's night-time activities, there was a few hours' admin, then it was all change as we moved to a new harbour loc. At this point a few new bodies joined us to replace those who had become injured. One of the new arrivals was **LCpl Samir Rignall**, whose uncanny resemblance to **Pte Pike** from *Dad's Army* brought a few laughs. Once in the new loc, more CTRs were carried out, along with pairs Fire and Manoeuvre, Cam and Concealment and Target Indication taken by **CSgt Arch**, **SSgt Dudley** and **Sgt Royle**, with input from **Sgt Towers**. That night (the last in the field) CTRs were carried out on enemy loc prior to the final assault. Morale was temporarily raised when **Sig Kate Ord** fired a burst at a 'fox' that actually turned out to be **SSgt Dudley**.

And so we moved into position for the dawn attack. The initial assault went very well, taking the enemy by surprise, with clearing trench by trench in quick succession done by 1 Sec, with **Cpl Steve Lawrence** and **LCpl Karl Winsper** doing the hard work. 2 and 3 Secs followed, flanking left and right to fight through the in-depth positions. As the re-org was called, two POWs were taken and the ex was over. We couldn't wait to get on the bus! After a quick meal, we were on our way back to Gütersloh, where the whole Tp deployed to the bar for a well-earned night out, having blown away a few cobwebs and learned some new lessons along the way.

280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Russell Edwards**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Dixon**

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt MA Schofield**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Copley**

SSgt Tamea has moved on to UOTC Oxford and **Sgt Rees** has left for 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt. **Cpl Jackson** and **Cpl Rycroft** move on promotion. We welcome to the REME **SSgt Luckett**, **Cpl Parker** and **Cpl Stevens.**

Congratulations to **LCpl Denham** and his wife on the recent birth of their baby boy. Both are doing fine. Congratulations also to **SSgt Copley** for his successful exploits at the CENTSAAM, Bisley. He won a gold medal in the Graham Trophy, scoring 194 points, a bronze medal the Association Cup, scoring 178 points. He achieved an overall position of 11th out of 387 military contenders from all over the world.

KILO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Jon Davies**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mark Sala**

Cpl Pearce and **Sig Pearce** have gone to 14 Sig Regt; **LCpl Brennan** to 30 Sig Regt; and **LCpl Lister** to start his bar in Spain. We welcome **Sig Paul Cross**, **LCpl John Ford**, **Cpls Paul Hayes**, **Marsh** and **Ford**.

Congratulations to recently-promoted **Cpls McSween** and **Smith**. Finally, good luck to all of those in the Tp deploying to the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq.

JULIET TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Jason Dawes**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Gartside**

We welcome **Capt Jason Dawes**, **Cpls Morley**, **Mark Avery**, **Hepworth**, **Keenan**, **Standley**, **Sutton**, **Jo Neal**, **LCpls Mann**, **Vasey**, **Chris Sankey** and **Tarrier**.

We farewell **Sgt Steve Templeman**, **Cpl Chacksfield** and **LCpl Angie Fewster** on their respective postings; and **Cpl Mike Williams** on his imminent departure to Civ Div.

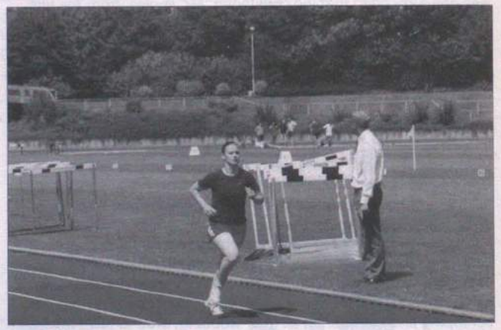
Congratulations to **Sgt Evo Evans** and **Cpl Dan Clark** on their promotions; to **Cpl Wayne Meeds** and **Cpl Marie Moore** on passing their T1 entrance; and to **Cpl Morley** and his wife, **Laura** on the birth of their second child, **Thomas**.

We also say hello to our hard working boys out in Bosnia at the moment, **Cpls Zak Williamson**, **Graham Le May** and **Sigs Beatson**, **Dale and Hall**.

MORRISON CUP – *by Cpl Moore*

On Thursday 19 June, after everyone had found their passports, we eventually managed to depart Javelin Barracks for Blandford Camp. Our team included **SSgt (YofS) Tomkinson**, **Cpl Blanks**, **Cpl McSween**, **LCpl Sankey**, **Sig Cooper**, **Sig Preston**, **Cpl Moore**, **LCpl Fewster** and **Pte McPherson**.

A good day was had by all in the blistering UK heat. **SSgt (YofS) Tomkinson** produced noteworthy performances in the 110m Hurdles and the High Jump. He frequently asks the Ops Offr 'How high do you want me to jump, Sir?' A mention also goes to **Cpl McSween** who was impressive in the 100m.



It's all in a day's work for Cpl Moore, showing the way home

Overall the team came second in the Minor Units, just 3 points away from winning it.

NEWS FROM THE OPS ROOM

With the summer leave period rapidly approaching, there has been no let-up in work commitments for the Sqn. Rather, there has been a noticeable increase in op activity. As ever, the Sqn's Det in Banja Luka continues to maintain the high standards expected of it, whilst back in Javelin Barracks, the Unit says farewell to its members deploying on ISAF IV in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, plans continue for the deployment of personnel to Iraq in support of 2 Polish Corps. As is obvious, NATO remains an extremely busy environment to work in.

On another topic, congratulations to **Sgt Dave Rycroft**, on his promotion and farewell to **WO2 (FofS) John Sutton** and **SSgt (YofS) Tim Tomkinson**, and to **YofS Tomkinson**, who leaves us on promotion

CATHODE EMISSION 03 – *by Sig Hampson*

On 6 June 03 CGS5 deployed once more to Aalborg, Denmark for EX CATHODE EMISSION 03. The first stage of the deployment involved two very long night moves from Elmpt to Aalborg, and

was completed with only a small oil incident en route. Once there, we quickly set up our equipt and looked forward to the hard routine to follow.

The ex itself was very challenging series of interoperability tests and procedures. These went particularly well, achieving the ex's primary aim. Connections were established with ease, as the vast experience of the CGS5 team showed. The other nations were extremely impressed as our links came in without fail. The aptitude and determination was outstanding from every person, and morale was high. Other nations sported a wide range of equipt, including the French RITA system, the British Ptarmigan system and other systems from the Polish Army, the Italians and the German/Dutch Corps. 280's own equipment is Commercial-Off-the-Shelf (COTS), employed by NATO to fulfill all the necessary requirements of the DCM Bn.

The ex concluded with a flash-back to 1966, a football match against the German contingent. With **Cpl Donaldson** on top form, ably assisted by **SSgt (YofS) Fowler** and **LCpl Dickinson**, the outcome was inevitable: 4-3 to the Brits.

The crew of the CGS5 look forward to returning to Aalborg next year and hope to meet again the communicators of the many nations we met and worked with on this year's ex.

WINING IN COCHEM

It was an early start on Sunday 27 July for the families of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn on the trip to Cochem. The trip was organised by the dependable Welfare Officer, **Maj (Retd) Bob Lockwood**, who became the tour guide for the day.

At 08.15hrs, 27 individuals in various stages of sleep deprivation, set off for the sunny climate of the Mosel Valley. The weather, during the journey and on our arrival at Cochem, did not live up to the glorious weather we had been treated to over the previous two weeks. However, not deterred, the party boarded the *Stadt Bonn* for an hour's cruise down the Mosel, taking in the beautiful scenery of steep vine-covered hillsides, bringing back the long-lost memories of soldiers grape picking.

After the cruise, the party split up to take in the views, atmosphere and tastes of Cochem. Some chose to take the Susselbahn (chairlift) up to the *Pinnerberg*. Once at the top, the views are breathtaking and a superb place to appreciate the beautiful Cochem Castle. Others chose do a little wine and food appreciation, whilst wandering through the narrow streets and buying a few trinkets.

It was back on the bus and a trip across to Bitburg BX, following the course of the Mosel en route. One hour later we were at the BX, where everyone raced to the cash dispenser and duly emptied it. After filling our bags and stomachs with various items, it was back on the bus for return trip home. Thanks must go to the driver for his patience and good humour. It was an excellent trip and all enjoyed it very much. All eyes are now on the Weinfest in October.

81 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Craig Tillotson**
SSM	**WO2 Alastair Carruthers**

OUT OF CAMP TRAINING – ALTCAR 2003 - *by Sgt McEvoy*

81 Sig Sqn deployed once again to our old stamping ground at Altcar Trg Camp near Southport for the annual military training weekend – 2003.

856 Tp were determined to put right the many years of hurt and to regain the illustrious Selector Trophy, after having victory snatched from their grasp during last year's OOCT at Nesscliffe near Shrewsbury. This trophy is awarded annually by the OC to the Tp that has accumulated the most points from all ITD activities, including range scores, and this year the focus was on 'fit for role.'

The Tp arrived keen as ever on the Thursday evening, and old friendships were once again renewed in the sociable atmosphere of a local hostelry. Being a UK-wide specialist unit, Tp members get the chance to meet up only twice a year, so anecdotes and stories stretched long into the night.

Up bright and early with the SSM's early morning call ringing in their ears, the Tp were on the parade ground for the first works parade. After the welcome address by the OC, **Maj Craig Tillotson** and a pep talk from our Tp Comd, **Capt Seb Phillips**, they took to the various training stands under the leadership of newly promoted Tp SSgt, **SSgt Tony Blatcher**. Some were busily involved as trg cadre members –**SSgt (FofS) Phil Murnane** and **Sgt Andy McEvoy** on the BFAT stall; **Sgt John Helm** and **Cpl Simon Smith** on the ranges; and **Sgt Al Rosser** on NBC. However we were all together in spirit in our drive to regain the prestigious Selector Trophy for 856.

During the weekend's events, Tp members gave total commitment for all ITD activities, including NBC, BFAT, Recognition, TACFT, Ranges, WHT and trade trg for fibre and copper projects. Highlights included the NBC casualty evacuation simulation during the BFAT practical phase – much coughing and panting was to be heard after the stretcher run! However on the serious side, the trg reinforced the skills required in the event of deployment to operational theatres, such as OP TELIC.

The 'work hard play hard' ethos of the Tp was ably assisted by social interaction and cohesion trips to both Southport and Liverpool, whilst the Offrs and SNCO contingent enjoyed a Western theme night in the WO & Sgt's Mess on the Saturday. Our resident Chef, **Sgt Bernie Robinson**, laid on a superb spread that had the queue for second helpings literally gasping for more! (something to do with the black pepper and chillies). Sunday activities included a St George's day talk and prayers led by our visiting Canadian Padre as well as the TACFT – not many blisters here as the Tp gelled together and supported all members around the course.

Come the Sunday evening Sqn night held in the *Red Rose* on camp, events would reveal the 'scores on the doors' from all the stands & activities over the weekend's events. After a curry served by the Sqn Offrs, the presentations were announced, including long service awards and many a tall story to match. After a long build up, our TO, **Capt Steve Clout**, finally got to the one that really mattered – the Selector Trophy.

All Sqn members held trembling pint pots in their hand as the results were revealed - in reverse order. 856 Tp were convinced that they should have gained the trophy last year and were hesitant as the names were revealed. Finally, with a magnificent 86% 'fit for role' score (a full 11% above the next best placed Tp), 856 Tp picked their jaws up from the floor and burst into wild celebrations!

What a superb comeback after last year's disappointment. The Sqn Tech Adjt, **Capt Andy Kennedy** – our ex 856 Tp Comd, joined in the victory songs after the OC, **Maj Craig Tillotson**, handed the trophy to **Capt Seb Phillips** and **SSgt Tony Blatcher**. **OCdt Tom Bond** eventually managed a smile!

Fully equipped with the fruits of our labour (slabs of beer) the Tp then celebrated long into the night. **Cpl John Vincent** and **Sig Shaun O'Brien**, organised the DJ'ing and general games to follow, including a 'how long can I hold the Selector Trophy out in front of me with straight arms' competition - won, once again by 856 Tp.

So all in all, a very successful OOCT weekend for 856 Tp and 81 Sig Sqn members. With many soldiers now deployed to OP TELIC, it reinforces the high quality of individuals we have, in both the Tp and Sqn, as part of the RSigs family.

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

OC **Lt Col MG Billingham**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) D Scott**

As always, the Sqn has been busy, a large proportion of the regulars remaining on ops. We welcome back **Sgt McGillivray** from her slimming tour in the sun, arriving in time for the OC's leaving do. **Sgt Gott** managed to save the day with the last minute acquisition of three air conditioning units. We have a new yeoman in the chair, **SSgt (YofS) Milne** joining us from Scotland (242 Sig Sqn). Our farewells to **WO1 (YofS) Hughes**, who is off to DCSA. We wish him all the best. Our congratulations to **SSgt Churchward** and **Sandy**, on the recent birth of their second son. Apart from ongoing operations the highlight of the recent couple of months has been EX MEDIUM LYNX 03.

EXERCISE MEDIUM LYNX 03

This was a TA/Regular ex with dets in Denmark, Germany, Cyprus and (for the unlucky) Catterick. The ex started well with one Pinz Det (Yellow) breaking down before getting 10 miles, delaying their departure by 24 hours. The second Pinz Det (Blue) had a magical mystery tour of the country before finding the elusive ferry port. On their return, Yellow and Blue managed another fine display of navigation, missing their ferry. **Cpl Teo** and **LCpl Matthews** have been logged for remedial Map Reading. The Cyprus Det (Red) narrowly avoided the BA strikes and apart from some vicious sunburn returned in one piece.

YELLOW DETACHMENT – *by Sig Yates*

EX MEDIUM LYNX 03 started well for Yellow Det. **Sgt Litchfield**, the Det Comd, 2IC, **LCpl Brian Jones**, the Regular element, **Cpl Sonja Macmillan** and **LCpl Shane Matthews** were also recruiting for 1 Sqn among the Sig Regts in Elmpt, **LCpl Stephanie Quantrell**, **Sig Dan Yates** and **Sig McCarville**. The kit was checked, packed and we led the packet out of the TAC for our destination Elmpt Station in Germany. Travelling with us in the packet was Blue Det, who would head for their Danish destination once we had reached the Hook of Holland via Harwich.

Unfortunately, ten miles later on the A421, Yellow Det's Pinzgauer decided that its transmission box was going to throw in the towel and the packet came to a halt. Blue Det pushed on to the ferry, but Yellow Det were left directing traffic until Thames Valley Police arrived. Because of the tailback we were causing in both directions they arranged for recovery - which came a lot quicker than when we called it via the RMPs. Same recovery veh though. The Police directed traffic until the Pinzgauer was on its way to Bletchley.

After a quick swap of equipt between Pinzgauers and a night out in Bletchley, we were on our way again. This part of the trip was a lot more successful, and we arrived at Javelin Barracks at 03.00hrs on Monday morning. Heads went down for a few hours and then next morning we set up on the airfield to carry on with the ex and were soon in to the other Dets. The ex proved to be very worthwhile and great fun. Everyone learned something new and brushed up on old skills. Linking an extra earth spike to get a better earth was a good trick.

LCpl Stephanie Quantrell and **Sig Stuart McCarville** fixed a variety of mech problems on our old GS 110s with some assistance from the local REME, so we could get the entire Det back to Britain. Blue Det joined us again on their return from Denmark for a day-trip to Dusseldorf and the Altstadtfest in Brüggen. Can't wait for the next Medium Lynx and another trip abroad.

BLACK DETACHMENT

After a six and a half-hour journey, Black Det (MBS) finally arrived at Gaza Bks in Catterick Garrison. The weather was nice for about an hour and then the black clouds came and stayed for the remainder of the ex.

For the first part we were setting up comms, which was a little more difficult than usual, since most of the Det had not assembled the directional antenna before. But with some quick thinking action from **Cpl Thomas**, we soon had it sorted. From then on we kept comms in to the three other Dets. Apart from a few generator problems, this was very successful. **Cpl Stainforth** was keeping an eye on them.

Everybody felt the ex was of benefit and a lot was learned. When the time came for Black Det to make their long journey home, it was just sod's law that the sun came out again.

SERVICE WITH SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS

Anyone wishing to join Special Comms should complete Annex C to SOinC's PD 206. The Sqn recruits for the following trades: Rad Sys Op: LCpl – Sgt; Tele Tech Rad/Sys: Sgt: Tech Sup Spec: Cpl and RSigs Dvr:LCpl.

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TOP STITCH DESIGNS

CYPRUS COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (CCU)

OC **Maj Matt Hanson**
USM **WO2(SSM) Dave Smith**

UNIT RECEIVES A COMMENDATION FROM CBF CYPRUS

CCU has recently been awarded a commendation by CBF for services rendered since the formation of the Unit in September 2002. This is an unprecedented Award, and one that no other Unit in Cyprus has previously received. It is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of all the personnel in the Unit, both RSigs and RAF, over the last 10 months, an achievement that the Corps should be proud of.

CBF Cyprus presents the Unit with his Commendation

CYPRUS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING 2003 - *by Sig Adam Huber*

07-08 May 2003 saw the annual Cyprus SAAM at the Dhekelia range complex. Although the event was almost cancelled because of OP TELIC commitments, all major and most minor units on the Island managed to enter teams.

The CCU team comprised 8 people with **Lt Fi Watson** as Team Capt and **SSgt Watts** as 2IC. The competition consisted of the Combat Infantryman APWT, the Association Match and the Section Match with a Pistol Shoot organised as an individual competition.

Day One got off to a slow start with **Lt Watson**, **Cpl Paul Fox** and **Sig Adam Huber** all having to re-zero. However, **Sig Stu Clark** had a blinder in the Association Match, finishing with one of the highest scores. The Section Match was the highlight of the second day for everyone except **Cpl Phil Parish** and his LSW. According to the scoreboard, he managed to get 29 rounds down range and hit a whopping great 0. Good shooting, Hawkeye!

The Pistol Shoot was our last chance of taking home silverware. It looked promising, with **Sig Huber** leading the competition by over 20 points, until the penultimate firer overtook his score by a few points. Denied – again!

The CCU Team finished fourth – ahead of most of the resident Inf Bn teams – and **Sig Clark** and **Sig Al Simpson** were placed in CBF's Top 30 Shots. Look out Bisley, here we come! The SAAM proved to be a good learning event for those of us who hadn't shot competitively before, so a big thanks to **Lt Watson** and **SSgt Watts** for organising the team.

EPISKOPI RUGBY 7's TOURNAMENT – *by Sig Vicky Marsh*

The Episkopi Invitational Rugby Sevens Tournament is normally held in the spring, but the demands of OP TELIC forced a rescheduling of this year's event. In the July heat, the finals were played under floodlights on the Happy Valley stadium pitches. Ten men's and two ladies' teams from across the Island entered.

The ladies' final was held between Cyprus Joint Police Unit (CJPU) and the Epi Falcons. The overwhelming interest from CCU ladies resulted in a highly competitive Epi Falcons team that was dominated by RSigs personnel.

Despite the beating sun and no noticeable breeze, all players showed strong commitment. CJPU scored two first-half tries by **Cpl Roxy Mealin** and **LCpl Llyn Jones**, to take a 12-0 lead into the interval. The first half also saw the Falcons lose **Capt Mary Maitland** to a bad tackle. The second half was to prove totally different as the Falcons staged an all out assault on the CJPU line. **Sigs Shelley Pardoe** and **Michelle Smith** kept the CJPU team pinned back into their own half as **Lt Fiona Watson** left everyone behind to score between the posts. But CJPU somehow held out to deny any further score, and with a final score of 12-5, the Falcons had to settle with the runners-up medals. But all was not lost. The end of the match saw the beer tent opening and the men's knockout stage to watch. There is always next year, girls!

AKROTIRI SECTION – *by Cpl Jon White and Sig Col Caisley*

OC **Capt Ben Psaila**
Sec SSgt **SSgt Paul Batley**

The Sec, as always leads the way in Unit sport, recently becoming the proud owners of the Army Open Water Freestyle champion and the Cyprus Bay to Bay champion, **Capt Ben Psaila**, who has actually turned up sporting a new DPM outfit. Keeping with the wet theme, the Sec's fine vessel of paper and varnish obliterated all competition in this year's annual raft race. Competing against two other CCU rafts, the boys, led by **Cpl Lewis**, had finished and eaten their lunch before the next raft hit the shore, putting to shame all who doubted our fine engineering.

We say hello to **SSgt Paul Batley**, **Cpl Stewart**, **LCpl Chapman**, **LCpl Buckler** and **Sig O'Neil**. We also say goodbye, to **SSgt Cain**, and **Cpl Thorpe**, and to **LCpl Dean Roberts**, who is leaving us to join Civ-Div.

COMMUNICATION SERVICES SECTION

OC **Lt Fiona Watson**
WO **WO2 Moran**

The Tactical Radio Cell of CCU has had a busy few months, with new faces, new ways and, creating more work than ever, new radios. A new commercial radio system has been introduced to the whole island, and new radios mean more trg for everyone. After a mad rush of civilians attaching antennae and radio sets to anything and everything, the lads at TRC were left to figure it all out and make it work.

While all of this was going on, there have been a number of changes to staffing. The main change was the hand over of the Sec to **Cpl Bob Zimmerman** who joins us from NI. This means goodbye to **Cpl Kenny Purdie**, who has gone to Blandford to become an IS Op. Two other new arrivals are **Sig Simpson**, from 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt and **Sig Pardoe** from 1 Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt. **LCpl Law** has managed to escape for a little peace and quiet to Blandford for his Class One. Finally we bid a fond farewell to **Sig Vaughan Harvey**, who has left us for 2 Sig Regt.

DHEKELIA SECTION - *by Cpl Taylor*

OC	**Capt Dean Richardson**
Sec SSgt	**SSgt Watts**

After several hectic months, a reduced post OP TELIC workload has allowed routine maintenance to be tackled, and some indulgence on the playing field. On FA Cup Final weekend our Team the BITSA FC played a tough match against Chalice (a touring team comprising the Joint High Commissions of Nicosia, London and Brussels). Following a well-fought first half, an exciting game saw the Sec's fitness (and acclimatisation) shine through, and with a converted penalty by **Sig John Dent** in his final game, we gained a well-deserved 5-2 victory.

The after-match celebrations included the showing of the Cup Final on big screen and the annual end of season club presentations. For his long service and dedication to BITSA FC, **Sig John Dent** was presented with the players' Player of the Season Award; **Mr Antonio** received the Golden Boot for the most goals and **SSgt (FofS) Mick Lingard** the Wooden Spoon for an ability to miss almost every chance he was presented.

The Inter-Section Griffon Cup Swimming Competition proved a welcome release from summer cable-pulling. The Dhekelia swimmers provided a devastating, one-sided display of technique and teamwork, scoring 39 out of a possible 40 points. Particular commendations to the organisers, **LCpl Mick Jagger** and **Sig Andy Pyle** for all their hard work but also to **LCpls Mark Robinson**, **Jimmy Wilson**, **Piers Daw**, **Phil Brewster**, **Cpl Nath Hadley** and **Capt Dean Richardson**. With 4 wins out 4 events in the Inter-Sec Competition, it's off to Lords next for the cricket sixes.

The Dhekelia Sec winning swimming team

The annual Cyprus Raft Race was held at Cessac Beach, Dhekelia and **Cpl Kurt Molden** took it upon himself to pull a team together and build a race-winning raft. With plenty of time on his hands, he and his sidekick, **Pani Poullos**, constructed a raft of water bottles and cable trunking and duly christened it *HMS Bitsa*. After two failed (sunken) maiden voyages, his crew of **LCpl Mark Robinson**, **Sig Dan Sprules** and **Sig Nicky Lewis** paddled furiously around the course and gained a creditable third place.

A large turnaround over recent months sees welcomes to **LCpls Paul Clarke**, **Dean Smith**, **Phil Brewster**, **Mark Robinson**, **Sigs Dan Sprules**, **Chris Vant**, **Nicky Lewis** and **Chris Rutter**. We hope you all enjoy your time in Cyprus. Farewell to **Cpl Graham Dorward** and **LCpl Piers Daw**, who leave the Forces, and goodbye and good luck to **Sig John Dent** in NI.

NETWORK & ENGINEERING SERVICES SECTION

OC	**FltLt Elaine Spalding**
Sec SSgt	**SSgt Elvis Hemstead**

We welcome **Sgt Billie Beaumont**, who takes over from **Sgt Steve Lewis**. We also say hello to **LCpl Simon Randall**, from 11 Sig Regt and **LCpl Chris Turnbull**, from 14 Sig Regt. Farewell to **WO1 Neil Hendry**, who goes to 30 Sig Regt as Foreman. **Sigs Huber** and **Marsh** go to 8 Inf Bde.

It was a very eventful sporting month for Unit personnel on the Island, particularly hockey, where we were heavily represented in the Inter-Services match. The ladies' match was full of end-to-end action and excitement.

The Army took the lead in the last ten minutes of the first half to give them the advantage at half time, with **Lt Fiona Watson** scoring. The RAF ladies then drew level and had a chance to go one up when they had a penalty flick, which was taken by **Cpl Sue Lester**, also of CCU, but it was well saved by the Army keeper. It eventually ended in a 1-1 draw.

The CCU Army personnel dominated the men's match, and with GB international, **Capt John Evernett** from 2LI, it was always a case of how many would the Army score. **Sig Craig McHale** (NESS) opened the scoring when he pounced on a loose ball following a short corner. **LCpl Nick Jones** (Dhekelia) then skilfully dribbled the ball into the D and lifted it over the RAF keeper to make the score 2-0 to the Army. **Sig McHale** fired a ball into the D, where the OC, **Maj Matt Hanson** was waiting to deflect the ball into the back for a third. The RAF then pulled one back, when **SqnLdr Neil Powell** was fouled and awarded a penalty flick, which he buried to make it 3-1 at half time. In the second half, it only took a few minutes before **Maj Matt Hanson** got his second goal to make it 4-1. CCU can be proud, having scored all four goals.

OPERATIONS CELL

Ops Offr	**Capt (TOT) Iain McNelly**
WO	**WO Brian Hassall** RAF

Post OP TELIC, the Ops Cell now continues with its core business of controlling the plethora of projects currently running in Cyprus. Recently, one of our major successes was the replacement of the Island's old commercial radio with a much-improved trunked system named the Cyprus Operational and Emergency Radio System (COERS). This system has been installed Island-wide, in handheld, veh-mounted, and base-fitted modes. The installation was completed in record time and provides a marked improvement over the old system. It now gives better area coverage, improved user facilities and exploits the RF spectrum more efficiently.

WO2 (FofS) Leyland has departed to RSS, Blandford; SSgt **(YofS) Chris Green** goes on promotion to WO2 to 38 Sig Regt; SSgt **Gaz Tinsley** has moved to Nottingham UOTC, also on promotion to WO2; and **Capt Iain McNelly** moves to JCUNI in August.

WO2 (FofS) Mark Riley comes to us from RSS, Blandford; SSgt **(YofS) Daz Bailey** arrives on completion of his YofS course; SSgt **Jim McEwan** comes in from Middlesbrough ACIO as the new QA and Ops SSgt; and **Capt Steve Bason** from PJHQ is our new TOT.

QM's DEPARTMENT

QM	**Capt Dave Stachini**
SQMS	**SSgt Paul Jordan**

With OP TELIC behind us, things have returned to normality in the Dept. We said farewell to **Sgt Nathan Ruff**, who leaves us for 21 Sig Regt (AS), and we welcome his replacement, **Sgt Gordon Smith**. We bid a temporary farewell to **Cpl Lee Alderson**, who's escaped back to UK, for what we are sure will be a very successful Skill At Arms Course. Congratulations to **SSgt Paul Jordan** and **Anna** on the birth of their second daughter, **Ellie**. Also to **Sgt Sean Hyland**, on his recently being selected for promotion to SSgt.
On the work side of life, we have been very busy. The Unit played an integral part in providing much needed comms infrastructure for OP TELIC, especially the Fwd Mounting Base at RAF Akrotiri, where we pulled out the stops, and maintained a high standard of log support throughout. In addition to this, we have provided vital assistance to HQB FC, for the implementation of the new COERS. From a purely stores side, this was a very manpower intensive time, and all hands were used to make the accounting mechanism happen under the watchful eye of the SQMS. This involved accounting of all items, from receipt at the airhead to delivery to the end-user. **Sgt Joyce** has gained many grey hairs, and the SQMS is even balder.

We now look forward to the prep for Unit Trg Camp in November, which is giving the SQMS more than his share of heartaches, delivering a realistic and valuable trg package. Overall, a very busy period. Who said life in CCU QM Dept was easy?

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

THE GOVERNOR'S DINNER

As part of its annual fundraising campaign for the charity, Wireless for the Blind, BFBS Radio in the Falkland Islands held an auction.

Amongst the items on offer was a blacktie dinner hosted by HE The Governor, **Howard Pearce CVO**, The Queen's representative in the Falkland Islands. There was a fierce bidding war for this prize and in the end seven members of BFFI paid £200 each to secure their places at the Governor's table.

The seven included R Sigs personnel, **Sgts Paula Hunter**, **Andy Fisher** and **Chris Matthews**.

The dinner was held at Government house in Stanley. HE The Governor treated the diners to a fabulous evening, which included a tour of the house and the privilege of signing the official Visitors' Book.

A total of £21,000 was raised by BFBS FI for Wireless for the Blind, which provides custombuilt radios and cassette recorders for blind people in the UK.

The Governor and his (paying) dinner guests

642 SIGNAL TROOP
DCSA GIBRALTAR

OC **Capt Bill McCreath**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Torrington**

With the rock deep into summer, the pace has not slackened with ongoing projects in support of the Gibraltar Comd. The day-to-day routine is now punctuated by frequent PT sessions taken by **LCpl Adie Bennett** (who is applying the skills he learned while achieving top student on his recent PTI Class 3 course). Congratulations also go to **Sgt Eddie Longford** and **Cpl Owen Trimble** on completion of the RSigs Cpls Course and **Eddie's** subsequent promotion.

VISIT OF BRIGADIER JE THOMAS MBE

During a visit to the Rock, **Brig JE Thomas MBE**, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, called on 642 Sig Tp. Here he met members of the Tp in their natural environment, and was shown examples of ongoing and past projects in support of the Agency and Command in Gibraltar. Time was also found for a trip to our responsibilities on top of the rock and a whistle-stop visit to the myriad of tunnels inside the rock, still active and central to our continued support to British forces in Gibraltar.

642 Sig Tp and Brig JE Thomas MBE on top of the Rock with the Spanish Costa Del Sol in the background

NEWS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH

2 SQUADRON
ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SIGNALS

OC **Maj Karyn Te Moana**
RSM **WO1 Nigel Shields**

CORPS DAY – 24 MARCH 2003

2 NZ Sig Sqn celebrated Corps Day on 24 March 03, marking 82 years since the founding of the NZ Corps of Signals. As with other Commonwealth Signal Corps, the prefix Royal was granted on 12 July 1947 by **King George VI** to make us the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals.

Corps Day celebrations consisted of a formal parade with medal presentations, the presentation of the Bassett VC Trophy, Unit sports, an informal dinner and lastly a Unit function.

With the Sqn on parade, official guests included **Col Phil Gibbons**, Comd 2 Land Force Gp and **LtCol Steve Cook**, Acting Regtl Col, RNZSigs. Unfortunately the Col Commandant RNZSigs, **Col Warren Tucker** was unable to attend.

LtCol Steve Cook, Acting Regt Col talks to Cpl Andre Tana

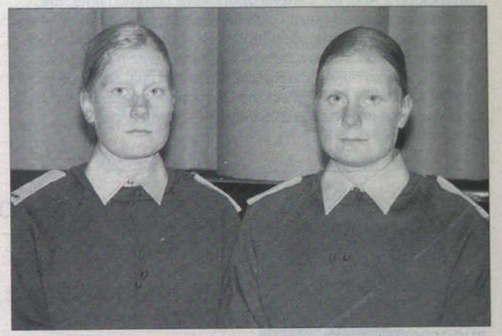
Messrs SA Morton, G Armstrong and D Burgess, ex members of Commonwealth Sig Regt 1951-54

The Parade was an opportunity for members of 2 Sig Sqn to be presented with a number of medals and awards. The International Force East Timor (INTERFET) Medal was awarded to **LCpl Renate Tamatea**. The NZ East Timor Clasp was awarded to **LCpl Clinton Smith** and **LCpl Andrew Crisp**. The NZ East Timor Medal and NZ Operational Service Medal were awarded to **Capt Barrie Dunbar**, **LCpl Cheyla Shortland**, **Sigs Stefan Mitchell**, **Devan Robinson**, **Kylie Jenkins**, **Prudence Charteris**, **Nova Sagaga**, **Lana Piripi** and **Dana Ross**. The Long Service and Good Conduct Medal was awarded to **Cpl Glen Kerr**.

The last presentation of the parade was awarded to **WO1 Myron Warr**, who received his Bachelor of Administrative Leadership (BAL) Degree. The Parade over, **LtCol Cook** unveiled the Cyril Bassett Room, formally 2 Sig Sqn lecture room. Here invited guests and medal recipients were welcomed for morning tea.

During morning tea the Cyril Bassett VC Trophy, which is awarded each year to the best Corporal in the Corps, was presented to **Cpl James Fitzgerald** of NZSAS Sig Tp. This award is named after **Cpl Cyril Basset** who won the VC for his courageous actions on Chunuk Bair, Gallipoli during WW1. *(See page 87 of the February 2003 WIRE – Editor)*

The remainder of the day was spent on the sports field with Unit sports activities, including the inter-Tp Rugby and Netball competitions. This was followed by the Sqn Dinner and Unit function, a chance for the soldiers to unwind and celebrate their Corps Day.



Eve on the left, Hollie on the right - we think!

HERE'S TROUBLE

Identical twin sisters, **Eve** and **Hollie Matheison** have recently joined the Corps. For the moment, they will be apart, with **Holly** at 3 Tp in Burnham and **Eve** in Linton. But watch out RSM when they appear on parade together!

SPORT

RUGBY

RUGBY UNION – 2002/3 SEASON

After a number of disappointing seasons, RSigs Rugby Union is in the process of rebuilding. Measures have been introduced to ensure the Corps wins Merit Table 1, raises the standard of regtl rugby throughout the Corps and establishes and maintains a reputation of playing high quality Rugby Union. Despite some rather mixed results in the 2002-3 Season, there is no doubt that the playing standard has improved significantly and the Corps can look forward to the 2003-4 Season with renewed confidence and vigour.

The 2002-3 Season kicked off with a trg camp in late September 02. Three days of high quality trg concluded with a developmental match between a Corps XV and the RSigs Offrs' XV. This was a keenly contested encounter, resulting in a narrow victory for the Corps.

With a 22-0 victory over RE at Chatham on 31 October 02, the Merit Table 1 campaign could not have started more positively. Our forwards proved too strong for the Sappers, and a number of old heads ensured that control was maintained. The try-scorers were **Sig Stapleton**, 21 Sig Regt (AS); **Maj Drew**, HQ LAND and **SSgt Cassidy**, 34 Sig Regt (V).

The second Merit Table fixture against RLC took place in Blandford on 6 November 02. The Corps' first half performance was excellent and produced some outstanding three-quarter play. **Sig Littlehailes** (30 Sig Regt), whilst making his Corps debut, clearly demonstrated speed and guile at centre and is likely to feature increasingly at Army level. Unfortunately, **Sig Littlehailes** was badly injured, and the back line lost coherence and potency as a result. Despite a strong first half performance by the Corps, a well-balanced and committed RLC team won 21-10. Try-scorers were **Sgt Jones**, 21 Sig Regt (AS) and **LCpl Parkinson**, 2 Sig Regt.

The final Merit Table match before Christmas was in Blandford on 20 November 02 against REME, last season's Champions. We had not beaten REME for a number of seasons, so if we were to make any impression this season, this had to be a 'must win'. After an impressive first half, the Corps led 22-0 but REME mounted a spirited fight-back in the second, and the white-knuckle ride concluded with RSigs 22 - REME 17.

A Corps Development squad based on 21 Sig Regt (AS) entered the Inter-Corps XV A-side Competition in Aldershot 10-11 December 02. This provided an excellent opportunity to give players a run-out without the pressure of a Merit Table fixture. The squad were well organised and, despite truly awful weather, stuck to the task throughout both days of the competition. The Corps finished as plate finalist, loosing by 7-0 to Inf. **Sgt Jones**, 21 Sig Regt (AS) is commended on his performance as coach and manager for that particular competition.

On 4 March 03 a Corps Development XV played the Defence Academy Shrivenham. This was a generally bad-tempered encounter, during which the Corps XV took a long time to impose themselves. That said, a number of young players impressed, particularly those from 7 Sig Regt. The final score was RSigs 19, Def Academy 8. Our try scorers were **SSgt Cassidy**, 34 Sig Regt (V), **Sgt Evans** JCUNI and **Sig Kolikata**, 2 Sig Regt.

Unfortunately the Gunners were unable to field a side to play the Corps and hence the last Merit Table fixture was against Inf in Catterick on 2 April 03. Despite operational commitments, the Corps fielded a good quality side and once again thanks must go to 7 Sig Regt for their support. It was clear the RSigs were much the better side on the day, but we failed to maintain concentration at vital moments during the match. Whilst the final score, Sigs 17 Infantry 21 did not fairly reflect the Corps performance, it did emphasise the importance of control and maintenance of concentration.

The 2002-3 Season concluded in style with a 3-match tour of the Netherlands. A 30-man squad hosted by 7 Sig Regt played 3, won 3 against sociable opposition. Enthusiasts will have enjoyed the tour report featured in August's edition of *The WIRE*.

In addition to all this, in March 03 **Cpl Beart**, 2 Sig Regt and **Sig Littlehailes**, 30 Sig Regt toured with the Army Squad in New Zealand.

In conclusion there is much to be pleased with, and there now exists a solid foundation on which to build. There is a healthy group of Corps-standard players in 2 Sig Regt, 7 Sig Regt and 21 Sig Regt (AS) that will form the core of the squad. This, coupled with a club ethos puts us in a position to do some serious damage in the 2003-4 Season. Credit must go to **Maj Trev Keates**, Director of Rugby; **WO2 Nige Roberts**, Club Secretary and **Maj Tom Hall**, who has remained committed to Corps Rugby for many years.

Merit Table 1 Positions

1	RLC	10 Pts
2	REME	7 Pts
3	R Sigs	6 Pts
4	Inf	4 Pts
5	RA	2 Pts
6	RE	0 Pts

Attention all players! Planning for the Canadian Tour in May 04 is going well. There are 27 places up for grabs.

FOOTBALL

ROYAL SIGNALS FOOTBALL - *By Capt Tommy Steele*

7 SIG REGT WIN THE SIGNALLER CUP FOR THE SECOND SUCCESSIVE YEAR

For the second year running the Signaller Cup final was held in Bramcote between the same two sides, 7 Sig Regt and 30 Sig Regt.

The preliminary round saw 1 (UK) Div beat 16 Sig Regt 2-1; 7 Sig Regt beat 7 Armd Bde 10-0; 21 Sig Regt beat 243 Sig Sqn 3-2 (where **WO2 (FofS) Mattless** scored an OG; and 11 Sig Regt beat 101 Log Bde 4-0.

In the first round proper in Northern Ireland, 15 Sig Regt once again beat 39 Inf Bde 4-1 and 8 Inf Bde in the quarter-final, also by 4-1. To reach the quarter-finals 8 Inf Bde beat their local rivals, 3 Inf Bde 4-3, with goals by **LCpl Bibby**, **Sig Forrester**, **LCpl Plunket** (REME) and **Pte Gill** (AGC).

In Germany, 7 Sig Regt reached the semi-final stage, having beaten 1 (UK) Div by 1-0 and then 20 Armd Bde in the quarter-final in a thrilling game by 6-2. **Cpl** 'Stevo' **Stephenson** scored a hat-trick, with **Cpl Meachin** and **LCpl Hooper** (REME) replying for 20 Armd Bde. 20 Armd Bde had previously knocked out 280 Sig Sqn by 3-1, **Sig Keen** scoring a brace.

In UK, the first round saw 216 Sig Sqn thrash HQ SOinC(A) 8-1, with **Cpl Kemp** and **LCpl Meecham** each grabbing a hat-trick. 21 Sig Regt surprisingly beat 11 Sig Regt (Army Challenge Cup finalists), 30 Sig Regt overcame 14 Sig Regt, 3-1 (with **WO2 Kev Scott** scoring the lone goal for 14 Sig Regt), and 2 Sig Regt beat 3 (UK) Div by 2-0. In the quarter-finals, 21 Sig Regt beat 216 Sig Sqn rear party by 5-0 and in the other quarter-final, 30 Sig Regt overcame 2 Sig Regt by 4-1, with scorers, **LCpl Hem** (QGS) for 2 Sig Regt and **Cpl Leo Ross**, **LCpl** 'Baldy' **Lamb**, **LCpl Kishan** (QGS) and **Capt Tommy Steele** for 30 Sig Regt.

The first semi-final saw 7 Sig Regt soundly beat 15 Sig Regt by 6-1, with **Cpl** 'Stevo' **Stephenson** grabbing his second hat-trick of the competition. Despite the score-line, the game was an extremely competitive one. The manager of 7 Sig Regt, **Capt Steve Jackson**, was very relieved and full of praise for the opposition. The other semi-final in Colerne saw 30 Sig Regt pip 21 Sig Regt by 2-1. The only high points were the goals scored, a cracking free kick by **Sgt Richie Lees** and a 30-yard screamer to win the match by **Cpl Leo Ross**.

The final was held in Bramcote, home of 30 Sig Regt, on 23 May 03. **Lt Col Vingoe**, CO 30 Sig Regt was introduced to the teams by the team captains, **Sgt Joey Collins** of 7 Sig Regt and **LCpl** 'Lamb' **Lamb** of 30 Sig Regt.

With the whole of 30 Sig Regt eating their lunch on the sidelines, the match kicked off to the smell of hot dogs and burgers. It was clear from the start that 7 Sig Regt had the class and were able to pass the ball around as they pleased. The first 20 minutes saw 30 Sig Regt carry out a rearguard action that thwarted the 7 Sig Regt strikers time and time again. It didn't look good for the home side, but as time went on, 30 Sig Regt tackled their way into the game. It took them almost 30 minutes to gain some useful possession and put a move of more than three passes together. The plan was to bypass the midfield of 7 Sig Regt (which was very much the stronger), and get the ball forward to **Sig** 'Mo' **Morriss** and **LCpl Kishan** (QGS) as quickly as possible. Suddenly 30 Sig Regt were first to the ball, and started to pass it forward. The pressure was rewarded with a strange goal that saw a long hopeful cross of some considerable height come down from the heavens and bounce into the top of the goal with the goalkeeper flapping at the ball. The home side managed to get to half time with their lead still in tact.

The second half saw a very even game with 7 Sig Regt desperately trying to equalise and 30 Sig Regt hanging on, trying to get the second break. 30 Sig Regt managed to hold on until **Sig Jay Bates** of 7 Sig Regt received a cross-field pass from his strike partner to slam the ball in the left hand corner of the net, with **LCpl Adam Pinchback** beaten for the first time.

The game moved on at a frantic pace, with 7 Sig Regt fighting hard to gain the upper hand, but to the credit of the home side, they were having none of it and 30 Sig Regt were looking the likely winners. A claim for a penalty was rejected by the referee after **Sig Riz Rizza** brought down **Sig Mo Morris** in the area, and alas, a cast-iron spot kick wasn't to be.

With time running out, a fine cross by **LCpl Lamb** saw a chance for 30 Sig Regt to win the match, only for the striker to make a complete hash of it. The full-time whistle heralded extra time.

The Victorious 7 Sig Regt

The Valiant runners up

Extra time saw 7 Sig Regt eventually take total control of the match with three goals, all headers to the far post. **Sgt Andy Richards** scored the important one that sealed the Cup. CO 30 Sig Regt presented the Trophy to **Sgt Joey Collins** of 7 Sig Regt. The Man of the Match award was presented by the captain of the Army side, **SSgt Dean Baughen**, who selected **Cpl Murray** of 30 Sig Regt.

ARMY CRUSADERS FOOTBALL CLUB

(Founded 1922)
www.eteamz.com/crusadersfc

The Army Officers' Football Club (Crusaders) welcomes players from all cap badges to participate in a series of friendly and Cup matches throughout the 2003/04 season.

For more details contact the 1st XI Secretary:

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ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

RENAMING OF *SKYWAVE*

The Corps has recently taken possession of an Elan 333. She was renamed in a ceremony, at Hornet Sailing Club on Friday 27 June. The Master of Signals, **MajGen IOJ Sprackling OBE** was in attendance, and **Mrs Annie Sprackling** kindly agreed to name the yacht.

The ceremony passed smoothly, with the Hon RSA Chaplain, **Rev Peter Clemett**, conducting the ceremony to bless the boat, and **CSgt Elder**, 1 Black Watch Regt providing musical accompaniment. Using the traditional words 'May God bless her and all who sail in her,' **Mrs Annie Sprackling** named her and deftly cut a Corps-coloured ribbon, releasing a bottle of Moët onto her bows. *Skywave* was named.

The purchase of the new Elan has really taken the club forward. We have a core of soldiers who enjoy racing and we have acquitted ourselves well over the last few years in the Army and Services Offshore Regattas. As a vessel for continuation training, day training in the Solent, coastal sailing or offshore crossings of the English Channel, she will prove seaworthy and quick.

Skywave is the 21st Elan 333 to be built and was launched in June 1999, she is expected to remain in service with the yacht club for 10 years and is one of three hulls that we own.

The Admiral of the RSYC, **Brig CJ Burton OBE ADC** is keen to encourage all manner of sailing in all its disciplines throughout the Corps. The Offshore Section strives to get soldiers offshore sailing, to get members qualified and to provide opportunities for both cruising and racing.

RSYC maintains two yachts in UK and one in Germany. These are available on charter to members of the RSYC, members of other Service Yacht Clubs and to members of civilian organisations with a Service connection. Anyone interested in chartering *Skywave* or our other hull, *Petasus* can e-mail the Bosun, **Sgt Gale** on rsigsyc@tiscali.co.uk or by phone on: 9380 65668. Further information can be found on the RSYC website www.RSignalsYC.info .

Mrs Annie Sprackling, LtCol Richard Quinlan and the Master of Signals aboard Skywave

LAGOS TROPHY 25/26 JUNE 03 AT NETLEY
– by Cpl Stu Southan

The RSigs Dinghy Team was entered in the Lagos Trophy Event at Netley SC. The helms were **Cpl Stu Southan** (Team Captain), **Capt (Tfc) R Owens** and **Cpl Nick Scullion**. The crews were **Cpl Ginge Davies**, **Sig Dan McKenzie** and **Sig Amy Phillipo**. The team got together before the event to train and familiarise themselves with the Laser 2000 boats, with expert assistance from one of the British Team Members. On the training day, the winds were very light - good for roll tacking and roll gibing training. **Cpl Stu Southan** decided to push the roll tack a little too much and sent his crew and himself for a swim in the Solent.

The Dinghy Team. Front, L-R: Capt R Owens, Cpl N Scullion, Cpl S Southan (Captain); Back, L-R: Sig D Mackenzie, Cpl G Davies, Sig A Philippo

On the first day of racing the winds started light, but became very strong, enough to cancel the team racing in the afternoon. In our first race, against AGC we lost miserably, but we went on to win the rest of the races for this round. In the second round, we lost all races except the one against Inf, and that was very close. We were now joint 2nd with the RE. Round 3 started on the second day of racing with very light wind becoming strong again. Our first race was again against the unbeaten AGC. The team pulled together with a good start and, with a lot of close quarter team racing, we manage to pull a win. We were very proud of this win, which made our day. This round was close. We were fighting to stay in second place, and at the end we were still joint 2nd with RE. However, RE were awarded 2nd position because they had won the last race between them and us. I would like to thank the team for their effort in turning up and their work on the water.

RESULTS TABLE

Team	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Points	Place
AGC	W 4, L0	W4, L0	W3, L1	11	1
RE	W1, L3	W3, L1	W2, L2	6	2
RSigs	W3, L1	W1, L3	W2, L2	6	3
RLC	W2, L2	W1, L3	W1, L3	4	4
Inf	W0, L4	W1, L3	W2, L2	3	5

SAIL TRAINING WEEK - KIEL

The RSYC Sail Training Week was held in the Baltic Sea in July. A total of nine yachts (8 Najad 331s and a privately chartered committee boat) were chartered on behalf of the Club from the Kiel Training Centre. Adventure training requirements demand that each yacht is skippered by a minimum of RYA Coastal Skipper but where units could not provide their own skipper, RSYC arranged this from known Corps personnel.

The STW consisted of five trg days under the supervision of qualified skippers, followed by five days offshore racing. 54 RSigs personnel took part, with 32 arriving as novices and leaving with the RYA Competent Crew qualification. During the offshore racing phase, each day consisted of a race round chosen local marks, followed by a passage of between 40 and 90 NM. One day was allocated to a series of close quarter races 'round the cans' hosted by Horsens Yacht Club. The weather conditions varied from a flat calm to Force 6. This event is held in July every year and has developed into one of the most demanding Corps sail training weeks to be held at Kiel.

Results were:

Place	*Team*	*Boat*	*Skipper*
First Overall	36 Sig Regt	*Teal*	**WO2 Terry McIntyre**
Second Overall	1 ADSR	*Petrel*	**Mr Angus Ferguson**
Third Overall	DCSA	*Pochard*	**LtCol Richard Giles**
Passage Race	DCSA	*Pochard*	**LtCol Richard Giles**
Round the Cans	1 ADSR	*Petrel*	**Mr Angus Ferguson**
Homeward Bound	DCSA	*Pochard*	**LtCol Richard Giles**
Spirit of Event	228 Sig Sqn	*Tern*	**Maj Robert Appleton**
Novice Skipper		*Skua*	**Capt Simon Doherty**
Best Improved	12 Mech	*Grebe*	**Maj David Tyle**

SWIMMING

THE ARMY SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS 25 JUNE 2003
- By SSgt (YofS) Lee Johns

After our successful run in the 4/5 Div Swimming Championships, we headed back to Aldershot on 25 June 2003 with hopes of gaining a respectable 3rd or 2nd place. We arrived to find that there were a few more teams entered than at the Div Championships. These were ATR Litchfield, Kings Div Normandy Band, 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, 6 Regt RMP and ourselves. The team we had for the Div Championships was depleted, with **W02 (FofS) Matless** away on leave/course and **Cpl Jim Lang** medically excused. But we did have **SSgt (FofS) Neil Kenyon** to bolster the squad.

The first event saw **Cpl Jay Binnie** line up for the 50m Freestyle, and an excellent swim saw him come first in a time of 32.08 seconds. Next came **SSgt (FofS) Neil Kenyon**, who won the 50m Breaststroke with a record time of 36.92secs. He was approached shortly afterwards by a member of the Army team and was invited to train with them! The next event saw **LCpl Steve Henderson** take part in the 4 x 50m Individual Medley, and a cracking race saw him narrowly beaten into second place. Our next Ace, **Sig Trigger Beasley** lined up for the 100m Freestyle event. On the previous day, he had won the Army individual 100m and came second in the 50m Freestyle. A sterling effort saw him easily finish first. In the next event the Ops Offr, **Capt Al Patterson**, surprised us all with a first place in the 50m Backstroke. By now we realised that we had a good chance of finishing 2nd and possibly1st. With just the relay left, the only way we could lose was by disqualification.

The first relay event was the 4 x 50m Medley Relay. **Capt Al Patterson** (Backstroke) led, handing over to **SSgt Neil Kenyon** (Breaststroke), **Sig Trigger Beasley** (Butterfly) and lastly, **LCpl Steve Henderson** (Freestyle). Again another excellent swim by all, and another first place was in the bag.

Then came the 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay, and the team of **Cpl Jay Binnie**, **Capt Al Patterson**, **LCpl Steve Henderson** and **Sig Trigger Beasley**, brought in yet another first place.

Finally came the 4 x 50m Breaststroke Relay. The team was **Cpl Jay Binnie**, **SSgt (YofS) Johns**, the OC, **Maj Janes** and **SSgt (FofS) Neil Kenyon**. A good effort by all saw **SSgt (FofS) Neil Kenyon** take over the last leg in 5th place, and from out of no where, he managed to claw back all bar one of the other racers to finish in 2nd place and secure the title for the Regt/Sqn.

All in all, a good couple of weeks for the team, who look forward to defending the title next year.

ORIENTEERING

CORPS TRAINING CAMP 03 – BORDEAUX
- by Maj Terry Crosby

Why train in UK when you can do so on sun-drenched beaches in France? Simply because we can! The French 5-day Competition provided the focus for this year's Trg Camp, a concentrated period of orienteering designed to improve the skills of the Corps squad in prep for this years Inter-Corps Competition in November. A broken minibus within 100 miles of crossing the coast proved to be a blessing in disguise, when the RAC replaced it with two lovely hire cars for the week!

Along with 3,000 other competitors, we soon discovered that the pace required was going to be fast. **SSgt Paula Matheson** hit a low, missing a control on Day 1, disqualified herself on Day 2 eventually to take third places on Days 3 and 4. Running on long courses, both **Maj Mark Hanby** and **Sgt Mark Ebanks** worked hard, having their own battle, whilst both **LCpl Andy Price** and **Sig Stef Bogart** were on full receive mode and sharp learning curves. They got their money's worth in terms of time. **Maj Mel Rayner** should have been capable of holding her own in a very competitive field, had it not been for the odd lapse in concentration that produced a navigation howler! Finally among the oldies, **SSgt Colin Holcombe** consistently saw the back of **Maj Terry Crosby** as he came past. **Colin** blames the allocation of start times!

Underpinning all of this was the more serious side of improving technique on what was fairly technical terrain. You should forget the fact that the maps were adjacent to the miles and miles of sandy beaches that run all the way from Bordeaux to Biarritz.

Sig Stef Bogart approaching the finish

BOXING

ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS FIRST ANNUAL BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Work is under way to organise the first ever Royal Signals boxing championships to be held on 29 March 2004 at 30 Sig Regt, Bramcote. The winners and selected runners-up will be picked to create the first ever Royal Signals boxing squad. They will be entered into the Army Individual Championships and a planned tour of California in October 2004, as well as other competitions.

The competition is open to Novice 3, 2 and 1 boxers of both sexes. It is hoped that a female team will also be created to compete in the proposed combined services female boxing championships next year. They would also be included in the planned tour of the U.S.

All units boxing officers should have received a signal by now with the proposals for the Championships. All enquires through **Sgt Booth**, PSI 80 Sig Sqn, 33 Sig Regt Tel: 94558-8847.

VACANCY FOR NRPS REGIONAL RADIO CONTROLLER (RRC) WITH 238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON, LONDON

Vacancy. A vacancy currently exists for a Regional Radio Controller (RRC) with 238 (London) Sig Sqn, Chelsea Barracks, London.

Salary. The salary for the position is £23,287.00 on appointment (rising to £26,524.55 maximum) and an additional Recruiting and Retention Allowance (RRA) of £1,160.

Requirements of Post: Candidates must have served in the Regular Army and hold the qualification of Royal Signals Radio Systems Operator at Class 1 level. Reserve Forces equivalents may also be considered.

Candidates should have knowledge and experience in technical stores procedures, and ability in IT would be a benefit.

Additional information. The RRC is a member of the operations team based in 238 (London) Sig Sqn. The post is responsible to the Ops Offr 238 (London) Sig Sqn for the planning, operations, inservice management, equipment care and accounting of all London District commercial radio equipment.

The retiring age for the position is 60, so applicants should be under 55 years of age at the beginning of their tenure. Terms of Service are contained in TA Regs 1978 CH 6 Parts 1 and 3 and in Ch 9.

Applications. Applicants should submit a letter of application with two referees (including contact addresses) and a curriculum vitae (written in military terminology, if the applicant has served or is serving in the Armed Forces) containing the following information:

Personal Statement/Profile;

Resumé of military/civilian career;

Career History, with approximate dates to include: appointments/ postings, rank/position, responsibilities and relevant information applicable to the position;

Military Courses/Qualifications achieved/attended with grades and dates;

Civilian Courses/Qualifications achieved/attended with grades and dates;

Additional attribute(s) that would benefit the unit; Hobbies & interests; DOB; Marital Status; Date available to take up position.

Closing Date. The closing date for applications is 26 September 2003.

Applications are to be submitted to: **LtCol (Retd) DA O'Halloran**
S02 GI/G4 Ops/Gen
HQ London District
Horse Guards
Whitehall
London SWI 2AX
Tel: 0207 414 2263

Any queries to: **Maj (Retd) R Bates**
Second in Command
Chelsea Barracks
Chelsea Bridge Road
London SW1 8RF
Tel: 0207 414 4207

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: MajGen A H Boyle CB

Vice Chairman: Brig N F Wood Area1; 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 F Carter MBE
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick

Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C Conlan
Membership: Mr P J Cuckow

Association Office, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone: Military System (9) 4371 2090 or Civilian 01258 48 2090. Welfare Secretary Telephone: Military System (9) 4371 2089 or Civilian 01258 48 2089.

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 MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

BRANCH NEWS

It is with much sadness that we report the death in August of **Mic Morris**. **Mic** had been the Hon Secretary of the South London Branch since early 2000 and we will all miss his cheerful, helpful nature.

The **Bradford** Branch has a new Committee. Hon Chairman is **Dr David Vickers**, Secretary is **Dr Gerard Reynolds** and Treasurer is **David Blackwell**. Anyone who would like to join the Bradford Branch should contact **Gerard** on 07751-584775. Our thanks go to **Nora Holdsworth** for her time as Secretary over the past years. Thanks also to **Bob Cook**, Area Rep, for ensuring the future of the Branch.

Details of the new Secretary for the 3 Div Sigs Reunion Club were published incorrectly in the June *WIRE*. **Colin Spencer's** address is: 94 Mousehold Ave, Norwich NR3 4RS, Tel: 01603-404471. **Steve Jewell**, Hon Secretary of the Scarborough Branch, has handed in his uniform and can now be contacted at: 14 Newlands Park Ave, Scarborough YO12 6PY, Tel: 01723-379922. **Jim Brown** has stood down as Secretary of the Hull Branch. Contact for the Branch is now the Chairman, **Mr A J (Jerry) Gribben**, 7 Sutherland Ave, Endike Lane, Hull HU6 7UG.

We welcome the Denbury JLR Assn, now affiliated to the RSA. Their contact is the Hon Secretary, **Mr Mike Butchers**, 25 Jarvis Way, Stalbridge, Dorset DT10 2NW, Tel: 01963-362599. **Lt Col (Retd) R G (Bob)Vale** has succeeded **Patricia Edridge** as Hon Secretary of the Bath Branch. **Bob** can be contacted on: 01249-714074. Also in the Bath Branch, **Lt Col (Retd) Eddie Pickup** has succeeded **Geoff Oakley** as Chairman. Our thanks go to **Patricia** and **Geoff** for their hard work in office over many years. **Peter Howells** is now the Secretary of the Swindon Branch and can be contacted at: 210 Shaftesbury Ave, Swindon SN3 2BD, Tel: 01793-643735. **Peter** would like to remind members in the Swindon area that the Branch meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at the TA Centre, Church Place, Swindon at 19.00 for 19.30 hrs.

BRANCH BALANCE SHEETS

The Corps Accountant has advised that Hon Treasurers may send in their Branch balance sheets in e-mail form. A single A4 size sheet will suffice.

WELFARE

The RSA Welfare Aide-Memoire can now be viewed on the Association website.

REGISTER OF MEMBERS' POSTINGS

The Register has now been refined and put on the RSA database. The database not only gives the list of members who served in any given unit, but it can also narrow the field to specific dates i.e. those who served in say, 16 Sig Regt 1970-75, or those who served at Harrogate in 1972. To date, just over 2,500 members have their details recorded, which leaves a further 7,500 members yet to take part. Eventually the list of units and who served in them, might even be put on the RSA website (minus personal details of course). If you haven't sent in your posting details, may I invite you to do so. Simply list the units you served in, the years you were there (from – to) and send them together with your RSA Life Member No and contact details to: RSA Membership, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH. Or send it by e-mail to rsa@rsignals.net - easy as that. Remember, details from the database may only be given to those who participate and all initial contact is via this office. No contact details will be given to unauthorised persons.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE 2003

This year's Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey will open at approximately 11.20 hrs on Thursday, 6 November, when a short service will be held. All members of the Association are cordially invited to join the Chairman and members of RHQ at the Corps Plot at the Abbey. Please be in position by 11.00 hrs. The Field will remain open until 16.00 hrs on Thursday, 13 November.

CENOTAPH PARADE

Assn HQ has a limited number of tickets for the Cenotaph Parade at Whitehall on Sunday, 9 November 2003. All tickets are issued on a 'first come, first served' basis. Anyone contemplating attending should be aware of standing in Whitehall for 1 hour and a march of at least 1fi miles. Civilians are not permitted to parade in the Ex-Services columns.

CORPS CAROL SERVICE

This year's Carol Service will be held in the church of St Stephen with St John, Rochester Row, Westminster, London on Monday, 15 December, starting at 18.00 hrs. All serving and retired members of the Corps and their families are cordially invited to attend, and to enjoy sherry and mince pies in the Church hall afterwards. Hon Secretaries of RSA Branches in and around London are asked to encourage attendance from their members.

2003 REUNION

Members may like to know that the collection taken at the Drum Head Service at this year's Annual Reunion at Blandford was £635.28. This has been donated to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following newly-enrolled Life Members:

Rank/Name	Branch	*Service*
Sig Paul McCreeth		1971-76
WO2 Dave Bousfield	Dorset	1975-03
Sig Wally Moss	Peterborough	1945-48
Sig Michael Parker	Bournemouth	1951-53
Cpl Pete Rose		1970-79
Sig Ken Woodford	Bournemouth	1951-53
Sig George Penny	AFSR Assn	1943-47
SSgt Jim Sheils		1971-93
Col Ken Hadfield		1968-03
Capt Russ Lifton		1976-03
Maj Jane Freebairn	Aldershot	1972-90
Cpl John Newton		1959-61
SSgt Doug Piper		1975-00
SSgt Dave Edgecombe		1972-94
Sig Andy Stone		1952-54
Lt Col Tim Craven		1965-03
SSgt Mike Jeffery		1971-93
2Lt Hilary Eve		1947-48
LCpl David Rooney		1980-95
Sig Ron Dawson		1952-54
Sgt Roger Philp		1984-95
Sig Danny Davies		1991-96
Cpl Glenn Peters		1965-77
SSgt Joe McKenzie		1965-89
WO2 Arthur Paxton	Berwick	1957-77
Sig Malcolm Bogaert	Berwick	1968-75
Sig Roy Stubbs		1953-55
Cpl Bertram Mills		1949-54
Cpl Peter Ingarfield		1966-77
WO2 Andy Soward		1982-date
Sig Andy Collins		1992-96
Lt Marie Keating(Bellamy)		1944-46
Sig Tom Owen	Liverpool	1937-45
Sgt Ivor Mortimer	Exmouth	1950-56
LCpl Eric Roscaleer	AFSR Assn	1960-62
Sgt Keith Andrews	Poole	1952-63
Sig Dan Waterfield	Derby	2002-date
Capt Gill Spinney		1994-03
SSgt Geordie Shave		1972-96
Cpl Jon Chivers		1983-96
Sgt David Henderson		1972-96
Sgt Ron Robertson		1982-94
Sgt Robert Summerscales		1940-46
WO2 Tom Wood		1964-87
Sig Colin Draper	Beverley Ex-Boys Assn	1958-60
Capt Richard Todd		1992-00
Sig Harry Tolson		1945-48
WO2 Neil James		1978-01
Sig Kate Theobald		1992-96
Sig Alison Warren		1992-96
Sig Garry Stewart		1989-96
Sgt Michael Winchester		1966-88
Sig Michael Button		1982-89
Sig Samantha Yates		1991-96
LCpl Richard Thomas		1988-96
Sgt Phil Pett		1975-92
Cpl Kevin Jones		1980-95
WO2 Paul Staynings		1973-96
Sig Craig Torrance		1995-97
Sgt Mark Willis		1980-96
Cpl Lisa Shaw		1994-03
Cpl Paul Witchell		1988-96
Sig John Soames	Chesterfield	1956-58
Sig Charles Derrick	Beverley Ex-Boys Assn	1953-70
Sig Ron Creaser		1945-48
LCpl Sophie Spittle	Middx Yeomanry Assn	1997-date
Sig Jim Hunter		1941-47
WO1 James Willock MBE		1962-96
Cpl Harry Mount		1963-78
LCpl Jill Sanford		1992-96
LCpl Graeme Waring		1984-96
LCpl Alan Goddard		1959-61
Sig Trevor Edgely	AFSR Assn	1943-47
Sgt Alan Cole	Cardiff	1966-80

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Jane Knight**

A sudden change to perfect weather conditions, possibly evoked by the good offices of our two padres (who no doubt have influence where it counts) contributed in no small way to the enjoyment of an excellent Reunion Weekend by those of the Branch who attended. 11 Sig Regt did us proud, and those of us fortunate to be present for the Princess Royal Day Parade on the Saturday morning witnessed a great example of training and dedication by the young soldiers and their officers. Those of us who paraded after church on the Sunday did our best to maintain the high standard. Certainly **Fred Bridges**, our Standard Bearer did us proud. Our thanks go to the CO and All Ranks and to the Messes who accommodated us.

A tour of Brooklands, organised by **Neville Lyons** and guided by **Bob Webb**, provided one of the highlights of the year. On a glorious summer morning in July, 23 people descended on the historic Brooklands Museum, legendary birthplace of British motor sport and aviation. The shocking pink Ladies Reading

Room, commemorating **Barbara Cartland's** support for the lady racing motorists, took some by surprise, as no doubt did the weighing machine to conform to the requirements of the Clerk of the Course.

The motoring village contained both the workshop and memorabilia of the great **Sir Malcolm Campbell**, including a model of the Bluebird, and a display commemorating the first ever Grand Prix held at Brooklands. In the World War II Hangar the showpiece was the Wellington Bomber recovered from Loch Ness after 40 years under water. We were fortunate to have this part of our tour conducted by the legendary **Norman** 'Spud' **Boorer**, who worked with the great **Barnes Wallis**. He was able to enlighten us on the design and trials of the bouncing bomb. A great day was had by all.

Expert Norman 'Spud' Boorer giving us the finer points

The Loch Ness Wellington

A prototype Harrier

On our annual attendance at the Sovereign's Parade final rehearsal at RMA Sandhurst, we were joined by friends from Reading, Southampton and West London Branches. A pleasant occasion, but in the hot and humid weather conditions we were all glad that it wasn't we who were on parade!

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Ken Brown**
Secretary **Mr Phil West**

Branch subscribing membership has remained fairly constant at just over 100, despite the sad loss of some respected members. Functions attract varying numbers. About thirty attend, with older members preferring daytime and younger members supporting evening events.

The Plan for Change has been discussed and a detailed survey of members used to prepare the Branch response.

The annual quiz was well attended by members of both the Branch and the local 884 Tp. After all the disputes were resolved by the quizmaster, generous refreshments led to a quieter atmosphere. A raffle was held to support a Sussex Army Cadet who was about to travel to South Africa to take part in a Wilderness Challenge.

A Summer Lunch was held at the Courtland Hotel in Hove, and we were fortunate that our President, **Brig Colin Brown** and his wife **Heather** were able to attend. It was an excellent venue providing good food. The atmosphere was so convivial that lunchtime nearly became teatime.

A large number of the Branch wished to attend the Blandford Reunion, so a coach was provided for the lengthy journey. Everyone had a good day out, and the SAT range proved that those members who could still hold a rifle hadn't lost their skills - although there were some casualties in the US Army!

August is a quiet month, but in September we start a full programme for the remainder of the year, organised by a hard working committee and led by our Chairman, **Ken Brown**.

BRISTOL BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Chick Cheetham**
Secretary **Mr Ray Rigg**

It has been a while since Bristol Branch submitted any *WIRE* notes, but as you can see, we are still alive and kicking. In September we had our Annual Dinner at the BAWA Club.

Our principle guest was CO, 39 Sig Regt (V), **LtCol PR Towers**, with **Capt J Cullen**, **Capt T Pengelley** and RSM, **W01 FE Roberts**. The meal and the wine were excellent and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

Our Hon Sec, **Ray Rigg** spends a lot of time arranging a varied social calendar, which has included a visit to the Bristol Telephone Exchange and the Bristol Blue Glass Factory. We also had a very pleasant skittles evening at the local Civil Service Club.

At our AGM in January, the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were all re-elected. During the firemen's strike, some of our meetings have had to be held at venues other than the TAC. This now appears to have been resolved.

Three of our members attended the RSA AGM on Saturday 5 April at the Victory Services Club. This was very informative and was followed by a very pleasant buffet lunch and a chinwag with old and new friends.

Unfortunately one of our members, **Ray Millard**, has passed on. Our condolences go to all his family.

Finally our membership has been steady throughout the year, and if anyone wishes to visit or join us, they will be made very welcome. We meet at 19.30hrs on the last Thursday of each month at 39 Sig Regt (V), TAC Horfield Common, Bristol.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs J Barrett**
Secretary **MajGen JHW Badcock CB CBE DL**

BRANCH GOINGS ON

July saw the Branch at the Duke of York's Royal Military School in Dover for its annual pilgrimage to the magnificent sports field, although this year we reluctantly accepted that many members were not now in the first (or even the second) flush of youth and may not enjoy cricket so much this year as in years past. We therefore decided on a Potted Sports Day, which in itself challenged the elasticity of joints, muscles and various other bits, but did it in a rather more genteel way. A great day, lots of fun, beautiful sunshine with a gentle breeze coming in from the Channel, enhanced by a profitable raffle by the De Rose Duo and the homemade cake and tea served by our worthy Chairman, **Mrs Jo Barrett** and **Doreen Alison**. We were even graced by the appearance of **HRH The Duke of York** who landed by helicopter in our sports field on his way to some other function. He didn't wave.

34 members attended the Annual Reunion at Blandford described so graphically by the Editor and others in the last issue of *The WIRE*. Suffice it to say that all our Members agreed that this year the whole weekend was the best ever, fortunately enhanced by splendid weather and a parade by the young men and women which brought the occasional tear of admiration and nostalgia to the eyes of those of us who remembered the day when we ourselves ..... but we digress.

10 August saw a large audience of Members and Guests at **Gen John** and **Gill Badcock's** Antrum Lodge, where the Committee took their thespian lives in their hands when they introduced the Stodmarsh Fête in the style of The Vicar of Dibley, going through the 'meeting' routine of the TV series, using a script bent, twisted, tortured and finally agreed to by **John Badcock**, **Ted Drake** and **Donald Crisp**.

The 'meeting' finally over, our Visiting Personality in the shape of Elton John aka **John Ballantyne**, enchanting in pink, performed to much applause. **Mike Wheeler** and assistants took over the entertainment from here on and one of the first items (when the Committee had changed from their Dibley costumes) was a rustic Morris Dance, the movements of which cannot be read in any Drill Book - nor should they be. However, to much tingling of bells, daintily waved hankies, whoops of Kentish countryside delight and the odd 'Heigh-nonny-no' the dancers 'done great' and earned much applause.

Various entertainments followed until the usual sumptuous cooked buffet was served to the ravenous multitude. **Marion** and **Vincent de Rose** prised £170.00 from us with their raffle, which brought many attractive prizes to lucky winners. Yet another success story for the production skills of the Badcock Vaudeville and Cultural Ensemble PLC. Who coined the phrase 'a fête worse than death?'. Not this one!

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Jack Dienst is now 92 years of age and has reluctantly come to the conclusion that he is now too frail to ride his trusty Matchless motorcycle. **Jack** has entertained us for many years, arriving at the Branch functions on his bike, dressed appropriately in his DR outfit and regaling anybody with an interest in war stories of his adventures during the krieg.

Peter Foakes has been receiving chemotherapy for something nasty, but remains cheerful. Both he and **Peggy** continue with their daily swim and we wish them both well.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J McMillan**
Secretary **Miss I Muir**

At our meeting on 17 June, a games night with a buffet, our guests were the Glasgow Branch of the RCT Assn. They obviously enjoyed themselves, and in appreciation, have promised to arrange a return visit to one of their meetings.

Eight of our warriors returned from the Blandford Reunion full of praise for the arrangements made by RSA and Corps personnel. They had a great weekend and thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

On 5 July, Branch members attended a celebration at Jardine Street, for **Jackie Dollen**, who retired from 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) after 42 years service. **Jackie** has always been very helpful to the Branch during his service as SSgt and caretaker of Jardine Street. He will continue in that capacity as a civilian with TAVRA. His former colleagues made presentation gifts and he received many gifts from his friends. Congratulations, **Jackie**, on a fine record of service, and all best wishes for the future.

Also in July some of our Members visited the Erskine Hospital to meet the patients for a games night, and to take in books and magazines for the hospital library. It was discovered that there are two ex-RSigs male patients there, one in the main hospital complex, and the other in one of the houses in the hospital grounds occupied by married patients. Both welcomed the visit, as did the other patients of the three Services catered for by the hospital.

The Branch thanks past Chairman **Joe Keegan**, for his efforts over the last three years, and to his successor, **Jim McMillan**, best wishes for the future.

A Jimmy Dinner was organised by 52 Sqn at East Kilbride on 8 August, and was attended by members of the Branch.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Secretary **SSgt (YofS) I Wolfe**

The Blandford Reunion has been and gone once again. It hardly seems like a year since the last one. **Edgar McCall** managed to get the travel organised and although some of our usual stalwarts were unable to attend this year, eight members travelled in two cars driven by **Edgar McCall** and **Ian Stewart**, to whom thanks must go for the long drive. **John** and **Heather Loveday** again travelled separately with their caravan. **Dill** and **Palm Ogden** and **Mark Barrass** our cross-Channel members met up at Blandford and an old friend of the Branch, **Keith Fisher** said hello. Thanks from all who attended go to the CO and RSM of 11 Sig Regt and to **Peter Cuckow**, for all the hard work involved in organising the event.

Unfortunately this has been a very sad period for NI Branch. First **Fred Holmes**, one of our foundation Members passed away (see Last Post section in this issue), then **Capt Joe Mitchell** (not a Branch Member, but well known to most of us) died after a tragic accident. Another shock was the sudden death of **Sgt Chris Montgomery** of 40 (U) Sig Regt (V), a most regular attender at meetings, travelling a long distances to be there. I had mentioned him in the August article as having received the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate. Many thanks to the Editor for adding the final note of his death just before printing. Sadly, **Chris's** father also passed away one week later.

Then there has been the passing of our staunch member, **Jim Vance's** father. To add to this most unfortunate period our Branch, President **Maj (Retd) JW (Bill) Douglas TD**, passed away after a long illness (See Last Post section in this issue). Our Officers and Members extend their sincere condolences to all of their families.

A welcome awaits any serving or ex-Sig at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the third Wednesday of each month. Why not check out our web site to see what's on?

SOUTHAMPTON RSA

Chairman **Mr SL Smith**
Secretary **Mr AAT Dear**

NEW MEMBERS

As the result of our Secretary's action in sending questionnaires to ex-regulars, we now welcome the following new members to our Branch: **LtCol Michael Jarrett**, **Mr Mark Matthews**, **Mr AC**

Keen, **Mrs Jean Keen** (Associate Member), **Mr Derrick G Roberts**, **Mr FT Morris BEM** and **Mrs Morris** (Associate Member).

RSA REUNION

Bravely carrying our new Standard, **Bryan Littlecott** made it to the six finalists in this year's Standard Bearers' Competition. Congratulations **Bryan** from all of us. He missed being runner-up by 3 points. The new Standard was dedicated at the Drum Head Service on the Sunday. The RSA veterans march past on Sunday included a contingent of Korean War Veterans. Our Chairman, **Sid Smith** headed the contingent carrying the Standard of the BKVA Wessex Branch. Prior to the march on, the Corps RSM paid a compliment to the contingent. He came to attention and saluted, saying 'Well done gentlemen, I salute you'. Nice to be recognised by the younger generation.

KOREAN WAR CEASEFIRE COMMEMORATION

As reported in the last issue of *The WIRE*, Korean War Veterans, **Sid Smith**, **Tony Hull**, **Norman Davies**, **George Clarke** and **Frank Sidey** from this Branch were on parade in London on 9 July. This most memorable and nostalgic occasion was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARYS

Congratulations to our Hon Secretary, **Tony Dear** and his wife **Ruth**, who celebrated 30 years of married bliss on o14 July 2003; and to **John** and **Margaret Daw**, who celebrated their 62nd Anniversary on 21 September 2003.

SANDHURST

The annual visit to RMA Sandhurst to see the Sovereign's Parade Rehearsal took place on Wednesday 6 August. About 14 Branch members (incl family and guests) turned up on a scorching hot day. **Sid Smith** and **Norman Davies** ignored the dress code and arrived attired in summer garb with baseball caps. They decided that maybe they were inappropriately dressed and opted to lounge comfortably by the lake in the shade of the pine trees, sipping cool drinks and listening to the band and the shouted orders echoing back from the impressive buildings. We learned afterwards that, in spite of the sweltering heat, the parade went down very well and the recruits and staff stood up to it in true military fashion – apart, that is, for a few who keeled over in the heat.

Afterwards our President, **Brig Johnny Clinch**, together with his faithful hound Susie, held court at the lake, where we enjoyed each other's company, gorging ourselves on picnic fare and cold drinks (including champagne left over from their silver wedding anniversary party) provided by **Claire** and **Bryan Littlecott**. The highlight of the picnic was provided by **Peter Loveless**, who came with his friend **Margaret**. He had brought several Ice Cream Mars Bars, which had melted, and he proceeded messily to milk them into a cup then tried to eat them with a spoon. He offered to share this 'delicacy', an offer which **Claire Littlecott** accepted (she'll try anything once.)

Claire Littlecott, Peter Loveless and Margaret

Sid Smith and Norman Davies at peace with the world

Southampton Branch 'A Disreputable Bunch'

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Branch members were involved in several other social and ceremonial activities during August and September The Branch picnic was held in the New Forest on 14 August. There was a trip on the Watercress Railway Line together with members from Reading Branch on 31 August. The Earl Mountbatten Memorial Service and Parade was held at Romsey on 7 September. A Skittle Evening at the *Ship Inn*, Redbridge on 19 September.

Our members may be ageing fast, but it's 'all go' at Southampton Branch.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

A fine weekend was enjoyed by those of the Branch attending the Annual Reunion. The weather improved overnight to give pleasant sunny conditions, only returning to rain on the Sunday evening. Those of us who were there on Saturday morning witnessed an excellent Princess Royal Day Parade by the recruits of 11 Sig Regt. We were impressed by the high standard, for which they are to be congratulated. Those taking part entertained us to drinks following the parade and in the evening we were well looked after by the Members of the Sgts Mess, who provided music and an excellent curry supper. On both days **Harry Ruff** paraded the Branch Standard.

In August we joined the Aldershot Branch for the Final Rehearsal of the Sovereign's Parade at the RMA Sandhurst. It was an enjoyable event, but the hot and humid weather conditions may have contributed to a lack of coordination in finding the picnic area. We are sure it was not poor map reading!

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

We are going from strength to strength and now have 211 members, thanks partly to the advertising undertaken by our Chairman. The website, provided by our Webmaster, **John Harrison** on http://bebadorset.tripod.com is also beginning to pay dividends. Our new members are **Terry Bartlett**, **Colin Nurse**, **Keith Andrews**, **Tony Robertshaw** and **Charles Derrick**. We are also pleased to welcome home **David Walker**, who has been living in Australia for the past four years. **David** has taken up residence at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

On Sunday, 13 July, **Tony** and **Beryl Hull** hosted their annual barbecue in Bournemouth. 24 members of BEBA attended and we were also very pleased to welcome the Editor of *The WIRE*, **Bernard Redshaw**. People travelled quite long distances to attend, such as our President and his wife, **John** and **Pat Beasley** from Kingston uponThames. But the accolade must go to **Albert** and **Barbara Trevor**, who came from Ramsgate. The weather was absolutely glorious and **Tony** did his usual superb job as head cook. It proved to be a very enjoyable afternoon.

Back row: Ted Hunt, Peter Vass, Peter Gray, Frank Webber, Terry Poingdestre, Arthur Cotillard, Keith Andrews. Front row: Dick Hurel, Albert Trevor, Tony Hull, John Beasley, Alan Smith, Bernard Redshaw

COMMEMORATION OF 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF KOREAN WAR CEASEFIRE

Ron and Derek Smith with Ron's daughter and son-in-law.

At 05.50hrs on Saturday, 26 July, we left Poole by coach with 27 members of the Southampton Branch of the British Korean Veterans Association to travel to the Royal Artillery Barracks, Woolwich. A drumhead service was held, followed by a march past with the salute taken by **MajGen Sir Peter Downward KCVO CB DSO DFC**. We were pleased to meet BEBA members **Don Horton** and **Derek Smith** at Woolwich and **Derek** was accompanied by his brother, **Ron** (also a boy soldier at Beverley), who was on a visit from Canada.

BLANDFORD RSA BARBECUE

On Sunday, 3 August, **Tony** and **Beryl Hull** were invited by **Frank** and **Eve Webber** to a barbecue being given by the Blandford Branch of the RSA. This proved to be a very good afternoon with horse racing run by **Dave Walker**. There was a horse called *The Association*, for which **Tony** bid and bought. This went on to win so he made a nice profit!

INFORMATION REQUEST - DUNKIRK

The BBC is developing a drama about the evacuation of Dunkirk. We have spent the last year and a half researching these events in detail using official archives and talking to over 130 veterans of the retreat and evacuation. A script has been written based on this research and we will begin filming later in the year.

One of our storylines concerns 48 Div Sig Regt. We are keen to get in touch with the relatives of **Cpl 'Tich' Humphreys**. We know that he was a reservist with 'Ack' Section, 48 Div Sig Regt, and in his mid thirties at the time. Together with **Wilf Saunders** and **Clive Tonry** he crewed a No 9 set in a 'gin palace' from around 15 May until the unit's evacuation on 31 May 1940.

If you can help please contact:

Sarah Barton
Room D108
BBC Centre House
56 Wood Lane
LONDON
W12 7SB
Tel: 0208 576 1188
Email: sarah.barton@bbc.co.uk

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

EX BRITISH FORCES KIDS

From: Donna Walker (née Tutor)
16 Lingmell
Albany
Washington
Tyne and Wear
NE37 1TP
Email: donna.tutor@ntlworld.com

Dear Sir

Could you please give a mention in your magazine to the very worthy cause of putting ex-British Forces kids back in touch with each other.

Children who grew up with Forces parents will know that the chance of bumping into people from our school days is remote. Using the Internet, we have found many friends, we share stories and photos on-line and most of the schools have had fantastic reunions that leave us all on such a high. This gives me the incentive to try and find more and more people.

Please come and find out more at the following websites:-

http://www.britbrats.com

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/exbritishforceskids2/

These sites will point you in the right direction for the school that you went to.

If anyone out there went to my school, Edinburgh School, Münster, Germany, please get in touch urgently, as we are planning our second reunion in Munster on 1 May 2004. Please contact me at the above address.

Thank you for any help you can give. It's much appreciated.

Yours....

MADRAS SIGNAL COMPANY 1944-46

Mrs Marie Keating (Née **Bellamy**) would like to hear from anyone who served in the Madras Signal Company 1944-46. **Marie** can be contacted on 01282 813428.

WALTER NORMAN WATHEN

Alderbury and Whaddon Local History Research Group are seeking any information on **Lance Sergeant Walter Norman Wathen**, Royal Corps of Signals who is recorded as having died in Hong Kong on 1 October 1942.

We are researching the soldiers named on our village War Memorial for a future publication. We believe that his parents were from Exeter but moved to Alderbury near Salisbury.

Any information would be very useful to build up a picture of the man.

Please contact: **Bernice Range**, 7 Silverwood, Alderbury, Salisbury SP5 3TN, Tel: 01722 711370, Email: b.range@virgin.net

CORRESPONDENCE

DO YOU REMEMBER THE CORONATION PARADE IN MAY 1937?

From: **Mr TAA Elliott**
24 Dymchurch Close
Polegate
East Sussex
BN26 6ND
Tel: 01323 483132

Dear Sir

Alison Schofield's most interesting account of her experiences of the 1953 Coronation has inspired me to put down on paper for the first time, what I can recall of the previous coronation in 1937.

I was one of two cadets selected to represent my school, Haberdashers Aske's Hampstead School, in the Coronation Detachment of The British National Cadet Association. I have tried hard to remember the name of my companion, but until now it escapes me.

The night before, we had to report to a vast Drill Hall in Belsize Park, where we ate, slept, and cleaned our buttons and boots. It was teaming with cadets, mostly corporals or sergeants, in every conceivable uniform.

I can remember no details of arrangements for messing, ablutions etc., so they must have been adequate, and I did sleep. Not so my companion, who told me that talking went on all night.

Very quickly Markers were called for, and order was established. Then it was 'Open Order March', (we had just learned to march in threes), and then, 'Two Foot in the Ranks'.

We marched out into rain at first light and eventually arrived at Constitution Hill, where we formed up behind the RAF Cranwell Cadets, who were lining the route.

I was immediately struck by the cleanliness of their rifles. At the time we were 'armed' with a mixture of Drill Purpose Lee Metfords and 'long' Lee Enfields, with every conceivable variation of sight and safety catch arrangement. How I envied the Cranwell Cadets their immaculate SMLEs. Their drill too, was as good as the Guards.

We had an excellent view of the procession. As the coaches came past, I noticed that most of the distinguished occupants were wearing stage makeup, no doubt to hide the strain of the long and tiring ceremony. Very understandable, but I regret to say my first reaction was something like 'Good Lord, they're wearing rouge!'

Eventually it was all over. We Londoners sloped off to the nearest Tube station, and the main body marched off, presumably to spend another night on the floor at Belsize Park before being shepherded to their respective main line stations.

My experiences are nothing like as glamorous as **Alison's**, but I was very glad I was chosen. I have often wondered since how many of those Cranwell Cadets survived the Battle of Britain and the Bomber Command ops and how many didn't.

I left school later that same year and immediately joined the TA on Boy Service.

Yours.....

From: **Gordon Liddell**
Northern Signals Association
8 Mihaka Road
Kawakawa Bay
RD 5
Papakura
New Zealand

Dear Sir

Congratulations on *The WIRE*. The quality and quantity of its contents are superb.

It was sad to read of the passing of **AL (Alf) Boynton**. I first met **Alf** in the mid 50's, when he was the trg cadre NCO of 2 Sqn 51 (HD) Sig Regt, located in my home town of Stirling. His sense of humour and friendliness was greatly appreciated by us young Highland Warriors and I think he left with a bit of an accent. May he rest in peace.

Don Marsh passed on to **Mrs Cherry Bramwell**, granddaughter of **LtCol Cyril Basset VC**, the June issue with the photo on the back cover of the RNZSigs Sgt receiving the Basset VC Memorial Trophy. She was highly delighted.

We celebrated Corps Day with a wee service and lunch at the Papakura RSA and laid a wreath to remember the fallen. *Last Post* and *Reveille* were played by **Pipe Major Ian Hill** of the RNZSigs Pipes and Drums.

If any of your people are ever heading this way and they are in the Auckland area, we would appreciate their giving **Don Marsh** or me a call. We would like to extend the hand of friendship and show them a wee bit of Kiwi hospitality. Our phone numbers are: **Gordon Liddell** (09) 292 2562; **Don Marsh** (09) 298 8769.

Keep up the good work and please pass on our best wishes to all members of the Corps, both ex and serving. Good luck and God bless.

Yours....

From: **Richard Dougal**
Sundance
Innhams Wood
Crowborough
East Sussex
TN6 1TE
Tel: 01892 654247

Dear Sir

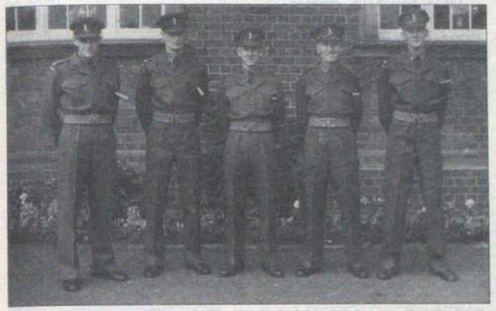
These two photos may be of interest to your readers, one showing five young Royal Signals National Service Officers on the day they were commissioned at Catterick in 1953, and the other showing the same (no longer young) Officers when they met up for a reunion fifty years later in April 2003.

The names of the five Officers (L-R in both photos) are **Robin Wotherspoon**, **Richard Dougal**, **Harry Hemus**, **Glyn Yeoman** and **Geoff Halsall**.

The military service of all five ended in 1955, when they completed their 3 years' National Service, so their friendship has continued for 48 years back in civvy street.

It would be interesting to hear of other such long-enduring friendships initiated by the Corps.

Yours.....



Catterick 1953

April 2003

From: **Mr J Soutar**
60 Brook Road
Borrowash
Derby
DE72 3FW

Dear Sir,

I have just read the article *Korea the Forgotten War* by **George Loudon** in the August edition of *The WIRE*. Although I did not serve in Korea myself, I met up with **George** in LFPG, Juffair Camp, Bahrain in 1959 when he took over the Cipher Office from **WO2 Bob Buchanan**. He was a very efficient WO and very easy to work with. I left Bahrain in mid 1960 and lost touch with him until 1976, when another article appeared in *The WIRE* regarding his period in Hong Kong and his eventual posting to Korea. Through this article I was able to contact him again, and whilst on duty at the Farnborough Air Show he came up to Weybridge with his wife **Betty** and we went out for a drink and to talk of old times. Again we lost contact and it would be great if we could get in touch again after such a long time.

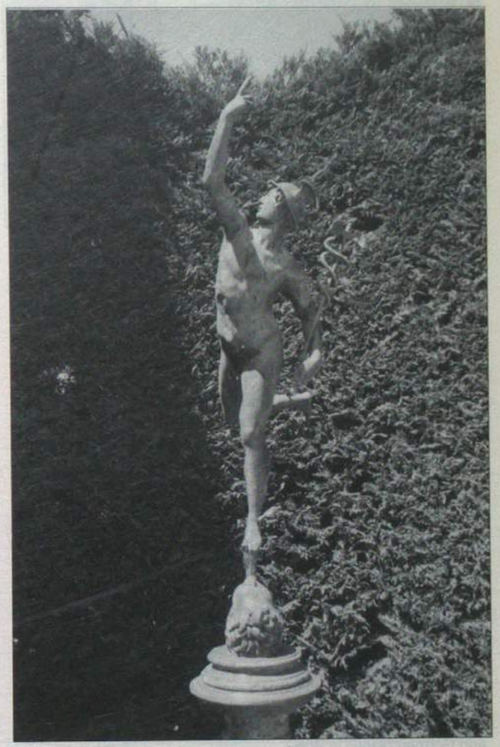
Since renewing acquaintances with *The WIRE* after a long absence, I notice a lot of familiar names from the 'old days' keep appearing. If any 'oldies' from the past wish to get in touch with me, they can do so on 01332 679108 or at the above address.

Yours.....

From: **Douglas N Robinson**
10, 025 Resthaven Drive
Suite 308
Sidney. BC V8L 3G3
Canada
Email: dnr55@attcanada.ca

Dear Sir

Butchart Gardens, near Victoria BC are well known worldwide for their beauty and they attract many visitors. In one of the gardens, the Italian Garden, there is a statue of Mercury, the emblem of my old Corps. My wife and I often sit near the statue to take a rest after much walking.



We have seen so many people taking pictures of him that on a few occasions I have asked the photographer if he or she had served in the Royal Corps of Signals. So far the answers have been in the negative, but one day I might just get lucky and find someone with whom I served so many years ago.

I asked one of the attendants if there was any significant reason for the statue being placed there, but he couldn't tell me. So I took a photo to see if any *WIRE* reader would know.

Wishing all at RHQ every success in your future endeavours.

Yours.....

From: Archie Cairns
58 Quentin Rise
Dedridge
Livingston
EH54 6NT

Dear Sir

235 SIGNAL SQUADRON (DCN) MALTA

Whilst on holiday in Malta recently with **Roy Andrews** of the Malta Libya Assn, we met up with **SSgt Anthony Mifsud**, who had served with Malta Sig Sqn and later with 234 Sig Sqn (Malta).

Archie Cairns, 260 Sig Sqn Assn; Tony Misfud, 234 Sign Sqn; Roy Andrews, Malta/Libya Assn outside the old MT Sec of 235 Sig Sqn

Tony took us on a tour of the Catacombs and on to the silent city of Mdina, where he attended school as a young boy. During the tour we visited a landmark familiar to many an ex-siggy lucky enough to be posted to Malta. As the enclosed picture shows, the old MT Sec building of 235 Sig Sqn (DCN) at Mtarfa is still standing and, although quite faded, the old sign above the door clearly shows that this was the home of a R Sigs unit.

The building is still in use as garage today, but doesn't quite have the spit and polish it had when in use by the MT Sec. In one corner of the garage was an old pile of discarded car parts and tucked away against the wall was another familiar sign which I understand was from the Joint Services Family Unit. **Tony** has promised to recover this sign and find a more suitable home for it, perhaps in the National War Museum, Valletta where **Tony's** No2 Dress uniform is on display.

Tony is quite a remarkable character and has retained a good knowledge of his time in the Corps. He enlisted in the Army in April 1949, initially trained as a Lineman and after attending a course at Catterick, retrained as a Tg Op. He is one of a handful of members of the Corps to have mounted guard on the George Cross awarded to the people of Malta by **HM King George VI** following 154 days and nights of continuous bombing by Italian and German planes in WW2.

Tony left the Corps in March 1972 but retains memories of his life and takes great pride in being a member of the Royal Corps of Signals. Anyone reading this who served with the Corps in Malta and would like to contact **Tony**, can contact him at the following address:-

Tony Mifsud
Flat 2 Block 1
Chrie Xem Street
Rabat RBTOS
Malta
Email amifsud28@onvol.net

Yours.....

DONATIONS

Eastbourne Branch	£150.00
Mrs JE Casson	£20.00
Janet Hild in memory of **LtCol Nigel Ribchester**	£50.00
The estate of the late **Julian K Bird**	£500.00
DW & BJ Capon in memory of **LtCol Nigel Ribchester**	£25.00
DF & SR Oakley in memory of **LtCol Nigel Ribchester**	£20.00
Frank and **Oliver Pedley** in memory of **LtCol Nigel Ribchester**	£50.00
Dorothy Frankland in memory of **LtCol Nigel Ribchester**	£10.00
Certa Cito	£10.00
Darlington Branch	£10.00
Poole Branch	£20.00
Tarrant Valley 10 Race	£50.00
RSA Church Service 29 June 2003	£635.28
Pedley children **(Susan, Carol, Janet & Christopher)** in memory of **LtCol Nigel Ribchester**	£50.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of **Mr AW Spratley**	£10.00
Mrs BV Ribchester in memory of her late husband **LtCol Nigel Ribchester**	£200.00
Al MacMillan	£10.00
Brig CT Garton	£12.00
238 (London) Sig Sqn	£161.93
Swindon Branch	£10.00
Maj (Retd) WA Barnes	£10.00

LAST POST

Anderson - WO2 HH Anderson	Served 1942/70	Died 27/07/03
Andrews - WO2 LM Andrews	Served 1950/75	Died 26/05/03
Bardell - Col EJ Bardell	Served 1939/75	Died 13/07/03
Barkley - LCpl KG Barkley	Served 1946/49	Died 07/09/03
Cairns - Cpl J Cairns	Served 1960/82	Died 03/08/03
Collison - Col RCS Collison	Served 1939/70	Died 03/08/03
Cox - Maj NA Cox	Served 1945/82	Died 04/08/03
Crampton - WO1 FJ Crampton	Served 1931/75	Died 12/12/01
Davis - Lt Col AF Davis	Served WW2	Died 04/09/03
Delicata-Bennett - Sgt M Delicata-Bennett	Served 1950/62	Died 19/07/03
Douglas - Maj JW Douglas	Served 1961/69	Died 05/08/03
Fulton - Sgt A Fulton	Served 1975/99	Died 20/07/03
Gardiner - Maj DP Gardiner	Served 1942/67	Died 28/08/03
Gilyeat - Maj JM Gilyeat	Served 1947/79	Died 07/09/03
Hewlett - Sig J Hewlett	Served 1948/50	Died 17/08/03
Holmes - Cpl FC Holmes	Served 1938/45	Died 04/07/03
Johnson - Sig N Johnson	Served 1940/46	Died 02/09/03
Lambden - Cpl J Lambden	Served 1940/45	Died 28/08/03
Langley - SSgt CRS Langley	Served 1962/75	Died 25/07/03
Montgomery - Sgt C Montgomery	Served 1988/03	Died 12/07/03
Morris - LCpl MP Morris	Served 1949/51	Died 06/08/03
Pemberton - Capt RM Pemberton	Served 1978/00	Died 06/08/03
Porter - Sig J Porter	Served 1943/47	Died 28/08/03
Ramsbottom - Col E Ramsbottom	Served 1947/78	Died 21/07/03
Roberts - SSgt DG Roberts	Served 1950/75	Died 19/08/03
Rogers - Sig NC Rogers	Served 1946/48	Died 21/07/03
Rook - Cpl WH Rook	Served 1939/52	Died ??/07/03
Rudland - Sgt M Rudland	Served 1995/03	Died 28/07/03
Spratley - Sig AW Spratley	Served 1942/47 & 1963/70	Died 12/07/03
Tecter - Sig MJ Tecter	Served 1947/49	Died 17/07/03
Turner - WO2 PW Turner	Served 1933/56	Died 29/07/03
Upfield - WO2 JEP Upfield	Served 1945/69	Died 29/07/03
Ward - Dvr G Ward	Served 1941/46	Died 30/08/03
Wilton-Steer - Maj MJ Wilton-Steer	Served 1947/84	Died 07/09/03
Woolaston - Maj FJC Woolaston	Served WW2	Died 01/09/03

MOORCROFT – Cpl Bernard Thomas Moorcroft died on 8 June 2003

Bernard Moorcroft was born in Southport on 11 August 1926. After leaving school at 14 years, he became an apprentice electrician. He joined the Army on 15 March 1945 at Bodmin, Cornwall and after his six weeks' initial trg, he moved to Catterick to commence trade trg as a lineman.

Bernard was posted to the Middle East in November 1945, serving in Egypt and Palestine. He was promoted LCpl on 27 September 1946, and in May 1947 he was with 2 Para Bde Sig Sqn, having gained his para wings. He eventually made Cpl and was demobbed in 1948.

On leaving the Army, **Bernard** joined the Southport Police Force, where he served for thirty-three years, reaching the rank of Sgt. On retirement, he became Treasurer of the Southport Branch of the National Assn of Retired Police Officers, a branch of some four hundred members.

Bernard joined the RSA Southport Branch shortly after it was formed in 1980, and took over the role of Branch Treasurer in 1989, serving in this position for 14 years, loyally supported by his wife, **Agnes**. Sadly **Agnes** died in September 2001 and then **Bernard's** health started to decline after Christmas 2002. He was admitted to hospital in May 2003 and died peacefully on 9 June.

A Requiem Mass was held for **Bernard** at St Marie's Catholic Church in Southport on 16 June. There was a Guard of Honour comprising members of RSA Southport, Southport and Preston Retired Police Officers Assn; and the Standards of RSA Southport, Para Regt Assn, Korean Vets Assn and the Police Assn were paraded.

Bernard will be greatly missed, and the Branch's condolences go out to his daughter, **Anne**, brothers, **Ronnie**, **Brian** and their families.

JOHNSTON – Maj CW Johnston (Johnny) died 6 June 2003.

Johnny Johnston was born in Liverpool on 11 May 1923. He was conscripted on 29 January 1942 and joined R Signals, serving in Northern Ireland in 1943-44.

In 1945 **Johnny** embarked on *TSS Ormonde* for India to take part in the Burma campaign. He served as a Sgt in 4 Indian Corps Sig Regt at Pegu, and in October 1945 he was promoted to CQMS and moved to Meiktila. The rest of 1945 and 1946 he spent moving down to Rangoon, handing over the Army comms to the Burmese Post and Telegraph Dept. By this time, he was RQMS and was posted to Burma Command Sig Regt in Rangoon. In 1947 he spent 7 months in Singapore and was then posted to Liverpool.

Whilst in UK, **Johnny** met **Olga** 'the light of my life' and they married in September 1949. After some time in York, he was posted to Germany. Between 1950 and 1953 he was stationed at 11 Air Formation Sig Regt in Buckeburg, then at Lemgo and HQ BAOR Sig Regt in Herford. After marching in the Coronation Parade in June 1953, **Johnny** was posted to Catterick in 1954 and moved with the Regt to Lincoln in 1957.

In 1958, **Johnny** was posted to 234 Sig Sqn in Malta. From there, he went to Lippstadt in Germany, becoming RSM in June 1962. In August he moved to 1 Div Sig Regt in Verden. He was commissioned in February 1965 and posted to 16 Sig Regt, Krefeld as Lt (QM). **Johnny** became Capt (QM) in February 1967 and spent 1968-71 with 33 Sig Regt in Liverpool, before a posting in September 1971 to Herford. He became Maj (QM) in 1973 and his last posting was at the Army Apprentices College in Harrogate in October 1974. He took early retirement in March 1976.

Johnny worked for the NHS from May 1976 to July 1977, after which time he was employed as an RO with 240 Sig Sqn until January 1986. He then took a voluntary post as a Treasurer for Oxfam for several years.

Johnny is sadly missed by **Olga**, their three children and six grandchildren.

WATSON - Sgt WBS Watson (Wilf) died on 11 January 2003.

I first met **Wilf** at Catterick during Basic and Trade Trg in 1936/7 after which he was posted to Egypt Comd Sigs, and I to A Corps Sigs, Aldershot. In the Spring of 1938 we met again when I was posted to 2 Coy Egypt Comd Sigs located in Abbassia Bks, and he at Kasr el Nil Barracks (Downtown Cairo) where he was employed as one of the Wireless Ops working on the roof of the old HQ BTE building. Later he was transferred to the Polygon Wireless Transmitter Station at Abbassia. He had built up a rapport with the Farrier Cpl in charge of the Remount Depot at Kasr el Nil Bks, and whenever possible, **Wilf** and I would assist **Paddy McKnight**, 8th Hussars, exercising some of the mounts. In off duty hours **Wilf** also spent some time learning to play the clarinet. Whenever duty allowed, we would spend our time together either swimming at the Services Club in Ezbekieh Gardens in Cairo or cycling in the vicinity of Cairo. He and I were among the seven who founded the Albion Cycling Club, which eventually grew to 150 international members from all walks of life.

I believe I can lay claim to knowing him better than anyone else at that time, for we shared everything. Whenever we saw something we liked, we would each buy the same. Our clothing was a duplicate of each others. There were two main differences, **Wilf** had almost white hair, mine was dark brown; he spoke with a North Midland accent, I with that of a Bristolian. Because of the colour of his hair he was known as, 'Whitey,' 'Blondy' and by several of us, as 'Spooky.' His brother, **Walter** joined us just before the outbreak of WW2.

As a member of the Support Gp, 7 Armd Div Sig Regt, I was sent to the desert and they remained in Cairo as members of 1 Coy, Egypt Comd Sigs. **Wilf** and I corresponded frequently while we were separated, then suddenly we lost touch. Whenever I sought information, I was told no one knew of his whereabouts and some even said he had been killed. I would not accept this, and kept trying. My efforts eventually paid off when, in 1984 in response to my letter to the Mayor of Chesterfield (**Wilf's** hometown), I received a telephone call here in Canada, from **Wilf**. Our friendship grew stronger and whenever my wife and I were visiting England we would try to spend a few days with them. They were visiting us when we learned that my wife was suffering from an inoperable cancer, so they spent most of their holiday visiting her in hospital and supporting me, a kindness typical of both **Wilf** and **Ruth**.

The passing of **Wilf** hit me very hard. He was exactly a year older than me (our birthday fell on 3 November). Sadly, **Wilf's** brother, **Walter** passed away a few days after him. My sympathy goes out to **Ruth** and their children, as well as to **Walter's** family.

Some friendships are brief; some like **Wilf's** and mine seem not to die. 67 years can never be replaced.

Obituary written by EWH 'Ernie' Huntley, Canada

DELICATA-BENNETT Sgt Michael Delicata-Bennett died on Saturday, 19 July 2003, in St George's Hospital, Tooting, after a long illness.

Michael Bennett was born in 1934 and joined 6 (Boys) Trg Regt, Beverley on 13 May 1950. He served for 12 years, with postings to Kenya and Cyprus and ended up as a Sgt. In later years he became involved with the Brunel Exhibition at Rotherhithe. When he filled in the application form, he was asked by **Nick Desalis** whether Delicata was a Christian name or a barrel of his surname. 'Neither,' he said, 'It's my late wife's surname.' He was told the form required his name. 'Well,' he said rather frostily, 'she can't use it any more, so I will!' He joined the Engine House of the Brunel Exhibition and brought a voracious appetite for absorbing a totally new subject (and rapidly became more knowledgeable than anybody else). He had an infectious enthusiasm for getting things going, and a dogged determination to see them through.

The current **Duke of Wellington** was invited to christen the new chimney at the Engine House. Down the line, after the good and great, stood **Michael**, boots glinting in the sun. When his turn came, he volunteered 'You won't remember me, Your Grace. I was your Sqn Clerk in Cyprus when you were Marquess Duoro.' 'Yes of course, my dear fellow. No, don't tell me you're ... Barnett.' '**Bennett**, Sir', says **Michael**. '**Sgt Bennett**.' 'Of course, of course,' replied the Duke. 'Now then, **Bennett**, I'll be looking to you to help me out if this curtain thing gets stuck. One doesn't want to be a duffer, don't you know.' **Michael** had no fears, because it had been tested a good few times before the big day.

In addition to his work at the Engine House, **Michael** also made time to be a significant contributor to another charity, REACH, and to give talks to other groups, such as The Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery.

Michael's funeral took place at West Lambeth Crematorium, Tooting, London on 4 August 2003. It was attended by **Tony** and **Beryl Hull** and **Norman Biffen** representing the Beverley Ex-Boys Association and the Corps flag was draped on the coffin.

Michael was a key player in a warm and loving family, who successfully managed to support each other through good times and bad. If he did any leading, it was leading by example. Our sincerest condolences go to his wife, **Marie**, and to his children.

RUDLAND - Sgt Martyn Rudland died on 28 July 2003 whilst serving in Rheindahlen with 252 Sqn DCSA(G).

Martyn Rudland joined the Army in September 1995 after completing a successful apprenticeship as an electrician at Gateshead College. His soldier training was conducted at ATR Bassingbourne and his trade training as a Telecomms Tech (Radio) at RSS, Blandford.

His first posting was with 249 Sig Sqn in Bulford in June 1997. This unit supported the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land), whose major role required soldiers to be extremely fit and undergo specialist winter warfare training. In December 1999 he was posted to 15 Sig Regt in Northern Ireland, where he was employed maintaining the radio systems throughout the Province. **Martyn** was awarded the GSM with NI clasp for his time spent in this operational unit.

It was at this time that **Martyn** sat and passed his entrance examination for his Class 1 trade training. He attended the long course at RSS in June 2001, and was awarded an OND in Engineering.

He was then posted to Rheindahlen in August 2002, to serve with 252 Sqn DCSA(G). He was appointed to the IPG and Enabling Services Dept, where he had responsibility for the planning and provision of comms circuits and systems in support of exercising units and maintaining the Dept's databases.

Martyn was a quiet individual who excelled at his work. He was extremely well thought of by all whom he came into contact with, and was highly regarded by his line manager and colleagues. It gave the Management Board and his Sqn OC great pleasure to promote him to the rank of Sgt on 8 July 2003.

The Head of DCSA(G), **Col Paul Eaton**, the Sqn OC, **Maj Garth Pickersgill** and all ranks DCSA(G) send their deepest sympathies to **Mrs Kay Rudland** and their son **Aiden**.

DOUGLAS - Maj (Retd) JW Douglas TD (Bill) died on 5 August 2003.

The Northern Ireland Branch, RSA are saddened by the passing on 5 August of their much-respected Branch President, **Bill Douglas**. **Bill** was active in wartime with the Civil Defence Service. He was commissioned in North Irish Horse Signals (TA), with whom he served until re-organisation in 1962, when he transferred to 66 (Ulster) Sig Regt (TA) in Clonaver TAC, Belfast. His interest was always in radio, particularly amateur radio (G13 IWD) and he was instrumental in forming an Amateur Radio Club in the Regt. His TA career continued with a further change of title of the Regt to 40 (U) Sig Regt (V), until his retirement in the rank of Maj and the award of TD.

Bill joined the NI Branch in 1962 and has been a stalwart ever since, holding various offices: Auditor, Vice Chairman, Chairman, Vice President and from 1989, President of the Branch. He was awarded Honour Membership for services to the RSA. His son, **Paul** continues to run the Branch website for us. In addition to the RSA, **Bill** was active in the Helen's Bay Branch of the RBL, holding various offices: Treasurer, President and latterly, Vice President.

A private burial took place on the morning of 11 August, attended by family and close friends. The coffin was draped with the Standard of 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) by kind permission of the CO and RSM of the Regt. In the afternoon a thanksgiving service was held in his local church, attended by a large gathering of family, friends, RSA NI Branch Members and RBL Members. Along with the RBL Standard, the RSA Branch Standard was paraded in the Church by our Standard Bearer, **Billy Dixon**. At his own request, a piper played at the end of the service. A fitting farewell indeed.

The RSA NI Branch has lost a great President. The Members convey their sympathy to his wife, **Lorna** and the family.

HODGETTS – Edwin Joseph Albert Hodgetts passed away peacefully at his home in New Zealand on Sunday 7 September 2003, in his 81st year.

Edwin served with the Corps from 1949 to 1952. He served in Korea with 29 Bde Sig Sqn and was awarded an MID for distinguished service during the battle of the Imjin River and Sol Ma Ri, the Chinese offensive in April 1951. He made a desperate and dangerous despatch run to supply radio batteries to the Gloucestershire Regt, and on his return to Tac HQ, he captured a Chinese sniper. Whilst under constant enemy fire, he also ferried messages from the Northumberland Fusiliers CP to Tac HQ when their telephone lines were cut.

His son **John** says of him, 'My father often recounted to me the actions he took part in, and those of the Sig Tp he served with in Korea. I would like the Corps to know of his death, the very high regard the family has for him, and the enormous amount of pride my father had for the Corps. He will be sadly missed.'

HOLMES - Cpl FC Holmes (Fred) died on 4 July 2003.

The Northern Ireland Branch RSA regrets to report the death of **Fred Holmes**, one of our few remaining Foundation Members. **Fred** was a member of the RSigs Supplementary Reserve in Clonaver Camp, Belfast when they left for Annual Camp at Port Stewart in August 1939. War was declared whilst they were in camp and the Unit was sent abroad shortly afterwards. **Fred** served in France and was involved in the Dunkirk evacuation. He went on to serve in the Middle East and was eventually demobbed in 1946. He was then employed as a Telecomms Engr in Post Office Telephones (now British Telecom) until his retirement. He became a Member of the Dunkirk Veterans Association, serving as Chairman for a year. When the RSA NI Branch was formed in Belfast in 1956, **Fred** joined and became a Foundation Member, regularly attending meetings over the years. For a period he held the office of Branch Vice-Chairman. He was awarded the 50-year badge for service to the Corps. After the death of his wife, **Doreen** in October 2001, **Fred's** health deteriorated and he was unable to attend meetings, but the Welfare Member and others kept in touch with him. He will be missed.

HAYDON – LtCol JM Haydon (John) died on 12 July 2003

John Haydon joined the Army as a National Serviceman. He joined the Royal Corps of Signals on 26 September 1953 as an 18 year old Signalman.

He served all over the world, including Singapore and Germany as a member of the Air Formation Signals Unit, and then later as the RSM at the RMA Sandhurst Signals Wing.

John was commissioned in 1972, serving in Germany, Northern Ireland and UK. He finished his 37 years in the Corps as a LtCol (QM) at HQ BAOR at Rheindahlen.

He loved to play golf during his time in the Army. While stationed at HQ BAOR, he ran the Corps Golf Team. It was a passion he continued to enjoy during his retirement.

Sadly **John** passed away suddenly and unexpectedly on 12 July 2003, aged 68. He was on holiday in Denmark, with his wife **Gillian**, visiting his eldest son, **Andrew**. **John** always loved travelling. It was a passion that began during his time with the Army, beginning with his first posting to Germany and ending with his final trip to Denmark.

His wife of 47 years, **Gillian**, his two sons, **Andrew** and **Richard**, and his whole family are devastated by their loss. His friends and colleagues in the Corps and the Services as a whole will be shocked and saddened to learn of his untimely passing.

John made friends wherever he went, and with whomever he met. He was a special man, a gentleman and a respected officer, who brought the best out of all of those he served with. He was extremely proud to have served his country and the Royal Corps of Signals, and loved his 37 years in the Army.

He will be greatly missed, but remembered always.

continued from Inside Front Cover

The SOinC(A) was able to take advantage of his trip to Canada to be briefed on future concepts and developments in the Canadian Forces and to see the Canadian Forces Tactical Command and Control Communications System (TCCCS) and their Land Forces Command and Control Information System (LFC2IS) in operation. During his trip to Kingston the SOinC(A) was escorted by the Assistant Military Attaché, **Lt Col Andy Topp REME**, and the Royal Signals Exchange Officer, **Maj Jon Watt**, and visited a Bde HQ demonstration using digital CNR and WAS.

The Corps Band and Pipes and Drums march past as HRH The Princess Royal takes the salute

In recognition of this important anniversary and to demonstrate the Royal Corps of Signals' commitment to our close relationship with the C&E Branch, the Royal Corps of Signals Band and the Royal Corps of Signals Pipes and Drums were made available to assist with the event.

During an intensive 3-week programme, both Bands, under the Director of Music, **Maj Paul Murrell**, took part in the Centennial and Veterans' parades as well as conducting a Royal Concert for Her Royal Highness in the Grand Theatre Kingston and a public concert at the Fort Henry National Historic Site in Kingston. The Bands were also fortunate to be able to play for the new British High Commissioner to Canada at an official function in Ottawa and to join the Governor General's Ceremonial Band outside the Canadian Parliament buildings in Ottawa. In support of the Governor General's Foot Guards and Grenadier Guards' Changing of the Guard Ceremony, the Royal Corps of Signals Band, the Royal Corps of Signals Pipes and Drums and the Governor General's Ceremonial Band were able to put on an excellent display in Canada's capital city.

The Royal Corps of Signals in Canada – Past and Present. Rear Rank: WO2 Elder (Pipes & Drums), Maj (Retd) John Burnage (EO Aug 88 – Feb 91), LtCol (Retd) Tez Fish (EO Feb 91 – Oct 92), Col (Retd) Tom Moncur (Pipes & Drums), Brig (Retd) Tim Hackworth (EO 1968 – 1970), Cpl Broadbent (71(Y) Sig Regt), Lt Fraser Keith (2 Sig Regt). Middle Rank: WO2 Williams (BSM), Lt Col Richard Lapslie (EO Aug 99 – Aug 01), Maj Paul Murrell (DOM), Maj Clive Cox (Served with Royal Signals 1973 – 1991), Lt Col Paul Kelly (SHAPE), WO1 Wilman (BM). Front Rank: Maj Jonathan Turner (Incoming EO), SOinC(A), Mrs Sprackling, Master of Signals, Maj Jon Watt (Outgoing EO).

A number of past and present members of the Corps attended the celebration weekend. Many were previous Exchange Officers (EO), the oldest being **Brig (Retd) Tim Hackworth**, who served as the Royal Signals Exchange Officer during the period 1968 – 1970 and was at that time the sixteenth EO to have assumed the post. Others attended had either been born and raised in Canada and then transferred to the Royal Corps of Signals or had served in the Corps then moved to Canada. With the Master of Signals and SOinC(A) present and with the senior members of both Bands, this was a photo opportunity that could not be missed.

THE wire

December 2003

The Royal Corps of Signals

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER OF SIGNALS, GENERAL SIR SAM COWAN KCB CBE

I am delighted and very proud to be Master of Signals. I follow a distinguished line and I must pay tribute to my immediate predecessor, **Maj Gen Ian Sprackling OBE**, for his outstanding work. He is a hard act to follow but I can assure you of my best endeavours.

In my last few years of service, it was a great pleasure to hear so many senior officers commenting so favourably on the excellent work being done by the Corps. Clearly our stock is high, and this reflects great credit on you all, not least on the leadership being given at every level. Well done! As ever, there can be no resting on laurels. Challenges abound but I have great confidence in your ability to deliver, and I look forward to helping in every way I can.

A very Happy Christmas and a successful 2004 to you all!

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY) BRIGADIER DAVID McDOWELL MBE ADC

2003 has been another busy year for the Corps. Once again, the Regular and Territorial Army elements of the Corps have contributed greatly to operational commitments worldwide. We can all be very proud indeed of the professionalism, dedication and determination of our officers and soldiers, in meeting the demands that have been placed on them during operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, and Northern Ireland. Concurrently, we have maintained our commitments in the Falkland Islands, and individual reinforcements to operations in Sierra Leone, and the Congo.

Everywhere I have visited, I have found highly-motivated, high-quality individuals who are delivering solutions to the demands we face on a day-to-day basis, in barracks, on training and on operations. I remain extremely proud of the manner in which our commanders and soldiers are responding to these challenges.

My message Is simple - well done, and keep up the good work. **Valerie** and I would like to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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The Wire

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FRONT COVER

Taking the plunge on the high wire. After an eventful 2 years with 742 Tp, 34 (N) Sig Regt (V), Lt Jo Barr has taken the plunge to join the Regular Army. A very popular young subaltern, she is seen here typically enjoying the action at 90 Sig Sqn's confidence course activity.

BACK COVER

Six men in a boat. During a cold, windy long weekend in October, The White Helmets had a role change and took to the water. Participating in a fund-raising event for Cancer and Leukaemia in Children (CLIC), they rowed a heavy 18 ft whaler from the source of the Thames to London. Here they are seen just out of Goring Lock in Oxfordshire.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE....

A TA REGIMENT EXERCISES IN A FORMER WARSAW PACT COUNTRY

71 (Y) Sig Regt has been on ex in the Czech Republic, the first time a complete TA regt has trained in a former Warsaw Pact country. This involved a complete pre-deployment period of trg, innoculations and paperwork, before deploying to the south of the Czech Republic for an intensive field ex. As a finale (and much to the amazement of the locals), the offrs and NCOs turned out in full mess kit to dine out their retiring CO, **LtCol Simon Malik TD**.

Read more in 71 (Y) Sig Regt's report on page 563.

EXPLODING FEET

The *Dodentocht* or Death March is an annual event held in Bornem, Belgium, where the challenge is to march 100 km in 24 hours. Up to 10,000 people of all nationalities take part, and only about one third finish. JSSU (Digby) entered a team of six, of whom four finished within the time limit. 'I was presented with flowers, a pineapple, a certificate with my checkpoint times on, and, most importantly of all, a medal!' said one of them.

Read about this gruelling event in JSSU(D)'s report on page 583.

TWO VIEWS OF EXERCISE LONG LOOK

Lt Jules Tydeman, of 30 Sig Regt, has just returned from Australia after spending four months with 103 Sig Sqn RASigs in Townsville. He didn't manage to 'go bush' with the unit, but he did partake in arduous visits to Canberra, Sydney, Wagga Wagga and Melbourne, and diving on the Great Barrier Reef.

Lt Kate Benjamin RNZSigs returns to the colonies, after her four-month stint with 7 Sig Regt with a favourable report on her Pommie hosts. 'Much better than spending the southern winter in the arctic climes of Waiourou,' she thought, as she left Linton Camp to fly out to Germany. And so it was, with CIV POP trg in UK, DEPLOYEX 200 in Italy, a tussle with Ptarmigan (which, like the kiwi, is also flightless) and a trip to Bosnia, she managed to while away her time with us.

Read about both views in 30 Sig Regt's report on page 553 and 7 Sig Regt's on page 537.

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Corps of Signals or the Ministry of Defence.

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EDITORIAL

Much has happened on the Corps' operational front this year. In addition to on-going commitments in Northern Ireland, Afghanistan, The Balkans and elsewhere in the world, our people have been heavily engaged in a second Gulf War, whilst having to commit valuable resources to the threatened Firemen's strike in UK. This has meant a lot of hard work and not a little hardship for those involved. Everyone has been fully stretched. TA and Reservists have been mobilised and the families of all Corps members deployed have had to wait anxiously, patiently keeping the home-fires burning. For most soldiers involved, many days of well-earned leave have had to be postponed or, in some cases, left untaken. Yet, they have performed – and performed brilliantly. Despite shortages of time, people and equipment, despite many last-minute changes of plan and despite frequently atrocious working conditions, they have all used initiative, found solutions and done the business. They have lived up to the true traditions of the Corps and have much to be proud of, as the recent list of Awards shows. My congratulations to you all, and to your families, who have given you such support.

We have also said goodbye to a memorable Master of Signals. During his six years' tenure, **Maj Gen Ian Sprackling OBE** has had a major impact on the Corps. As reported on the centre spread of this issue, we dined him out with due ceremony on 9 October. The accolades given that night to him and his wife, **Annie**, were many. I personally owe him much for the support he has given me for *The WIRE*. I thank them both and wish them well for the future.

On the following day, 10 October, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** took up the reins as our new Master of Signals. The first four-star the Corps had as Master, **Gen Sir Sam** has already visited this office to express his support for *The WIRE*. I look forward to continued contact with him.

Things have also been happening in the Retired Corps during the year. **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** has been quietly working away with a dedicated group, taking a fresh look at the RSA, looking at ways to build on what we have and to increase the membership. We shall be hearing more from them in 2004.

And a lot has happened to *The WIRE* during the year. We have introduced more colour, moved the balance of writing towards a wider readership appeal, upgraded the layout and appearance, and generally improved the way we communicate with you, our readers and writers. To facilitate this, I have been able to get out to visit a large number Units and RSA Branches, and I have been delighted not only with the reception I have received, but also with the results, in the form of more focussed writing and photos, that have followed. I have also received a lot of positive feedback, so I know that we are on the right track. But there is still a lot more to do, so you will see even more changes during 2004.

As mentioned in the August issue, my Deputy Editor, **Maria Field** moved to Cambridgeshire in July. Pending the arrival of a replacement, **Maria** has continued working on-line from home. Despite being plagued by a run of very difficult computer viruses, she has worked hard to put together the October and December issues. She has even laid down the foundations for the February 2004 issue to make it easier for her replacement to take up the reins. I thank **Maria** for her sterling efforts and dedication, and wish her all the best for her new job at RAF Wyton.

My new Deputy Editor, **Dawn Haselden**, will be arriving just as this issue goes out. After an intensive round of training for her in our desktop publishing software, we shall shortly both be fully immersed in the February issue, in which you will see a few more changes.

So as the Festive Season draws near, my thoughts are with you all, the retired Corps, the Serving Corps, in UK and abroad. I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and all that's best for 2004.

CORPS CAROL SERVICE 2003

The Corps Carol Service
will be held at
18.00hrs on
Monday 15 December 03 at the
Church of St Stephen with St John,
Rochester Row,
Westminster, SW1.

Mince pies and sherry
will be served afterwards at nearby
Napier Hall, Hide Place, SW1

THE WIRE - FREE ISSUES FOR JUNIOR RANKS

In order to give junior ranks a greater opportunity to read *The WIRE*, the Corps Committee has approved funding for free copies to all units up to a scale of 50 for regts, 20 for independent sqns and 5 for smaller independent units.

These free issues will commence from February 2004.

In response to a letter sent out earlier this year, most units have advised their requirements. Any unit that hasn't yet advised their requirements should advise *The WIRE* Office without delay.

SERVE TO LEAD - HIGH QUALITY NCOs REQUIRED

The Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst is probably the only major military academy to utilise the experience and knowledge of NCOs to the extent that it does in the training of future military leaders. In so doing, it draws SNCOs of the very highest calibre from across the British Army to fill the role of RMAS Assistant Instructors.

The professional competence, knowledge, understanding and leadership skills of our young officers are forged during their eleven months at Sandhurst in a process that's reflected in the Academy motto 'Serve to Lead.' The role of Assistant Instructors in influencing and guiding these young men and women during the formative experience of the Commissioning Course is vital, and it's often said that this influence has a life-long effect upon the Officer Cadets.

Academy on parade! Sandhurst as the world knows it

The Commissioning Course consists of three 14-week terms, interspersed with periods of adventure training and leave. There are three intakes of approximately 270 Officer Cadets per year. These intakes are split into three companies, each of three platoons, averaging 30 Officer Cadets. Each platoon is commanded by a senior Captain and supported by an Assistant Instructor, who is normally a newly promoted Staff/Colour Sergeant. The Academy is unique in the degree to which these SNCOs contribute directly to training, and therefore, it selects them with great care from the best the Army has to offer.

The path to becoming an Assistant Instructor (AI) at RMA is a difficult one. For most, the journey starts in the rank of Corporal with a visit to the Pre-AI Cadre Course, held annually in January. The short 5-day course is more of a visit than an assessment; its aim being to let potential AIs know what's required of them, to experience the 'Sounds of Sandhurst' and to provide a 'light at the end of the tunnel'. After that, it's time to get on with life in regimental duty, gather the necessary experience and reports and complete a variety of advanced courses covering topics, such as map-reading, drill, first aid, NBC and range management. Those aspiring to become AIs also have the opportunity to hone their physical fitness and robust-ness by attending the Platoon Sergeant's Battle Course at Brecon.

Fieldcraft and low-level tactics are an essential element of the Sandhurst syllabus

The final stage of the selection process involves the successful completion of the 4-week AI Cadre held annually at Sandhurst, with only those placed high enough in the order of merit securing a posting to the Academy. The AI Cadre is both mentally and physically demanding, requiring the highest standards of instructional techniques, robustness, character, fitness and common-sense. Normally attended by senior Sergeants, success leads to the granting of the acting rank Staff Sergeant almost immediately. From there, you join the Academy Staff, board the train, and hang on for dear life!

Cadets in the front line - training is made as realistic as possible

Completing a two-year posting as an Assistant Instructor at RMAS is undoubtedly a huge challenge, but the reward of helping to create future commanders and the satisfaction of transforming civilians into professional officers is incomparable. High quality male and female NCOs who are interested in taking up the challenge, should discuss the matter with their local RCMO before submitting applications through their chain of command, and should then arrange to attend a Pre-AI course at the earliest opportunity. SOinC(A) places a high priority on filling this important role with the very best SNCOs that the Corps has to offer. If you're ambitious, and think that you may have what's required – don't hesitate.

OPERATIONAL AWARDS FOR OPERATION TELIC

We congratulate the following Corps personnel whose Operational Awards for OP TELIC were announced on 31 October 03.

FOR SERVICES WHILST DEPLOYED ON OPERATION TELIC

Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Capt Andrew Forbes, 2 Sig Regt
Sig John Rayner Bentley, 7 Sig Regt

Queens Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)

Lt Col Andrew Philip Bristow, 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Lt Col Stuart Keith Macrostie MBE, 2 Sig Regt
Capt Anthony Glen Jenkins, 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt Peter John Stoddart MBE, MOD London
Capt David Mark Stoter, 30 Sig Regt
WO2 Mark Adam Bullivant, 2(NC) Sig Bde
WO2 Carl Jason Heath, 30 Sig Regt
WO 2 Brett Palmer, 31 (City of London) Signal Regt (V)
Cpl Iain James Lawson, MOD London

FOR SERVICES IN UK CONNECTED WITH OPERATION TELIC

Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE)
WO2 Ian John Walling, 600 Sig Tp

SIGNALLER JOHN RAYNOR BENTLEY MBE

At 22 yrs of age, **Sig John Bentley** of 7 Sig Regt must be one of the most junior members of the Corps (both in rank and age) to be awarded the MBE.

On OP TELIC **Sig Bentley** was attached to 2 Sig Regt. Quoting from his citation, 'He deployed as the junior rank, with a team of four, with a Light Weight Reconnaissance Node (LWRN) comms equipt. This hugely demanding task provided secure voice and data facility to the ever-increasing UK Joint Forces Logistic Component Staff. Rapidly learning the tech requirements and mechanics of working this equipt, **Sig Bentley** soon made himself the expert, and indeed invaluable to the UK preparation for force deployment.

'With over sixty staff officers and only one means of data or voice comms, his drive and determination to ensure the equipt was serviceable showed a dedicated attitude far beyond his rank and experience.

'Thriving on the responsibility and stress levels associated with the early deployment of such a sizeable force, **Sig Bentley** shone above all others at this stage. His personal admin was first class, enabling him to advise and assist many others of higher rank and experience. Never losing his keen sense of humour, he has been a shining example to others throughout this tour.

'Without the dedicated and professional attitude of **Sig Bentley**, far beyond his rank and years, the initial deployment of the Joint Forces Logistic Component and their ability to function from the Tac HQ would have been adversely affected.'

Sig Bentley MBE

JOIN THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION ON OR BEFORE LEAVING SERVICE

APC Glasgow no longer informs the RSA when soldiers leave the Corps. This means that we are unable to make contact as before to inform you about the Association and to invite you to become Life Members.

Anyone who contributes to Corps Funds through the Day's Pay Scheme (DPS) is entitled to become a Life Member, either before or after leaving service, and we at the RSA wish to encourage you to do so. So, if you are coming to the end of your service in the Corps, don't wait. Join us now!

To find out the benefits of membership and how to join the RSA, call the Membership Secretary on Blandford Mil 2090, Civ 01258 482 090, by email to rsa@rsignals.net or get the application form from our website, www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals

THE QUEEN'S CORONATION PARADE FROM A SPECTATOR'S VIEW

– by Ron Larby

My story really starts on 6 February 1952, the day **King George VI** died. I had just started patrol guard at 28 Bde HQ, just north of the Imjin River, so I would say it was about 20.30 hrs local time when I was called back to the guard bunker by the guard comd, **Cpl Taffy Williams**, where we were told of the King's death. We presented arms as the Bde flag was lowered to half-mast.

The next day, a solitary gun boomed out at a regular interval - 57 times, one for every year of the King's life. Then at sundown, the whole of 1 COMWEL Div's artillery fired a salvo in honour of the new Queen.

By 2 June 1953, I was home, my two years over. Initially, I wasn't that much interested in the Coronation. However, some of the girls in my road wanted to go to see it, but their fathers wouldn't let them unless local lads of impeccable character escorted them. Somehow I was thought to fit the bill, and so I was persuaded to join the party.

We went up to London the night before, and whilst walking through Green Park to the Mall, where you could see the processions both to and from Westminster Abbey, we passed the tented camp of the troops taking part in the parade.

To my surprise my name was called, and there behind the wire was the now **Sgt Taffy Williams**, resplendent in blue patrols. It was, of course, the RSigs area, and **Taffy** called over some other ex-28 Bde Tp members for a handshake and natter, they now being with 3 Div Sig Regt at Colchester.

It poured down for the Coronation Parade, but our party had a good view from a slight elevation made to accommodate temporary stands. We were immediately in front of one containing, I would think, South American military attachés in comic opera style uniforms, awash with decorations. And despite being informed not to stand up for the Standards, there being so many, they bobbed up and down all the time as the Parade went by.

Other memories of the parade? **Queen Salote**, of course; the Guards Band in the Mall who, off the cuff, played popular tunes to entertain the rain soaked crowds; the council lorries carrying workers who had to clear up the horse droppings. Getting loud cheers from the spectators, they replied with bows and regal waves of the hand as they drove off.

The Queen looked absolutely radiant returning in her well lit up coach to the Palace after her crowning. A few years later I worked in the electrical lab of CAV Acton, who were responsible for the lighting in the Royal coaches. Periodically an engineer would go to the Royal Mews to check the circuits. I have no idea who does this job now.

But back to the parade. After it was over, we started to make our way home and called into a pub for a warming drink. By then, either by accident or design, the other blokes in the party had got separated from the girls and myself. So I had the job of escorting back to their anxious parents, a number of soaking wet girls, giggly with rum and pep – with theirs and my reputations intact!

So, in the end, I was glad I did go. A truly memorable day, still crystal clear in my memory, even after fifty years.

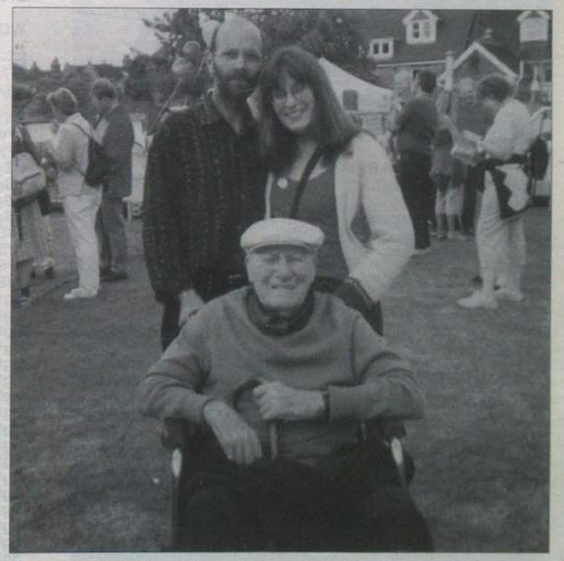
I wonder what the next Coronation will be like? I hate to think!

CHARLIE HART CELEBRATES HIS OWN CENTENARY

Whilst Canadian Signals were marking their centenary in Canada, here in UK, former Brit signaller, **Rossen Charles Hart (Charlie)** celebrated his own 100th birthday on 10 July 2003. The occasion was marked by a party in Hassocks, West Sussex with his friends and three daughters, **Brenda**, **Adrienne** and **Chrissie**. In addition to his message from the Queen, **Charlie** received a specially produced birthday card from HQ Royal Signals. **Chrissie** says, 'When I went to see Dad on his birthday, the first thing he said was 'Come and look at this.' and he showed me the card from Royal Signals. Thank you for that. It even took priority over his card from the Queen. He had an absolutely wonderful day, and had a big grin on his face from start to finish.'

Charlie joined the Army in 1921 and his first posting was to a mounted unit in Maresfield and Crowborough. He then served in Egypt from 1923 to 1933 and then on the North West Frontier, Palestine and Iraq between 1933 and 1939. Between 1940 and 1943 **Charlie** was posted to various units in India. He sailed to Celle, Germany in 1943 to join 11 Air Formation Sig Regt, but was torpedoed en route. Despite being in the water for some time and losing some of his mates, he survived (one of his nicknames was 'Tiger'). **Charlie** remained in Germany until 1947. His wife, **Ethel** and daughter, **Brenda** was one of the first families to move to Germany.

At some time in his service career, **Charlie** was stationed in Jerusalem, and he often tells of sleeping on a hill overlooking the site of the tomb where **Jesus** was said to have been buried. He was Mentioned in Despatches and received a personal communication from **Gen Montgomery**. At around this time, he was teaching new recruits literacy and maths. During his time with the Corps, **Charlie** boxed, played water polo and hockey for the Army. Following his demob in 1947, he worked for the Post Office and then the Co-op until his retirement.


Charlie with youngest daughter Chrissie and partner Philip

Charlie now enjoys life at Villa Adastra, a Salvation Army Home in West Sussex, where he has been for just over three years. He is one of three centenarians there, and is much loved by staff and other residents, who call him 'Cheeky Charlie'. He requires no medication apart from a little warfarin. 'Not bad, eh?' says **Chrissie**.

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM SOE PROJECT

In the interests of preserving the fullest possible record of the history of the Special Operations Executive (SOE), the Imperial War Museum (IWM) has embarked on a major project to add significantly to its SOE collections. The surviving official records of SOE have now been released to The National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office) at Kew. The IWM has built up impressive collections of non-official SOE memorabilia, including oral history recordings, personal documents, memoirs, photographs and some artefacts, medals and weapons. The Museum's public galleries include the striking 'Secret War' exhibition, which showcases these collections, while the archival records of SOE's activities are readily accessible to serious researchers along with other records of the two world wars.

SOE veterans who may be willing and able to offer more material, by way of interview or memorabilia, are asked to contact **Roderick Bailey** at the IWM by telephone or other means. The Museum is not merely looking for contributions from agents who were in the front line or staff who held senior positions in HQ. Memories of day-to-day life in HQ, at training schools in the United Kingdom or of support staff in overseas missions – especially in the Middle and Far East – are very much needed. The Museum is also keen to hear from descendants of SOE veterans who may be prepared to provide related material.

Roderick Bailey can be contacted by telephone on 0207 416 5222, by email at rbailey@iwm.org.uk or by letter at the following address:

SOE Project Researcher
Department of Documents
Imperial War Museum
Lambeth Road
London SE1 6HZ.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS

OCTOBER 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
LtCol TW Canham	SO1 Training, COS, HQ SOinC(A)
LtCol RON Evans	DCSA Eng Services /InfoSec1
LtCol AG Hill	OCE HQ Land
LtCol SD Hodges	40 Sig Regt (V)
LtCol SJ Turnbull	Royal School of Signals
LtCol RP Wilson	Y List MCM Div
Maj GR Burrows QGM BEM	JSSU Digby
Maj MJ Campbell	Bristol University OTC
Maj S A Donovan	RMCS Courses DA
Maj MJ Duggan	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Maj RP Grist	AD NBC
Maj RM Jones	Y List MCM Div
Maj AG Lucas	RMCS Courses DA
Maj GJH Maloney	Y List MCM Div
Maj K A Owen	RMCS Courses DA
Maj R Patrickson	30 Sig Regt
Maj MR Purves	2 Sig Regt
Maj R D W Rumsey	RMCS Courses DA
Maj CI Russell	Concepts HQ SOinC(A)
Maj BJ Spiers	7 Sig Regt
Maj NM Stokoe	RMCS Courses DA
Capt KE Eggett	37 Sig Regt
Capt JC Fraser	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt JS Jones	HQ ARRC
Capt JD Noble	36 Sig Regt
Capt A Patterson	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Capt S Steven	HQ AirNorth
Capt J C Stewart	Royal School of Signals
Capt CJH Wootten	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Lt PA Gudonis	ATR Lichfield

NOVEMBER 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Capt HJ Owen	2 (NC) Sig Bde
Capt JK Stokoe	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
Capt CH Stephens	35 Sig Regt (V)
Lt OJ Ford	1(UK) Div Sig Regt
Lt RS Jacques	Army Tech & Foundation College
Lt M Jones	ATR Lichfield
Lt ZK White	228 Sig Sqn
Lt AS Youngman	214 (Trunk) Sig Sqn, 21 Sig Regt

WOS AND SNCOS

OCTOBER 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO2 DJ Hizzett	The Royal School of Signals
A/WO2 DPHepburn	15 Sig Regt
A/WO2 DP Wilson	DEI Enterprise
SSgt DJ McCall	14 Sig Regt
SSgt CM Ogg	16 Sig Regt
SSgt NJ Oldcroft	Trials HQ SOinC(A)
SSgt MD Scanlon	243 Sig Sqn
A/SSgt K Castledine	15 Sig Regt
A/SSgt NA Coombs	2 Sig Regt
A/SSgt MJ Fairclough	63 Sig Sqn
A/SSgt RD Heynes	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
Sgt NDW Brewin	215 Sig Sqn
Sgt SW Burman	225 Sig Sqn
Sgt IR Chappell	The Royal School of Signals
Sgt MD Clayton-Batty	600 Sig Tp
Sgt I Devonport	203 Sig Sqn
Sgt VC Key	2 Sig Regt
Sgt MD Laidlaw	280 (Uk) Sig Sqn
Sgt MA Makin	7 Sig Regt
Sgt SA Marriott	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt DT Mawson	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt RO O'Neill	15 Sig Regt
Sgt CM Ramsden	AFCO Hull
Sgt DG Rawlings	26 Regt RA
Sgt MJ Smith	The Royal School of Signals
Sgt MJ Spittles	NATO Set F17 Balado Bridge
Sgt S Thomas	7 Sig Regt
Sgt DS Thorpe	14 Sig Regt
Sgt A Tye	14 Sig Regt
Sgt AJ Watson	14 Sig Regt
Sgt KJ Welch	21 Sig Regt
Sgt DJ Wilkinson	7 Sig Regt
A/Sgt JH Gray	39 Sig Regt (V)
A/Sgt RJ Hay	PJHQ (UK)
A/Sgt MD Hazard	21 Sig Regt
A/Sgt KM Kiff	HQ DCSA
A/Sgt JA Lang	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt S Paterson	RMCS
A/Sgt R Wilson	The Royal School of Signals

NOVEMBER 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO2 CR Hawkins	21 Sig Regt
WO2 RF Lawrence	The Royal School of Signals
A/WO2 MM Evans	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO2 I Stallard	21 Sig Regt
A/WO2 DR Taylor	21 Sig Regt
SSgt F McGuinness	30 Sig Regt
SSgt DR Taylor	21 Sig Regt
SSgt AC Wringe	31 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt PA Jenkinson	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/SSgt PS Kinsey	7 Sig Regt
Sgt NW Bremner	206 Sig Sqn
Sgt AP Duplock	206 Sig Sqn
Sgt D Lythe	2 Sig Regt
Sgt RJ O'Connor	The Royal School of Signals
Sgt DR Rimmer	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt NJ Snape	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn

RETIREMENTS

OCTOBER

LtCol DF Palmer	11 Oct 03
Capt SJ Harrild	31 Oct 03

NOVEMBER

A/Maj P Wilson BEM	01 Nov 03
Capt W Simpson	29 Nov 03
Capt DA Cooper	30 Nov 03

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt **Capt J Malcolm**
SNCO **SSgt P Boughey**

At last, we reach the end of another successful Season promoting the Corps image and enhancing the Corps' recruiting effort. We have visited every corner of the country and performed in front of over a million spectators (not including TV coverage or being read about in the press!) The last main event of the year was our 'Home Game,' the South West Motorcycle Expo (more on that later). We have one more display remaining, an event for potential show organisers, and then after our Induction Course, we go into deep maintenance in prep for Christmas Leave, and then on to the start of trg for our return in the New Year.

At the time of going to press, we are currently building up to and recruiting for this year's induction course. As usual, this will be run over the first two weeks in November. Our small recruiting team has been busy travelling around visiting units, polling for volunteers. We are very grateful to all those units for their assistance. If you are interested in attending this year's course, you are too late! But the course will be running at the same time in 2004. See the end of this article for application details.

SOUTH WEST MOTORCYCLE EXPO

The annual South West Motorcycle Expo hit Blandford Camp on Sunday, 14 September. This year's event was a chance for motorcycle enthusiasts from across the region and beyond to meet up and show off. It began with the Team promoting the Expo at the Dream Machines evening at Poole Quay the week before the event. Sixteen Triumphs with team members in full blues certainly stood out from the Quay's usual visitors.

On the day, it was a busy event, with invitations extended to the Honda Imps display team, World Stunt Champion, **Kevin Carmichael** and our 'friendly' competitors, The RA's The Flying Gunners. **Billy Baxter**, World Record Holder for the fastest blind man on a motorcycle was guest of honour.

The programme began with a demonstration of utter lunacy on two wheels by the Super Moto Team. Combining high speed with outrageous riding, the riders opened the day with style. The mini White Helmets, otherwise known as the Honda Imps, followed

White Helmets get younger every day

The World Champion Blind Biker, Billy Baxter is guided around the arena

them in to the arena. With an age range of six to sixteen years old, the Imps certainly showed our Team members a thing or two, proving you can still teach an old dog (**SSgt Paul Boughey**) new tricks.

Talking about new tricks, **Kevin Carmichael** even impressed the Team wheelie experts with his array of stunts. In gentlemanly fashion, The Flying Gunners were allowed to take to the stage immediately prior to our display. With an exhibition that included 'wild gorillas' (?!?!?) and a wide variety of jumps, the Gunners provided a good warm up for the main event.

Having watched everything in the arena so far, being on home ground and being aware that many of the Team were performing for the last time, we had all the incentive needed to stage the Display of the Season. And what a display it turned out to be! Every rider brought together all the skill and professionalism gained over the season to create an excellent performance, which was enormously enjoyed by one of the most critical crowds of the year. *I agree. It was the best performance I have ever seen them do – Bernard Redshaw, Editor.*

To top the day off, **Adam Forty**, Business Manager of the Royal Signals Museum, organised a World Record attempt. Joining the combined display teams for their closing salute was every other motorcycle on the airfield. As **Billy Baxter** stepped forward to take the salute, every biker revved their engines. A salute that was supposed to last two or three seconds turned in to over a minute of solid noise. It was an emotional moment for all involved, not least **Billy** himself, as the final count exceeded 750 motorcycles.

The day turned out to be one of the highlights of the year and the perfect note on which to end the season. If you are interested in a tour with the White Helmets from the end of 2004, then seek out SOinC(A) Policy Directive 204 from your admin office, or call **Mary** on 94371 2365 (01258 482365).

The crew, finally arrived in London and now smiling again

CLIC 150 CHALLENGE - *by Capt Jon Malcolm*

I'm not quite sure how we always get persuaded into these kinds of things, but once again we found ourselves coerced into another 'Really Good Idea' for charity. This time it was the brainchild of **Denise Banfill** and **Dave Ward** of Event Essentials, one of our sponsors. The idea was to row 150 miles of the Thames, from Lechlade to West India Quay in London, in an 18ft whaler (picture the *Titanic* lifeboats) in three days - all in aid of Cancer and Leukaemia in Children (CLIC). After a couple of days practice, the crew motored to Lechlade bright and early on the morning of Friday 17 October. If only we knew what was in store. Our intrepid crew consisted of myself, **Cpls Mal Cooper**, **Duncan Marsh**, **Jim Brown**, **LCpls Bowes**, **Ian Allan**, **Dave Kruczek**, **Sigs Jonno Johnston**, **Sam Bowles**, **Dave Cumberland**, **Fitzy Fitzgerald** and **Daz Fothergill**. We were ably supported by **Cpl Girling** and **LCpl Nick Pallis**. **Cpl Ian Dickinson** only just deserves a mention for driving the coach.

The event itself proved to be one of the hardest things any of us had ever attempted. We started in good spirits and ended in extremely tired good spirits. It was a phenomenally difficult challenge and the whole crew, rowers and admin support gave their all. Rowing under **David Blaine** at Tower Bridge proved to be a bit of a highlight - at least we had only been going for three days! At time of going to press we have raised over £3,500 for CLIC and now we all get an uncomfortable feeling watching *Titanic*.

NEWS OF TRAINING

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **LtCol AP Hudson MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) DM Forrester**

BLANDFORD SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj John MacKay**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Gaz Davies**

We say goodbye to **Maj Ray Patrickson**, who is off to 30 Sig Regt as 2IC, and wish him and **Connie** all the very best and good luck. Taking over is **Maj John MacKay**, from 39 Sig Regt (V). We know that you will enjoy your time in Blandford.

QM DEPARTMENT

QM **LtCol Bob O'Hara**
QM (Tech) **Capt Angie Hilborn**

We welcome **Capt Angie Hilborn**, who fills the re-established post of QM(Tech), **WO2 (RQMS) Paul McGarry** from the MT and **Sgt Dave Fitton**, from 7 Armd Bde and Sig Sqn. Congratulations to **WO2 Gaz Cole**, on his promotion to WO1 and move to 3 Sqn, to **Sgt Si Booth**, on his promotion to SSgt and to **WO1(GCWO) Kev Thorne**, on his selection for commission.

Recently 5 members of QM Dept, **WO2(RQMS) BJ Forbes-Wilson**, **SSgt Mark Chivers**, **CSgt Mike Vincent**, **SSgt Si Booth** and **Mr Gerry Paul** ventured down to Tarrant Monkton, just outside Blandford, to attempt The Tarrant 10, a 10-mile multi-terrain race. Having done little or no distance trg prior to the event, some were to find it difficult, so they split into two groups, with **SSgt Chivers**, **SSgt Booth** and **Gerry Paul** forging ahead, and **WO2(RQMS) Forbes-Wilson** and **CSgt Vincent**, clearing the route behind. After 1hr 30mins, the leading 3 crossed the line, with the remainder some 15 mins later. Our new arrival, **Sgt Dave Fitton**, was heard to say, 'That sounds like fun. Next time count me in.' So the intrepid team, now plus 1, have entered The Stickler, a Dorset 3-peaks challenge (10 miles of 1:3 climbs). We wait with bated breath for next year's instalment.

MT TROOP

We say farewell to **WO2 Paul McGarry**, as he takes up the post as RQMS(Gen), to our RE (wannabe Lineman) **WO2 Tony Peach**, who is posted to Pirbright, and to **LCpl Foster**, on his posting to Civvy Street. The new faces on the block are, **WO2 Leigh Crossing**, from 16 Sig Regt (taking over as MTO), **WO2 Martin Dolan** RLC, (the new MTWO), **LCpl Buck Rodgers**, who took over from **LCpl Taff Brown**, **Sig Neil Whitenstall**, from 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and **Sig Carl Potter**, from the White Helmets. We also welcome the School's new staff-car drivers, **Cpl Chau**, **LCpl Uttan** and **LCpl Basanta**.

As well as our normal work, we have recently been preparing for inspections, including the ECI (which went very well). There are not enough hours in the day, but time has been made for a little fun. Congratulations to **LCpl Lee Cote** and **Sig Andy Nealis** for coming first and second in the MT all-comers' go-carting competition. It has been a bit hectic with people on leave and courses, but a special thanks goes to **Mr Geoff Case**, one of our civilian drivers, after driving all 3 battle buses single-handed to Marchwood Military Port in one day. And a big well done to **Sig Stu Dott** and **Mr John Greening**, whose cars were impounded on a job in London! Finally, congratulations to **Cpl Gaz Welsh** and his wife **Stacey** on the new arrival of their daughter **Paige**, and on his recent selection for promotion and posting to 14 Sig Regt.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

We farewell **Cpls Steve Kelly** and **Kate Anderson**. Our new arrival is **Rupert Evill**, the new member of civilian staff working out of the Quality Cell. We have been busy, with the ongoing second line programme and recent ECI keeping us out of trouble. The Tp has provided PA for every man and his dog, giving ex cover, and helping outside agencies in accordance with the LOA - all this achieved, as always, with the TM Tp smile.

A quick note of thanks to **Cpl Dhanraj** for running a wonderful barbecue for **Steve Kelly** and **Kate Anderson's** leaving do. Finally, congratulations to **SSgt Steve Munro** and **Denise** on the birth of their daughter.

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JC Boisvert CD** RCSigs
SSM **WO2(SSM) NJ Roberts**

We say farewell to **Maj Jeff Howes**, who has returned to Canada and to **Capt Dean Atkinson**, off to 14 Sig Regt. We welcome **Maj JC Boisvert** as our new OC and **Capt Rip Wilson**, the new Tp Comd Kohima Tp.

EXERCISE HOLTON ENDEAVOUR - *by LCpl Bailey*

This was the third year that 1 Sqn has assisted the charity trust Holton Lee, by building access paths to enable movement-impaired people to have easier access to 350 acres of natural beauty. This ex was planned and directed by **WO2(SSM) Roberts** and **SSgt Caulfield**. After an initial OC's briefing on previous work, the challenge was on to prove that combat trades could really still cut the mustard. The task to move one hundred and forty-two tonnes of earth to the paths of a local beauty spot was easily met by Rhino Tp. In particular, **Sig Crossman** brought more than a snigger to the camp by proving that wheelbarrow racing was not his forte. **LCpl Horton** and **Sig Magill** showed off their impressive driving skills. On Sunday, with all the paths completed, sport was declared following the CO's inspection of the area. A good weekend was had by all.

1 Sqn practise their road building skills on EX HOLTON ENDEAVOUR

HARROGATE CUP BASKETBALL COMPETITION

- by Sig Muggleton

One week after completing our Induction Course at 11 Sig Regt, **Sig Taff Evans** and I were given the task of selecting and training the Kohima Tp Basketball Team for the Harrogate Cup competition. After getting through the initial rounds and playing quite well, we found ourselves in the semi-final, where we had to play Iron Tp, 2 Sqn. This was one of the hardest games, and unfortunately we lost by 15 points. The team pulled together for the next day's competition and finally gained third place. The competition was an enjoyable experience, and all in all, the Kohima Tp Team did well (that is, as well as can be expected for a team who still doesn't know the rules!)

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Scott Youngson**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Eric Williams**

We've had a host of new arrivals recently and would like to welcome our new OC, **Maj Scott Youngson**, new 2IC, **Capt Liz Robson**, Tp Comd Beaufighter Tp, **WO1 Pete Curtis**, Tp Comd Iron Tp, **WO1 Chris Davies** and our most recent arrival, **Cpl Nicky Donnelly**. We say goodbye and good luck to **Maj Rob Gibson**, **Capt Sofia Hargreaves**, **WO1 Mark Giles** and a fond farewell, after 22 yrs service to **WO1 Craig Kearney**.

LAKE BALA - THE ULTIMATE SWIMMING CHALLENGE

- by Cpl Matt Lee

Recently two of the Corps' finest swimmers, **Cpl Matt Lee** and **Capt Ben Psaila** (CCU) took part in the ultimate swimming challenge at Lake Bala in North Wales. There were two events, a short course race of 1,500m and the long course race of 5km. After winning Inter Services Gold in last year's short course breaststroke, I decided to try the long course breaststroke. At 13.30hrs **Capt Ben Psaila**, who competed in the long course freestyle, and I climbed aboard the transport for the other side of the lake. The start point was about 50m out from the shore and I noticed the drop in temperature, but after 100m, I warmed up as I settled into my stroke. Half way across the lake I couldn't see anyone around me, and felt incredibly isolated. When you compete in the long course, you have a safety canoeist with you to guide you and keep an eye on you. My canoeist was **Cpl Stu Green**, and without his help and encouragement, the whole swim would have been much more difficult. As you approach the finish, your mind takes over and drives you into the end. As I climbed out of the water, my legs were like jelly and my arms felt like they were falling off.

After the swim it was prize-giving time in the bar at Bala Sailing Club. **Capt Ben Psaila** took the Army Gold in the 5km freestyle, and I took Army Gold and Inter Services Silver in the 5km breaststroke. Next year we would like to send more competitors from the Corps so we can enter the short course team competition. Anyone interested in competing, or acting as the safety canoeist's next year should contact **Cpl Matt Lee** on Blandford Mil 2659.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Miles Webb**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Tony Ward**

We welcome **Capt Ed Swift**, **Cpls Chaffer**, **Delaney**, and **Dolan**, and say goodbye to **Capt Cas Wootten**, wishing her all the best at 14 Sig Regt.

EXERCISE TOPHAM HATT - *by WO1 Frank Roberts*

In July and August this year, 3 Sqn sent two parties of 70 soldiers to continue the work carried out for over 20 years by the Corps on the Swanage Railway. During the first weekend the main task was to continue the 6-year project to maintain a passenger facility at Herston Halt. Among the helpers were **Cpls Graham Firth**, **Peter Huntsberger** and **Jim Smith**. The work went according to plan, with **Cpl Paul Floyd** and his team constructing a new path out of concrete blocks and laying cable troughing.

The second visit commenced with two teams of 30 soldiers lugging two 90-ton steam locos up and down the track in front of hundreds of grockles (tourists). The event, watched by the CO, **LtCol AP Hudson MBE** and many others, went well and raised over £2,000 for charity. Work started in earnest early the following morning and included various tasks and more tidying up at a stores area called Herston Bank. Worthy of note are **Sigs Parker** and **Pitcairn** who were unstoppable with an industrial strimmer. Luckily the sun shone, and **Cpls Jim Smith**, **Adrian Field** and **Andy Burrows** got the painters in order, whilst **Cpl Adam Dixon** dug trenches. A special mention goes to **Cpl Gavin Ruckledge**, who proved to be a bit of a wood butcher – very impressive work. Standby, for the next visit.

The 3 Sqn Team after successfully completing the Charity Train Pull

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC	**Maj Don Macaulay**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Neil Roome**

KUKRI TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt(Tfc) Taff Owens**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Foggy Dewhurst**

We farewell Tp Comd, **Capt (Tfc) Harris**, and welcome his replacement, **Capt (Tfc) Owens**, from 14 Sig Regt (EW). We also farewell **Sgt Andy Lockie**, who leaves us for Hohne on promotion. We welcome back **WO2 (FofS) Davies** and **Sgt Dave Sangster**. We congratulate **Cpl Richie Savage** on his marriage to **Katie**, and wish them all the best for the future. We also congratulate **Cpl Robinson** on passing his RSJCC and his subsequent promotion to Sgt.

EXERCISE SEA DRAGON - *by Sgt Rick Davey*

On Monday 4 August, four members of ASG set off for Gosport aboard a luxury 52-seater coach. We were about to take part in EX SEA DRAGON, spending two weeks sailing to France and back via the Channel Islands. **Sgt Dave Sangster**, **WO1 (FofS) Bert Curtin**, **Sgt Rick Davey** and **Cpl Dom Tomkow** set sail in the yacht *Callista*, enjoying a warm afternoon for the first leg. As we headed across the Channel towards Cherbourg, it wasn't long before **Bert** started to feed the fish, with **Rick** to follow. The following day, we went to Alderney - which was closed! Next day, 7 August, was widely advertised as the hottest day ever in the UK, but unfortunately for we sailors, it was a day of thick fog and no sun at all. We did however make it to Guernsey, where we spent our time watching Elvis do Karaoke.

After Guernsey we made our way to Jersey, topping up on our tans on the way. Saturday was a rest day, and on Sunday, the fog came down again, reducing us to using GPS and marker buoys to determine our route.

In St Malo we swapped crew. **Bert Curtin** left for home with **Cpls Si Harris** and **Richie Savage** arriving on the Supercat for the second week. That evening we set sail for Guernsey, then on to Weymouth. The latter leg took 17 hrs, with adverse tides slowing our progress. The next day we sailed from Weymouth to Poole - the best day of the entire ex. Good winds going the right way meant that we made good speeds with the yacht leaning over at an exciting angle.

After a good night out in Poole, we sailed on to Southampton (which took 10 hrs) and then back to Gosport. By now, **Dave** had complete faith in us, letting us sail the yacht by ourselves. Safely back in Gosport, we had our last night out before returning to Blandford and work.

SYSEX TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Mahendra Limbu**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Neil Pollit**

During the ASBR, 22-26 September, our new SI, **LtCol Matt Fensom**, came for a field visit to TNs 015 and 016. At TN 016, he was escorted by **Sgt Shackleton**, met all of the det and was given a quick run down of their role in ASBR.

We farewell **Sgt Dave Taylor**, who goes to Battleaxe Tp, **Sgt Dave Berry** and **Cpl Jamie Masters** to 3 Div Sig Regt, and **Cpl Ian Hare**, to Donnington. We welcome **Sgts Rob Parr**, **Fred Hazard**, **Cpls Barry Sherwin**, **Stuart Cragg**, **LCpls Adam Millgate**, and **Steve Leach**. We congratulate **Cpl Man** and his wife on the birth of their son, **Euan**, and **Cpls Lee Schackleton** and **Dharmaraj Rai** on their promotion to Sgt, and **LCpl Ian Pease** on his promotion to Cpl.

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

OC	**Maj Guy Benson**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Rob Melotte**

We welcome **Mr Pete Garside**, from IAG and two former members of the Corps, **Mr Gareth Ayto** and **Mr Neil Rumbold**.

Unfortunately we also bid farewell to the 2IC, **Capt Darren Cooper** on his retirement, and to **WO2(SSM) Rob Melotte**, who leaves us after 22 years in the Army. Both **WO2(YofS) Paul White** and **Sgt Sid Snape** move on with well-deserved promotion and finally, we say goodbye to **Sgt Chaz Fox** and **Cpl Carl Hewitt** after 22 years service. All those who have left were dined out in style at a function organised by **Sgt Andy Brown**.

The recent YofS Selection Board sat at Blandford and all 4 of RSG's potential Yeoman were successful. Our congratulations to **Sgts Richard Lloyd**, **Steven Gray**, **Nigel Brewin**, and **Cpl Simon Olver**. The moral of this story is if you want to get to get to the very top, you can with RSG.

The successful YofS candidates with OC RSG. L-R: Sgt Lloyd, Cpl Olver, WO2(YofS) White, Maj Benson, Sgt Gray and Sgt Brewin

GROUP GLADIATORS

Even after all the lessons, admin, leaving functions, arrival drinks, the Boss's good ideas etc, there are still those with time for sport! Two of the Gp's leading lights, **Sgts Vikki Hawtree** and **Ginty McTurk**, represented 11 Sig Regt at the Army Inter-Units Rounders championships. They were so good that both were selected for the Corps team, and promptly help beat AGC. Then, to top off the week, they both found places in the Army B Team to play the England U21 Team. Unfortunately they got thrashed, but it's the taking part that counts.

MEDAL PRESENTATION

The Gp recently celebrated two of our team receiving their LS and GC medals from the SOinC(A), **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC**, at a ceremony held in HQ WOs and Sgts Mess. **Sgt George Sutherland** was accompanied by his wife **Linda** and **Sgt Vikki Hawtree** by her partner **Paul Forster** and her father, **Mr Jim Hawtree**.

Sgt Vikki Hawtree receives her LS & GC medal from SOinC(A), Brig David McDowall MBE ADC.

TOP STUDENT

Only rarely does the Gp give a Top Student award. However, **Sig Mario Brown**, who has just completed his Phase 2 trg, was rewarded for his hard work. In essence, he attained the highest standards in all aspects of trg and was a key member of his course - a potential member of RSG if ever we saw one! **Sig Brown** leaves Blandford for the posting of his choice, 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, Aldershot.

Sig Mario Brown congratulates the OC, Maj Guy Benson on getting his picture in The Wire yet again!

OPERATION MARKET GARDEN 2003 - *by Sgt Nige Brewin*

On Friday, 19 September, **Sgt Nige Brewin** led a drop on to Ginkle Heath, the original WW2 DZ for 1 Brit Airborne Div. Having organised the whole drop in just three weeks, he felt justified in being the first man out of the door.

The aircraft used was an original WW2 DC3 Dakota, still in WW2 RAF markings. The parachutes were all standard PX1 Mk IV parachutes and PR7 reserves. 16 men jumped, all in full WW2 airborne kit, running in at 1,000 ft. Being a Friday, with many people not yet having arrived in Holland, there were only about 20 veterans and their families watching from the side of the DZ. However, one veteran, not wanting to watch from side, hid himself in some dead ground and only appeared when the parachutists were landing around him. **Sgt Brewin** was field-packing his canopy when the veteran, in blazer and maroon beret, appeared from nowhere to shake his hand. The veteran then went to the RV and thanked everyone before walking off the drop zone. The jump was watched by the Royal Netherlands Air Force, who have invited the aircraft and parachutists back to jump next year at the 60th Anniversary events in September 2004. If anyone reading this article wishes to jump from a Dakota onto Ginkle Heath next year, then they should in the first instance, contact directly **Sgt Nige Brewin** or **Cpl Mac MacDonald** at RSG, RSS.

Finally, a special thanks to **Cpl Mac MacDonald** from Radio Exercise Tp, for being the team back-up here in UK, and safely delivering the parachutes to the Dakota at Lee-on-the-Solent.

Sgt Brewin passes up his leg bag to a fellow parachutist

TROOP COMMANDERS' COURSE TC 56

TC 56 - EXERCISE SMOOTH SAILING - *by 2Lt Wartemberg*

As a reward for TC 56's Herculean achievement in gaining a Health and Safety Qualification, the course was treated to a 2-day sailing trip from Gosport to the Isle of Wight. The decision to go sailing was obviously not due to the fact that most of us had not sailed before and that the few who had, suffered from sea-sickness. Despite the general belief that Offrs, let alone those on the Tp Comds' Course, cannot navigate, everyone arrived at JSASTC in Gosport, a mere two hours behind schedule. There, the Course Offrs apportioned themselves between yachts and took the Course on a tour of the delights of Gosport and Portsmouth. In fact the delights were so alluring, that one person on the Course (to remain nameless if not blameless!) had to do the walk of shame back to the boats the following morning.

The general idea for the first day was that three yachts, *White Knight*, *Janthina* and *Guinevere*, would embark on a race to Cowes with the crew learning en route. It was a 'sink or swim' scenario and considering how close and how often my nose came to the water, I'm glad we learned quickly!

White Knight, being an RAC yacht, was skippered by **Capt Simon Doherty** (9/12 Lancers) renowned (at least among the crew) for his languid and relaxed approach to sailing. It was a relief that he was not concerned by our complete lack of nous, especially with sailing terms, because we never got around to using them.

Meanwhile for the other yachts, the wind was blowing strongly in their favour. The skipper of *Guinevere*, **Sgt Shuggie**, had been brave enough to let them take the helm and before long they were sailing like pros (no sniggering from the back row, please!) **Lt Grant** managed to get the sails under control, but only after being told that the winch actually works better when turned in the other direction! Cowes was a delightful experience, and there was mutual backslapping after the day's efforts. Eventually the day got the better of the Course, and we subsequently put in a rigorous 10 hrs of Egyptian PT to get the blood flowing.

All good things however come to an end, and so we sailed back the following day already homesick for Blandford. The crew of *Guinevere* and *Janthina* made it back in record time, but, surprisingly *White Knight* took a more languorous route back. This might have had something to do with taking a detour in a Public House for a few hours to discuss important pressing social issues. Thoroughly invigorated, we played chicken with a few petrol tankers and a lead buoy before returning to Gosport. And so ended a marvellous couple of days away from the Course. And now I'm off to join the Royal Armoured Corps!

NEWS FROM THE GULF

3 (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col D Hudson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Kelly**

OSCA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Howe**
Tp Sgts	**SSgt Paddy Bickerstaff**
	Sgt Sharp

As the season reluctantly drags itself into the autumn stage, so too does OP TELIC 2. The past month has seen most of the OSCA dets preparing to wrap things up, and transfer comms to SYNERGY. Morale is still high and the crews still find time in their day to relax and let off a little steam.

Take the unforgiving landscape of Al Nasiriyah for example. There, a crew of six, led by **SSgt Mark Carrick** and **Cpl Andy Cornfield** knuckled down to transform the ravaged wasteland into a delightful oasis, complete with aviary and pond. Proof that a little work and imagination can make the most basic of conditions comfortable.

'I said turn left, Sgt!'

The Tp was recently tasked to travel to Babylon to recover a wagon that had broken down. The drive was long, but it gave us the opportunity to see more of the country. Once again it amazes me how these people survive, and just how much we take for granted back home. Babylon itself is quite surprising. On the outside it looks just as rough and ragged as most places out here. Once inside the gates, the sight you are treated to is breathtaking. With the partially restored ruins of Babylon and the river running down the side of the Palace, in a couple of decades and with a lot of hard work and commitment, this country could easily be one of the most beautiful places in the world. In the words of **Sig Thomas**, 'It was like prying open the ugly, rough shell of an oyster and finding a pearl sitting on the pink velvet flesh.' Perhaps the sun had got to him!

TRUNK NODE 073

Tp Comd	**2Lt Marcus Speed**
Tp Sgts	**Sgt Watts**
	Sgt Mace

3(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt took over the role of the Div HQ from 1(UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt at BIA on 7 July 03, and the HQ became known as HQ MND (SE). (Multi-National Division (South East)). The advance party from 3(UK) DSR flew from RAF Brize Norton to BIA on 21 June, with the main body following on 3 July, after most of the HOTO had been completed. When we stepped

The kid on the left is 2Lt Speed

Four wise men buying gold for their wives

off the plane in the early hours of the morning, it quickly became apparent that it would be a good tour, despite a lack of acclimatisation trg. The first night was spent drinking vast quantities of warm bottled water, which we would soon get used to. We being as organised and prepared as always, the HOTO ran smoothly, and we thank the guys of 1(UK) ADSR for lending us their wagons.

TN 073 finally settled in at the back of the airport, with all comms in and working. Then it was decided that we, like the HQ complex, should move to the opposite end of the airport. After a month of the TN being in theatre, we had a change of Tp Comd, with **2Lt Marcus Speed** replacing **Lt Lee Chamberlain**.

The event that all shift workers looked forward to was coming off night shift and attending the SSM's morning parade, where we picked up litter and had the never-ending task of sweeping up the sand in the airport building - which is located in the middle of the desert! TN073 had the extra privilege of opening the gate at the back of the airport, an enjoyable task, where the telephone rings every two minutes with requests for the gate to be opened!

There have been some highlights, particularly the trips down to the PX at Doha and to Kuwait City. In Kuwait city we went to the aqua park, where the infamous blue waterslide is. **Sig Jim Hoyle** managed to crack his head open on it, and spent the rest of the day with his head in a bandage. After her two cans in the bar, **LCpl Walker** managed to twist her ankle when she raced someone to the toilet, fell down a pothole, spending a week in the field hospital before being returned home. As a result, the whole HQ has been trying to follow her example as a quick escape back to UK! The CES show was also a highlight, with talented acts, including dancers, singers and comedians. Commiserations to all who went to it.

Now preparing to withdraw to UK, TN 073 is slowly bringing kit in from around MND (SE). Our return will be a welcome break after a long, hot and dusty tour, but we return with many stories and memories!

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj T Allen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) KRJ Smith**

The Sqn has been deployed in Iraq for the past 6 months and in that time has seen some personalities come and go. We welcome our new OC, **Maj Tim Allen**, his wife **Andrea** and their three children (the latter not to the desert, of course). We congratulate **LtCol Matt Fensom** on his promotion and wish him, **Tanya** and their children all the best for the future. We also welcome **Capt Sofia Hargreaves**, **WO2(FofS) Rob Campbell**, **Cpl Lafferty**, **LCpl Dicken** and **Sigs Sam Kani**, **Dale Strydom** and **Stokes**. We farewell **Capt Jamie Noble**, **WO1(FofS) S King**, **Cpl Baker** and **Sig Blower**.

RADIO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt E Pointon**
Tp SSgt **SSgt A J Doe**

PORT STARS - *by LCpl K Brown*

During the tour, the Sqn has been focused on raising money for charity, and with this in mind, **SSgts Basnett** and **Harman** came up with the idea of hosting a *Port Stars* competition. With the newly-purchased karaoke machine, the Sqn would hold a weekly competition, run along the same lines of *Pop Idol*, with contestants being voted off each week until we ended up with a winner. Those taking part were **Lt Liz Pointon**, **WO1 Kayser**, **Sgt Shaun Hunter**, **Cpl Caroline Barr**, **LCpls Bri Chambers**, **Jez Skelhorn**, **Sigs Justin Burrows**, **Claire Gordon**, and **Pte Emma Wilson**. Throughout the knockout stages, the Sqn bar was filled with capacity crowds, with all personnel strictly adhering to the two can rule. The finalists were **Lt Liz Pointon** and **Sig Justin Burrows**, and at a final showdown on a Saturday evening, the winner turned out to be Radio Tp Comd, **Lt Liz Pointon** - albeit with a controversial vote count. Congratulations to all who took part. The $2,500 raised will be used to buy equipt needed in the local Umm Qasr Hospital.

CSE SHOW - *by Lt E Pointon*

After my *Port Stars* bonanza, when the task of escorting the CSE Show entertainers and crew arose, I thought all of my Christmases had come at once. The down side to the arduous chore of hosting the 'luvvies' was that, in addition to spending six nights in a five-star hotel in Kuwait city, I was also required, whilst sunning myself at the poolside, to oil up the dancing girls to ensure they didn't get too pink. Unlucky boys!

The CSE show took place between 24-26 September at Shaiba Logistic Base and those who went to see it all said they had a great time. Well, they had a pizza and a night away from the monotony of Umm Qasr, so it can't have been that bad.

Getting to see the behind the scenes element of the show and all of the hard work that goes into organising such an event, was a real eye opener. I was just a bit upset that following my recent successes, they didn't ask me to join them. They were probably just afraid of the competition…

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt JR Keith**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M Harman**

MOBILISATION FROM TA TO REGULAR SERVICE
- by LCpl P Commerford

As a Tech Storeman for MOD in 128 Reclamation Coy, Portsmouth, I received my papers to mobilise mid April 03. I have served with the TA for the past eleven years, but this is my first op tour. So far, it is living up to all of my expectations. Although I was looking forward to deploying, I was anxious about the work I would be doing in what is still a hostile environment. My father, himself a Regular Serviceman with Port and Maritime, was full of good advice, but my mother had her concerns.

I reported to Chilwell on 01 June 03, where we were issued with our kit and went through a series of briefings. We then went to Grantham for pre-deployment trg. This involved NBC trg, weapon handling, law of armed conflict briefs, driving in theatre and first aid. There were 180 of us going through Grantham every three days and the atmosphere was full of excitement for our impending deployment.

I eventually arrived out in theatre on 01 July 03 and spent the first two weeks acclimatising to the heat of the Kuwaiti desert in temperatures often above 55?C! I originally deployed with 5 Bn REME, but after 2fi months, I deployed to LAD Sec of 261 Sig Sqn in Umm Qasr. My responsibilities include veh maint, weekly inspections and escort duties, which I particularly enjoy, as it allows me to see all of the British AOR. On arrival in Umm Qasr, I was pleasantly surprised to find a Sqn bar, but not so pleasantly surprised to find out about their early PT sessions twice weekly!

I am really enjoying my first op tour, especially the atmosphere in the Sqn. I see myself as a Regular Soldier out here in Iraq, doing my job and enjoying every minute of it. TA soldiers who haven't deployed don't know what they're missing!

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **LtCol NP Metcalfe MBE QGM**
RSM **WO1(RSM) D Mitchell**

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SJ McConnell**
SSM **WO2 Lappin**

ELEMENTARY PARAGLIDING PILOT'S COURSE
– by Cpl Patterson

On 21 July, seven members of 233 Sig Sqn took a break from work. The mission was to take part in a paragliding course; our aim to become pilots. It was a very early start, but by 05.00hrs, we were well on our way to the Bavarian Alps in southern Germany. Unfortunately, the journey took slightly longer that it should have done, because our air tickets were to Hanover Airport in northern Germany - 7 hours from our desired destination. So we collected hire cars and drove to Wertach, using the in-car satnav system. However, because it was in German, **Sgt Brett Spruce** took us on a slight detour.

Dreimuhlen Activity Centre in Wertach, an Army-run lodge, is the home of the Tri-Service Paragliding Centre. Its facilities include a wide range of paragliding equipt for people of every size, classrooms for theory lessons and, of course, a bar in which to wind down after an exhausting day's running off mountains.

Our first morning consisted mostly of briefings and the collection of our kit: a wing, a harness, a helmet, windproof gloves and a flying suit. It was then off to the trg slope to check each individual wing, making sure they were all in good working order.

The next two days were also on the trg slope, where we spent hour after hour setting the wing up correctly, securing it to the harness then running as fast as we could, in the hope the wing would rise off the floor. Mostly, we ran like maniacs for about 10 seconds with the wing crashing down on our heads, but from time to time, we did become airborne.

The good weather left us on the fourth morning, so we started on some theory lessons. Soon we were experts on the theory of flight and the different kinds of clouds in the sky. By afternoon the sky had brightened considerably, so it was off once again to the trg slope. **Alistair**, our instructor, had the bright idea of going on to the steeper slope, affectionately known as 'Cowpat Alley'. It started off well for **Sgt Mark Jones**, the first to try. He looked up, his wing was above him, and he was flying (for a couple of seconds at least). Soon the reality of his being a total beginner showed, and he crashed in a heap at the bottom of the hill, narrowly missing an electric fence. **Sgt Brett Spruce** was next to go, but taking off was not for him. He just ran all the way down the hill, dodging cowpats on the way.

It was more of the same for the next couple of days - up and down the trg slope, slowly getting better and building confidence. The weather on the sixth day was not paragliding weather, so it became a full day of theory. We were then issued our reserve parachutes ready for going up to the mountain!

It was now time for what we had all been waiting for – launching off a mountain. We had all progressed well enough to go to the top of Buching, a mountain near the town of Buching-Berg. When we saw the takeoff slope and the distance to the ground, the excitement we had experienced on the way to the top soon gave way to fear! But the fear soon dissipated and we were once again raring to go.

Cpl Carl Turner amazed everybody with his bravery when he decided to run off the mountain with a half-collapsed wing. Luckily, apart from the wing being caught in a tree, he was fully intact and carried on!

Everyone in our group managed their four required mountain launches, which they found exhilarating and breathtaking. I don't think that I am the only one in the group who can't wait to get back to Dreimuhlen Activity Centre to complete the Club Pilot's course.

TUG OF WAR AT THE BRAEMAR GAMES - *by Cpl H Lawer*

On 31 August our Regtl Tug of War team set off from Belfast to compete in the renowned Braemar Games in Scotland. Expectations were high, as we had been trg every day for the previous 4 weeks. We spent the first night at Barry Bundon with the rest of our Sqn, who were engaged in the battle camp. But we moved on the following morning to Stonehaven, where the local tug of war team had kindly allowed us to use their trg facilities.

On the Wednesday, the captain of the local tug of war team joined us. He just happened to be driving past and stopped in to see our skills. He soon had us trying different techniques and styles, some of which seemed to make a real difference to our overall pulling power. Confidence was growing by the day, as our rope strength and team skill increased with every trg session. Unfortunately, **LCpl Pete Witton** suffered an injury to his thigh, putting him out of action - that is until Saturday night! Thursday saw us training with the Stonehaven tug of war team. Although their accents required our translator, **SSgt Jim Mason**, we were soon being shown the ropes. Later, we had a few social drinks with their team - but only a few, as we were now dieting, ready for the weigh-in on Saturday 6 September. Friday consisted of a gentle run at 06.00hrs. Then it was a weigh-in at the medical centre to make sure we were not bulking too much!

On the Saturday we were up early again, heading for Braemar, about 2 hrs away. Stomachs were rumbling as we were holding back on eating until after the weigh-in, and had been since 17.00hrs the previous night! Well, some of us had been, although accusations concerning a sly burger were being thrown at **LCpl Dan Cole**! Anyway, we were pleased to see that we were bang on the 640kg weight limit.

The competition was split into two Leagues, ourselves being drawn into the second with teams from 1 (UK) ADSR and 11 Sig Regt, to name just the Signals element. League 1 went first, with 7 Sig Regt drawn against their rivals, 4 Royal Irish. Unsurprisingly, 7 Sig Regt topped that league, with 4 RI coming second. The ground by now had been turned up nicely, and it was becoming apparent that one end was more favourable than the other.

Our efforts saw us take ends from several teams and even defeat one of them! After the results were tallied up from the Leagues, we saw that we were to play 11 Sig Regt for the plate. The match itself was close-fought and had to go to a third end, which we came only inches away from winning. Gracious in defeat, we looked on the bright side, namely that evening's festivities - and the added extra of being able to eat pies again! On the whole, the competition was good learning experience for the team. Confidence is getting stronger, as is our technique and understanding of the sport. On a personal note, I can't wait to see the team again next season, even though I'll probably be at the opposite end of the rope!

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Inglis**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Hogg**

EXERCISE STRIDING FINN - *by Cpl Callaway*

EX STRIDING FINN was an AT ex, organised by **Sgt Paul Newell**, at Kendall in the Lake District. The week consisted of various outdoor pursuits, including hill walking, climbing (outdoors and indoors) and a bit of suicide mountain biking.

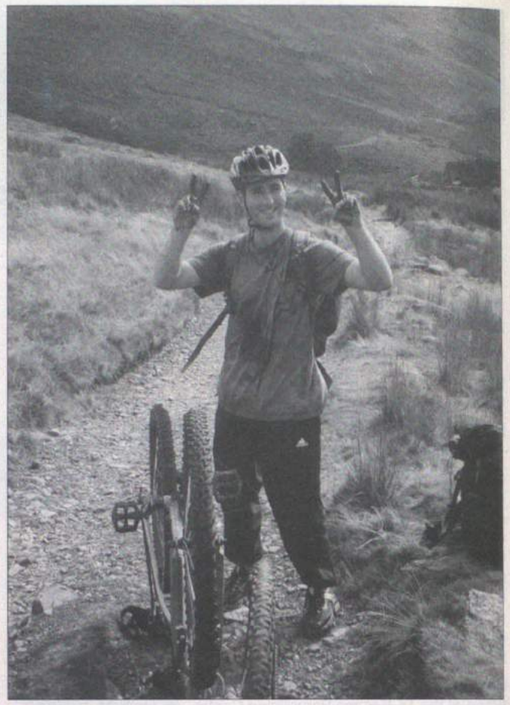
The first day was an introduction into hill walking and micro navigation under the guidance of **Capt Paul Randell**, **SSgts Steve Lord** and **Dave Wilson**. On a wet morning, with most of the walkers soaked to the skin even before getting onto the bus, it was going to be a challenge to get morale to head height, let alone to reach the peak of Blenchathra. With little chance to admire the breath-taking views, we reached the misty Peak in what must have been record time. The descent was rapid, and with the intrepid explorers stopping only for an occasional navigation check, we headed for the bus and some warm gear.

Once back in Keswick, the moist trekkers descended upon the outdoor equipt shops (of which there were plenty), all looking for Goretex spray and waterproof trousers. I must heartily thank the makers for the efficacy of these products, because it stopped raining the moment we bought them and stayed dry for the remainder of the week.

On the second day, with wet boots and the sun blazing, we set out to conquer Bow Fell and then along to Esk Pike. We made good time, and everyone enjoyed the slightly more arduous day's trekking. Even **SSgt Dave Wilson**, the most ardent anti-hill walker was smiling - occasionally. The end of the trek saw the whole group relaxing with their sore feet in the *Dungeon Ghyll* public house beer garden for a well-deserved pint and snack.

The next day saw a gentle introduction to rock climbing and rope safety. With the climbs ranging from Difficult to Very Difficult, there was plenty of scope for everyone to have a go and try something a little more testing. The day went well, with **Cpl Nathan Dorrian** getting his hands back on the rock after filming the Two Towers. **SSgts Steve Lord** and **Wilson** took the opportunity to recce another walk for the final day.

For the fourth day, the group split into three. **Sgt Stu Rowbottom** and **Cpl Phil Callaway** went climbing indoors at Kendall, **SSgts Lord** and **Wilson** took the second group trekking and **Cpls Nathan Dorrian** and **Steve Livesey** brought a new meaning to down hill mountain biking. I am sure that by the time this is printed the wounds will have healed, leaving only scars to provide excellent stories in the future. **Capt Paul Randell**, **Sgt Paul Newell**, **Sgt Chaz Caley** and **LCpl Chad Fitzgerald** went along to apologise to the locals and administer first aid where and when needed.



LCpl Fitzgerald showing that techs do sometimes get their hands dirty

Overall, it was an excellent week, with everyone enjoying a wide range of activities, some for the first time and other just refreshing old skills. The social aspect of AT, essential for team-building and sometimes overlooked, was enjoyed by everyone, giving JNCOs and SNCOs a chance to interact outside of the workplace. Everyone had a great week and would recommend Keswick as a venue for future AT.

3 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

OC **Maj TJ Carmichael**
RSM **WO1(RSM) D Buckingham**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

It has been a quiet period in SHQ, generally routine work with the odd inspection fitted in by the QM. Unlike the rest of us the OC, **Maj Tim Carmichael** has been busy with meetings followed by meetings. **WO1 (RSM) Dave Buckingham** has had on his best running shoes just to keep up.

We say a fond farewell to **SSgt Caz Thoburn**, our Regt Accountant and welcome her replacement, **SSgt Dawn Marritt**, whose sweets are always very welcome. Farewell also to **CSgt McGrath** RI, who leaves us for pastures new after 24 years valuable service. Best of luck for the future. Last but not least, welcome to **Pte Williams**, who joins us fresh from trg.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt F Loxton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt K McIntosh**

This is generally a quiet time for the Tp – the calm after the Drumcree storm, but TM Sec have been kept busy with the big projects resulting from normalisation. The last few months have also seen new faces arrive in Portadown and a few old characters depart. Welcome to **Sgt Devonport**, who managed to get to Portadown despite a cunning ploy by 39 Inf Bde to have him posted there instead! He takes over from **Sgt Setchfield**, who sadly leaves us for 21 Sig Regt. No doubt it is a relief to have left the Crypto cell behind you! Best of luck for the future. Syscon welcomes **Cpl Beerling** and **Sigs Croston** and **Gower**, who all join us fresh from OP TELIC. Believe me lads, your war stories are nothing compared with the dangerous day-to-day life of Syscon.

Joining TM are **Cpls Quinn** and **King**. Farewell to **Sgt Owen**, who is moving to 30 Sig Regt. Goodbye also to **Cpl Thompson**, who after much persuasion, was convinced to leave NI to go to Cyprus. **Sig Hawke** has also left us, but only up the road to join the Dog Handlers. Finally, we farewell **WO2 (YofS) Steve White**, who leaves for BOTAT in Bulford, and congratulate him on his well-deserved promotion. We welcome his replacement, **WO2(YofS) Jason Budding**, who will have been with us for five months by the time this is read, will be almost a quarter of the way through his tour and no doubt fully settled in!

TROOP GO-KARTING DAY – *by Sig Smart*

In the middle of August, **Sig Richie Squires** organised a Tp Go-Karting day that doubled up as a leaving event for **WO2(YofS) Steve White**. After donning coveralls and helmets, we received the civilian health and safety brief: 'Do not bump into each other; no overtaking on the inside; etc, etc,' so in true competitive squaddie fashion, everyone totally ignored it all and did anything necessary to win. Although we were all competitive, none were more so than **LCpl Peck Ridgeon** and **Sgt Mac McKenna**. The weather was excellent for the first few races, but grey clouds loomed and rain made the track slippery, leading to an interesting final. **Sig Squires** was in fine form until he took a turn to quickly and lost control, allowing his trailing competitors to overtake. Appropriately it was **WO2(YofS) Steve White** who was crowned overall champion.

MERCURY CUP MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION
– *by Cpl Jackson*

3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn March and Shoot trg started way back at the beginning of August. The selection process whittled down the team to: **Lt Fiona Loxton**, **Sgt Mac Mckenna** (Team Capt), **Cpl Bri Belshaw**, **Cpl Wacko Jackson**, **Cpl King**, **LCpl Newell**, **LCpl Robinson** and **Sig Kev Nicholson**.

The PT build-up regime, concocted by **Sgts McKenna** and **Wilson** (SI) was gruelling to say the least, lasting 6 weeks. It was conducted twice a day, and included several hill days on the Mourne Mountains. **Sgt Dave Graham** gave his expert advice in trg the team for the shooting phase. Ranges were booked for a week, during which time the team improved from poor to very good. Even **Lt Fiona Loxton** got to grips with it!

The March and Shoot comprised a 7-mile speed march and a broken down version of the fire team assessment. On the day of the competition, the team was quietly confident, having won it for the previous two years. The weapons were warmed under the supervision of **Sgt Mick Lawlor**, and the competition brief followed. After the weigh-in, (each soldier carried 28lbs and a rifle) the OC, **Maj Tim Carmichael** offered a few words of advice, and then put on a similar weight Bergen to act as team pacemaker.

We took off from the start line like jet-propelled butterflies. By the halfway point we were making good time, with the first of the beach phases behind us. The second beach phase was emotional, with our really having to dig in. Finally, we sighted the finish and all crossed it with a time of 1hr 09 mins. It was the fastest time by more than 3 mins.

The shooting phase was where we really excelled, scoring 176 hits to the next closest team's 117. All the trg had been worthwhile, and we had peaked at just the right time. Special thanks must to **Sgt Dave Graham** (Trg Sgt), whose shooting coaching and techniques were second to none.

The victorious 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn March and Shoot Team

BIG BREW DAY – *by Sig Brock*

On 25 September, Mahon Barracks did its bit for the SSAFA Big Brew fundraising day. It took place in the Hive and was organised by Hive Manager, **Mrs Annette Holden** and **Sgt Tony Cecil**, ably assisted by **Cpl King**, **LCpl Whittaker** and myself. We set up

LCpl Whittaker, Sgt Cecil and Cpl King – obviously enjoying themselves

shop in the morning with tea urns and a mountain of cakes and biscuits, kindly provided by wives and the cookhouse. Fully kitted out in tea lady aprons and hairnets, we began the charity event, as a storm of customers rolled in. At 50p for a brew and cake of your choice, we were raking it in. When the rush died down, we filled our tea trolley and unleashed ourselves on Bde HQ. We were swamped by a herd of clerks and offrs all sticking money in the pot, and in no time we were stripped of cakes and cups. In all, we had a great time and the Camp seems to have enjoyed the cakes and brews, as well as seeing us dressed as dinner ladies. In total, we raised around £120 for SSAFA - a fun day for a good cause.

SUPPORT TROOP

QM	**Maj J Williams**
RQMS(A)	**WO2 A Buckle**
RQMS(M)	**WO2 I Wylie**

The Tp enjoyed a brief respite following Drumcree, before being launched head-on into prep for the ECI. The work paid off, the inspection went well, and the QM thanks everyone involved for their efforts. We farewell **Cpl Daz Owens**, who is off to 2 Sig Regt, and wish him all the best for the future. Recently arrived from Germany are **Ptes Sutton** and **Todd**, whom we welcome to MT. We congratulate **Cpl Ginge Major** and **Zoe** on their marriage at the beginning of September. **Ginge** heard that it was a good party, but his own recollection is a little fuzzy.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC	**Maj Sophie Evans**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Downie**

We farewell **Maj DA Craft** who goes to drive a desk at MCM Div. **WO1(RSM) Marshall** retires from the Army and is sorely missed, particular when there is trg to be done. We wish them both all the best for the future. Taking over the reins of the Sqn is **Maj Sophie Evans**, fresh from Staff College after a demanding time at PJHQ. Everyone hopes she enjoys her two years in this busy Unit. We also welcome **WO1(RSM) Downie**, who joins us from Oman. We just hope he can acclimatise to the cold and wet of NI.

SUPPORT TROOP

OC	**Maj S Harvey** R Irish
WOIC	**WO2(RQMS) DM Coates**

We farewell **SSgt Gez Walker**, who is off to Civ Div after 22 years service; **SSgt Steve Lynch**, who is off to Hereford; **Cpl Al Temple**, who is off with our congratulations to Cyprus on his promotion to Sgt. We welcome **SSgt Dunlop**, who takes over as BTLO; **SSgt Donna Scaife**, who is the new ISLO and **Cpl Terry McGrouther**, who will be working as the A/BTLO.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt SR Bennett**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt PP Corcoran**

We welcome **2Lt Louise Halstead**, from Sandhurst for her pre-Blandford attachment. Everyone hopes she has an excellent time with the unit and goes away with plenty to talk about and some good memories.

OPS SECTION

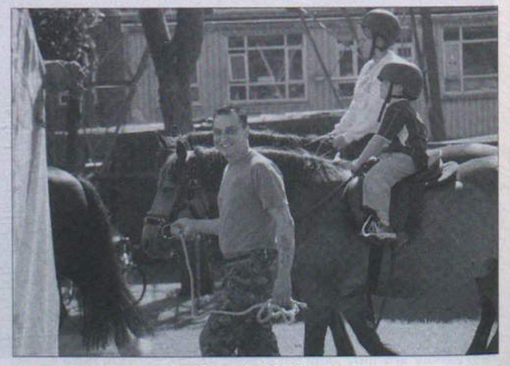
We say hello to **Sgt Ky Wilcockson** who, with wife **Debbie** and children, **Charlotte** and **Adam**, joins us from 16 Sig Regt. Also joining us are **LCpl Steve Potts** and **Sigs Terry John**, **Chris Wilson** and **Sarah McGuinness**. We farewell **Cpl Stu Welton**, who leaves us for 7 Sig Regt, and **LCpls Leon Mathieson**, **Ryan Parker** and **Liz Fox**. Congratulations to **Sig Jay Gillard** on passing his PTI course and commiserations to **Sig John Bromhead** for his valiant attempt at P Coy. Better luck next time, big lad.

TM SECTION

We farewell **Sgt Ritchie Brown**, who is off to 2 Sig Regt. We welcome **Cpls Lorraine Dorrian** and **Jezz Greenlee** from their Class One Tech courses, and congratulate them on their promotion to Sgt. Also newly arrived is **Cpl Darlington** from 1 Div Sig Regt.

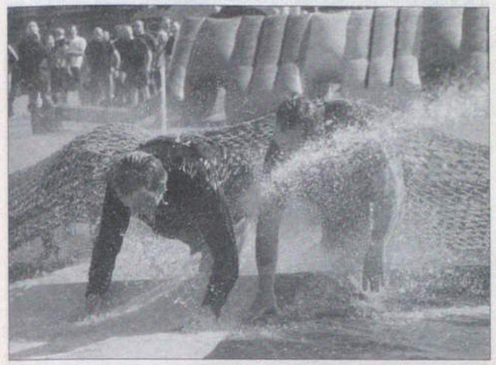
CHARITY DAY

The Sqn held its annual charity day on 6 September in what passes in NI for a pleasant sunny day - well it rained for only half an hour. The day featured such events as pony-riding with **Cpl Marlon Stroud**; a five-a-side competition for teams from throughout the Bde, ably organised by **Cpl Matt Grounds** and **Sig Jay Gillard**; climbing walls; trailer-borne ranges and paint-balling, all provided by the NI Recruiting Team.



Cpl Stroud with his pony

The barbecue skills of **Cpl Dave Healy** and **LCpl Rob Lawless** were on display and he didn't manage to poison anyone. A joint *Its-A-Knockout* competition, run by ourselves and the Police Service of Northern Ireland proved to be a great attraction with kids and adults alike, especially with the Assistant Chief Constable being soaked to the skin and caught cheating.



A very wet Its-A-Knockout competition

The day closed with an evening event featuring a comedian and a Blues Brothers tribute band. Nobody realised that the new Sqn OC, **Maj Sophie Evans**, was so good at shaking her tail feathers as she danced with the band on stage, to the great amusement of the troops. All in all, it was a good day, raising over £1,800 for the Sqn's chosen charity of Malone Road and £1,500 for NI Cancer Research.

MERCURY CUP MARCH AND SHOOT

On 15 September, a March and Shoot competition was held at Ballykinlar as part of the ongoing Mercury Cup competition held in NI. Our team consisted of **2Lt Halstead**, **Sgt Murphy**, **Cpls Chittick**, **Barnes**, **LCpls Padley**, **Williams**, **Sigs Gilliard** and **Bromhead**.

The Team put a great deal of effort into an impressive tab, completing it in 1hr 13mins. It was good to see most of the Lanyard Team participating, but it did finish off **LCpl Williams'** desire to go tabbing again, ever. Unfortunately this was followed by a poor shoot, the team having been too busy with ops to spend an entire week practising as some others had. This meant that we finished fourth out of six, but it was a fun day, the weather was pleasant and the morale high.

EXERCISE TRI-A-DAY FINN III

EX TRI-A-DAY FINN III was an AT ex based at Coleraine from 23–25 September. The first day started with **Cpl Dave Grimes** wanting us all to do a bit of surfing. So, after getting suited up in our lovely black rubber gear, and after waiting for the beautiful Irish weather to subside a little (ignoring the hail stones and gale force winds and sand storms...) we jumped straight into the balmy Irish Sea.

Lt Halstead got straight in without any problems. Not wishing to be shown up, we all dove right in too. **LCpls Dave Gummery** and **Thompson** became overly confident and nearly got dragged out to sea, while **LCpl Stevie O'Halloran** managed to stop a flying surfboard with the back of his head. **Cpl Lorraine Dorrian** was, to say the least, washed up, having had a surfing experience similar to Action Man in a washing machine! **Cpl Matt Finney** decided to pack it in after three hours, as he was spending all of his time attempting just trying to stay on his surf-board. Our next stop was to the world-famous Giant's Causeway, where **LCpl Thompson** very nearly lost his footing when a large wave crashed over him.

The final day of the ex was spent playing a round or two of golf, or for the hardcore amongst us, rock-climbing at Port Rush. Having listened to a wind-swept lesson on how to tie a figure-of-eight-knot (or how not to), we had to abseil into our climbing site. Good climbing was achieved by all, not to mention climbing with heavy daysacks - a new experience for most.

Among the golfers, with nine shots being the norm for a par three, none of us turned out to be the next Tiger Woods! Highlights of the day were **LCpl O'Halloran** managing to throw his club further than he hit the ball, and **Cpl Dorrian** embarrassing the lads with her abilities to hit the ball further than any of them.

At the end of the ex, we all sat down for a few beers and a good meal. All in all, it was a great success, giving us structured time out of the workplace to get to know each other better and to accomplish new challenges.

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC	**Maj DC Gaul**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) KJ O'Neill**

The closing down of Ebrington Bks has now moved into the final stages. The relocation of 8 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (218) buildings and associated units from Londonderry to Ballykelly has been a major undertaking for many people in the Sqn. Most notable have been the contributions made by the FofS, **WO2 Metcalfe** and **SSgt Keilty**, who have played a pivotal role in the comms fit of the new buildings, and generally driven the whole process along.

Cpl Figel organised and ran a most successful 'Leaving Ebrington Barracks' function for all personnel on camp. With the support of CSE, the sizeable crowd was entertained by an alleged professional comic and then a Blues Brothers tribute band, which proved to be very good. **Cpl Figel** videoed the whole event, and the results make very interesting viewing.

In all the Sqn is entering a very busy period, and everyone's focus is on being happily relocated at Ballykelly by the time the Christmas leave period is upon us.

EXERCISE HIGHLAND FINN - *by LCpl Ross Humble*

On Saturday 23 August, members of 218 Sig Sqn were deployed on AT to participate in EX HIGHLAND FINN in hot and sunny Carlisle. The trg package was headed up by **Cpls Mercer** and **Wilson** with **Sgt Thompson** and **Cpl Daniels** as the instructors.

On arriving in Carlisle, our first port of call was Carlisle Castle, our home for the next 7 days. A quick brief and scoff was followed by a mass surge of people hitting the showers and getting their glad rags on ready for the town.

With the ex not due to start until Monday, another chance for people to taste the delights of the local kebab houses and sample the fine Cumbrian ale presented itself. The opportunity was taken

up with gusto, and all members readied themselves for another night on the razz. On the pulling front, it was a three-horse race between **LCpls Humble** and **Bibby** and **Sig Creighton**. Unfortunately, in this case the horse bit back, and **LCpl Humble** retired hurt with flesh wound to the neck. Even with toothpaste applied to the affected area, this left him with a nice reminder to choose a less spirited ride in the future.

Monday marked the official start of the AT. We were split into two groups, one hill walking and the other mountain biking. The walking route took us along part of Hadrian's Wall. **Cpl Daniels** struck out at a reasonable pace. He was followed, mainly out of curiosity, by nine hungover squaddies.

After much moaning and **Sig Creighton** being a bit worse for wear, we finally came to the end of the route, having covered about 15 miles. Despite the almost constant complaining throughout the day about being tired and ill, a few hours rest saw the majority of the group suitably recovered and ready for another night out.

Tuesday was headed up by **Sgt Thompson**, who took the group into Scotland for a cross-country mountain bike beasting in the Mable forest. The bikes, which can only be described as decrepit at best, were death traps, and **Sgt Thompson's** 'we're not stopping until everyone's eyes are bleeding' attitude made for an enjoyable ride in the country. With time flying past, it actually seemed a shame when we finished - unless your name was **Cpl Tarry**, who did a good line in over-the-handlebars stunts.

Wednesday saw the visit of the RSM, **WO1 O'Neill**. It was a case of all hands on deck cleaning the accn, having a shave and not wearing any offensive height-related t-shirts. Rock climbing was the activity of the day. **Sig Jones** proved that you don't need to be thin to climb fast. The stout one was like a rat up a (wide) drainpipe, shimming up the wall in a few seconds. Sadly, everyone had to look and act correctly whilst socialising that evening, so most of the Cumbrian women were safe!

On Thursday morning one of the groups was up bright and early as a trip to the Teeside barrage beckoned with some kayaking and white water rafting. After getting lost on the A19 flyover, we eventually got there at 10.30hrs, chomping at the bit to get wet and cold. After meeting our instructor, who doubled up as a hairdresser, we spent the rest of the day trying to tip each other into the murky depths of a polluted river, whilst also trying to learn how to do various strokes and maneuvers.

Friday was a 09.30hrs start at the barrage to try our hand at white water rafting. Again we were taught various strokes whilst going round the course. At 12.00hrs it was time to get back in the kayaks and go through the strokes that we had learned the previous day, prior to being tested.

Pte Jay Dewar ended up learning 3-star stuff, beyond us mere mortals. **Cpl Pope** refused to perform the capsizing drills - there was no way he could risk his hair in that mucky water. He was quite happy sitting on the shore, chin in his hands, gazing fondly at his own reflection. By 16.00hrs it was time to finish, and a bedraggled bunch of exhausted wet lads made their way out of the trees and into the minibus back to Carlisle for a weekend of fun and games.

All in all, an enjoyable week was had by everyone. But as true professionals, our minds began to turn back to the Emerald Isle and our jobs back in Londonderry. I swear there were tears in some people's eyes. That's passionate dedication for you, or in **Cpl Pope's** case, itchy eyes and hair wax on his fingers.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt JD Landreth**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Love**

Comms Tp has seen the departure of **Capt Wilson** to Blandford. We wish him luck in his new post. His replacement is **2Lt Landreth** and he and **SSgt Love** are well on the way to settling themselves in. Also newly in to the Sqn are **Capt Ashton**, who replaces **Capt Southern** as 2IC and **SSgt Middlemiss**, who has filled **SSgt Watson's** shoes as site-man.

On the geek side (ISLO) of our operations here, we have lost **Sgt Hobson** and gained **Sgt Briggs**. We also welcome **Cpl Milne**, **LCpls Walker** and **Coakley**, **Sigs Pollard**, **French** and **Shields**. Departing to new units are **LCpl Bacon** and **Ptes Locking** and **Davis** (MT Dept).

QM DEPARTMENT

QM	**Capt Gordon**
RQMS	**WO2 D Inman**

A lot of manpower has been away on leave since the end of summer. Those not lucky enough to get away, have had a busy few months. During this period there have been some highs and lows with arrivals, departures and promotions,

We say goodbye to **Pte Jarvis**, who has been posted to Germany to do what he does best, dig holes. We welcome **SSgt Dave Maw** from Germany to become the second SQMS. **LCpl Paul Downs** has come from Aldergrove and **Pte Taff Hughes** and his family has also recently arrived from Germany to enjoy wet weather in Northern Ireland.

We congratulate **LCpl Stu Eason** on being selected for promotion, and **Cpl Munslow**, who has been promoted to Sgt and will soon be off to Cyprus.

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

HEADQUARTERS 2 (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

Comd	**Brig JE Thomas MBE**
COS	**Maj J Rowley**

MEDAL PRESENTATION

Padre to the HQ, **Maj Brian Millson**, recently received the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal from the Comd, **Brig John Thomas MBE**.

The Padre was a member of the Canadian Armed Forces from 1993-96, and was awarded the medal retrospectively by the Canadian Government in recognition of a tour of duty in Bosnia. Since his transfer to the British Army, **Brian** has completed two other operational tours and received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal. He has also been awarded the St Lazarus Medal in recognition of his charitable works. A successful year all round for a Padre who is known throughout the area for his big smile and warm friendship.

Padre Brian Millson receiving the Canadian Peacekeeping Medal from the Comd

HORSESHOE DINNER

This year's Horseshoe Dinner was held at Pockeridge House on Saturday, 4 October. The principle guests were TA Col Th Tps, **Col RA Hood TD ADC** and **Mr D Groves** and **Mr D Turner** from BT. Also present were two former Bde Comds, **MajGen (Retd) JOC Alexander CB OBE** and **Brig (Retd) JAP Russell**. This year's event was widened to include Regtl Hon Cols, Regtl Comd Teams, past and present members of the HQ.

SPOTLIGHT ON G1/MS

The people department in the HQ is run by **LtCol (Retd) Mike Stevenson MBE**, ably assisted by **Mrs Jenny Wilsher**. This Dept is responsible for a diverse range of subjects in the G1/MS area, and now and again picks up a bit of variety, as with the Bde HQ's first ever Arms Control Inspection. The Inspection was conducted by the Joint Arms Control Implementation Group (JACIG) with visiting participants from Serbia and Montenegro and Macedonia. As to be expected, the preparation was quite involved, but the resulting visit went very well and we look forward to a return - in about 10 years time!

The Joint Arms Control Implementation Group

The Dept is also involved in promotion and selection processes for all RSigs TA offrs, and will, where possible, place offrs (and WOs) in suitable jobs in their desired geographical area. It's a bit like a dating agency, except we introduce you to a unit rather than a person.

Subject to the lifting of the moratorium on NRPS/FTRS and the continuing survival of the present team, the Dept will shortly be splitting into two separate entities (G1 and MS)

UPDATE FROM THE PLANS TEAM

The Plans Team has been joined by **Capt Mick Turnbull**, from 37 Sig Regt. He comes at a hectic time as the team, aided by **Capt Chris Biddulph**, SO3 Ops/Cts, prepare for the Bde FTX. This will include support to six regional formations as part of our SDR New Chapter role. The roads are going to be busy that weekend!

LAND AIRWAVE

A key enabler of SDR New Chapter, AIRWAVE is a secure, digital service, which will provide key Land users with a multi-functional and highly flexible radio system. It is being rolled out across the Home Office, allowing interoperability with civil agencies.

The Land AIRWAVE Project Implementation Team was formed in January 2003. Under the direction of **Maj Keith Goodfellow**, the team, comprising 3 military and 4 civil servants, commenced work on building the foundations, gathering user requirements and developing and delivering the Land fleet mapping. After a couple of years in the civilian wilderness, **Capt Bob Nixon** was, within a few weeks of joining, catapulted from 'easing his way back in' to Project Manager. Under **Bob's** stewardship, the Team has grown in strength, implemented Project SAINT, and has delivered early capability AIRWAVE to elements of the Bde and regional formations.

After a very demanding summer, the Team welcomed its third SO2. **Maj Tim Langford** parachuted into the AIRWAVE office, and with much applause from the civilian staff (the majority of whom had seen military service, albeit National Service), announced his aim to increase the number of team cigarette breaks and to take up the reins of power – a couple of days before he left for a few weeks in America to play water polo!

Finally we welcome **Capt Ronald Jephcote**, on long-term loan from 32 Sig Regt (V), and **Sgt Kev Hall**, on FTRS from 37 Sig Regt (V). We bid farewell to **WO1 (YofS) Mark Whiting**, who departs for Gloucestershire Constabulary, on completion of 22 years service

LAND INFORMATION ASSURANCE GROUP

A number of successful tasks has again seen LIAG teams deployed to far-flung corners of the world. **Capt David Moore** was originally mobilised on OP VERITAS duties in January 2002 – and is still based with the US Army's Central Comd in Tampa, Florida. He is finally expected to return in October 2003 after a total tour of 22 months, which must surely rank as a record in this modern age.

In March 2003, **Maj John Tydeman** led a team consisting of **Capts Geoff Guy**, **Ed Moses**, **Kevin Wood** and **Alan Woodroffe** to Gibraltar to help HQ Gib implement a rollout of an upgraded IS infrastructure. This was the first time that a LIAG team had consisted of all RSigs offrs, four out of the five being professionally qualified offrs (PQOs), rather than career TA. LIAG is an All Arms unit, and new entrants with no previous military service are commissioned as RSigs PQOs.

A further team is due to return during the autumn to provide ongoing assurance that the upgrade has been performed according to plan, and to carry out a penetration test of the live system.

LIAG Team in Gibraltar. L-R: Capt Alan Woodroffe, Capt Ed Moses, Maj John Tydeman, Capt Geoff Guy and Capt Kevin Wood

LIAG Baghdad. Maj John Pringle and Capt Phil Hatton complete with Humvee at Rawaniyah Palace

LIAG also provided teams for two separate tasks during OP TELIC. A Force InfoSec Team (FIT), consisting of **Maj Tom Fairfax** and **Capt Ian Sneyd**, was based at Arifjan/Kohima, and provided tech security evaluation of a number of deployed systems. This team arrived in Kuwait at the end of February, did some work in the Um Qasr area, when systems were deployed forward, and returned to UK in mid-April. It was a good example of LIAG's ability to task organise a small team and provide an immediate deployable capability. The only other FIT in theatre was provided by the RAF's 591SU, both teams being under the operational control of Qatar-based JFCIS.

The second LIAG team, consisting of **Maj John Pringle** and **Capt Phil Hatton**, provided a media exploitation capability as part of a wider US-led multi-agency organisation concerned with Sensitive Site Exploitation (SSE). This team was based initially at a coalition site in Northern Kuwait, and then moved forward direct to Baghdad in early April.

During the in-country exploitation phase, a 10-man element, (commanded and managed by the LIAG team with personnel from the US Army, USMC, US counter-intelligence agents and linguists) processed 5500+ items (over 2 terabytes of data) of captured media, producing reports and analyses, which were released to coalition intelligence agencies. It is interesting to note that for a lengthy period the coalition computer forensic capability was provided mainly by the four LIAG forensic workstations, which had been quickly procured for the operation. The LIAG team returned to the UK at the end of May, having handed over the media exploitation mission to the US-led Iraq Survey Group.

Other tasks on the books for the final part of the year include visits to Gibraltar, Bosnia and Saudi Arabia.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AP Bristow**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) GM Baird**

With everyone back in the Regt after the enormous leave packages that some individuals managed to wangle, the normality of barrack life is with us once again. Most of the Regt has been busy with trying to de-conflict Adv Trg with the Board of Offrs. Needless to say the priorities were firmly laid down, and most of the guys and girls managed to get away to AT.

MajGen P Wall, GOC 1(UK) Armd Div, made his first official visit to the Regt since returning from the Gulf. As well as seeing the Sqns at work in bks, he also managed to chat with the tps. A worthwhile visit, and one that we hope was informative and enjoyable for the GOC.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj T Keates**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) S Mayell**

The new OC, **Maj Trevor Keates**, has settled in well, and it helps with his having his own office on Sennelager Golf Course. The Sqn 2IC, **Capt Lawes**, has been keeping himself amused with his proposed posting to Cyprus, but MCM Div didn't hear about it, and decided he would be better off going to 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. The new SSM, **WO2 Steve Mayell**, is doing a cracking job, although he is making the SQMS's job harder by going through a few chairs.

As ever, it is a busy period in the QMs Dept post OP TELIC – leave, then straight into a Board of Offrs. OP TELIC was a valuable experience for the Dept, especially for the younger members. Judging by their war stories, there must have been two OP TELICs running at the same time!

On the social side of things, we have had a function since our return to say farewell to some of those leaving us. The evening went well, with **Cpl Chris Mooney** and **Cpl Squirrel Tyrell** putting a lot of time and effort into the proceedings. Of note was the garden bench and hedgehog presented to **WO2 Dave Sloan** on completion of 22 years service with the Colours. **Dave** has now moved onto the Long Service List as RQMS of the ARRC Sp Bn. The Dept looks forward to an interesting period ahead, with Battle

Camp, AT and yet more leave! I think **Capt Bob Stanton** is going to have a heart attack when he finds out we will not be here to sort out the results of the Board of Offrs. Soldiers first, Sir, Tradesmen second!

On return from the Gulf, TM Tp were involved in a rather busy turnaround period of both the dets and the wksps. Now complete, work is ticking over nicely, leaving plenty of time for AT, trade and military courses, not forgetting the all-important and well-earned leave.

Operational commitments in the Tp include **LCpl Moffat**, who is soon to go on an all -inclusive to Bosnia; **Cpl Johnston**, who is in the Falklands; and **LCpls Wooley** and **Stainthorp**, who are both off to Corsham Hub. A welcome also to **LCpl Henry**, who recently arrived and is shortly off to Iraq on OP TELIC 3. Meanwhile **Cpl Torode** is wearing down the pavements around Herford whilst training for the Army Marathon.

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj A Churchill**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Cook**

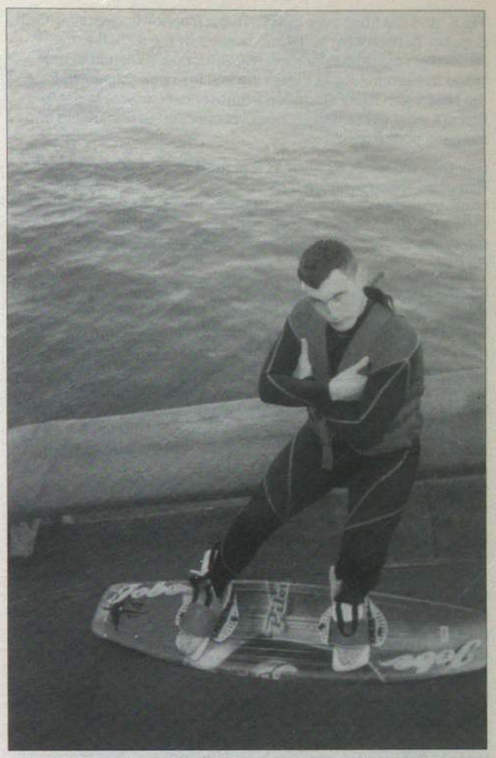
Coming back from OP TELIC, life was supposed to get easier. Initially this was so, thanks to leave, but some fastballs were looming on the horizon. These needed to be fielded, and fortunately we had **FofS Mark Clark** with his trusty baseball mitt on, to intercept the TN vehs returning from Iraq and forward them to UK for much-needed refurbishment. Concurrent to this was the up and coming Board of Offrs, where all our kit had to be accounted for (who said war is bad thing?).

It hasn't been all work, work, work in the Sqn though. The Regt has given us carte blanche to get away on courses, and we have been making the most of this opportunity. **Sigs Louis Simpkins** and **Dale Kerry** have been spending most of their time at the Parachute Centre, Sennelager leaping out of perfectly serviceable aircraft. **Sig Simpkins** loves it so much that he is going back on attachment as an assistant instructor.

Sig Stu Shaw and **Sig Hodgy Hodge** are currently attached to Kiel Sailing Club, aiding the instructors there and picking up some qualifications on the way. **Sgts Stu Reynolds** and **Greg Miller** are also giving Kiel the benefit of their sailing abilities. We've managed to get people slotted into vacancies on all sorts of AT weeks, and they've come back having thoroughly enjoyed it. **Sig Anna Gailey** keeps traveling to Bavaria on consecutive paragliding courses because she is addicted to throwing herself off mountains.

Sig Owen & Sig Vallelly enjoying a great day on the river

However, the tps have not just been going on the Gucci courses. Many have attended courses ranging from rat catcher (unit environmental health), Joint Services powerboat handling, PTI class 3, Pistol handling and many more. Further to this, we have our cpls organising culture trips to Germany's historical cities and places of interest, interspersed with the odd battlefield tour here and there.



You have to wakeboard on the water, otherwise it doesn't count!

OCEAN DIVER COURSE – KIEL

The week started off with a 100m swimming assessment, which was passed by all. Then to get everyone used to putting his or her heads into the Baltic Sea, snorkelling was next. Two days were spent in the pool to get us used to all the equipt and practise all the drills and techniques. We spent most of this time pulling funny faces at each other and fighting to stay on the bottom of the pool – harder than it looks!

Once the instructors were happy with our skills, we were allowed out into the sea, nicely wrapped up, so it was not too cold. Everyone was determined to audition for the next James Bond movie, relishing the different ways of actually getting into the sea. These included walking in from the beach, stepping off a jetty, forward somersaulting off a jetty (most macho points) and backward rolls from a powerboat (RIB).

Visibility in the Baltic was quite impressive (around 5m). There also seemed to be lots of sea life around, so there were always new fish or starfish to be pointed out. We explored a sunken submarine, which was quite ghostly. The only really tricky bit was controlling our buoyancy so that we could stay on the bottom to look at things. However, every now and then you could see **Sgt Green** go streaming upwards, trailing bubbles. Everyone on the course really had a fantastic time, and is now determined to carry on diving to get the next qualification, Sports Diver. Many thanks to the instructors, **Cpl Rocket**, **John** and **Denise** for making the course both fun and enjoyable.

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj AG Lucas**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Lloyd**

The last couple of months have seen the rebuilding of the Sqn as everyone returns from their monumental leave packages after OP

TELIC and the troops are given a major manpower reshuffle. With Support Tp remaining largely untouched by the reshuffle, the remaining Tps, Comd, Comms and RRB, now have lots of new blood to learn the ropes before the first major ex scheduled for the New Year. It has also been a time for new arrivals to get to find out what the Sqn really does, as opposed to rear details and stagging on the gate.

Sqn lines are relatively quiet as 3 of the 4 tp comds are still in Blandford toiling away on their Tp Comds' Course. They are due back, fresh and raring to go, some time in November, just in time for the Christmas party circuit. Just forget everything you did in the Gulf and learn how the instructors did it in Kosovo, and you'll do fine.

For the first time many members of the Sqn ventured beyond the SQMS's building to discover the community centre where the Sqn held its 'back to work' bash to celebrate the end of everyone's leave and getting back into things. Organised by **Cpl Cogram**, the evening was a great success, with an awesome curry rustled up by the chefs, and only 5 people getting lost trying to find the toilets. **Sig Waters** hit the jackpot with the cash draw, and promptly disappeared. But this might have something to do with the SSM's bizarre dress sense – bright orange belts don't go with anything, not even in the 60's. The ironic thing was that very few people were actually able to go back to work the next day.

At the time of writing, **SSgt (SQMS) Tobbell** is breathing a huge sigh of relief as the Board of Offrs comes to an end and he can finally empty his car boot of surplus kit. Ably assisted by the one remaining storeman in the Sqn, **Sig Buchanan**, the Board has been the focus of much of the Sqn's activities recently, with every piece of kit being meticulously laid out in the garages, only for **Lt Gaw** to ask to see all the Royal Artillery torches after seeing 'Torch RA' written in the UET.

The coming months see an AT visit to Mohnesee, where members of the Sqn hope to recreate the actions of the Dambusters as they windsurf and canoe their way around the large historic lake (article below). Only a week after this exped, the SSM is off to Bavaria for two weeks with an intrepid gang of hill walkers and climbers for some grueling AT. Then it's the half term break with a two-week battle camp to look forward to upon our return. Roll on Christmas.

EXERCISE RUSHDEN DIAMOND

The first in a series of AT packages for 211 Sig Sqn, EX RUSHDEN DIAMOND was a week of water sports at the British Sailing Club in Mohnesee.

Arriving just before lunch on the Monday morning, the tps were met with pouring rain, freezing winds and the prospect of a swim test before lunch. Reluctantly stripping down to their swimming trunks, it took a brave soul to launch themselves into the freezing murky waters of the Mohnesee to swim under a canoe and back to the edge. Some chicken nuggets and chips later, it was time to commence the activities. Whilst some people opted for a round robin of activities, including windsurfing, sailing, canoeing and mountain biking, others chose to complete recognised AT courses in dinghy sailing and windsurfing.

For the dinghy sailors, Monday afternoon was spent learning the basics in the Toppers, and also for **Cpl Blackett** to amuse everyone by falling off the land-based trainer as it slowly turned in the wind. Goodness knows how he stayed upright on the water. Once on the lake, the new sailors were soon zipping backwards and forwards, taking advantage of what was to be one of the windiest days in the week. It all proved too much for the ex organiser, **SSgt Lee**, as he capsized his Topper for the third time in ten minutes, and managed to cut his eye open on the boom. Rushed to hospital, he spent the rest of the week trying to keep his stitches dry whilst paddling about on a surfboard. The budding sea cadets soon progressed on to the larger Bosuns, which proved to be great fun, especially when they had to be capsized completely as part of the assessment. The problem arose when the top of the mast stuck in the bottom of the lake, and it took a fair bit of weight on the centreboard to right the boat.

By the end of the week, **Lt Gaw**, **Sig Edwards** and **Sig Wilkinson** managed to qualify for their Class 2 dinghy sailing award, but only after showing off their knot-tying proficiency and naming the parts of the boat.

Inspired by **WO2 Lloyd**, a small group decided to try their hand at windsurfing (or due to the lack of wind, floating). Once they had mastered the art of standing upright on the boards and how to pull the sail back up using their body weight, the hardy few floated gracefully around the lake terrorising sailors and canoeists.

The rescue boat was working overtime, towing people away from the weir, and most will never forget the screams from **Sig O'Reilly**, as she bobbed slowly towards the crashing water of the weir, unaware of the protective barrier that was in place. **Sig White** also managed to keep the shore party amused as, with her slippery shoes, she ran on the spot on her board before leaping into the water. **LCpl Girvan** overcame his fears of the water and improved his swimming skills, after windsurfing straight into a group of moored up boats by the jetty. But he still came away with his Class 1 qualification.

Disappointed by the lack of wind and crashing waves, **WO2 (SSM) Lloyd** took canoe trips around the lake for those that could sit upright for more than an hour or two without getting wet. Others, who were determined never to get wet outside of the shower, decided to spend the week mountain biking, exploring the many paths around the lake and testing their abilities on a local mini-golf course.

The week was a huge success and thanks go out to our instructors at Mohnesee, especially **Sig Woodhouse** from 200 Sig Sqn, the chef, and ex organiser, **SSgt Lee**.

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Buck**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) J McNeil**

CANADIAN CANOEING ON EXERCISE DIAMOND STAR

Scorching weather and a fantastic loc, the Grosser Alpsee, made the four days of canoeing an experience not easily forgotten. With the expert tuition from the infamous **Ron Woolmar**, the eight students and the commandant hit the lake for some serious paddling.

Having practised the safety drills, the group found the lake was too tempting and went in - except **Sig Power**. **Sigs Field** and **Hesketh** gave him a helping hand (or was it a shove?) and he was in!

The group was progressing nicely. All the main techniques learned in the morning were quickly coming together, until the capsize kings **Cpl Lord** and **Sig Kienstra** decided that every one should try capsizing as well – all the time – for the duration. The joke was rapidly wearing off!

Next morning, steady progress from the previous day's paddling resulted in **Sig Dillet** pulling her hair out after having to paddle for a full day with **Sig Field**, meaning more practice in capsize drills!

On the third day, the group moved to the Alpsee River to learn the safety and rescue techniques needed to tackle the Grade 5/6 rapids that lay ahead (well actually, Grade 2). The freezing glacial water took everyone by surprise, especially **Cpl Kent** and **LCpl Frost**, who were straight in and out after losing their nether regions in between tackling the obstacles en route! After more capsize drills and a 360° turn by **Cpl Lord** and **Sig Kienstra** on a floating tree stump, the day ended with even more capsize drills! However, the distance covered was a mighty 14km.

Next day, back on the Grosser Alpsee Lake, the group found that the antics of **Sig Field** were extremely disruptive to the sunning, chilling and admiration of the natural female scenery around the perimeter of the lake! Nevertheless, the group successfully passed the course after a great four days with a superb instructor, **Mr Ron Woolmar**, and under the watchful eye of the commandant. The remaining three days of the AT package involved hill walking and rock climbing in and around Bavaria.

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**LtCol GR Norton**
RSM	**WO1 A Manktelow**

229 (BERLIN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Capt SY Richardson**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) D Welch**

Congratulations to **SSgt Chris Stuart** and his wife **Mags** on their recent addition to the family. Also congratulations to **Cpl Heathcote** on his recent promotion.

We farewell **Cpls Mat Ashurst**, **Gareth Giffin**, **Matt Garner** and **John Graham**. Yes, all the techs appear to be doing a runner. Is it the fact that the tech workshops are smaller than the average bus shelter? Surely not.

BRANDENBURG TROOP- *By LCpl Derek Hunter*

Tp Comd	**Lt K L Milner**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt O'Neill**

We welcome **SSgt Chris O'Neill**, from Belize; **LCpl Sean Martin**, from 30 Sig Regt; **Cpls Mandy Howard**, **Gregg Dick** and **Sig Si Byrne**, from within the Regt. **SSgt Willie Scoots** departs the Corps for civilian life after a grand total of 22 years service. **Sgt Jase Wood** departs on promotion to the TA; **Cpl Jules Dolan**, **LCpls Ollie Holborn** and **Robbie Kerswell**, **Sigs Baz Mears**, **O'Neill** and **Harry Horsham** also leave us. Farewell to you all and good luck. Finally we congratulate **Cpls Al Doyle** and **Woz Wright** on being selected for promotion to Sgt. Well done.

EXERCISE BRANDENBURG BRAVADO

It fell to **Cpl Jules Dolan** to organise a tp leadership ex, designed to enhance morale, cohesion, team spirit and develop leadership. The comd tasks involved crossing a river and a skidpan test, in which each team had to perform a series of manoeuvres under increasingly difficult simulated conditions.

There was also an assault course, set up by **LCpl Taff Colwell** and **Sig Dan Brown**, before the grande finale. First off was the stretcher race, followed by a log run and then a Landrover push. After much deliberation, the verdict was delivered: **Cpl Robbo Robinson's** team received their prize of a crate of decent beer and my team received the consolation prize of a bottle each of German beverage. The ex was a close-run thing, but it achieved its aims and all had a good day.

CHARLOTTENBURG TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt AT Limb**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt L Johnston**

We welcome **Cpl Watt**, **LCpls Jasjew**, **Laing**, **Atkins** and **Sig Carlyle**, and we farewell **Sgt Guiseppe Poppa** and **Sig Brimfield**.

On the 3 September Charlie Tp took on Bravo Tp in paintballing. It was a great day full of fun and adventure. The day consisted of various games and challenges, some tactics and a lot of accurate shots to the head, neck, faces and groin!

In the final game, all hell broke loose with everyone just shooting at each other, regardless of which team they were on. The baby techs all ended up crying - need we say more! There were some real scenes of pain at the end, with **LCpl Mitchell** enduring 7 close range shots to the back. To say that he was cut and bleeding is an understatement! With **Lt Andy Limb** leading Charlie Tp, they were always going to triumph and win the battle. We thank **LCpl Hunter** for arranging the day.

WILMERSDORF TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt BKN Robson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Curry**

EXERCISE KIWI ADVENTURE - *by LCpl Tuck*

On 4 September, 21 members of Whisky Tp, went to SHAPE for a four-day weekend. We went on two battlefield tours (Ypres & Waterloo), and a day trip to the Six Flags amusement park. The tours were excellent and the troops were really fascinated, especially when the tour guide of the Ypres Tour started apologising every two minutes for absolutely nothing. The Last Post at The Mennen Gate was very moving. The turn out from all the war veterans was amazing, and it was brilliant to see faces young and old stood there remembering what our comrades-at-arms did for our country.

For a couple of the guys in the Tp, the Last Post was especially heart-felt as members of the Staffordshire Regt were there. One of them was carrying The Stoke-on-Trent Branch Standard. Four of the lads in the Tp are from Stoke-on-Trent and they did everything they could to get a picture, and have a chat with the war heroes.

The weekend was a huge success and was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. Whisky Tp would like to say a big thank you and a fond farewell to **Lt Kate Benjamin** RNZSigs who returns to New Zealand after four months with us. We all know how much she enjoyed her time here, but she didn't need to burn the Tp Office down to stay that little bit longer. We all wish her good luck and all the best for the future.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Fallows**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) K Read**

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd	**SSgt Kidd**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt B Jenkinson**

After a busy couple of weeks, Oscar Tp welcomes our new Tp Comd, **2Lt Serge Wartemburg**, who has just joined us from Sandhurst and has firmly established himself as leader. **LCpls Ross Palmer** and **Waters**, **Sigs Watson**, **Mazzone**, **Bryce**, **James** and **Hymas** have also arrived over the last few months.

On the promotion front, congratulations to **SSgt Kidd**, **Sgt Jenkinson**, **Cpls McIntosh** and **Paul Whenman** on their recent selections. Good luck to the departing **Cpls Baynes** and **Clarke**, who have both been posted to 15 Sig Regt. Finally good luck to **Sig Jenny Roberts**, currently deployed on OP TELIC 2.

During a busy RSIT month, Oscar Tp contributed 231 Sig Sqn's achievement of 1st and 2nd place in the CO's challenge, which took place in the Hartz Mountains over 4 days. **Sigs Sorby**, **Dave Burn**, **Craig Watson** and **Roberts** participated in the orienteering/Krypton Factor event and although it was quite tiring, it was also very rewarding. Despite the wishes of **SSgt Kidd** and **Sgt Jenkinson**, all members returned in one piece. Meanwhile, back at camp, the Tp have been keeping up 100% quality maintenance as well as area cleaning with much enthusiasm. Also, on the Cross-country run, most of the Tp finished in the top 50, helping 231 Sig Sqn win the Krefeld Cup.

QUEBEC TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt T Cooper**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt P Millington**

We've said goodbye to **Cpls Neil Austin**, **John Foley** and **Gill Cave**; and welcome **SSgt Paul Millington**, **Sgt Mark Ebanks**, **LCpl Cameron Gillian**, **LCpl Jimmy Lawlan** and finally **LCpl Sean Peart**. We also welcome back **Lt Timbo Cooper**, from his

Tp Comd's Course, and **LCpl Michelle Denham**, from maternity leave. Congratulations to **LCpl Anthony Johnson** and his wife **Samantha** on the arrival of their baby 'liney', and well done to **Sgt Chris Healey** on his long awaited promotion.

Most of the Tp participated in the CO's Challenge, and with the exception of a few blisters, all thoroughly enjoyed it. **Cpl Mark Shirley** was victorious for the Tp and the Sqn after hi-jacking one of the Minibus drivers and persuading him to take his team to the local Supermarket to buy a Goldfish!

In the next couple of weeks we see the departure of **Sigs Hoy** and **Edwards** on an installation project in Brunei, and we wish a nice Christmas to **Sig Legg** who's off to the Falklands.

RADIO TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt M McNelis**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Bazzard**

In the CO's Challenge, Team 1 was led by **Cpl Si Burns** and Team 3 by **Cpl Spearpoint**. On our way to the Hartz Mountains we endured possibly the longest coach journey ever, eventually arriving at base camp, where 10 blokes squeezed into 12 x 12 tents – cosy!

The first day involved moving between stands in teams and completing as many as possible in order to gain either equipt, money, or time. In fact, we would have stood a better chance if we all stayed in bed instead of getting blisters, and walking up lots of hills. However on a positive note, the Germans in the area were very friendly, offering us lifts between the stands when we were able to flag them down!

The final race, a timed event consisting of a 4.5km run with 3 stands thrown in for good measure was equally as fun. Stand 1 was a mental challenge, stand 2 was the mess favourite (nails) run by the Tp favourite, **Sgt Bazzard** and Stand 3 was a river-crossing run by **Sig Newbold**. **Cpl Spearpoint's** team completed the race in 1hr, 8mins, 40secs and held the top spot. Unfortunately, they were pipped at the post by 231 Sqn's Team 2, led by **Cpl Shirley**, mainly because his team gained bonus points after they managed to steal a goldfish from a local boozer. All in all Radio Tp emerged covered in glory as usual, and even if we didn't win the Big Race or the CO's Challenge, we still drank more then everyone else!

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Graham Ingram**
SSM	**WO2 Shaun Littlefield**

ASCOT DAY

Every year 7 Sig Regt organises Ascot Day at the Race Course in Krefeld. To our delight, this task fell once again upon 232 Sig Sqn and **WO2 (SSM) Shaun Littlefield.** Weeks in advance, hundreds of portions of fish and chips and punnets of strawberries were ordered, posters were made, menus decided upon and more importantly, a large supply of alcohol (in particular, Pimms) was ordered by the Sgts' Mess. Days in advance most of the Sqn could be found down at the Race Course setting up and guarding the alcohol stash.

On the actual day the sun was shining and the Ascot Day hats were out in force. The soldiers of 232 Sig Sqn did a fantastic job, especially when it came to measuring out Pimms in the jugs! The band of RTR kept us and the German spectators entertained all afternoon. All who attended had a brilliant day, although with German betting rules, most went staggering home with considerably less than they started with (even after winning!).

The weather is changing, the cold and the frost is hanging in the air as the summer clings to its last days of heady sunshine. Exs are on the horizon and the Ops Dept in 232 SHQ are working extended days, the kettle is luke warm and the computer keyboards run with the blood, sweat and tears of the Yeoman and Foreman - or so **WO2 (YofS) Mick Cooper** and **WO2 (FofS) Mac McGregor** say.

SSgt Mal Pavier and **Monica**, leave SHQ just a hop skip and a jump to 280 Sig Sqn. We also farewell **Sgt Sean Marriott** and welcome **Sgt Gaz Place**.

TAC TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Lucy Webster**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Rob Atherton**

We congratulate **LCpls McCreadie** and **Alex McMurry** on their promotion to Cpl, and farewell **Alex** to 14 Sig Regt. We welcome **LCpls Castledene** and **Fatiaki** and **Sig Jeffrey** from inter sqn postings.

Most of the Tp have recently been away on Sqn AT in Bavaria. On arrival, very few actually wanted to go hill-walking after hearing the reputation of the then OC Sqn, **Maj Jenkins**, otherwise known as a running mountain goat. Yes, he did live up to his reputation of speed and danger. The lodge was excellent and the range of activities on offer was wide, kayaking, walking and climbing to name a few – although the kayaking group renamed the session 'fishing.' A good time was definitely had by all!

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Lorna Giddings**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Dean Boughen**

The Tp has experienced almost a complete change of command summer. We have bid farewell to **Lt Ali Youngman** as he rides off into the sunset, to become Team Capt, White Helmets. Let's hope the team makes it out to Germany next year to give us a show. We have also been parted from **Sgts Riley** and **Bone**, who have gone off to new pastures.

We now find the Tp in the hands of **2Lt Lorna Giddings**, fresh from her Troopies course. She joins a very unique set of tp comds in 232 Sig Sqn, who now hold the record of having the shortest tp comds in any sqn, ever. We also welcome **SSgt Boughen** and **Sgt Shilton.**

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Jo Wilson**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Ian Strachan**

We always thought 'D' stood for Delta, but we now suspect that the hierarchy is going to make us 'Demo Tp'. Whilst the rest of the Regt deployed on the CO's Challenge, Delta Tp were preparing for a demo at JHQ for COS, HQ Land. On the day, the sun was shining, the patter went off perfectly and all concerned were very happy.

In September, we farewelled **SSgt Tony Taylor**, who has been with the Tp for nearly three years, expertly guiding us, with military precision, through the move from Krefeld to Elmpt. After 22 years in the Army and about five leaving do's, we finally got him out of the door and packed off to RMA Sandhurst, where he will complete his continuance service. He was last seen counting a pile of 349's in the Sigs Wing! We wish **Tony** and **Andrea** all the very best for the future. We welcome our new Tp Staffy, **Sgt Ian Strachan**.

FOUR MONTHS WITH 7 SIGNAL REGIMENT
- by Lt Kate Benjamin RNZSigs

Tena Koutou katoa

Given the chance of either spending four months working my butt off on Sqn exs in a southern winter, digging holes in the arctic climes of Waiourou, or doing four months in the northern summer, lazing around, drinking cups of tea and discovering the best that Europe has to offer, what would you do?

So it was with great expectations I left a New Zealand autumn for the summer of Germany. Over the last four months I have managed to wangle my way onto a good number of different trips and visits, much to the anxiety of my Sqn OC.

I hardly knew what I was in for when the Adjt, **Capt Jules Hill**, duped me into attending CIV POP trg in UK. After a few days' driving, running over slow sheep and even slower Grunts (Infanteers), I was introduced to a huge pile of rotten carrots and an evil horde carrying batons and shields. Too damn right I was gonna run away! Sorry **LCpl Rizza** and **LCpl Michelle Amis**, but not everyone has your intestinal fortitude, or dare I say, stupidity to get whacked senseless by the Infantry. Anyway cheers for the experience, Adjt!

My little excursion to the UK was quickly followed by a wee journey to Italy for DEPLOYEX 2003. I really have to applaud the Brit movts sec. Only they can still remain smiling after 200 smelly, tired and hungry soldiers have beaten them to a pulp for making them travel in a cattle class train for three days.

DEPLOYEX 2003 was quite an eye opener in terms of witnessing the British squaddies hard at work. I gotta hand it to my RR crew, **Cpl Daemo Legg**, **LCpl Nat Davis** and **Sig Al Doorbar**, who managed to make sitting on a hill sunbathing sound like hard work. They almost managed to outshine **Sig Duggan** in the shimphing stakes!

It was about this time that I discovered that Ptarmigan can't actually fly and has more in common with a big white elephant than a small bird. But at the end of the day, W Tp, aided by **Cpl Martin Hart** and his team, really pulled out the stops and had a good ex. Special mention needs to be made of **Sgt Steve Davies**, who managed to be polite to the ARRC staff for a total of ten days running.

Full credit has to go to my Tp, who tried to make my life into the biggest admin nightmare ever. I'll try not to take it personally, but when three of your Tp go AWOL after leave, and a couple more are on a first name basis with the CO, you start to wonder where you are going wrong! Seriously though, guys you've been a great lot to get to know, and I will advise next year's LONG LOOK Officer to think twice before challenging **Cpl Greg Dick** to a drink.

Amid all of this, I also managed to wing my way along to watch the Army swimming Champs in Aldershot, to visit Balkan Sig Sqn in Bosnia, ATR Lichfield, and witness the BAG Netball Champs. I also managed to squeeze in a bit of sightseeing along the Med and in Scotland.

To top off my exchange, my Tp Staffy, **SSgt Shaun Curry**, organised a Tp battlefield tour to Ypres and Waterloo - definitely a memorable ex, with plenty of stories to come back with. One particularly haunting memory was the stunning rendition of *Love lift us up where we belong* by **LCpl Dave Tuck** and **Sig Si Byrne** that deserves never to be repeated. I feel I now can honestly say I have now seen Brit sigs at their best (and worst, no names mentioned... except maybe **Cpl Mark Carlisle** and **Sig Gaz Hall**!)

I can't forget to mention some of the brilliant peeps I've encountered in the Mess. A huge thanks to **Capt Harry Cairns** and **Lt Martin Williamson** for your hospitality and constant comments about my state of dress. And don't worry **Kate** and **Andy** (**Lt Milner and Lt Limb**) I have not forgotten the two of you who have made my life as a troopie all the more challenging. I know it must have been hell for you both to have to live up to my standards!

So I'm off next week back to Palmerston North and 2 Sig Sqn. I've had a fantastic exchange and take back many fond memories. Many thanks to the *Tanes* (lads) and *Wahines* (ladettes) of W Tp. May you paint many more tent pegs, hit plenty more fast balls and spend your lives dodging the SSM. And if anyone manages to find **Sig Golding**, please pass on my farewells!

No reira, kia kaha, kia kite ano. Arohanui, **Kate Benjamin**

MY GAP YEAR COMMISSION - *by 2Lt Anna Bates*

It all started one cold and frosty morning at the end of September, when seventy-six fresh faces turned up at Sandhurst. Excitement teamed with anxiety as we bid our parents goodbye to start our year-long 'career' in the military.

Sandhurst was an enjoyable experience – honest. My mother has commented upon my improved ironing skills, and my father read through my leadership notes and said 'This is good stuff, you know.' After a grueling three and a half weeks I had learned how to clean and fire a rifle (yes, in that order), do intersections and resections and just about master an 'a———-bout turn'. Most importantly I learned never to call a Colour Sgt 'Staff', never to mistake WO2s for Majs, never to wear my beret 1mm too far forwards or 1mm too far back, and never, ever, ever to wear blue jeans ever, ever again.

The week-long Tp Comds course at RSS Blandford was very different. All of a sudden Capts were friends and SNCOs were nice to you. It was a useful intro to what the Signals do, as well as an opportunity for us to ask questions left, right and centre - even about the smallest matters. The emphasis on the course was practical knowledge, designed to give us grounding as to what to expect when we arrived at our units. As a Gap Year Officer, you really do begin by knowing absolutely nothing about the Army. So this was a 'heads up week', to make sure that we would cut the mustard and were all singing off the same song sheet when we arrived at our respective units.

I was privileged to have been attached to two different units this year. I began my tour with 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. Thrilled to be with the high profile Desert Rats, I was keen to impress my Tp SSgt, **Staff Walton** and his sidekick **Sgt Link**. This I duly did when cleaning my rifle after an ex, and cut my cleaning cloth to just slightly bigger than the required 45mm by 45mm. Well you will know what happened next, as I struggled to pull it through, struggled a little harder and eventually admitted defeat and asked for help. Well at least I provided a little entertainment for the morning as they both laughed long and loud and rapidly remarked 'That's what recruits do, Ma'am – not Officers!'

7 Bde were soon warned off for deployment, and prep began as soon as we arrived back after leave. The Sqn was very busy and it was a fascinating time to be with them. A week spent in Bde HQ with SO3 Media Ops to help with the setting up of a press conference was also very exciting. It was also fascinating to find out what constitutes a 'good picture' in *The Sun* newspaper. Add soldiers, an England flag and a moving Challenger 2, and all of a sudden, they're happy!

As the Sqn set off for Iraq, it was with sadness that I had to move to another unit. Anxious to make the most of what the Army had to offer, I decided to explore the AT programme for a while. Four weeks in Bavaria helped me decide that the opportunities available to Army personnel were excellent. Under tuition, my skiing improved ten fold. It was a fantastic month that I thoroughly enjoyed. I was not alone on the GYC front. There were five others to keep me company. A weekend in Munich was beneficial to our cultural education, but the skiing was the highlight, and I think we are all desperate to get our instructor qualifications now!

Sadly I couldn't ski for the entire year, so I was sent to a new unit, 7 Sig Regt. The two units are completely different and the contrasts have been fascinating. Everybody at the Regt has gone out of their way to ensure that I enjoy myself. I spent the first week in UK on EX SILVER CHILD, a charity run and cycle ride that raised 42,000 for Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital. The second week I spent on a battlefield tour to Italy (knowledge that I hope I can use in my degree), where we had guided tours of the battles of Monte Cassino and the Anzio Beach landings. It was a truly multi-cultural visit as we visited the *Scottish Highlander* pub (in Italy, yes), which played Salsa music! Interesting!

I have since spent plenty of time getting to know Radio Tp and enjoying Regtl life. A few weeks without any seniors in the Tp quickly increased my understanding of day-to-day barrack life (and gave me plenty to do!). I have been back to UK to do athletics and to swim, spent a week in London undergoing 'Officer education', including the Corps Dinner Night. I spent a week doing CIVPOP for 2 Bn PWRR's rural phase of their NI trg. Most gloriously of all, I have spent ages completing a Regtl Silver check.

I have spent a very busy and fun-packed year. Seeing the differences between two such different units has meant that I hold a much broader view of the Army. At both units I have been impressed with the professionalism and dedication of the military, from Signaller upwards. Never before have I met such a diverse and interesting range of people who all share a similar aim. The Army is an inimitable organization with a unique and dangerous role to play in today's society, and I feel privileged to have shared this for a year. Many thanks to all those people who were part of this experience. I thank each and every one of you.

10 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col PW Glibbery**

We welcome our new Ops Offr, **Maj Mick Boxall**, vice **Maj Tim Langford**, who moves to SO2 AIRWAVE; and our new Tech Adjt, **Capt Pete Hodson**, vice **Capt Phil Cutforth**, who has left for Blandford and the CISM course. Our thanks to **Tim**, **Phil** and their families and our best wishes for the future.

The CO's visits to the regional Sig Sqns and the Div HQ they provide close ICS support to, continue at a pace. A recent CO's conference in Edinburgh, ably hosted by 242 Sig Sqn, was very successful, and a number of workshops took place to progress ongoing Regtl issues. All of the different depts in RHQ are heavily engaged in the Land DII Convergence Delamination Project, ongoing ISIS and LCSS(R) routine support, and for those at Corsham, the thorny issue of the choice of menu for the joint Regtl/Bde HQ Christmas Lunch.

Our congratulations go to **Capt Nik Bruce** and **Vicky**, who are now the proud parents of **Jack Samuel**, born Sunday 12 October at 07.30hrs, weight 7lbs 13oz. **Vicky** and **Jack** are well. **Nik** is still in shock!

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Nick Beecher**
Sqn SSgt **SSgt Pete Nealis**

Congratulations to **Sgt Nikki Coombes**, who moves on promotion to 2 Sig Regt and to **Mr Archie Goddard**, who departs having served with the Sqn for 4 years and the civil service for an impressive 31 years. Congratulations too, to **Cpl Emily Ironmonger**, who successfully came off the IS Op Selection Board, and good luck to **LCpl Matt Richards**, who has just embarked to MPA FI for a four-month tour.

VISIT OF COMMANDING OFFICER

On the 15 September, the Sqn had the privilege of hosting a visit from **Lt Col Gliberry**. Whilst here, the CO met many members of the Sqn, both military and civilian, and rounded off the day with a rather excellent Gurkha curry, courtesy of our 2IC, **Maj (retd) LB Gurung**.

LCpl Hebenton receiving his Pan Balkans medal From the CO 10 Sig Regt Lt Col Glibbery

EXERCISE BRUNO WARRIOR

The Regiment's annual foray into all things green took place over the period 19 September – 3 October. **Cpl Eddie Hart** and **LCpl Kev Hebenton** were eager participants, and as with all things military, surprises were never far away. **LCpl Hebenton** received his Pan-Balkans medal from CO 10 Sig Regt half way through a patrol. Luckily for all involved, **LCpl Hebenton** suppressed his normal 'shoot first and ask questions later' attitude, but was disappointed to find he couldn't wear his shiny new medal with webbing and helmet for the remainder of the ex. **SSgt Pete Nealis** and **Sgt Andy Dobson** acting as DS, provided a series of very informative lessons to all participating.

Lt Col Glibbery with 251 Squadron 'Heads of Sheds'

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING

On 26 September, as part of the World's Biggest Coffee Morning, **Mrs Christine Steeples** organised a big coffee break in support of the Macmillan Cancer Research. All who attended were greeted with a smile and an amazing array of cakes, which bore the brunt of the Sqn's post-PT hunger. It was attended by 91 people, helping it to become officially the World's Biggest Coffee Morning, and raised £151 for this worthwhile cause.

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **LtCol CJ Thackray**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Fisher**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Guy Richards**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Gaz Greaves**

MT TROOP

MTWO **WO2 B Batley**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Tremain**

The MT is still as busy as ever. Stood to yet again for OP TELIC 3, but this time it could be happening. Welcome to **Sgt Chris Leader**, from ACIO Doncaster; **LCpl Paddy Porter** and his wife, **Michelle** from 54 Tpt Sqn and **LCpl Swanick** and his wife **Sophie** from 1 ADSR, who have just had their first child, **Lea Sophie**. Goodbye to **Sig Needham**, who is off to 20 Armd Bde. Congratulations to **Cpl Barker** on his promotion to Sgt. **LCpl Evans** has just returned his Class 1 and demonstrated his ability to read route cards by getting lost on his first time as packet comd.

The MT entered a team into the Regtl March and Shoot competition. All who took part completed the event, except **Sig McQuillen**, who decided to have a kip after 2 miles and to be taken to the med centre by the jack wagon.

QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT

As we go to press the regt and most of the QM Dept are starting their prep for OP TELIC 3, which means that we have now become everyone's best friend. Funny old thing that!

We have had some sporting achievements, with our bowling team finishing second in the league behind the LAD, so congratulations to all those who took part. We have had a few arrivals with **Capt Tivey**, **LCpl Davies** and **Cpl Hayward**. We also have to say farewell to **Capt Paul Horton**, off to Litchfield on promotion and **Cpl Des Lang** on his way to Chicksands. We wish them and their families a happy stay in their new units.

LIGHT AID DETACHMENT

EXERCISE GARMISCH BACKSTOP

In between getting stood up and down for OP TELIC 1, 2 or 3, the LAD had the opportunity to do some AT at Garmisch-Partenkirchen in the south of Germany from 25 August - 5 September 2003. This was broken down into two separate groups to give the maximum number of people the opportunity to enjoy the area. So with much fussing around, the group left camp in a series of minibuses to find our way down south.

The Eibsee Lake Trip

The programme included a day's walk was up to the top of the Kramer Mountain, a half day walk up the Wank Mountain, an afternoon on Eibsee Lake, a day on the Zugspitze, and more ambitious final day on the Alpstpitze Mountain. All in all, it was an extremely challenging yet enjoyable bit of trg. Now all that remains is to prepare our next set of AT in Basra.

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Dominic Sharkey**
SSM **WO2(SSM) M Angove**

BREAKING NEWS...

The pace of life within the Regt and Sqn has moved up another notch and we are rapidly running out of notches. We have been stood up yet again for deployment to the Gulf. There is still argument about whether this is the third for fourth time we have been prepared and subsequently stood down. Can we finally join, what seems to be the rest of the entire Corps, and have our turn in the sun? It looks good so far, but only time will tell. One thing is certain though. The medal hunters are straining at the leash.

SQUADRON BATTLECAMP *- by Sgt Lee Francis*

The Sqn deployed to Haltern trg area at 04.00hrs on Tuesday 2 September to conduct a short 2-day package of ranges and transition to field firing. This covered grouping and zeroing, APWT and MMTT ranges. The background activities included harbour drills, which would come in very handy for our nighttime activities. After the ranges on day one, SSM, **WO2 Angove**, thought it would be character-building to slide in a nice CFT, with a tidy amount of hills included. I believe everyone appreciated it! Nighttime activities included moving and occupying a harbour area and a night nav ex run by SQMS **Bob Goldsmith** and his large sidekick, **Cpl Paul Lomas**.

The second day was run in a round robin and included comd tasks, led by **SSgts Ian Glover** and medical and BFAT stands, run by **Sgt Jones** and **Cpl Smith**. The day concluded with the section in defence range, run by **Sgt Lee Francis**. With a lot of young class 3 soldiers in the Sqn, many had not taken part in ranges of this nature before. The battle prep area was run with the usual aggression and general nastiness of the SSM. By the time the sections arrived up the steep gully and onto the ranges they were literally hanging out, with kit laid all over the place.

The actual shoot lasted roughly 45 minutes, with each sec comd and 2IC receiving plenty of ammo from the DS, **Cpl Andy Nuttley** and **Sgt Del Parkinson**. The trg value of the 2-day package was excellent, showing the soldiers in a different light and bringing out some characters from the younger element of the Sqn. All in all, a very successful 2 days.

TORNADO TROOP *- by Sig Feline*

Amongst the few ups and downs we have welcomed back our members who where deployed on OP TELIC in support of 1 (UK) Armd Division and 2 Sig Regt. The quiet period after RSIT has allowed the Tp much-needed time to sort out many of its internal admin issues, including the back-loading of the Tp's standard Centrals. The new SSM's PT schedule raised a few eyebrows over the last couple of weeks with all the prep for the march and shoot competition being run at the end of August, including Bergen runs, relay pulls and hill repetitions. Most of the Tp are now fairly sick of the sight of the 'bunkers' and hill 60. Tough luck, guys! The oddest news of late comes from **LCpl Nigel Foulkes**. He had

an emergency operation to have his appendix removed after eating one of the burgers at the latest Sqn barbecue. It now looks as if he has the Bermuda Triangle tattooed on his belly. He must have succumbed to the mysterious affliction that has become known in 230 Sqn as morale.

This week we welcome back **Sig Andy Sutton** from Leconsfield after his driver trg course, and **Cpl Philips** from BATUS, where he picked up more than a sun tan, as the photos show.

PHANTOM TROOP - *by Sig Gilroy*

In the absence of all those on OP TELIC, Phantom Tp has been rent-a-node and has been simultaneously supporting EX ARRCADE DEPLOYEX in Italy, EX CATHODE EMISSION in Denmark and going through RSIT in Elmpt.

We are seeing an influx of tanned faces as our detached personnel return from sunnier pastures. Welcome back to **Cpls Si Griffiths**, **Gerry Devlin**, **Ross Quinn** and Sigs **Dave Szejok** and **Chris Matthews**, all safely returned from the Gulf, where they too, were a rent-a-det facility for 1 (UK) ADSR and 2 Sig Regt. Thank you for looking after our soldiers and sending them back all in one piece. **Sig Kirsten Randall** has also returned from a rather less arduous 6-onth tour in BATUS, quite unidentifiable with her new blonde look. Her place has been taken by **Sig Guy Ansell**, who has finally managed to tear himself away from the Sqn.

Unfortunately no sooner have some of our war heroes returned, than they are already bidding us farewell. Goodbye to **Cpls Quinn** and **Devlin**, and to **Sgt Andy Simmons**, 16 Sig Regt's token veteran who couldn't remind us enough that he was due to leave. Welcome to **LCpl Mikie Moss** from 1 (UK) ADSR and **Sig Chris Cargill** from the factory.

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj T Cooper**
SSM	**WO2 Storey**

It is all change on the bridge at 255, as the entire Sqn hierarchy changes over. Goodbyes and good luck go to **Maj Hayden**, who leaves us for a job in JHQ; to **Capt Gunsen**, who may actually have to do some work in his new posting, and to **Cpl Wilcockson,** who did an admirable job, standing in until a new Sqn Yeoman arrived.

Welcome to **Maj Tim Cooper**, from MOD London; to **Capt Mel Crawford**, from 2 Sig Regt; to **WO2 (SSM) Storey**, recently arrived back from his RQs course; and to newly promoted **WO2 (YofS) Emsen**, from 1 (UK) Armd Div, just in time for all the main ARRC exs and a move to sunnier climates for the Sqn.

IS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt D Rutherford**
Tp SSgt	**WO1 S Jarnell**

Congratulations and farewell to **Sgt Kim Castledine** on her selection for promotion to SSgt, and posting to 15 Sig Regt. Congratulations also to **Sgt Dave Skinley**, on his promotion to SSgt; to **Cpls Tam Mooney**, **Carson Briggs**, **Mick Kenning** and **Paul Brown**, (currently on OP TELIC 2) on your selection for promotion to Sgt.

Cheerio, to **Cpl Alex West**, on her return to civilian life. And a big warm welcome to **SSgt Asplen**, **Cpls Igboebisiokwu** and **McNally** and **Sig Kenny Welburn**, who join us at our busiest period.

MAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt T Kane**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt P Greenwood**

Life in MAN Tp has moved up a gear since being warned off for a future deployment on OP TELIC, and we have already started our training. Last week we successfully deployed on EX WHIP IT UP, which did just that, thanks to **Cpl Richie Scott** and his efforts in designing a stressful and physically demanding ex. **Sig Wendy Cunnington** failed miserably to escape and evade the enemy, instead collapsing to the ground screaming for help. Luckily for her, this alerted the whole site and she came away with a near miss: an event that will stay with the Tp for a long time! The day after ENDEX, as tired as we were, the Tp went to the Station Fête. MAN Tp had a stall called 'Beat The Seaman', designed by **Sig Ian Riley**, testing football skills. The overall winner of the day was our very own **Sgt Joey Maguire**, whose prize was a slab of Fosters. A great day was had by all and lots of money raised for charity.

Over the past month we have sadly said goodbye to The King of Barbecues, **SSgt Barney Balmforth**, who was promoted to WO2 and posted to sunny Cyprus. Goodbye and congratulations to **Cpl Wilcockson** on his promotion to Sgt and posting to NI. **LCpl Andy Winters** also leaves us for our close rivals 7 Sig Regt. Congratulations **Sgt Rob Kirk**, who came off the SSgts Board. Welcome to cricket fanatic **SSgt Greenwood**, **LCpl Traynor** and **Sig Andy Cridland**, who I'm sure will start to talk sooner or later.

FORWARD SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt K Bates**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt N Howard**

We welcome our new Tp Comd, **2Lt K Bates**, and new Tp SSgt, **SSgt N Howard**. Welcome also to **Cpls Heptinstall**, **Bourke** and **Faid** and **Sigs Glass** and **Winters**. We wish best of luck to **Cpl Hywell Baker** and **Sig Monty Burns**, who have both gone back to UK to attend the 216 course.

H TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Griffiths**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Macphee**

H Tp have been busy as usual over the last few months, both preparing for EX ARRCADE WARRIOR and sending crews away on our usual array of deployments. We are currently spread from the Balkans to Brunei, from the Falkland Islands to Iraq. In and around that, time is found for the 'voluntary' Hill 60 sessions!

We were actively involved in the entertainments for this year's Station Fête. Thanks to the Club Tropicana Team, headed up by **Cpl Farrow** for turning the Sqn bar into a Caribbean paradise. **Sig Hartshorne** also did well in entertaining the customers. The day went down a treat with all.

Our football team is making a good start to the season. **Sig Waller** is keeping up the Tp's good reputation by competing with the Army Judo Team in America. **Sig Kingan**, **Sig Hartshorne** and **Cpl Shubert** have represented the Regt in cricket, and **SSgt Macphee**, Sgt **Sunderland**, **Cpl Lowe** and **Sig Aston** have represented the Regt in rugby.

Congratulations go to **Cpl Buckingham** and **LCpl Paczchniuk**, who were married last month, to **Sig Anderson** and **LCpl Dawn Bentley**, on the birth of their son, **Kyle** and to **LCpl Crooks** and partner on the birth of their daughter, **Holly**.

We welcome our new Tp Comd, **2Lt Griffiths,** which means goodbye to **Capt Greenwood**, who is off to RHQ. We also welcome **Sigs Morrison**, **Meredith** and **Moffat** from Blandford, and **LCpls Stables** and **Kervell** from NI. Goodbye also to **LCpls Vincent**, **Stewart** and **Wride**, who are posted to far away places, and to **Lt Looker**, who returns to her home down under after spending 4 months as a Tp Comd.

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT CRICKET 2003

This season has been the most successful for many a year, with the Regt competing in the BA(G) Cup and the Rhine Garrison Festival. The Festival Cup was played over the period 7-11 July, with 8 teams competing. It was split into two groups with the Regt being grouped with DCSA and CIVSEC. Both were very easily won, and **Cpl Danny Miller** made massive contributions in both games. In the Semi-Finals we faced ARRC Sp Bn - a tough game on paper. The Team Capt **SSgt Frankie Greenwood** scored a valuable 63 before being stumped from the last ball of the innings. **Sig Andy Kingan** bowled in this game for the first time in Army cricket and turned the game on its head, taking 7 wkts for 18 runs in only 5 overs, helping us crush them by a massive 72 runs.

The final brought together the big clash between 7 and16 Sig Regts, with 16 Regt being favourites for a change. We batted first and scored 177 in 30 overs for just 6wkts. The skipper scored 47 not out and **Sig Kingan** scored 67, putting together 107 runs in just 14 overs. 7 Sig Regt batted next, and were skittled for 100 all out with **Cpl Miller** and **Sig Westfield** taking 3wkts each for 18 runs.

As Festival Champions, our next trip was to 1 GS Regt (RLC) in Gütersloh for the BA(G) Cup, just 3 days later. After some top bowling, 1GS were restricted to 89 all out on a tiny playing area, with the skipper taking 3 for 11 off 7 overs and **Sig Kingan** taking 3 for 24 off 6 overs. 16 Sig Regt knocked off the runs in only 15 overs with the skipper completing a great day, scoring 35 not out. Yet another easy win.

BA (G) Champions 2003

The Semi-final drew us against 7 Sig Regt again, and they batted first, scoring 115 runs with **Cpl Miller** taking 3 for 24 and **Cpl Schubert** mopping up the tail with 2 for 9. In reply 16 Sig Regt scored 118 for 4 in 24 overs with **WO2 Tom Ward** and **Sig Kingan** steering us home after a wobble early on.

The BA(G) Final was played against 3 RHA in probably the worst weather of the summer, with constant rain during the morning and into the afternoon putting the game in doubt. With a bowl out looming, both captains agreed to play a 25 over match. 16 Sig Regt won the toss and choose to bowl. **Sig Jamie Ayres**, **Cpl Danny Miller** and **Cpl Rob Schubert** all took 2 wkts in what can only be described as dreadful conditions. 3 RHA scored 108 in 25 overs which, considering the conditions, was very competitive. However no-one told that to **Sig Kingan** and **Cpl Miller**, who when the score was 50 after 12 overs, scored the further 59 runs needed to win in just 5 overs. 3 RHA found it tough with the wet ball and slippery conditions.

With us becoming BA(G) Champions, it was fitting for **SSgt Lloyd Bath**, who had been trying to win the BA(G) Cup for 2 decades with 16 Sig Regt over 3 tours in the Unit. It was his last day before being posted to 7 Sig Regt!

The Army quarterfinal tie back in UK against Seme Bordon was next. There we found how hard it is to play on a grass. Seme Bordon were bowled out for 132 all out with 16 Sig Regt skipper taking 5 for 27 and **LCpl Phil Mulligan** taking 2 for 8. Some great fielding topped by **Cpl Ginge Birkbeck's** one-handed catch over his head in a Champagne moment. At the interval things were going brilliantly, but the dream was soon to be over, as very quickly 16 Sig Regt lost by 100 runs.

A super season played in the right way, with a great team spirit and good blend of youth and experience, with four of the squad representing BA(G), **SSgt Frank Greenwood**, **Cpl Danny Miller, Sig Jamie Ayres** and **Sig Andy Kingan**. The BA(G) Champions will be on tour next summer in Iraq, a country which has just taken up cricket. You never know, we might still play next season.

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**Lt Col I Hooper**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) GC Smith**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SJ Morgan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) AA Chapman**

We are now well in to the autumn trg season and the Sqn has just returned from its Ech trg, EX FINAL BEAUFIGHTER. With commitments to OP TELIC, this was the Sqn's first ex this year, but the 'Final' in the title refers to it being the last ex for **WO2 (SSM) Adie Chapman**, who retires shortly on completion of 22 years' service.

Cpl Alex Dutton, who has headed up the Sqn office team since January, has now moved on to take over the office at 244 Sig Sqn. We welcome **Cpl Adams** in her place.

MT SECTION

MTO	**Capt AJ Barry**
MTWO	**WO2(MTWO) B Rigby**

The preparations for EX FINAL BEAUFIGHTER have kept the MT team busy in recent weeks, the deployment itself bringing a welcome break from normal routine.

On the ex we refreshed ourselves on many skills and drills not practised since last year, and spent a great deal of time carrying out fuel replens for the field sqns. We are all now experts on the route between Colerne and Salisbury Plain, the two focus points of the ex. In the Gene Bay, **Cpl Richie Kear's** tenure has proved short-lived. He is transferring to RE and is currently being trained as a Combat Engineer. We welcome **LCpl Billy Bedford** and his family from 16 Sig Regt.

QUARTERMASTER (TECHNICAL) DEPARTMENT

QM	**Capt A Balsdon**
RQMS	**WO2(RQMS) A Macphearson MBE**

The QM Dept is now running as normal again after EX FINAL BEAUFIGHTER. **Sigs Cheryl Smyth**, **Graham Greener**, **Si Morse** and **Drew Young** have been grafting hard, loading the dets ready for deployment. We have recently had our LSI, which went extremely well. A big thanks to the entire Dept. We say good luck and farewell to **SSgt Ralph Deegan** and his wife, **Anne**, who leave us to join 1 (UK) ADSR, and welcome **WO2 (RQMS) Macphearson** and family from SHAPE. Also a big welcome to **SSgt Jock Castle**, from 3 (UK) DSR via OP TELIC. **Sig Christy Proudfoot** has just arrived from 20 Armd Bde after spending 4 months attached to 11 Sig Regt, and is on her way to becoming the Regt's new unit repairer. **Cpl Lee Peacock** and **Sig Ashcroft** deployed on OP TELIC, are returning in mid October.

TM TROOP

Regt FofS	**WO1 (FofS) MR Flather**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt TW Ewart**

We farewell **WO1 (FofS) Paul Lewis**, who departs for 238 Sig Sqn on commissioning; **Cpl Cheryl Rowlands**, going to ATR Basingbourne; **Cpl Helen Lee** (née **Coupe**) going to 3 (UK) DSR; and **LCpl Emma Jones**, who left in glorious style! We welcome the new Regt FofS, **WO1 (FofS) Martin Flather**, from DCSA(G); and **Cpls H Aitchison**, **Gillard**, **Marsh** and **John Beart**.

REGIMENTAL TRAINING WING

Trg Offr	**Capt R Quinsey**
Trg WO	**WO2 D Giles**

Since the hugely successful Battle Camp, Trg Wing has been busy conducting various military and trade trg. This included two Regtl trg weeks with themes of special-to-role, map reading and other tactics-based subjects. There has also been a New Arrivals Brief Week, whereby all those newly posted into the Regt receive induction trg, as well as being taken through all their relevant ITDs (lucky them!). Whilst currently in the middle of running a pre-OP TELIC 2 trg package, we are also busy completing any final prep for this year's Regtl Cadre Course. Sennybridge here we come!

We farewell **Sgt Sven Gronn**, posted on promotion to 31 Sig Regt (V), and **Sgt Ash Williams**, posted to Blandford. All the best to you both and a big thank you for all your hard work. We welcome **Sgt Sean McIlroy**, and **Cpl Andy Williams** (on attachment from 220 Sig Sqn), SSgt **(YofS) Rob White**, and **Sgt Craig Brooksbank**. Finally, congratulations to Trg Wing Clerk, **Mrs Eileen Robinson**, for achieving her weel-deserved bonus award. Well done, **Eileen**.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj R Lovett**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) D Taylor**

Following the Sqn's return from OP TELIC, it has been a very busy period, mainly spent brushing the sand off! With a lot of the Sqn's equipt still in the Gulf or on the boat, it has taken a lot of hard work and reorganisation to get the Sqn back into a routine ready for the forthcoming ex period. We have also seen changes in key personalities, with the arrival of **Maj Bob Lovett**, replacing **Maj Spencer Mannings** as OC, **Capt Heidi Hughes** replacing **Capt Lindsay Courage** as 2IC, **WO2 (YofS) Mick Murphy** replacing **WO2 (YofS) Mark Bentley** and **SSgt (FofS) Ebdon** replacing **SSgt (FofS) Walton**. A very warm welcome and farewell to all!

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt KE Hannaford**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt A Dutton**

Now that some of the dets have returned from the Gulf, there has been a lot of work getting the Tp back to normal and preparing for Tp and Sqn exs. Members of the Tp have also been heavily involved in Lanyard Trophy trg. Following a successful season competing, **Sig Harvey** has qualified for the GB Biathlon Squad and the World Championships in Monaco and **Sig Swann** has been selected to play football for the Army team. Well done!

Congratulations to **Sig Davis** on his marriage to **Rachel**, and to **LCpl Staples-Miles** on his engagement to **Lorraine**. Our fond farewells to **Sgt Langridge**, **Cpls Lucas** and **Horton**, and warm welcomes to **2Lt Allt**, **Sgt Ions**, **LCpl Corlett**, **Sigs Gillbert**, **Kinnaird** and **Butterworth**.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt P Wright**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Burdus**

To recuperate from a busy period post OP TELIC, **Sgt Billy Morris** organised EX COASTAL ENDEAVOUR DRAGON for us. The aim of the ex was to walk the 250 miles from Mount Edgecombe, along the Cornish part of the South West Coastal path to Welcombe Mouth in Devon, to raise money for CLIC (Cancer and Leukaemia in Children). We had ten days to complete the full distance, and each team member had to raise a minimum of £200 to enter. This in itself was a challenge, but we did eventually manage to get a team of 10. We divided into two teams, each in turn either walking or providing admin support. Things looked good on the first day - the sun was shining and we had already managed to get a free ferry from Plymouth. After a few days walking, it appeared that all the mountains had been transported from the Brecon Beacons to the coast, but the good weather held out. Spirits were kept high throughout the walk by **Sig Danny Jones** just being his funny self. The people of Cornwall were all very friendly and we were always made to feel welcome by the local landlords (thirsty stuff walking!) Before we knew it, but not before time, we had arrived at the finish point. A big thank you from the Tp goes to **Sgt Thisby** and **Cpl Rob Harley** for his egg and bacon banjos. Anyone reading this who still owes money or wishes still to contribute to CLIC should send the money to **Sig Jimmy Cullen**.

LCpl Whitehead, Sgt Morris and Sig Cullen – the green blur back in Devon

GOLF TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Bangurah**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Hook**

We welcome our new Boss, **2Lt Bangurah** and new Staffy, **SSgt Hook**. We have had an intensive period aimed to get the Sqn back on track after a very successful tour and to prepare everyone for EX SCORPION'S CRAWL.

We congratulation **Sig Kieran Lee** and **LCpl Ross Harley** on their recent marriages to **Joanne** and **Emma**. We welcome **Cpl Kev Conlon**, **Sig Ady Rowden** and the two valley commandos, **Sigs Sam Price** and **Sarah Bowden**; and farewell **Sgt Nolan**, now on her YofS course, and **Sgt Ed Lockwood** and **LCpl Price**, leaving to join civilian street.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SO France**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M Brown**

As the summer draws to a close, the Sqn sees the return of most of its personnel from OP TELIC 2 and a return to normality. **Lt**

Zoe White is in command of the Regt's current contingent in Iraq, and the tp-size commitment that will exist from early October will be headed up by **Lt Lucy Fish**. Meanwhile, the Sqn embarks upon the ex season, starting with a Sqn concentration, EX RED HAND.

We farewell **Sgt Vince Key**, who departs for 2 Sig Regt; **Sgt Craig Brooksbank**, who makes the short journey across camp to Trg Wing; and **2Lt Anna Chomse**, who completes her gap-year commission and heads for Oxford University. Good Luck! We welcome **2Lt Bruce Scott**, recently commissioned from RMAS.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt CM Hill**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Cain**

We farewell **Sgts Bishop** and **Elliott**, both leaving on promotion to SSgt. Well done and good luck! Good luck and goodbye to **Sig Whiteley** and **Sig Spendlove**, who are both posted to Civ Div. Hello to **Sgt Setchfield**. You have two in-trays to empty! We welcome **LCpl Jennings**, from 7 Armd Bde; **Sig Ferris**, from 20 Armd Bde and **Sig Sunderland**, from the factory.

Both the Tp OC and SSgt returned from Iraq this month, and thrust us straight out on to EX RED HAND in Wales. For many of the Tp, this was the first ex, post AMF(L). Wales does not quite have the appeal of Norway! Meanwhile, elements of Alpha Tp continue to see op service in Iraq as part of JHF(I) Sig Sqn. We'll have the beer on ice for your return! Good luck to those in the Tp due to depart shortly for OP TELIC 3. Special mention to **Sig Bramfitt**, who has deployed to Morocco as part of EX JEBAL SAHARAH. As a dismounted MAOT, he is sure to return with a great tan! The Tp now faces a busy period with ex commitments in both UK and Norway.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt L Fish**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt M Pay**

Early September has seen the Tp preparing for deployment on the 244 Sqn EX RED HAND, the first phase involving a tp-level ex on STANTA. This time, however, we will be deploying without three of our trusty veterans, **Cpl Chas Charnley**, who leaves for Bovington on promotion, **LCpl Clark**, who is posted to 14 Sig Regt to put his MAOT skills to best use, and **Sig Al Croston**, who is headed for 3 Inf Bde. **Sig Gordy Arthur** is also leaving for civilian life. Soon to depart are the Tp Comd and **Sig McAskill**, who are off for a four-month stint in the Iraqi sandpit. Best of luck to you all!

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Z White**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt G Smillie**

We welcome new arrivals, **LCpl Mackie**, **Sig Robertson** and **Sig Granzow**. Hello also to **Sgt Chris Mulligan**, who finally escapes the role of Provost Sgt and gets to grip with being Rebro Recce!

The Tp has had success in the inter-Sqn March and Shoot, successfully winning the Log Race and the Competition overall. **LCpl Sherwin** led the team to victory through mud, water and over walls of great height. His shooting skills however were left wanting, with the lowest score - but at least he hit the target, once!

We are now about to deploy on EX RED HAND 1, the first ex deployment for over a year due to our OP TELIC commitments. This will be an eye-opener for some, as the Tp is presently very young in terms of rank and experience. Cam cream, stand-to's and lots of sleepless nights lay ahead…

ARMY

31 (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**LtCol SG Hutchinson MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Paterson**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Hudson**
SSM	**SSgt Browning**

EXERCISE COCKNEY SPLASH

On the morning of Monday 11 August our crew of seven departed Southfields, London for JSASTC, Gosport, where the skipper, **WO2 RQMS Si Hadley** and his number two, **Sgt Tony Carroll** took over the Corps yacht *Petasus*. At the same time, **SSgt Tony Wringe** and **Cpl Lafferty** were despatched for supplies. On their return, with no money left, the yacht was loaded with the supplies, and we were ready for the mandatory safety drills (which seemed to go on for weeks).

The brief over, we were finally under sail to Ocean Village, Southampton, where the skipper assured everyone that the nightlife was of the highest quality (he went on about this all that day). After several 'man overboard' drills en route, we arrived at Ocean Village, and everything was looking great. We moored in record time and were soon out to sample this, by now legendary, night life - only to hear from a voice (now well in the distance), 'I think they've knocked the pubs down lads. Beer in the cinema!'

As a result of this, we had an early start the following morning as we set off for Yarmouth, Isle of White. But this short leg was hindered by the lack of wind. However, after only 1 day, the crew became fairly efficient at raising and lowering the spinnaker. The following morning the CO, **LtCol Simon Hutchinson**, joined the crew. After initial steering problems and several U-turns, **SSgt Tony Wringe** had managed to collect him in the yacht's Mk 1 staff dinghy. The CO was duly welcomed aboard by the Adjt, **Capt Ian Rodger**, and we were soon on our way to Poole in Dorset. This was a far better day, as the wind was up and sailing was a lot more demanding, requiring 2 reefs in the main. **SSgt Roy Smith** kept the crew happy with bacon sandwiches and cups of tea, and after about five hours, we arrived safely at Poole.

That evening, with the CO in tow, the crew went to sample the delights of Poole Quay. At around 21.00hrs the CO made his apologies and departed back to camp. The next morning was a very cloudy day and the plan was to return to Yarmouth in about 4hrs. But a slight mis-calculation meant that we caught an opposing tide just inside The Needles. The skipper decided to anchor at Alum Bay to wait out the tide, which the crew took full advantage of for a bit of swimming and tanning. When the tide had turned, we made our way back to Yarmouth where the Mk 1 dinghy was in use again.

The final day was the best of the whole ex, as we had all by now become used to the yacht and the wind was behind us all the way back to Gosport. The speeds were up and the spray had increased, the only slight problem being when the skipper tried to play chicken with a cargo ship. We reached Gosport in one piece, thanks to a vigilant Harbourmaster and a very experienced skipper. The yacht was then handed back and we all returned safely to Southfields.

EXCHANGE TRIP TO 1111 SIGNAL BATTALION

- by SSgt (NRPS) Baz Roberts

On 13 July 2003, four members of the Regt, **WO2 Maurice Byrne**, **Sgt Martin Woodhouse**, **Sig Still** and I departed for Maryland, USA to be hosted by 1111 Sig Bn. We arrived mid afternoon and were taken to Fort Detrick to freshen up and go out

for a meal (the first of many). Monster steaks and sticky ribs were consumed, along with one or two glasses of the local brew.

The following morning we were transported to Site R, where we were all signed in. After a couple of days shift, and the odd diplomatic incident, we were treated to a barbecue at Coy OC, **Capt Lindstrom's** home, along with a few of our American colleagues, who looked after us admirably.

The following day was spent doing the Gettysburg Battlefield Tour, a trip that will live long in the memory. We took in the museum and the show at the auditorium, which brought home the enormity of the battle area. Our next stop, hosted by **SSgt Adrian Boatright**, was Washington DC, where we visited the Washington memorial, the White House and the Vietnam and Korean memorials. This trip happened to coincide with the visit of the Prime Minister, and as his procession of 40 vehicles passed, **Stan** was convinced that **Mr Blair** waved to him personally.

The Thursday morning PT session took the form of a softball match against Bravo Coy, who were soundly thrashed by Alpha, due in no small part to we Brits lending a hand.

Special thanks must go to **Alex**, **SSgt Elim**, **Tash** and the rest of HF Ops for hosting us so well, and making the trip truly memorable.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Lamb**
SSM	**WO2 Cooper**

We farewell **Maj Sarah Street**, who leaves us for greater things - initially in G3 at 2 (NC) Sig Bde and then on to command 97 (Balkans) Sig Sqn in Bosnia. In the immortal words of **Sig Tim Still**, 'She was all right.' – praise indeed within the TA. Also departed are **SSgt Hamblin** who, after a succession of career courses, finally left us for a place on the YofS course, and **LCpl King**, who was last seen at 145 Bde (V) Trg Team as a Sgt – after only 4 months!

We extend a warm welcome to the energetic **SSgt Sven Gronn**, who takes over as PSI, and **WO2 Cooper**, **SSgt Mickey Dowd**, **SSgt Hall**, **Cpl Back**, **LCpl Spilsted**, and **Sig Prescott**, who all returned safely but alas, without the expected deep tans, from the OP TELIC experience.

ANNUAL CAMP 2003

Annual camp 2003 was planned in secrecy, and no one really knew what was going on until it was too late. But once orders where given, we were off to a flying start. It was divided into comms and military trg phases and we were able to deploy and train with completely new (to us) secure VHF equipt. The mil skills phase at Thetford proved to be equally dynamic, with an exciting live firing range package organised by **SSgt Sven Gronn**.

EXERCISE PHOTO PLOD – *by Sig Tim Still*

Personally, I couldn't think of anything more adventurous than conquering some of the highest peaks along the South Downs. So along with 15 other 8-man teams from across the southeast, we began our 40-mile race from Steyning to the Birling Gap (near Beachy Head).

We took off at midnight on 5 June, with much excitement, fanfare and laughter, but the march proved to be extremely challenging, both physically and mentally. By the 5th mile, the jokes had dried up, and it was especially disheartening to see **Capt Ian Murray**, our PSAO (in the individual competition) whistle past us and disappear into the distance. We pressed on grimly.

Just before dawn, it started to rain, but by this time we could see the breakfast stop, manned by our Sqn chef, **SSgt Howe**. The thought of bacon and eggs had an incredible effect on our morale, and we were soon racing down the valley towards the halfway point. Over breakfast, we were reunited with our support team, led by **WO2 Cooper**, who had strategically placed themselves beside the cook tent. They where able to sort out our feet, and, with additional dry clothing, we where soon pounding the hills again.

The rest of the race descended into a battle for supremacy with Team 4 from Brighton County Council, and drawing on all our reserves of discipline and fitness, as well as unofficial extracts from the manoeuvrist approach, we were able to arrive at the finish ahead of them.

We completed the weekend with a tremendous sense of collective achievement and personal pride. It was precisely the sort of challenge we had all joined the Sqn for.

THE EASTBOURNE AIR SHOW

Once again the Sqn took the opportunity to deploy a recruiting stand on the beach to coincide with the Air Show during 22 – 24 August. This time however, we were joined by an extremely professional team from 3 PWRR (V). As a result of this joint operation, we were able to add a complete weapons gallery to the stand, which was a highlight for the audience.

Throughout the week, the stand was swamped by a good number of tourists and over a thousand kids wheeling harassed parents behind them. The potential recruit was a bit difficult to spot in the midst of this kindergarten invasion. Nevertheless, we were able to deal with a decent number of potential recruits, and despite stiff competition from the infantry, over 20 committed themselves to joining the Sqn. So, well done to **SSgt Young** and the recruiting team for their efforts.

94 (BERKSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj H Robertson TD**
SSM	**WO2 P Watson**

EXERCISE MARBLE TOR

After much begging over the last 2 years, the OC managed to secure an opportunity for the Sqn to go on EX MARBLE TOR in Gibraltar. With 22 members being deployed on OP TELIC, the ex was also opened up to other members of the Regt to ensure there were no empty spaces on the flight. The SSM finally managed to get himself mobilised with Media Ops, so his place was taken by **WO2 Dave Davies**. We also had with us members of the Postal and Courier Det from Mill Hill, 4 members of 238 Sig Sqn, under **Cpl Clarke**, a West Midlands Fusilier and a WO2 from HAC. This made a total of 93 people, of whom about half had never met before. One of the first tasks therefore, was to mix everyone up into 3 Tps under the command of some young thrusting officers, **Lt Mike Zazzi** (from 41 Sig Sqn), **Lt Jon Browning** (not so young and thrusting) and **2Lt Nick Storey** (tall).

The three wise monkeys, 2Lt Nick Storey, Capt Steve Hudson and Lt Jon Browning toast the Regt on the last night

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2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col Stuart MacRostie MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Dick**

After the return of the Regt from Iraq and some well-deserved summer leave in August, we were back at work on 1 September. A busy month followed, including an enjoyable two weeks AT at Penhale, successfully organised by our newly-arrived Artificer, **SSgt Foster** REME. We received visits from the outgoing and incoming Master of Signals, GOC Th Tps, **MajGen Shaw**, and a farewell visit from the Bde Comd, **Brig Le Gallais**.

GOC Th Tps Maj Gen JM Shaw and the CO, having some serious discussion on the future business plan

RSM, CO and the Master

The CO leads the Regt through the streets of York

Cambrian Patrol Team training

While some soldiers remain deployed on OPs VERITAS and FINGAL, others have departed to Kenya on EX GRAND PRIX with the Grenadier Guards and to Gibraltar on *HMS Cardiff*. The Regt received an exceptionally warm reception from the people of York on Saturday 4 Oct when we exercised our Freedom of the City of York by marching through the town with bayonets fixed and swords drawn. In barracks, the Regt is training and preparing for the second CORMORANT Systems Field Trial in November.

The Regtl Boxing team, the Lanyard Trophy Team and the Cambrian Patrol team are all training hard to build on the successes of last year.

ROYAL SIGNALS ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS

- by 2Lt Sarah Panting

OIC	**Capt Craig**
2IC	**WO2 Griffiths**

After a social evening and the cabaret aboard *Pride of Rotterdam*, the 2 Sig Regt team, **Capt Dougie Craig**, **Capt Pete Lockitt AGC (SPS)**, **Lt Hanna Frost**, **2Lt Sarah Panting**, **WO2 (RAWO) Pete Hubbert** AGC(SPS), **WO2 (RQMS) Pete Griffiths**, **WO2 (SSM) Neil Cooper**, **SSgt Chris Bailey**, **Cpl Pikendra**, **Cpl Pete Wright REME**, **LCpl Max Maxted**, **Sig Amy Johnson**, **Sig Spotswood** and **Pte Donu** AGC (SPS), arrived in Elmpt to compete in the Corps Orienteering Championships. The team's orienteering experience ranged from complete novice to seasoned runner.

On the first day we all ran the Short O heats, and were then streamed into the A and B final courses. Moments to remember included the puzzled looks at the start line when **Capt Craig** glanced at his map and took the infamous left turn that he was not allowed to forget for the rest of the trip. A couple of minutes later, he was seen running back again in the opposite direction - this time with his map the right way up!

The weather stayed sunny for all three days, and the ground under foot allowed for pretty fast going, apart from tripping over the odd hidden tree stump or getting tangled in a patch of stinging nettles.

The team was evenly split over the A and B courses, and we all ran well, with **2Lt Panting** winning the Short Course Ladies U25, and **Lt Frost** winning the Short Course Ladies Runner-Up prize. The Quality Street was extremely popular with proud fellow team members!

The Individual Score Event took place early on Saturday morning. There were 19 controls, with an hour to collect as many as possible. The team scores ranged from 4 controls to 17, depending on individual map reading disasters! 2 Sig Regt did well on this event in spite of feeling stiff from the day (and evening!) before. **2Lt Panting** was the Ladies Individual U25 winner, **WO2 Griffiths** won the Men's 35 category, and **Captain Craig** the Men's 40 winner.

The last day was the team competition. 2 Sig Regt put in two teams of six, one of which was the Ladies Team. Again we emerged triumphant, in spite of several mishaps, including **Lt Frost** leaving her emit card at the start. The A Team was the Corps Major Unit Men's Runners-Up, and the Ladies Team left as the Corps Major Unit Ladies Champions.

The whole team put in a considerable effort and enjoyed the competition, expertly organised by **Maj Crosby** and hosted by 7 Sig Regt. The courses were a pleasure to run and the sunny German weather made for an excellent weekend away.

2 Sig Regt Orienteering team. Back Row, L-R: 2Lt Panting, Capt Lockitt, SSgt Bailey, WO2 Griffiths, WO2 Hubbert, WO2 Cooper, Sig Spotswood, Cpl Maxted
Front Row, L-R: Pte Donu, Cpl Pikendra, Capt Craig, Sig Johnson, Lt Frost, Cpl Wright.

ARMY BENEVOLENT FUND

On Saturday, 20 September six soldiers from the Regt went to downtown York to stand in the streets for four hours with collection boxes to raise money for the Army Benevolent Fund. The team was astounded by the generosity and goodwill of the public, who were literally throwing money at them. The money raised in that short time came to an astonishing £1,341.43!! The cheque was presented to the ABF's NE Chairman, **Brig (Retd) Gaskell**.

The successful collection team, Sgt Monagle, Sig Bain, Sig Wray, Sig Fleming, LCpl Blundell, Sig Prakash, and the CO handing the cheque to Brig (Retd) Gaskell

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Major SA Clarke GM QGM**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) P Haughton**

Sqn HQ has seen many changes on our return from OP TELIC. We say farewell to **Capt Higgins**, off to 7 Sig Regt. **Capt Dougie Craig**, our new 2IC and UWO is hoping to keep a hold of **Cpl Karen Williamson**, **LCpl Fleming** and **Pte Donu** our latest Fijian arrival. We loose **WO2 Pete Griffiths**, who moves to RQMS(A) and is replaced by **WO2 (SSM) Paul Haughton**.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1 (FofS) R Batley**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D Cartledge**

With the Tp having settled back into routine after summer and POTL, OP TELIC is now all but a distant memory. Its now business as usual, with the newly formed Maint Sec now up and running under the watchful eye of **SSgt Dave Covey**. When not preparing for inspections, two of the Sec, **Cpl Gav Drewry** and **LCpl Isaac Fong** are generally away playing Corps Rugby. To keep them busy, the Foreman has kindly given the Sec the responsibility of mods for the Regt, as well as any 'little jobs' that come in!

Congratulations to **Cpl Joe Binder**, on his promotion, and welcome to **Cpl John Mackenzie** from 600 Sig Tp, **Cpl Gilly Gilbert** from 30 Sig Regt, **LCpl Fryer** from 3 (UK) Armoured Divisional Signal Regt and **LCpl Stu Pickup** straight from the factory.

REGIMENTAL MT

We farewell **Cpl Pierrepoint**, **LCpl Blundell**, **Sig Fleming** and **Sig Tucker**, who have gone to 219 Sig Sqn; **LCpls Wyllie**, **Sharpe** and **Simmons**, who have gone to 214 Sig Sqn; and to **Sig Blackham**, who goes of Civvy Street.

We welcome **Sig Mattison** and family from Germany; **Sigs Santander** and **Clayton** straight from Phase 2 trg, and congratulate **Capt Nuttall**, who has returned to us on completion of his MTO course.

ISM DEPARTMENT

We welcome **Sgt Mark Brundle**, from 1 (UK) ADSR; **Cpl Steve Graham**, from 15 Sig Regt and **Cpl Dave Lester**, from 214 Sig Sqn. We farewell **Sgt McKnight**, who leaves us for civilian life and **Cpl Lee Warren**, who is going on tour to Florida in November. We congratulate **SSgt Bell**, who was promoted in the Gulf and is selected for the IS Supervisor board.

REGTIMENTAL GENERATOR BAY

The Gene Bay has undergone many changes since returning from OP TELIC. We congratulate newly-promoted **WO2 Pete Crawford**, who has left us for 38 Sig Regt (V) in Sheffield. We welcome his replacement **SSgt Collins**, from 16 Sig Regt. Whilst awaiting for a new boss, the RGB was held together by **Cpl Trotman**, and his sidekick **Cpl Barn**, promoted on posting from 14 Sig Regt. Other new faces include **Sig Spotswood**, from 7 Sig Regt and **Sig Hanning**, from 1 Mech Bde Sig Sqn.

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

QM (Gen)	**Maj Krishna Gurung BEM**
RQMS (Gen)	**WO2 Wells**

Sgt Oldfield has now returned after his 6 month in the Falklands. We farewell **Sgt Richie Howard**, to 7 Sig Regt, and congratulate him on picking up his third stripe while serving in the Gulf earlier this year. Congratulations also to **Sig Rob** and **Kelly Reid** on the birth of daughter, **Morgan.** Lastly, we welcome **Maj Gurung** from 31 Sig Regt.

We sent **SSgt Stu Taylor** to Kuwait on a four-day recce of Arifjhan, which took 11 weeks. He then came back to take care of things in York with **Sigs Kelly Grey**, **Jesse Kolikata**, **Mark Hamblin** and **Cpl Micky Potter** to keep an eye on the younger ones of the group.

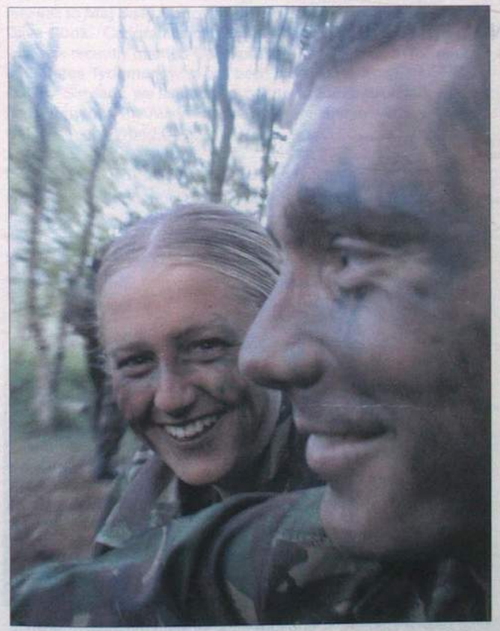
214 SIGNAL SQN

OC	**Maj S Gillespie**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Cooper**

VIKING TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Boag**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D Icke**

Viking Tp has been busy with a with a trg programme, including presentations, a comd task day, orienteering and a field craft day.



Sig Thrower and LCpl Wilson on EX VIKINGS CHALLENGE

The fieldcraft ex got off to a good start, with **Sig Chadwick** observing an enemy patrol with a SUSAT cover on! The ex, set up by **SSgt Icke,** was to provide revision of fieldcraft and mil skills, including orders, recce patrols, pairs fire and manoeuvre, personal admin and the six sec battle drills for members of 214 Sig Sqn. Recce patrols were sent out, providing **Cpl Hodgeson** an opportunity to stumble across the enemy campfire and **Sig Chadwick** to do his Tom Beringer impression with his scrim net around his head. Out on stag, **Sig Thrower** found some cam string and decided to give it a tug to see what it was. It was a comms cord, and brought her whole section to their Stand-to positions, thinking they were about to come under attack.

SAXON TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt H Frost**
Troop	**SSgt M Wigmore**

Saxon Tp is the second Cormorant Tp in the Sqn and are not due to begin our Cormorant trg until the beginning of next year. Currently we don't have any vehs or equipt to maintain, but our bosses have kept us busy by making sure we all pass our ITDs at least 3 times over - and the less said about PT the better.

We have also been brushing up on some of our lesson techniques, and were given the task of delivering a 30min lesson/presentation to the rest of the Sqn on a topic of our choice, with only a couple of days to prepare. The day began with a presentation on Moto-Cross by **Sig Honeybun**, and ended with **Sig Gregory** on press-ups. The highlight of the day was **Sig Clark**, with his brief presentation on making a cup of coffee. We also had the privilege of being taught some 70's disco dancing by **LCpl Akrill**, who preformed a miracle on **Sigs Smedley** and **Thrower**. All in all, it was a very enjoyable and successful day for all. Were all looking forward to the opportunity to do it all again - really!

ROMAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt I Flannery**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt MA Tench**

All of Roman Tp have now returned from OP TELIC, and have been using our time wisely, brushing up on mil skills and the odd task or ten from the SQMS. We welcome to **Sigs Bloor**, **Dickinson**, **Hart**, **Lynch**, **Murphy** and **Newbrook** all straight from the factory; LCpl **Sharp**, from 3 Div Sig Regt; **Sigs Wray** and **Grainger**, from 16 Sig Regt and **Sig Preece**, from 8 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. We farewell **Sig Welburn**, who has left us for 16 Sig Regt.

Sgt Pope is off to rough it in Tampa Bay on OP VERITAS. It is very hard work out there, according to **Cpl Gallagher** and **Sig Bain**, who returned 3 months ago to find that they can longer fit into their number 2 dress - still! **Cpl Gallagher**, **LCpl Wilson**, **Sigs Shaw**, **Wray** and **Chadwick** are off on OP FINGAL. And the telemechs are off to Africa for 6 weeks on EX AFRICAN SHIELD. **Sgt Lee-Davis**, **LCpl Dent**, **Sigs Preece** and **Siwadi** are off to lay fibre with the lions and elephants.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Rab Young**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Daz Abson**

With personnel currently in Afghanistan, Kenya, Tampa, Iraq and Canada, and with commitments for the Balkans, the Falklands and a JOCOMEX in Gibraltar coming up, the Sqns air miles should be enough to get the OC on a much needed golfing holiday to beat **SSgt Gallagher**, who destroyed all comers in the Regtl golf competition.

With further exs to support in UK and manpower detached to the Regtl Maint Tp and the Regtl Boxing Team, the remainder are doing a superb job to ensure that the Sqn's vehs are ready for inspections and taskings.

The Sqn 2IC, **Capt Sue Jeffery**, returned from OP VERITAS, and once the leave pass was completed, was away for some much deserved leave. The new Yeoman, **SSgt (YofS) Brendan Plant** came, saw, moved some furniture around and disappeared on his EFP. Luckily, it's being held at York so he's not escaped outside the wire yet. Finally, we welcome **LCpl Witty** and **Cpl Doyle**, to 219.

FALCON TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Andy Nicklin**
TP SSgt	**SSgt Reg Gutteridge**

We have now entered a busy period, with numerous 1st and 2nd line inspections being carried out on the wagons on their return from the Gulf. EX EAGLES EYE is just around the corner and we still have people in Tampa, Afghanistan and Kenya.
On the social side, we farewell our Tp Comd, **Lt Andy Nicklin**, who is posted to Shrivenham, and **Cpl Dave Needham**, off to civvy street and the 'Land of the Free' to find his fortune and marry his fiancée. New arrivals include **Sgt Rob Smith** and **LCpl Al Cowan**. Congratulations to **Sig Wood** and wife on the birth of their first child.

PHOENIX TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Frazer Keith**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Liam Tosh**

By the last week in July, most of the Tp had returned from OP TELIC and the Sqn went on some well-earned POTL/ block leave. After that, we had a turn around of personalities. With the departure of **SSgt Derek Peters** to 16 Sig Regt came the arrival of **SSgt Liam Tosh** on promotion from 264 Sig Sqn. **LCpl Ashley** came in from HQNI, **Sigs McNee** and **Proud** from Blandford and **Sig Heard** from 19 Mech Bde and Sig Sqn. We farewelled **Cpl Watts,** on promotion to Sgt, to Portsmouth We welcome back **LCpl Jones** from EX LONG LOOK and **LCpl Kerr** from OP FINGAL.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Ade Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2(SSM)Tarabahadur Pun**

The Sqn on return from OP TELIC and POTL have now recovered all the Trunk assets from Ashchurch. The Sqn plug-up ex, EX SHARP KHUKRI II, took place from 8 - 11 September 03 to confirm the equipt was back in working order. This period has also seen the regime change in the Sqn. We said a fond farewell to **Maj Julius Ceasar,** who is off to a course at RMCS Shrivenham with **Lisajane** Memsahib and children. The Sqn 2IC,

Maj Ade Clewlow and Capt(QGO) Krishna with their ladies

Capt(QGO) Rajendraman Gurung has left the Sqn to go to RSS Blandford. We wish them and their families all the best of good luck at Shrivenham and Blandford. This is without doubt a high turnover of key personalities, with additional farewells to **Lt(QGO) Ratanabahdur Pun** and his family who are posted to Brunei and have been replaced by **Lt(QGO) Buddhibahadur Gurung**, arriving from Nepal Sig Tp.

This brings the new OC, **Maj Ade Clewlow**, **Mafalda** Memsahib and their 21-month old son, **Sebastian** onto the Sqn nominal roll, followed by the new 2IC, **Capt(QGO) Krishnabahadur Gurung** and his family. In accordance with Sqn tradition and taking the advantage of the English summer, a Sqn barbecue was organised on 7 September to honour and welcome the new OC and 2IC.

Since our return, life continues to be busy. Sqn personnel are still committed on various Ops – VERITAS (**Capt Dave Farragher** has justified his necessity on this Op), FINGAL, TELIC (manning Corsham Hub) and roulement at JCUFI. The Sqn is also very active fulfilling other Regtl commitments, such as Freedom of York Parade, maint of all equipt on loan from other units, providing manpower for CAMBRIAN PATROL - and so the list goes on.

Jai 246 Sqn, Jai 2 Sig Regt!

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col IPF Vingoe**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) D Hancock**

With the Regt still committed to a variety of current ops, life remains far from dull, with battlefield tours, lots of AT and prep for ops.

FAREWELL PARADE FOR BRIGADIER LE GALLAIS

30 Sig Regt was proud to hold a farewell parade for **Brig Le Gallais**, Comd 11 Sig Bde on Friday 3 October. Rarely have so many members of the Regt massed together on the square, but it was pride combined with sadness. Before reviewing the Regt on horseback, **Brig Le Gallais** was presented with several gifts both from the Regt and the Bde of Gurkhas.

EX SWAN VALOUR - *by Capt Sarah Pittaway*

EX SWAN VALOUR was a battlefield tour of the D Day landings at Normandy, providing an opportunity for members of the Regt to improve their knowledge of events, and thus their understanding, of WW2. Following a comfortable (?) overnight ferry crossing to Cherbourg, we drove inland, where the CO, **Lt Col Vingoe**, conducted a whistle stop tour of world events leading to the outbreak of WW2. With this in mind, we visited Pegasus Bridge and the glider landing site of **Maj John Howard** and his Coy. After lunch we drove to Caen and after more museum tours, tested our French skills with the locals. **Cpl Freeland** proved that

Pegasus Bridge

rejection is easier to take in a foreign language and **LCpl Ski** and **Cpl Allen's** disco diva acts are clearly best left at home!

The second day included a visit to the 3D cinema and museum at Arromanches, and then in the evening we went out in downtown Bayeux, a picturesque medieval town with plenty to offer. Before leaving Bayeux we visited the military cemetery and paid or respects to those there, including many Signallers. Our final day was spent looking at the landing beaches. The weather was suitably grey and wet as we stood on Omaha Beach and looked up at the German encasements and firing points. We also visited the American cemetery at Colleville St Laurent, to round off an excellent tour.

INTER SQUADRON WATER POLO COMPETITION

As rivalry between the Sqns continues to thrive in Bramcote, the water polo competition proved to be no less competitive than the other, land based sports. In a fun afternoon of kicking, punching and dunking, Sp Sqn unsurprisingly (because they organised it!) emerged victorious, with 256 Sig Sqn in a close second.

NATO DEMO AND EXERCISE BATTERING RAM - *256 Sig Sqn*

Following a period of change, where both the OC, **Maj John Adams** and 2IC, **Capt Rhydian Jones** were posted and replaced by **Maj Marcus Chambers** and **Capt Sarah Pittaway** respectively, the Sqn has settled into routine once more as the JTFHQ Sqn. As part of this, Charlie Tp deployed on 3 September to Watisham Airfield to prepare for the NATO demo. EX BATTERING RAM was a plug-up ex for the JTFHQ Tp and everything went well. Our morning PT sessions only added to the enjoyment. Just to prove that you cannot possibly have too much of a good thing, we deployed immediately onto the Sqn ITD Camp.

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON ITD CAMP

With the change round of the Sqn hierarchy it was important to get out of bks and spend some time trg as a Sqn. Once again it proved that refresher trg is always worthwhile and a few cobwebs were blown away. **Cpl Graham** would like to thank **Sig Cole** for his expert wheel-changing ability, but requests that next time he puts all the nuts back on the wheel! It was all good trg for the deployment of Sqn elements on EX AFRICAN SHIELD, in Pretoria, later on this month.

THE NEW LOOK SQUADRON - *258 Sig Sqn*

This last month has seen a change at the top, and the Sqn bids farewell to **Maj Sally Donovan**, who has been replaced by **Maj Clive Cook**. Congratulations also to the 2IC, **Capt Jon Mayne**, who has recently married **Caroline**. We have also seen the return of **Lt Jules Tydeman**, who has been working hard on EX LONG LOOK. Similarly, we say bon voyage to **Lt Stevo Brennan**, who has returned to the Australian Army, just in time to watch England win the Rugby World Cup.

EXERCISE LONG LOOK - *by Lt Jules Tydeman*

From May to September, I participated on EX LONG LOOK, spending 4 months as a Tp Comd with 103 Sig Sqn in Townsville, Australia. 103 Sig Sqn is part of 3 Comd Support Regt (CSR) and is 190 strong. For the duration of the exchange I was assigned

Lt Jules Tydeman getting to grips with one of the local Sheilas on EX LONG LOOK

comd of CNR Tp, responsible for providing 3 Bde with secure HF and VHF voice comms. Unfortunately, I never had the pleasure of 'going bush' with the unit, as my attachment dates did not coincide with any Bde exs. However, I was able to deploy into the bks trg area. But I had other arduous duties to partake in, namely, visits to other units in Canberra, Sydney, Wagga Wagga and Melbourne, as well as diving on the Great Barrier Reef. I was also able to watch England destroy the Wallabies in their warm-up tour for the World Cup.

In summary, EX LONG LOOK has been one of the highlights of my short, yet eventful, career to date. Not only was I given an opportunity to get an insight into the role of our Australian counterparts, but I was also able to enjoy a few of the attractions that Australia has to offer. I found that, without exception, the Australian Army is a highly professional and well-motivated Army with whom it was a pleasure to serve.

GURKHA CELEBRATIONS - *250 Gurkha Sig Sqn*

This time of year is very busy for all ranks in QGS, with the Gurkha festivals of *Dashain* and *Tihar*, as well as the 54th Birthday of QGS. All members of the Sqn look forward to celebrating these festivities in style. With the departure of OC Sqn, **Maj Rich Moir** to Nepal for his Nepalese long language course, control of the Sqn has been left in the capable hands of the 2IC, **Capt Dhan**. The Sqn tasks of OP BASILISK and Spearhead Lead Element (SLE) remain with the Sqn, although they have rotated through the Tps. Later in October, **Lt Buddhi** leads EX AFRICAN SHIELD, whilst **Lt Alex Stanger** departs with members of X-ray Tp to the Balkans for a 6-month tour.

Members of X-Ray Troop, 250 GSS with SLE equipment, Sep 03.

EXERCISE WELCOME THE DRAGON - *by LCpl Govinda Rai*

On 18 August, Victor Tp departed for Wasdale Campsite in the Lake District to conduct AT. Scafell (964m), Scafell Pike (977m, and highest peak in England) Crag Peak (935m) and Great End (910m) were all conquered in quick time, carrying 4 day's rations, tents, water and spare clothes – hard, but enjoyable work! We climbed 8 different peaks above 900m and walked more than 60 km up and down hills throughout the exped. Everyone in the group agreed that it was a new experience to visit an unfamiliar part of England, and it was certainly challenging and enjoyable.

EXERCISE SMILING DRAGON

EX SMILING DRAGON was an offshore sailing exped in the Andaman Sea, to the West of Thailand. **LCpl Milan** was the greatest landlubber of the exped, whilst **LCpl Balkrishna** coped much better - until the weather started to produce some horrendous Force 10s, when everyone became a little apprehensive. The South West Monsoon was very exciting because every rainstorm was different, giving everything from light showers with loads of wind, to horizontal rain, huge waves and ridiculous winds that were impossible to sail in. So the R and R phase was a welcome break after the rigours of these storms. Three days were spent at the resort of Patong, before returning to Bangkok and flying home. A particular highlight was **Cpl Vernon** getting chatted up by some 'lady boys'.

MARRIAGE OF LCPL TREVOR REILLY AND STACEY

The Regtl MT participated in the marriage of **LCpl Trev Reilly** recently, by providing a Regtl MT Guard of Honour. With bands playing and flags flying, the lads said a fond farewell to **LCpl Reilly's** bachelorhood at the Oratory Church in Birmingham. After a couple of nerve settlers in the local RBL Club (it adds to the marching swagger!) and an impromptu Standard Bearer/Honour Guard drill lesson on a Birmingham front street by ex Corps RSM, **Capt Sean Keilty**, we were ready to give it our all. Suffice to say there was not a dry eye in the house.

Many a drink was offered (and accepted) at the reception afterwards and with the comments from admirers about uniforms, medals, soldiers and feeling weak at the knees, many of the Guard felt it was a pity that they were already married. The day was a great success and Sp Sqn and 30 Sig Regt wish **Trev** and **Stacey** a very happy future together.

The Honour Guard, Bride and Groom. L-R: Cpl Broderick, Tpr Doyle, LCpl Reilly, Capt Keilty, Cpl Watson, LCpl Russell, Stacy Reilly in arms and flanked by Quinton RBL Standard Bearers.

34 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**LtCol G Hearn**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D Newton**

49 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj Mark Finch**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Carr**

EX GREAT NORTH RUN - *by 2Lt Darryl McKerr*

On 21 September twelve members from 49 Sqn took part in the Great North Run, but unlike most other runners, they decided not to run it but to tab it, wearing 15 kg Bergens and boots. This was of course all in aid of charity. The two chosen were the Army Benevolent Fund (ABF) and the Paediatrics Ward at Hull Royal Infirmary, where a common room for adolescents will be redecorated.

The run started off in true TA style, with **Sig Stead** trying to mirror **Sgt Key** in the kitchen by cooking a nice greasy fry-up. He did him proud. From there it was a case of straight to the start line. We sat patiently on the grass near the cramped 7-minute mile runners, waiting for a space to join the start. Fortunately, it wasn't long before a gap sufficiently large enough for twelve people appeared, so we just slotted in. That's not pushing in, it's called using your head!

The event went very well and the atmosphere was fantastic - 47,000 people there to compete in the same thing as us. The best thing about it was that everyone was so friendly, whether they were competing or spectating, all having something encouraging to say to each other. This was especially noticeable for the first few miles until the field began to thin out. However, certain comments started to get a bit frustrating after a while, comments such as; 'What's inside your rucksacks?' 'How much do they weigh?' 'Have you been to Iraq?' 'You lot should be running this,' 'You're out of step.' But we all kept smiling, regardless.

We completed the event in just under 3hrs 13mins, slightly faster than CFT pace - and with an injured person, too. After the first few miles, **Cpl Bedford** fell when she tripped on some road markings, causing her to put her back out. But in true stubborn **Cpl B** style, she refused to quit and in doing so, allowed the team to start and finish as a squad. The most important thing was that all enjoyed the weekend, and money was raised for two very rewarding charities. The final total is expected to be over £1,000.

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj JD Bailey**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) L Middleton**

We welcome the following recruits into the Sqn: **Sigs Nick Barrett**, **Steven Dunn**, **Darren Greatbatch**, **Mark Patterson** and **Craig Weller**. A few welcome additions to our extended Sqn family are **Matthew James**, son of **Sig Jackie Courtney**, and **Neeve Kathryn**, daughter of **Sig Kath Pulford.**

It is with much regret that the Sqn has said farewell to **Lt Jo Barr**. After an eventful 2 years with 742 Tp at Debdon Gardens, she has taken the plunge into the Regular Army. We thank her for all her efforts and entertainment over the last 2 years, and wish her all the best with RCB and the forthcoming 44 weeks.

Debdon Gardens also loses their SPSI, **SSgt Chris Ogg**. **Chris** has put in a huge amount of hard work during his time with 742 Tp, and has arranged and contributed to many Sqn and Regtl activities. We wish him all the very best with his future posting to 16 Sig Regt.

Being a chef is one of the hardest tasks in the Army, usually unthanked, and with all that getting up very early in order to prepare breakfast for us. **Sgt Mark Phillips** has decided to hang up his whites and apron to support Sunderland full time. So for all the times we should have thanked **Mark** for the meals he prepared for us, we thank him now for all his efforts.

Cpl Craig Straughan is off to Kenya on detachment. Currently, he is on pre-deployment leave bathing in mosquito and lion repellent. We are sure he will enjoy his tour in the sun, and bring us all something back. We welcome **2Lt Joanna Burke**, who has successfully passed TACC, and wish her all the best with her TA career.

OPERATIONAL TOURS

While most of our lucky soldiers on ops remain either in the desert or in the Balkans, one particular individual has made it home safe and sound. We welcome home **Lt Karen Ford** from her stint on OP OCULUS, and look forward to hearing her interesting stories in due course as she settles down to hard work at Durham University.

EXERCISE KESWICK CAPERS

Having had to postpone the off-road driving weekend arranged by **SSgt Jeff Martin**, we quickly rearranged an alternative ex, based out of Keswick in the Lake District. The main focus for this weekend was a nav ex. The Sqn's star navigator, **SSgt Pete Robinson** planned a challenging course, which would test all those attempting it. Unfortunately for him, he could not attend the weekend due a long-standing family commitment. However, he still undertook all the admin and prep for it. As the ex approached, 90 Sqn also had to change their planned trg for the same weekend, so elected to join us, boosting the numbers participating. We were blessed with excellent weather as our happy band set off for the Newlands Valley. The only hiccup was the route, requiring the minibuses to cross the narrow bridge at Little Town, negotiated with much skill by **Capt Jenny Bowes**. Returning after a tiring day, we finally made it back to the campsite to enjoy a fine barbeque prepared by **SSgt (SQMS) Colin Ridley** and **Sgt Cliffy Readshaw**. Great fun enjoyed by all.

PRE-CAMP JUNIOR RANKS FUNCTION

In final prep for the upcoming annual camp, and get our mindset right, the mandatory Junior Ranks Function was held. **Capt JJ Wilson** organised the impressive function. PMC for the evening was **LCpl Shaun Byrne** and Mr Vice was **Sig Rama Sinha**. Joining the Sqn for the evening were the RSM, **WO1 Daz Newton** and the TOT, **Capt Simon Land**, an ex 50 Sqn soldier himself. Due to the absence in Australia of the OC, **Maj Jez Bailey**, **Lt Paul Denning** took up the post of acting chair monitor and tried in vain to entertain the troops with his after dinner speaking. Following the formalities, the disco was turned up, and we all danced the night away.

EXERCISE ROBIN'S SONG

Annual camp, this time at STANTA, was with us again. Arriving at the Regtl Concentration area, Watton Airfield, we started the process of battle prep, a PACEX followed by IBCP. Once the comms assets were ready, we turned our attention to mil skills with a day of anti-ambush drills, section battle drills, FIBUA trg BATCO and mast-rigging. Then with all our prep complete it was off to war, and TN035 set off to its first loc, only to be rudely disturbed by the local farmer, a certain 'Mr Smith' - a very shifty looking character. Having hidden deep in the woods, we struggled to get our links in while fighting off the restless locals and chasing our farmer, 'Mr Smith' once again. Then, with a sense of foreboding, we found our next loc was the FIBUA village. Having established ourselves in a safe corner of the FIBUA village, 'Mr Smith' appeared once more, this time with another 'Mr Smith' (genetics must have played a strange trick on evolution in STANTA). Urban hostilities developed into our final confrontation, which can be best described as a quiet night on Newcastle Quayside. Weary but content, we finally left our village and headed back to bks at Wreatham Camp, for hot showers and uncomfortable beds.

Ah! That's where I put my pacemaker. SSgt Faulder

90 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj R Lenton**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Ward**

REGIMENTAL MULTI-ACTIVITY WEEKEND

90 Sqn managed to excel at the Regtl Weekend in Cumbria, even in non-competitive activities. Middlesbrough, having a tradition of fine shipbuilding and being the birthplace of **Capt James Cook**, we continued this heritage in raft-building, where the careful application of Archimedes' Principle led to some very interesting raft designs (none of which would have passed a marine safety inspection!)

Gill scrambling proved to be a most revealing activity in more ways than one for certain members of 34 Sig Regt. For the greater part of the activity, **2Lt Helen Baxter** of 90 Sqn participated without any backside in her trousers, being assured by the team that it was just a small tear and that no one would really notice!

BIRTWISTLE TROPHY

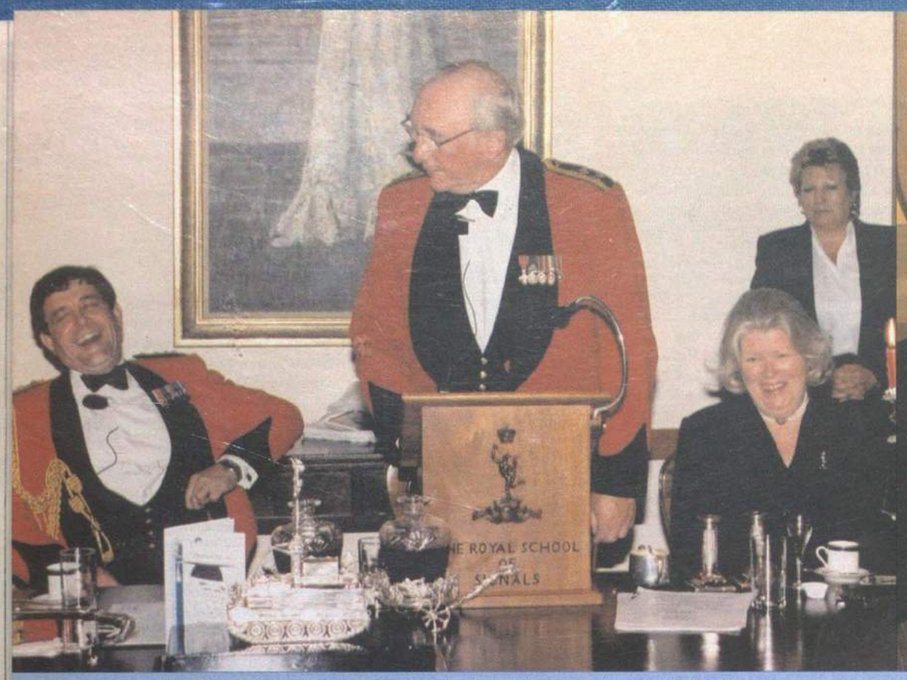
Following last year's disappointment at coming a close second, this year we claimed the Birtwistle trophy decisively. One event was carrying a large, heavy ammo box around the assault course. The usual approach is to share the burden amongst all team members. However, **Capt Andy Black**, OC LAD, took a totally different approach by strapping the box and its contents to his back, completing the task single-handed. Proving that size does matter, his Olympian feat was admired by many female onlookers!

Navigation proved to be a challenge for OC 90 Sqn, **Maj Richard Lenton**, when his guide (who shall remain nameless) produced a compass for the orienteering stand. Unfortunately the compass had de-polarised, giving a perfect reciprocal bearing. After 10 minutes of running south instead of north, giving directions to the CO and guiding **MajGen Birtwistle** to a stand, **Maj Lenton** realised the problem, and producing his own compass, quickly resumed command!

The NBC stand provided the ultimate challenge for 90 Sqn. Dressed in full NBC kit they navigated, with a rather eccentric instructor, along a path towards two chemical attacks and a stretcher casualty. For **Cpl Pete Hope**, the challenge of working in an NBC environment with temperatures of up to 25° C simply wasn't enough. His suggestion to run in the respirator and suit was taken quite literally by the rest of the team. Onlooking personnel from the RAF Regt were left wondering whether 90 Sqn had gone bonkers!

The final events of the Trophy were held on Wretham camp sports field, where in the Tug of War, 90 Sqn lost out to HQ Sqn, whose cumulative weight could have acted as a counter balance to Canary Warf. However, in the end, skill and guile won out, and 90 Sqn managed to claim this year's Birtwistle Trophy, presented by **MajGen Birtwistle** himself.

MajGen Birtwistle presenting the Birtwistle Trophy to 2Lt Baxter, with the CO looking on



The Master's farewell speech is punctuated by another gem of masterly wit

MajGen Sprackling with his sons, Simon and Robert and wife, Annie

Released at last, MajGen Sprackling is towed off in the traditional manner

FAREWELL TO THE MASTER

On the evening of 9 October, the retiring Master of Signals, **Maj Gen Ian Sprackling OBE**, was dined out at Blandford Garrison Officers Mess. He was accompanied by his wife, **Annie** and sons, **Simon** and **Robert**. More than 200 officers sat down to see him off. Guests included the Corps Committee and **Brig Gen Donny Banks**, the Canadian Representative Colonel Commandant.

The Band and Pipes and Drums of the Royal Corps of Signals provided a musical accompaniment to the meal and a few turns afterwards. Following Fanfares, Loyal Toasts and Regimental Marches, the SOinC(A), **Brig David McDowall MBE ADC** commenced his farewell speech to the Master, who, in his reply, brought many rounds of applause and bursts of laughter with his sparkling wit.

Gen Sprackling was presented with a silver salver, a matching pair of silver Victorian candlesticks and a silver picture frame. **Mrs Annie Sprackling** received a huge bouquet of flowers. The Master presented his gift to the Corps, a large barometer. The Corps Committee had previously presented him with a framed cartoon collage of themselves.

In due course, the appointed hour arrived, and shortly after midnight, accompanied by 50 torch-bearing Majors, the retiring Master of Signals was ceremoniously towed off in a highly polished Landrover by a similar number of Lieutenant Colonels, all preceded by outriders from the White Helmets and the Band playing the Corps March.

The Master hands his farewell present to the Corps to the SOinC(A)

The SOinC(A) presents a bouquet to a much-deserving Lady

The Master receives the Corps farewell present to him from the SOinC(A)

The Master demonstrates one of his many skills, conducting the Corps Band playing the Corps March

The Corps Committee present the Master with their farewell present

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col CR Owen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) RG Dalton**

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Summer leave was rapidly fading into the background as intensive preparations for our Annual Camp at Okehampton took centre stage. Some difficulties had already been encountered, particularly manning problems caused by many personnel being mobilised and others opting for essential trade trg.

The programme for camp had to be quickly condensed to take this into account, and to ensure that those attending received maximum benefit from the wide range of military trg activities planned. This quick reshuffle fell to the new Trg Maj, **Maj Butch Maycock** and his small trg team of selected SPSIs, who, with only days to go before deployment, were under considerable pressure to put it all together and make it work. In particular, the range orders had to be refined to ensure that all those selected to form pseudo inf secs passed the various field firing assessments to qualify for the CQBR, leading to a physically demanding and exhausting sec competition to round off the annual trg. It was also realised that any inf unit on the ground needs a massive amount of support staff, not only comd and control staff, but also the admin and log elements. Here too, there were limited resources that had to be carefully managed and allocated to a multitude of supporting tasks.

Finally it all began to take shape, and the structure of camp became clear. The first week would concentrate on a field ex phase, organised by Sqns and including harbour, ambush and fire and manoeuvre drills, with a number of fun activities and leading to R and R on the Saturday. The second week was to be a Regtl phase, embracing ITD's, field firing, section manoeuvres leading to the final mil trg competition. Running concurrently would be the final phase of recruit trg, known as the Trg GAP. We all had great expectations for this ambitious trg camp, but would they be realised?

BACK TO THE IRON AGE

Okehampton has a long history stretching back to the Iron Age, and there is strong evidence of Saxon and Roman settlements. The castle, the only one in Devon featured in the Domesday Book, was built by one of William the Conqueror's Knights. Unfortunately it fell into ruin during the reign of Henry VIII, when he executed its owner at the time, the ill-fated Marquis of Exeter. Nowadays Okehampton is famous for being the gateway to both Dartmoor National Park and Cornwall, and for hosting the Ten Tors trekking expeds. Our first impression on arrival at Okehampton Camp was that we had indeed arrived back in the Iron Age, but at least the accn was comfortable and the scenery outstanding. This was complemented by unexpected unseasonally warm weather and good food. Spirits were high, and now it was time to get down to a bit of hard work, especially for those who found themselves formed into the three secs for the mil trg competition.

Before the first intensive field ex, due to start on the Wednesday, everyone had the opportunity of participating in some fun activities, ranging from pyrotechnic demos, night nav, courtesy of **Capt John Middler**, a helicopter dunk at Yeovil, Damcon at Plymouth, ending with the climax at Lympstone, a not so gentle attempt at the RM's assault course. Even the chefs had a go, although **SSgt Paul Holland** wished he had stayed in the safety of the kitchen as he fell head first off the rope bridge at Lympstone. **LCpl Tony Morgans** will take some time to forget his unpleasant experience at the Damcon simulator at Plymouth. No one explained that it simulated damage repair in heavy seas and he ended up redecorating the inside of the simulator. The next victim, **LCpl Simon Claydon**, was unaware of this and could not understand where on earth the peas and carrots came from! A simple case of being bowled over at Plymouth!

EVEN THE BAD TIMES ARE GOOD

The first week's field ex was perfectly engineered by **SSgt Waggy Wagstaff**. Assisted by the SSMs, his main events list was executed with textbook precision to ensure all secs received maximum benefit in battle prep, issuing orders, sec attacks, patrols, recce drills, casualty recovery procedures, and the safe use of pyro. All of this was achieved through a series of stands on the first day, followed by practical applications on the ground during the following two days.

The theme of the ex provided a host of character-building opportunities, as well as highlighting the importance of working as a team, and proved very successful in both these areas. As a result, all secs on the ground were treated with much respect and admiration by the supporting staff, which increased their morale considerably.

A member of Section 3 moving in for the section attack

Inter-sec rivalry was now becoming evident, and their comds, **Sgt Tiny Hogan** and **SSgts Colin Marshall** and **Kev Potts** began assessing each other's strengths and weaknesses in prep for the final team competition. However, the physical demands began to take their toll and following an unfortunate ankle injury, **Sgt Tiny Hogan** was replaced by **Cpl Tony Hadley**, who took up the reins with an enthusiasm that could only be described as infectious. He was however, faced with one worrying incident when, during a sand-to at dusk, he seemed to have lost another member of his sec. A quick search revealed that the missing member, **Sig Chas Riley**, had become so engrossed in the intricacies of basha building, she was still in the harbour area erecting her basha, blissfully unaware of the excitement around her!

The next casualty was **SSgt Colin Marshall**, who suffered a severe bout of bronchitis. He handed over to **OCdt Rachel Stanley**, somewhat shell-shocked, having just joined the Regt from Sheffield UOTC. Needless to say, she rose to the challenge and received loads of support from her Sec 2IC, **Cpl Ian Townsend**. Another shell-shock experience was that of **Sgt Tiny Hogan** who, while recovering from his ankle injury, was advised personally by the CO that he was to be mobilised on OP TELIC 3. This clearly put his trg into perspective and **Tiny** left camp a week early to recover from the news! **SSgt Waggy Wagstaff** will not forget his memorable experience either, when during a sec attack, he noticed that the trip flares had set fire to some undergrowth. He immediately shouted 'Fire! Fire!' to alert all secs, and they immediately responded by emptying their magazines at nothing in particular! Eventually, 'Cease Firing!' was called, and the fire dealt with.

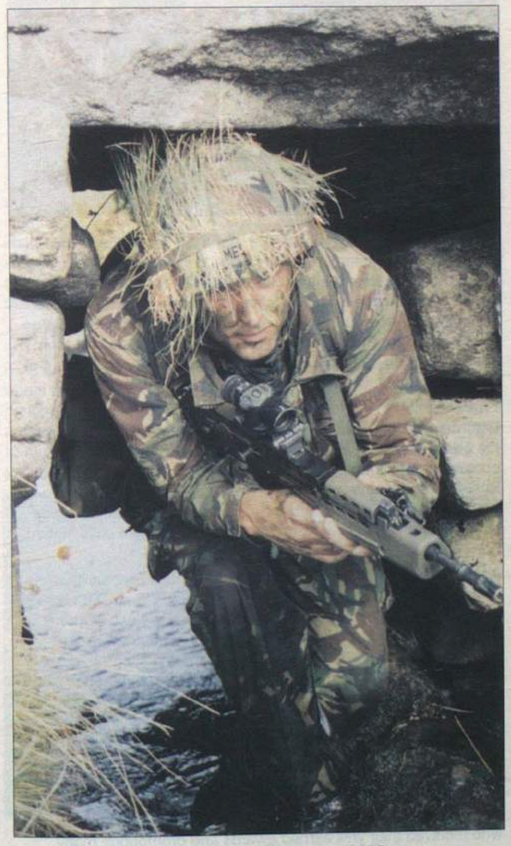
A WELCOME BREAK

Before the final Regtl phase, everyone enjoyed a bit of R and R, taking Sqns to a variety of locs, including the Eden Project, a night out in Plymouth or Newquay, and for those who had money to burn, a trip to **Rick Stein's** restaurant in Padstow for rather expensive fish and chips. The Hon Col, **Col Brian Foxon** visited us on the Sunday, and he took time out to present VRSMs to **WO2 (SSM) Craig Kinsey**, **SSgts Kevin Bannigan**, **Tom McCusker** and **Colin Richards** and the bar to his ED to **Capt Pete Mouland**. We congratulate them all on their awards.

At this time, the Regtl Orienteering Team took time out to travel to Germany to participate in the Corps Orienteering Championships. **Capt John Middler**, **WO2 Chris Smith**, **SSgt Dave Arnot**, **LCpls Liz Judge**, **Andy Price** and **LCpl Claire Samuel** travelled to Brüggen as the only TA team participating. **LCpl Price** took the Corps U25 Award, and the Team not surprisingly, won the TA Trophy. They wish to thank **Andy Price**, who works for *Adidas*, for their kit freebies and **Capt John Middler**, navigator extraordinaire, for eventually getting them to the NAAFI.

HOME ON THE RANGE

At the beginning of the second week, trg concentrated on completing a series of ITDs and the secs completed a nav ex that earned vital points towards the final team competition. The competitive atmosphere was now intense as everything the secs now participated in earned bonus points. 2 Sec argued that because they had four females in their team, placing them at a slight disadvantage, penalty points should be awarded against the other two secs. This was ruled out as not being in the spirit of EO, resulting in that sec being even more determined to succeed. At his stage, all secs were running neck and neck, so everything was there to play for.



LCpl James negotiating the CQBR

The range practices brought their own problems, with sudden changes in wind and weather and the ranges shrouded in early morning mist. This phase, organised superbly by **SSgt Mack McKenzie**, and centred on Willsworthy Range, was to last three days and included the tough assault course competition on the final day, followed by the March and Shoot. Initially all secs had to fire and pass their APWT and then carry out a practice on the Moving Man Target Trg Range (MMTTR). They then moved on to a Fire Team Assessment that would qualify them for the Field Firing that involved a two-mile run in full CEFO and body armour, carrying weapons. This had to be completed in a tortuous 32 minutes. Two exhausting minutes later, they would carry out a fire team shoot, where they had to accumulate a team score of 60% to pass and earn some valuable points. If anyone failed, they had to do it all over again. A pass during the fire team assessment qualified them for the exhilarating Close Quarter Battle Range (CQBR) run by the West Midland Regt. Happily, seventeen of the twenty-four field participants qualified for the CQBR and without exception had a field day!

Comd 143 Bde, **Brig Andrew Meek**, also visited during this phase of the trg. After a detailed briefing by the CO, **LtCol Calvin Owen** and his trg team, the Comd visited the recruits undergoing their Trg GAP on Okehampton Range before moving onto Willsworthy Range, where he spoke to many members of the Regt before returning to Shrewsbury.

Comd 143 Bde chatting to recruits

BRIDGE THAT GAP

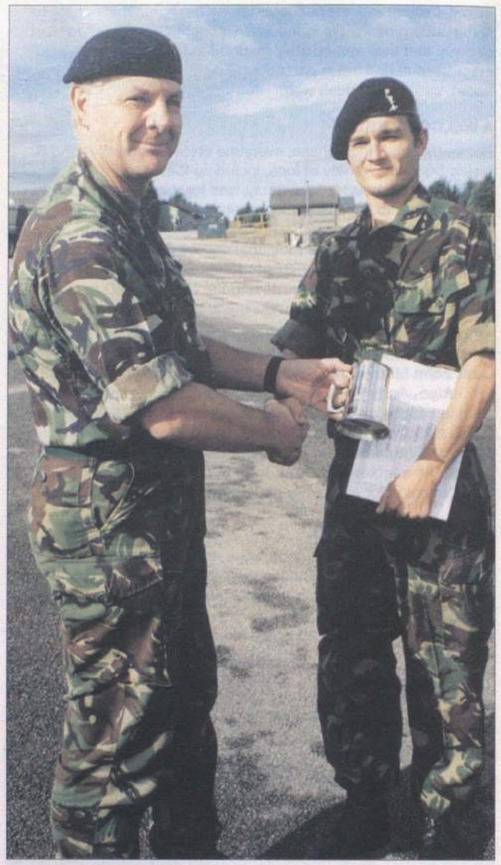
While all this was going on, the recruit trg team were getting on with the important job of concluding the Trg GAP for six intrepid recruits who were completing the final part of their initial recruit trg. The Trg GAP delivers the remaining trg that was not received during their recruit course at one of the ATRs and includes skill at arms, map reading, drill, first aid, NBC and PT. The PT took its toll, as **Sig Julie Carvell** suffered from a re-occurring shoulder injury on the march to Yes Tor and had to cease trg. Fortunately this happened after she was awarded her full recruit trained status. Most of this intensive trg took place on Okehampton Ranges and was concluded on Thursday 2 October.

Jubilant Recruits following the pass-off parade

A special parade was held for these six soldiers in recognition of their achievement in completing the final part of their recruit trg. Here the CO also presented the award of Best Recruit to **Sig Stuart Field**, who has decided to transfer within the Regt to RLC to train as a chef. All recruits are now looking forward to completing their trade trg early next year.

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

The final day had arrived, and all secs braced themselves to endure perhaps the most challenging phase before the final count of points that would determine the outright winner. The assault course was tougher than expected, and required a balanced



Sig Stuart Field receiving his award from the CO

mixture of guts, determination and stamina. These qualities came into their own, because if you failed to get over an obstacle you had only two more attempts to overcome it. For this, **Sigs Elaine Jones** and **Sam Fulthorpe's** spirited performance earned them a special mention by the CO. During this time, REME Hon Col, **Col J L O'Hanlon**, who was visiting at the time, singled out **LCpl Jasper Green** of the LAD to promote him to the rank of Cpl.

Returning to the competition, by this time Sec 3, who achieved the best team time, were now in pole position and could hardly contain their delight. But how would they fare in the March and Shoot during the afternoon? True to form, their overall skills proved too strong for the other two secs and later that day they were declared the overall winners with the other two secs in joint runner up positions.

A special award ceremony was held at the Regtl Smoker that evening, when the CO presented the Champion Team with their individual and team awards. The Stockdale Trophy was then presented to **Cpl Ian Townsend**. This prestigious award in memory of the late **LtCol Miles Stockdale**, is presented to the soldier who had made the most significant contribution and effort during annual trg. The CO then sprung another surprise by promoting **Cpl Tony Hadley** to the rank of Sgt. Earlier in the week the CO had promoted **SSgt Kevin Bannigan** to the rank of WO2, much to the delight of all members of the RRTT. Finally, to round off a rather unique annual trg camp, the CO presented a surprised but equally delighted **Sig Chez Riley** the award of the most improved soldier – could be promotion next time!! To all those who received their well earned awards and promotions many congratulations.

37 SIGNAL REGIMENT

ARMY

CO **Lt Col RG Mather**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A Keen**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Riley**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) PE Hall**

ANNUAL CAMP – EXERCISE VIXEN'S DASH

Perhaps because of their outstanding comms record, it was decided to handicap one of the Welsh 53 Sqn dets on EX VIXEN'S DASH, the comms ex making up the second half of the 37 Regt's Annual Camp. That handicap was I, **Sig Sole**, a newly qualified tech from HQ Sqn sent out on my first det.

Still recovering from the aches and pains of sports day, the 7-man det received its orders on the Monday morning. For the next four days we would be relocating every 12 hrs, each new site having a different mil skills stand. Added to this were 3 separate events on the nearby ranges and, of course, the constant threat from the enemy in the form of warring local drug and immigrant trafficking gangsters. It was going to be a busy week.

All ran well. Through some inspiring leadership and some hard work from all team members, we maintained comms throughout, produced some good performances on the ranges and survived both an anthrax attack by post and an impromptu visit by the Bde Comd.

All stands were well put together, but two in particular get a mention. The first was the patrolling skills stand, run particularly well by two men from SAS. Informal, simple and enjoyable, I think we all learned lots. The second, due to unexpected events, was the water-crossing stand.

The idea was to rescue our undercover agent, **Sgt Fubar**, from where he was last seen on an island in a lake. We constructed a raft out of the available materials and set off for the island. Despite our five-man crew being shot at at close range by the enemy, all was going well, when suddenly the DS in the accompanying speedboat told us to get to the bank ASAP. Our sixth team member on the shore had spotted large amounts of smoke coming from nearby. After a few arguments, we got the raft to the side and hurried after the DS, who were now trying to stamp out a grass-fire about as large as a football pitch.

After removing any blanks and pyrotechnics we had on ourselves, we joined in to tackle the flames. Gusts of wind were making the problem worse, as was the lack of fire-fighting equipt. Jackets, boots and boat paddles were not enough. Just as we were making progress, someone fetched some rubber fire beaters from a nearby fire point, which proved very effective - until they started to melt or catch fire. Fortunately the local Fire Service were very prompt in arriving and, armed with their water and our combined

MajGen JM Shaw MBE awards SSgt Gideon Jenkins the LS&GC Medal during 37 Signal Regt's Annual Camp

labour, it was only a matter of time before the blaze was extinguished. It had been hard work, and unfortunately, we didn't escape without loss. Many combat jackets suffered second-degree burns, and the blaze had claimed the lives of a young pair of boot soles and a fine pair of sandals.

After quick check-up at the local Casualty Dept, and with lungs full of smoke and the smell of burning rubber still in our nostrils, it was time for the last mission of the week, The Great North Run

It was a double congratulations to **SSgt Gideon Jenkins**, who received his LS&GC from **MajGen JM Shaw MBE** at Annual Camp and will be promoted to WO2 upon his next posting to 19 Regt RA in January 04.

THE GREAT NORTH RUN

It was off up to Newcastle for The Great North Run. Organised by **Sgt Pollard** of 96 Sqn (no stranger to the race), **Sig Sole** and **Sgt Elsworth** were lucky enough to take the places of two soldiers serving in the Gulf. Prep between the three of us could be described as nearing incompleteness, as one had a broken foot and another had not yet got round to trg. But morale was high.

The weather on the day was perfect, making the couple of hours wait before the start very enjoyable - particularly since we did not have to wear our disposable clothes (throw-away chemical suits) to keep warm. There was plenty to do while we waited, including drinking Lucozade, peeing in the bushes, and one memorable distraction from the excitement, a young lady running in bra, thong and trainers.

The run this year attracted 47,000 competitors, a record number of people, most of whom started in front of us. By the time we had cheered **Paula Radcliffe** on her way, we found a slot for ourselves. It was a disappointingly slow start if you had an eye on a reasonable finishing time, but we were sent on our way with a wave from the great **Jimmy Saville**, so we couldn't complain.

The 21km event was superbly organised, with more than enough water stations, cooling showers, and even a stand handing out an energy drink resembling slime. The course follows an undulating route with long but shallow climbing slopes. There were bands playing on every roundabout we came to, and spectators lined most of the route. A very enjoyable event.

All three of us achieved our expected times, so the pot noodle and Lucozade breakfast had obviously worked. We picked up our goody bags containing a particularly good medal, T-shirt and some bizarre odds and ends. All that remained left to do was to eat our body weight in burgers and fries, then head back to the Midlands to get some deserved sleep after a long week!

AND FINALLY

The Regt bids a fond farewell to our QM, **Maj DAO Holmes** and welcomes **Capt LD Kemp** into the appointment.

96 SIGNAL SUADRON (V)

OC **Maj PH Fowler-Smith**
SSM **WO2(SSM) JR Krikorian**

This period has been tinged with sadness when we had to say farewell to two of our stalwart Offrs. Firstly, **Capt Miles Schofield** to RARO due to his increased work and family commitments, but we look forward to his return to the Sqn in a couple of year's time and when circumstances allow. Secondly to **Lt Matthew Longcake**, who moved his home and job to Cardiff last year and reluctantly requested a posting to our sister Sqn, 53 Sig Sqn (V). We wish **Miles** and **Heather**, and, **Matthew** and **Becks** the best of luck for the future.

On the up side, we welcome **Capt Simon Jenner** on his posting in from LIAG, **Sig Ian Knight** from 42 Sig Sqn, **Sig Spencer** on his transfer in from 101 Regt RA and new recruits **Corrrine**

Mohammed, **Sperjohn Ruddock**, **Carl Colvin**, **Michael Holloway**, **David Wicks**.

ANNUAL CAMP – A DETACHMENT COMMANDER'S VIEW – *By LCpl Jo Kellard*

By the time we had reached Crowborough on Saturday 6 September, we had all shaken off the usual pre-camp blues, proved that the chaos theory of convoy drills (from maximum disorder comes order) is workable and learned that all motorway service stations stink of kidney juices.

After a couple of days of trade confirmation trg, our mood was to increase further when we discovered that a coveted Merlin had been provided to take us to Hythe Ranges for the remainder of the week. Both **LCpl Dave Montague** and I were somewhat dismayed when our SSM, **WO2 Krikorian** disclosed a spiritualist had told him his death lay in a helicopter trip! Considering this, we decided that if the helicopter took a dive, he was out the back without a question! Little did he know the reason why his seat was next to the end ramp.

The range package that had been laid on was outstanding and by far the best I have ever attended. Hythe Ranges is one of those places where application of fire skills can be dramatically improved in one day, and is a haven for those of us who love to shoot. The most popular ranges were the sec in defence and urban pairs fire and manoeuvre. On the fire and manoeuvre range, some of us showed scant regard for humanity by shooting the baby amongst the enemy within the first minute of firing! It's very rare that we get the opportunity to escape the monotonous APWT and to realise just how hot the hand guard gets after just 140 deliberate rate rounds. The ranges were well constructed and definitely something I'd like to do again.

The first week was going to be a hard act to follow but interesting, as we knew we would be moving to a new stand every 12 hrs. Armed with our CEIs and almost foolproof maps, we ventured out of Crowborough to discover we had become navigationally challenged again. However **Sig Helen Biggs** redeemed herself by fluking us all into the right loc. As result of compo rations, she developed a larger brain overnight, helping her to navigate flawlessly for the rest of the ex.

One by one the stands flew by, and our sleeping bags seemed to be permanently stored under our eyes. All of the det pulled together to get comms in, and morale was high. We conquered the camnet monster at each loc, but **Sig Dave Shaw** managed to kill off **LCpl Jo Kellard** by dutifully delivering an anthrax letter on the CBRN stand!

Despite sleep deprivation and compo rations, we survived contact with all stands and reached the penultimate stand, the Watermanship and Navex! We were greeted by a cup of tea, which some hours later would steam off us in the mission to rescue the captured **Sgt Fubar**, a very heavy NBC dummy!

Our mission was to build a raft and collect water, ammo and rations and the unfortunate **Sgt Fubar** from one of two islands situated on the lake of death. So the team got lashing and in the

Action Stations!

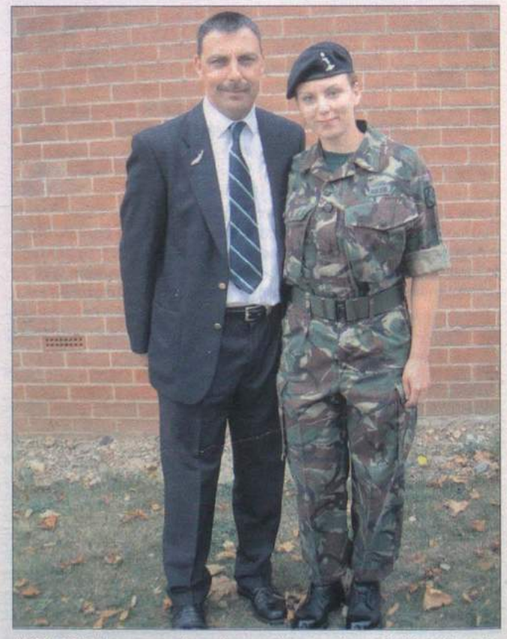
twinkling of an eye, we had created a monster that could only be described as *Kon Tiki's* ugly twin sister! She was ugly, but could she swim! They say that no plan survives contact with the enemy. Well, we had no plan, so we survived contact with the swamp monsters and the 'Yardies' (some fictitious enemy created to scare us). **Sgt Stef Sabuda** was that enemy and he is scary!

So, with **Sgt Fubar** on board, we rowed with renewed zest back to our base just in time for tea and medals. **Sgt Fubar**, the 10-stone bag of sand, was resuscitated by applying direct pressure to his testicular region with a size 10 boot. Task completed, we moved to our final stand before returning to Crowborough for a thoroughly enjoyable debrief over some beers.

A PROUD RSM CONGRATULATES HIS DAUGHTER

On 4 October, the RSM and **Mrs Keen** were in attendance at the

Sig Damon Magee, LCpl Jo Kellard and Sig Helen Biggs prepare for raft patrol



WO1 RSM Keen proudly welcomes his daughter, Sig Katy Keen to the Regiment

Recruit Course 06/03 at Grantham to watch their daughter, **Sig Katy Keen** of 96 Sig Sqn (V), on her Pass Off Parade. After smartly marching onto the Parade Square and being dressed off, her beaming smile towards her Mum and Dad in the spectators stand was noted. As all good RSM's do, he indicated to her to get rid of the smile, and she promptly obeyed. The Parade was inspected by **LtGen JP Kiszely MC**, GOC Regional Forces, Land. As soon as the Parade was over, the RSM and **Mrs Keen** congratulated **Katy** on her achievement and said that they were extremely proud of her.

ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION COVENTRY BRANCH

The Coventry Branch of the RSA meets on the last Tuesday of every month at 96 Sig Sqn (V) Sqn Club. All serving members and ex-members of the Corps are most welcome to attend. For further information contact **George Riley** on 024 7659 9076 or 07816 215 837.

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **LtCol HJ Robertson TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) SPJ White**

EXERCISE MERLIN MIGRANT 2003 - CZECH REPUBLIC

Led by the CO, **LtCol Simon Malik TD**, the Regt has just returned from the Czech Republic, having completed two weeks of infantry and AT on EX MERLIN MIGRANT 2003. The aim of the ex was to move the Regt through pre-deployment, including build-up trg, inoculations and paperwork, then deploy everyone to arrive at our loc of Otiče Camp north of Česky Krumlóv in the south of the Czech Republic.

The advance party travelled overland, via Germany, with all the stores and weapons. The main party flew out from Heathrow to Prague and then down to Otiče Camp, Boltiče trg area by coach.

Sunday, the first day in the Czech Republic, saw a CO's parade taken by **WO1 Paul Humphreys**, where **LtCol Malik** promoted **WO2 Stu McHenery** to the position of WO1, Senior Volunteer Warrant Officer (SVWO) and **WO2 (YofS) Kirk Humphries** to Capt (Ops Officer). The rest of the day was spent organising the two Coys (A & B), with safety briefs and admin matters. An insight into the history of the Czech Republic was also given by our MO and interpreter, **LtCol Pollock**, (a man who doesn't mince his words). Then weapons, stores etc. were issued, ready for the next six days' trg, which was to be followed by the CO's 36-hr ex.

The package was broken down into two halves, three days on the ranges, organised by **WO1 (SVWO) Stuart McHenery** and three days in the field toning our skills as soldiers. This part was organised by **SSgt Mick Preece** (SPSI, 68 Sig Sqn) and **SSgt Toyah Wilcox** (SPSI, 265 Sig Sqn)

The trg area had previously been used by Soviet Bloc forces for extensive tank trg and was quite overgrown in places. It was similar in appearance to North Wales, with lots of hills and evergreen forests – excellent terrain for the ex. However, there were a few hidden dangers, as **SSgt Karl Henry** from 60 Sig Sqn found out. He was patrolling along the obstacle course, when he disappeared rapidly into the ground, with only his head left visible. He had fallen into a concrete trench completely covered by grass, fortunately nothing injured but his pride. Other trg included ambush drills, concluding with a night ambush down the range that was extremely spectacular – loads of rounds! There was also an NBC recce with a chemical survey, and OBUA trg with VCPs and POW handling.

Building clearance during OBUA trg

The three days in the field commenced with moving into our harbour area and starting the work routine. From that base we sent out patrols to different stands in the area. The advance to contact stand, going up hill over a tank trg area in the dark was especially challenging – where was the FFR when you needed it? Also there was a CTR on a variety of old buildings in the area. It was very clear that the Soviets used live rounds on these range areas as, unlike the UK, all the buildings had taken a significant amount of damage and very few had a roof left on. These stands culminated in a company attack on a group of buildings, defended in depth and surrounded by marshy ground. This was hard work, putting all the skills learned to good use.

Sigs Chalmers and Denton ready for the attack

The last big effort was the CO's 36-hr ex, which involved both coys deploying to new harbour areas and getting ready for a simultaneous attack from each coy on their allotted loc. On one of the CTRs prior to the attack, **Sig Chalmers** from 70 (EY) Sig Sqn, was very pleased with himself when he located and retrieved an ammo box containing int useful for the assault. However he also retrieved a large tin with a skull and cross bones on it on the NBC survey, and this was taken back to the harbour area. Consequently, the DS declared half a platoon to be dead. Fortunately, we had battlefield replacements very quickly, and the plans proceeded for the attack the following morning.

Members of 68 Sqn ride the waves

Come H hr, we had a mortar barrage and SF from GPMG, then the attack went in at the two separate locs. Even the CO and the Adjt got stuck in, firing as many rounds as they could get their hands on. Finally, after many rounds from all sides both coys achieved their objectives.

After 10 days since deployment, it was time for a change of direction. There was a two-day cultural tour in Prague, with an overnight stay allowing everybody to take full advantage of the sights and facilities on offer.

Then we had two days of AT, involving sailing and white water rafting. The sailing was on a local lake, using small catamarans to get basic instruction on how to sail. The white water rafting wasn't particularly white, due the lack of recent rainfall, but was still extremely good fun.

The WOs' and Sgts' Mess dined out **LtCol Malik** and **WO2 Kirk Humphries** in Cesky Krumlóv's *Golden Angel* Hotel. The CO was soon to hand over comd of the Regt and **WO2 Humphries** was to be commissioned to Capt and appointed as Ops Officer. The offrs had a similar function to dine out the CO. Finally, we made a successful return to UK, finishing off an excellent camp for 2003.

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

RHQ would welcomes the new CO, **Lt Col Robertson**, who arrives on promotion from 94 (Berkshire Yeomanry) Sig Sqn, taking over from **Lt Col Simon Malik TD**, who leaves the Regt after a lot of years. All ranks wish him all the very best for the future - no doubt we will see him again soon.

We also welcome **Cpl Billy Baker** and his wife **Jaqueline**. **Cpl Baker** takes over as the CO's driver from **Cpl Nick Trethewey.** We wish him, **Kelly** and the girls, who all depart on posting to 2 Sig Regt, all the best.

For more info on 71Signal Regt, visit
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/71sigregt

Against a backdrop of typical Czech architecture, SNCOs pose with the CO prior to his dining out

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The ex was based around three different activities with each Tp rotating through. Three days of AT included scuba diving, sailing, kayaking and water skiing, all in the Mediterranean sun. 3 days of mil trg, run by the instructors of G Coy, Royal Gibraltar Regt, covered GPMG, LAW, contact drills, floatation packs and river crossing. The main activity was the tunnel-fighting package, run by the Trg Wing, Royal Gibraltar Regt, ably assisted by **Capt Steve Hudson's** ad hoc MTT comprising, **WO2 Gary Timmins** HAC and **WO2 Scrivener** REME. A 3-day package of OBUA and tunnel clearance trg was topped with a 36-hr FTX. Tp clearance drills through dark damp tunnels by torch light during the day was followed by a energy-sapping tab up to the top of the rock to occupy a patrol base. In the morning, each Tp launched an attack on the OBUA village. Everybody coming off the FTX buzzed about it, and we even had some volunteers to go back in to play enemy.

Whilst we were in Gibraltar, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig J Thomas MBE**, flew in for a visit to the ex and to attend our joint Offrs and SNCOs dinner night. He seemed to enjoy his visit, especially the high-speed trip around the harbour in the RIB just after lunch. We also hosted the CO, who flew in to see what all the excitement was about, and to say goodbye on this, his last camp, before flying back to join the rest of the Regt on STANTA. It was also the OC's last camp with the Sqn, the Sqn he joined as a Signalman some 19 years ago! **Maj Robertson** leaves us to take over comd of 71 (Y) Sig Regt (V). He will be much missed around here, and our best wishes go with him.

All in all, it was a great ex, and everyone enjoyed it - even the much harassed 'meals on wheels and taxi services' SQMS staff: **Sgt Chris Lewis**, **Sgt Sheila Townsend** and **LCpl Jennings**. Not wanting to rub it in for those who could not join us, the weather was glorious, the water blue and clear and the views stunning.

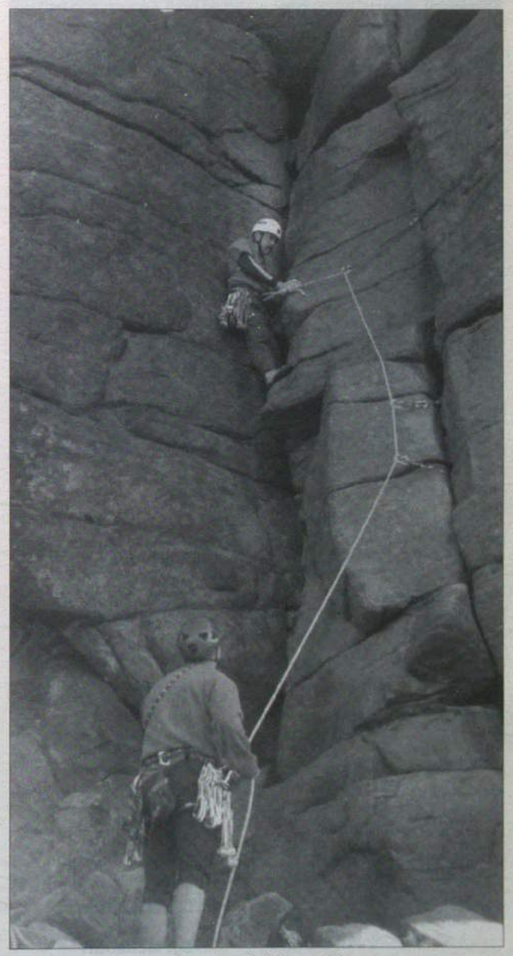
32 (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col EM Blyth TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) JH Greenwood**

It has been a busy period for the Regt, preparing for and executing Annual Camp. We held a Regtl sports trg weekend in August prior to Annual Camp to set the competitive scene for it. Annual Camp itself comprised two phases: a COMEX and an AT package. The COMEX worked through Mission Essential Task List (Land), as planned by the Trg Maj. We worked hard over this phase, and the scenario was ramped up to include terrorist shoot and run attacks (two of whom bore a striking resemblance to the CO and RSM), an NBC incident and exposure to the media. The culmination of this phase was a visit from a number of VIPs to the ex, including the Hon Col, **Col AC Cunningham TD**.

The Hon Col is shown airwave equipment by the FofS

The Adjt co-ordinated the AT package, which consisted of rock climbing at Stanage Edge; hill walking from Edale on the Kinder Scout Plateau; canoeing and watermanship skills at Rudyard Lake and mountain biking along the Manifold Track and Tissington Trails. The CO and RSM bagged some classic routes at Stanage Edge, and by the end of the weeks, the RSMs hands looked like he had had a good night late out in East Kilbride.



Carry on RSM! From CO

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj Donald Gordon**
SSM	**WO2 Karen Swan**

Late July saw all the Sqn Offrs heading off to Aberfeldy to celebrate the wedding of NCRS Tp Comd, **Lt Ewan Weir** to **Sam**. After a lovely wedding and reception in Castle Menzies, the happy couple headed off to France on honeymoon in the in-laws' brand new Winnebago. Over the same weekend the TAC was transformed by SQMS, **SSgt Chic Doyle** into a wedding facility fit for Royalty for the marriage of the former SPSI, **SSgt John Leach** to SSM 61 Sqn, **WO2 Rowena Clark**. Congratulations from all at 52 Sqn to both happy couples.

Further congratulations are due to **WO2 (YofS) Helen Jephcote** on her promotion to Capt (Tfc), and to **SSgt (YofS) MacKay**, for stepping into the Yeoman Role. The Sqn also welcomes **Sig Greg Marston**, who is returning to the Army, seven years after leaving the Regular Corps.

A big hello to **Cpl Gary Cambridge**, who is currently working in POL Sec of Supply Tp, 19 Mech Bde at Basra Palace. An insider says that he has the run of the place, so it looks like he has settled in there. By the time of publication he should be back with the Sqn after demob and POTL.

JIMMY CLUB SUPPER

This year's Jimmy Club Supper was held on 9 August, and had the special purpose of saying good-bye to the last serving member of 52 (L) Sig Regt (V). **Sgt Jackie Dolan** has been a stalwart of the Regt for many years, and shared a great night with everyone there. Not only was the event attended by ex-sigs, there was also a good representation from the former occupiers of the TAC – RAT and Scottish Yeomanry. **Sgt Dolan** was presented with gifts, and an impromptu speech was ad-libbed by **Lt Davidson** (who had been expecting the CO to turn up and do it). All had a great night and thanks go to the SSM for organising and the chefs for providing the great food.

REGIMENTAL ATHLETICS WEEKEND

The weekend of 15 –17 August saw the Sqn at the TAC for the annual Sports Competition. This year's focus was on swimming and track and field events. The sceptics in the Sqn felt this was an attempt by the powers that be to stop us running off with all the silver - and whether or not that was the intent, it worked.

Saturday morning saw the swimming at Dreghorn Pool, dominated by 52's **2Lt Laura Fernand**. If only they had let her compete in the male competition too, we could have wiped the board. She took part every race in the female event and won them all. **Cpls Brown**, **Holtz** and **McCole** kept the blokes' spirits up by taking third place in the Male Freestyle Relay.

Everyone then moved to Fettes College for the afternoon's track and field events, where 52 Sqn had a successful afternoon, the results being as follows:

High Jump	Male	1st	**Cpl MacPherson**
		2nd	**Lt IA Davidson**
	Female	1st	**2Lt LT Fernand**
		2nd	**LCpl Purvis**
Long Jump	Male	3rd	**Sgt McKeown**
Hammer	Male	3rd	**Sig Marston**
	Female	1st	**Sgt Wilkie**
Shot Put	Male	1st	**Sig Marston**
Discus	Male	2nd	**LCpl Barrie**
4 x 100m Relay		2nd	**Lt IA Davidson** **Sgt McKeown** **Cpl MacPherson** **LCpl Tochel**
Command Race		3rd	**Lt IA Davidson** **WO2 Swan** **Sgt McKeown** **LCpl Tochel**

PAISLEY 10KM RUN

As usual, a team from the Sqn entered the Paisley 10km Run this year. **LCpl Tochel** found it quite hard going without his normal swarm of cheerleading small children. There was good showing from the Sqn, despite other commitments over this weekend. Congratulations to all those who ran.

The Magnificent Seven. Back L-R: Sgt Kell, LCpl Tochel, Sig Larkin, Cpl McCole. Front L-R: Sig Marston, WO2 Swan, Sgt Wilkie

FAMILIES DAY

Sunday 7 September saw the Sqn's annual Families Day. As usual, it was held on the Sunday of the trg weekend prior to Annual Camp. A lot of work had gone into the preparation for the fun day, with attractions for both kids and adults alike. As the weather was so nice, the day took on a bit of a water theme. SPSI, **SSgt Sorley** is now famous for his appearance in the local paper sporting a wet t-shirt. Kids young and old were captivated by **LCpl MacDonald's** pet snake display, **Cpl McCole's** mobile assault course, the bouncy castle, face painting, sports and a treasure hunt. With everyone getting the opportunity to spend quality time with their nearest and dearest before going off to spend 2 weeks at Annual Camp, the aim of the day was achieved.

61 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj Andy Bruce**
SSM	**WO2 Rowena Clarke**

ANNUAL CAMP 2003

Annual Camp for the Sqn started with a MOBEX at Lanark Rd TAC, after which we deployed to Warcop Camp to join up with the remainder of the Regt. The following day we carried out successful start-ups of the kit that would be deployed in SCP and CSTs.

The first day of the ex saw the Sqn re-routed from Swynnerton to Rusholme TAC, home of 42 Sig Sqn. The new loc was swiftly recce'd, and once we were satisfied that the site was both secure and suitable, comms were established in 20 minutes. We spent two days at this loc, during which time we were joined by members of 52 Sig Sqn before moving back to Swynnerton. During the ex, the Sqn provided unbroken comms for the emergency services and Bde.

The culmination of this phase of Annual Camp was the visit by several VIPs, who were treated to a working display of a sig det in the field. On ENDEX we moved to Leek Camp to begin Phase 2, which was based around a variety of AT activities. This included mountain biking, (the fun of broken chains and spectacular crashes), canoeing, hill walking, carrying out 'man overboard drills' using the Gemini on the local lake.

On returning to the TAC on the Friday, the Sqn were treated to a superb candlelight curry supper with wine, compliments of the PSAO, **Capt Campbell**. This was very much appreciated by all.

33 (LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col Somerville**
WO1	**WO1(RSM) Browitt**

ANNUAL CAMP

The Regt paraded on the Friday evening prior to camp to ensure that all pers and vehs were ready for the deployment on the Saturday morning to RAF Macrihanish, some 327 miles away. The long and tedious journey was not helped by a 3-hr delay on the M6 due to a serious RTA. After leaving the TAC at 09.00hrs, we finally arrived at RAF Macrihanish at 01.00hrs to a wonderful curry, supplied by Master Chef, **WO1 Jim Ramsay** and his team.

Trg this year was split into Trade, Military, Officer and AT packages.

The trade trg element was held in the old US Navy Seal compound which was quite interesting. The history of the US Navy Seals had obviously not filtered down to 80 Sqn's PSI, **Sgt Tony Booth**, who was overheard asking where the pools were that held the seals! The standard of instruction for all trades was exceptional, and the enthusiasm second to none. Many who attended successfully completed their trade trg, and the Regt now has some excellent tradesmen of all classes available for future exs and deployments.

The Offrs completed a 5-day package under the ever-watchful eye of the Adjt, **Capt Angela Aylward**. The package started off with Int Prep of the Battlefield, the new 7-question decision making process, followed by Principles of Defence and Defence of a Comms Site. This was followed by a TEWT to put this all into practice. Then followed a two-day initiative ex, where, under **Maj Bill Dixon**, all were deployed to Glasgow with no money, credits cards or phones and a list of tasks to complete. The tasks ranged from getting on local radio, to gaining entry to Edinburgh Castle, to a free hair cut, to cleaning a cage at a zoo, to attending a wedding and being handcuffed by a policeman.

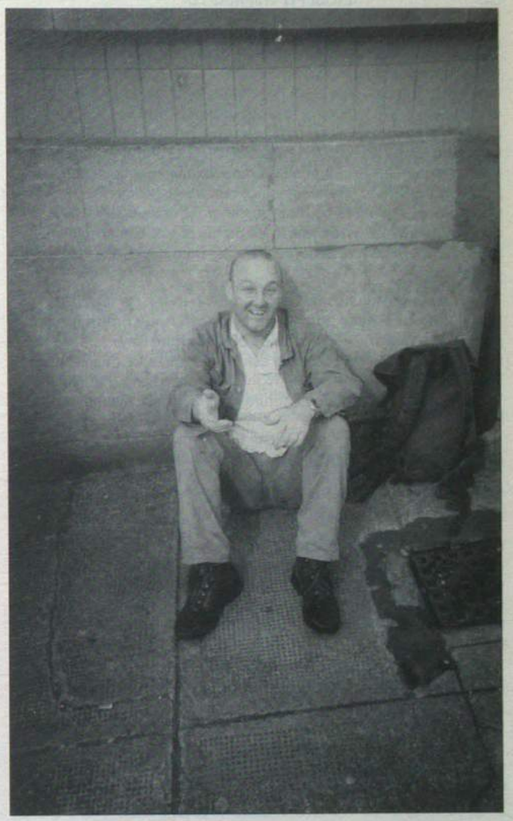
The ex progressed well, with all teams doing exceptionally well until they tried to get free accn in Glasgow on the day Celtic played Stuttgart. **OCdt Diane O'Brien** managed to blag two twin en-suite rooms in the Quality Hotel at Glasgow Central, and three teams paired up in a complicated room sharing arrangement. After this it was out on the town to enjoy a Chinese meal and a pint or two of Stella. The second day was carried out a slightly slower pace, but all tasks were completed and everyone returned to Macrihanish to carry out the debrief and team presentations. The winning team was **Lt Geordie Bartlett** and **OCdt Diane O'Brien**, who won the obligatory whisky and champagne. The officer trg package concluded with an overview of Service Writing, CRs and a moral standards lecture by the CO, which may have been a little too late after the overnight stay in Glasgow.

The AT package was organised by newly arrived **SSgt Alex Smith**, and comprised of hill-walking, orienteering and mountain biking. The hill-walking took place around the Ben Nevis area and consisted of climbing this giant, which for many proved to be a challenging yet enjoyable experience and gave most a chance to cross Ben Nevis off their list. The American visitors were overwhelmed by the scenery and found the ever-changing climate of Ben Nevis unusual to say the least. The phrase 'Sunny Scotland' will ring in their ears for many years to come.

80 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Acting OC	**Capt Andy Quinn**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Olly Ollson**

Over the last couple of months, we have said farewell to OC, **Maj Simon Mason**, **Sig Dowling** and **Pte Jones** to Bosnia;



Begging on the initiative ex. Apparently 2 wages a month are not enough for Capt Andy Quinn

Acting OC, **Capt Phil McGiveron**, **Sgt Karl Dace**, **Sgt Caroline Patton** to Iraq; and we have welcomed back **Sgt Tony Booth** and **Sgt Bland** from Bosnia; and **SSgt Mick Barton** and **Sgt Paul Wilson** from Iraq. To say our small Sqn is playing a vital role in operational deployments would be an understatement.

RUNCORN SSAFA DINNER

80 Sig Sqn combined Offrs and SNCOs Mess hosted the SSAFA Black Tie Dinner on Saturday, 4 October at Runcorn TAC. The evening was held in recognition of the close working relationship between 80 Sig Sqn and SSAFA's Runcorn Detachment. The Mayor and Mayoress of Halton attended, together with SSAFA and other local dignitaries.

The evening was a mix of good wine, good food, good company and good conversation. The entertainment, too, was excellent, with a mix of a **Frank Sinatra** style cabaret singer, a disco and a mini casino. It was a huge success, and a special thank you goes to **Capt Chris Hopkins** for organising it at short notice - and please can we have another!

36 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **LtCol PN Willmott TD**
RSM **W01 (RSM) MA Giles**

The last few months have been enormously busy for the Regt, with plenty of changes in personnel. We bid a temporary farewell to the 2IC, **Maj Paul Fredricks**, who is currently absent on sick leave. We welcome to **Capt Jamie Noble** to the huge pile of paperwork awaiting him. And we farewell **WO2 Terry McIntyre** (who takes up the post of RQMS at 39 Sig Regt (V)) and thank him for his huge efforts and achievements for the Regtl Sailing Team. The defence of our title as Corps Champions is going to be that much harder without him. We congratulate **WO2 Craig Marlowe** on his promotion and move to RHQ, where he has become instantly busy organising the next cadre course.

There has been an unusual family addition to the Regt. **WO2 (YofS) Simone Rouse** and her partner **YofS Andy Smith** have produced a healthy 9lb 12oz baby boy, **Morgan Jay**. Is this the first child born to two YofSs we ask? If so, does he qualify as a Traffic? At that weight, some might think it amazing that two Yeopersons could produce a future RD. Our best wishes for the future go to all three.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Pete Minshall**
Acting SSM **WO2 Graham Carroll**

Camp 2003 has now come and gone, and everyone who attended agreed that it was a great time, particularly, **SSgt Graham Carroll**, who was promoted to WO2, **Sgt Izzy Izzard** to SSgt and **LCpl Reggie Cullumbine** to Cpl. Congratulations to you all. We welcome **WO2 Craig Marlow** who, after 2 years hiding in Grays TAC, has moved over from 44 Sig Sqn to take up the post of Trg WO. We say farewell to **WO2 Terry McIntyre** and his new wife, **Emma**, who are off to 39 Sig Regt (V). All the best to both of you for the future. **SSgt SPSI Gaz Topps** from HQ Sqn has now moved into the role of Gene SSgt . It might have been the little incident with the Challenger that caused the move, but that's another story. Well done to **Sigs Cowie** and **Rudasinikwa** for passing their recruits course. Congratulations to you both and welcome to the fold.

CAMP 2003– *by Cpl Cullumbine*

This year's camp promised to be different, and it certainly was. With 3 phases of trg, a comms ex, AT and FIBUA trg, there was enough to challenge everyone. For those who didn't attend you really missed out.

The AT was packed with a variety of activities such as sailing, climbing, orienteering, rafting, sea survival and heli dunking, to name a few. In charge of the climbing was **Cpl Ian Phillips**, who took the groups to Blandford Camp to try out the outdoor wall there. The weather was perfect - all we needed was the bottle to climb. Some people had more bottle the night before, if you know what I mean.

We were then taken off to the New Forest to take part in an orienteering competition. This was a complete eye opener for a novice navigator like myself. 'Trust your compass' said the Chief Clerk. This was great but one question: 'What's a compass?' The Heli dunking was a first for most of us, including the Padre. He was heard saying 'The Lord helps those who help themselves' just before being dropped into a deep pool of cold water while strapped into the heli simulator. The padre definitely helped himself. He was first out of the safety hatch! **SSgt Izzy Izzard** (REME) proved during the raft building that he was worthy of his new rank by building the most amazing raft, which quickly turned itself into a submarine. Well done REME - you should have carried out a 932B inspection first. Our thanks to **SSgt Paul Gibney** and his merry team of PSIs for putting together such a good AT package.

We then moved up to Copehill Down to start FIBUA trg, where were told it would be a package to remember. **SSgt Topps** and his team of DS didn't let us down. Every aspect of FIBUA trg was covered, from booby traps, Molotov cocktails, casevac, PW handling and defending and assaulting buildings. There was also a confidence course. **Sgt Taff Lean** and his lucky leek demonstrated the course with ease, but it was a different matter when it came to our turn, with the term 'disco leg' arising frequently. It was also amazing how **Sig Boldinday** managed to squeeze his massive body (and head) into the sewage system.

FIBUA trg. Over the top, as the DS look on

We also built some impressive defences (the joys of sandbagging), which impressed the DS so much they decided to utilise them at a later stage. After more intense sec and pl assault practice, we were ready for the final assault - the twist being we were assaulting our own defences with a few alterations made by PSIs, **Sgt Jef Farnes** and **Sgt Leigh Griffiths**. After 5 houses and 3 hrs, we finished the assault as victors and we were back in time for tea and medals (well the Regtl Smoker anyway).

Summing up the FIBUA package, it was physically and mentally demanding, it was challenging, enjoyable and fun (am I allowed to say that word?) Everyone achieved something (at least a collection of bruises) - fantastic! None of this excellent trg would be possible without the hard work and the enthusiasm of the PSIs who arranged it for us. Cheers! This camp will be a hard act to follow.

44 (CINQUE PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Bob Davis**
Acting SSM **SSgt John Davis** (no relation, and absent OP TELIC)

Grays TAC, the home of 44 (Cinque Ports) Sig Sqn (V), has always been a difficult place to find. Firstly there has always been only one road sign on the roundabout coming into Grays and secondly the postal address is a road that runs parallel to the actual road that we are situated in. Officially, our particular road doesn't exist!

So we did some planning to put Grays TAC back on the map and came up with the ideal of pinpointing our loc with some new signage and a blimp. Blimp Day was to be Thursday, 25 September, with all the new road signs having been erected in the few days beforehand (B minus 3 and 4). The local Council's Transport Dept erected new road signs with the TA centre prominently marked on both approaches to the town, and the RFCA erected new signs to fill in the gaps.

Mayor of Thurrock, **Cllr Gerard Rice**, was invited to attend the B Day re-launch of the Centre and to launch our new Blimp. The weather was brilliant and after posing for the obligatory photographs with the Sqn OC, **Maj Bob Davis TD**, **Cllr Rice**, duly let go and the blimp floated serenely up into the atmosphere. Well two hundred feet of it anyway!

Grays TAC is now well and truly pinpointed with a huge balloon in TA colours and our telephone number clear for all to see for miles (especially to those with twenty twenty vision).

From L-R: SSgt Mick Grimshaw, Sig George Pearce, Capt Dave Watson, LCpl Wayne Ashpole and WO2 Craig Marlowe holding the 44 Sqn Blimp prior to the official launch

MOUNTVOY TROPHY

In the Mountvoy Trophy, a Regtl patrol competition, the Sqn was represented by a team from 749 Tp. Our team was led by **Capt Stuart Rowson**, and put in a very creditable performance, winning the stands for NBC, observation and mine-clearance, as well as the march and obstacle course. We finished second overall, having dropped valuable points on the river crossing comd task, where in spite of an excellent time, we came last by dropping **Sig Steve Mitchell** into the river. Apportionment of blame for this was split equally between **Sgt Marshall Jones 20**, who had tied the knot that came undone and **Capt Stuart Rowson** who commented 'Yes, it will definitely hold' only seconds before it didn't. The loss of points was made up for by seeing **Steve Mitchell's** attempts to balance on the lower rope three feet or so above the water, whilst holding onto an upper rope which was no longer secured to anything.

45 (ESSEX) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Mark MacKenzie-Bell**
Acting SSM **SSgt Pickett**

The Sqn congratulates the OC on the newest arrival to his family, **Cameron**, and wish them all the best for the future. We also congratulate **Sgt Putman** on her promotion, and wish her well in her new rank and Mess dress! We welcome **Cpl Lisa Fraser** and her family from 3 (UK) HQ and Sig Regt and wish her well in her new post. Recently the Sqn has had a busy time actively recruiting, but is still looking for a SNCO to join our ranks. So any ex-TA or Regular who needs a fresh challenge should contact us here in Colchester.

54 (EAST ANGLIA) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Phil Taylor**
Acting SSM **SSgt Osbourne**

EXERCISE CAMBRIDGE BEAR - *by Lt Nick Migallo*

The weekend 15-17 August saw one of the highlights of 54 Sqn's trg year, the battlefield tour. This year, the destination was Holland and the site of one the most ambitious operations of WW2. Before they departed, the thirty-eight strong Sqn party was prepared for the visit by a lecture at Cambridge TAC by tour leader **Lt Migallo**. This included the historical background and contemporary int assessment to help the party get to grips with the multi-faceted OP MARKET GARDEN.

We arrived rested in a practically deserted Arnhem. A couple of cafés were open and a light breakfast was taken al fresco on cobbled streets. Eager to see the battle sites, we left Arnhem, heading northwest, knowing we would be returning later in the day.

The DZ/LZ of Ginkel Heath, laid out before us under a clear blue sky, was peaceful and inviting, with local Dutch practising their golf swings and their national pastime, cycling. How different it must have been on 18 September 1944, when the second wave of the airborne drop, part of the 1 UK Airborne Div, deplaned into a confusion of skirmishes between SS troops and the British LZ protection force.

Next stop was the infamous Hartenstein Hotel. Then, it was GOC 1 UK Airborne Div, **MajGen Urquhart's** besieged HQ. Now it is the excellent Airborne Museum. Here we saw captivating exhibits, including **Lt Col John Frost's** hunting horn, used to rally his paratroops on landing, and a comprehensive collection of German small arms. In the basement of the museum are expertly crafted dioramas. One in particular, showing signalmen at work particularly caught our attention. We then paid our respect to the fallen, at the immaculately kept Oosterbeek airborne cemetery.

The most famous symbol of the action, the John Frost Bridge, had to be seen next. The bridge is as important as ever, serving as a major road crossing over the Rhine, and because of this, it evokes little of the emotion one would expect for such a historical battle site. The scars from the fighting have been repaired, but the bridge still looks as it did before the fighting in 1944 - minus the German pillbox, which is now a memorial. This is not the case for the rest of the town centre, which, having been severely battered by both sides' air forces and artillery, is now a modern urban landscape. A simple plaque on an office block marks the place where **Frost** doggedly held out until ordered to withdraw.

The party took time to appreciate their surroundings and overlay their newly-acquired knowledge of the action before dispersing into the town centre for lunch. Some chose to sample the delights of the Saturday Market and then utilise the best viewpoint in the area. The steeple of the main church, which was destroyed during the war, now encloses a glass elevator that rises to 86m. The panorama allowed us to see the larger scale picture of the battlefield: the ribbon of the river, the bridges and the distant Nijmegen.

That afternoon, we visited other places where desperate, defensive actions were fought and a VC was won. Then we walked to the bank of the Rhine, following the steps of those of the Div who were still able to move themselves to the safety of the far side. As an obstacle, the river no longer seemed impressive, with pleasure cruisers and freight barges quietly gliding along the now tamed currents. We, however, remembered the grim fact that then, the dominating high ground a mere mile away, was occupied by Germans raining down shells and mortars.

After resting in our hotel, the party enjoyed the hospitality of Nijmegen to the full. We found the Dutch people, who nearly all spoke good English, very accommodating. Sunday was spent travelling back home. Gripped by three hours of *Band Of Brothers* reminded us that the greater loss during OP MARKET GARDEN was borne by the American 101 Division.

The tour fulfilled its aims. Every member of the party now understood more about the Battle, thought about the sacrifices made by soldiers at the time and had an enjoyable time together. 54 Sqn are looking forward to their next battlefield tour.

39 (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **LtCol AH Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Stillie**

HEADQUARTER (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SQUADRON

OC **Major Dawes**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Clarke**

PHASE 1 ANNUAL CAMP 2003

HQ Sqn had the opportunity to visit and train with a Regular Unit, 7 Sig Regt in Germany. We were kindly hosted by **Maj Mick Campbell**, their OC HQ Sqn, who had previously served as QM of 39 Sig Regt (V) and had stayed in contact since leaving. **Maj Campbell** is about to become Trg Maj with Bristol University OTC, so he has come a full circle. We look forward to seeing more of him.

We travelled to Javelin Bks (previously RAF Brüggen) in two mini buses via the Channel Tunnel, France, Belgium and Holland. The journey was not uneventful, the first hiccup arising at the Chunnel. Some MOD civil servant in Travel Bookings thought that, to save costs, it would acceptable for us to wait at Folkstone for 12 hours to take the cheapest crossing. We didn't agree. The next one was towards the end of our journey, after the autobahn near Venlo, with only 10km to go to Javelin Bks. It was still light. Two hours later, most of which was in the dark, we completed our Magical Mystery Tour via Brüggen (twice!). Was it naïve to assume that ex-RAF Brüggen was at or near the town of Brüggen? We'll know next time.

Despite our late arrival on a Saturday evening, **Maj Campbell** was there to welcome and show us to our messes and accn.

Sunday was spent on a Battlefield Tour of OP MARKET GARDEN, visiting the museum and war cemetery in Osterbeek. It was surprising the number of Dutch nationals who still visit. We could have spent longer in the museum – there was so much to see and read.

For Monday and Tuesday we were assimilated into HQ Sqn's lines and allocated to the various depts according to trade – LAD, RAO, MTO, etc. For some of us it was the first opportunity to see a Regular unit operating.

Evenings were spent visiting the local eating and drinking establishments in Germany and Holland, as well as an evening spent on Camp enjoying the10-Pin Bowling facility (you can tell the RAF used to be there – everything to hand).

We returned to UK on the Wednesday to join the other Sqns for the second phase of Annual Camp 2003 at Kinmel Trg Camp, North Wales. Despite such a short visit, we returned in good spirits (and with duty-frees), all the better for the experience. We look forward to exploiting our contacts with the Regular army in the future.

5 (QUEENS OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Rich Belbin**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Hall**

CHARITY FUNDRAISING

16 members of the Sqn took part in an event to raise funds for the Army Benevolent Fund and Age Concern. They completed an arduous 30-mile walk visiting Banbury, Chipping Norton and many of the smaller towns and villages in North Oxfordshire. **Sig Louise Penfold** from Banbury, who joined the Sqn in July 2003 said, 'It was certainly not easy, but very rewarding in the end. I enjoyed being able to get out and meet members of the public.' **Sig Chris Taylor** from Chipping Norton, who joined the Sqn in the same month, agreed. 'It was good to see so many local people coming out to support us and giving money to these deserving charities.'

Former CCF Cadet **Will Norgate** aged 17fi of Southam, who only joined that week, personally raised over £250.00 in sponsorship for the charities.

The Sqn OC, **Maj Rich Belbin** said, 'Events like this one give us the chance to do some additional PT at the same time as raising monies for good causes.'

ADVENTURE TRAINING

Several members of the Sqn traveled to a campsite near Corfe Castle, Dorset, on the Friday evening, to spend the night under canvas before a day of AT.

After a comfortable night under the stars and a spot of *Italian Job* style minibus driving in Poole, we assembled at the quayside to try our hand at wind surfing. With only the lack of wind hampering our efforts, we all achieved a credible performance. Given that the session was carried out in a harbour full of moored boats, obstacle avoidance skills were also called upon!

The afternoon involved a walk from the campsite across to the coast, where we stumbled on the small cove of Winspit. There was more to this cove than met the eye. We discovered a tucked away quarry, previously used by the BBC as an 'other world' filming loc, notably for *Doctor Who*. After a bracing dip in the clear waters of the English Channel, it was back to the campsite and time for a well-earned dinner under the shadow of Corfe Castle before settling once again for another comfortable night al fresco (or in a Ford Focus – no names no pack drill).

Sunday was the chance for the Sqn to put their more cerebral leanings into play with a visit to the Bovington Tank Museum. A first for everyone, it was a great opportunity to learn more about one of the other arms in the British Army. Following this, we traveled back up to Banbury, all aims completed.

FAREWELL

A fond farewell was made to **2Lt Rob Fuller**, who leaves the Sqn to take a place at Edinburgh University for the next 12 months. We wish him well and hope that he will eventually return to Oxfordshire to rejoin the Sqn.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Ruth Empson**
SSM **SSgt Addison-Scott**

There has been considerable movement of personalities since the last *Wire* notes. OP TELIC has seen our OC, **Maj Bill Ruthven**, joining the other members of the Sqn still in theatre. We have welcomed back **Cpl Herbie Hyde** from OP TELIC and our SSM, **WO2 Phil Martin** from Bosnia. We welcome **Maj Ruth Empson**, who has taken over the reins as OC during **Maj Ruthven's** absence, joining us just in time for Annual Camp. We also welcome **Lt Karen Hanlon**, **OCdt Sarah Trevelion** and **SSgt Ben Newby**. We said farewell to our PSI, **SSgt Stu Fidler**, who goes with our thanks for all that he achieved whilst with us. The incoming PSI, **SSgt Dave Langridge**, was thrown straight in at the deep end with Annual Camp and EX SABRE STRIKE. In a short time he put the meat onto the bones of the plan, and organised an excellent Sqn first week. Congratulations to **SSgt Chris Klass**, **LCpl Mike Cunningham**, and **Maj Ruth Emson** on their promotions

ANNUAL CAMP 2003- EXERCISE SABRE STRIKE
- by a vegetarian

An observer in Bristol on a bright Saturday morning in September would have seen more luggage being relocated to Horfield TAC that comes off your average 747. Camp 2003 was under way. This

57 Sqn chefs cook al fresco

Sig James preparing his rabbit

year, camp was to be split into two phases, a Sqn survival/mil skills phase in Swynnerton Trg Area and a Regtl trg period set in North Wales.

The event in Swynnerton was designed as a survival ex, consisting of a day of trg in survival skills (i.e. what to and what not to eat, preparation of chickens and rabbits, hides, traps and snares etc). This was followed immediately by the ex itself, which was in the form of a competition, with secs completing stands to confirm all manner of subjects taught on the first day.

My sec marched out to the misty watermanship area on the Sunday morning, anticipating a few chilly and hungry days ahead. However, as the weather hotted up, so did our team's fervour to rise to the challenge of EX SABRE STRIKE. Ingenuity seemed to be the key to our success, although a few of our cunning plans did go awry.

Lt David Carter's attempt to make snow shoes from the stepping stones on the water collection comd task unfortunately had to be abandoned, as did his attempt to do a Fosberry Flop over the wire on **Sgt Richard Sharp's** comd task, nearly doing himself a serious mischief on landing!

With a hunter force out looking for us all the time, a spot of imaginative map-reading was called for throughout the ex. At one point, we thought we could see a route that would provide a short cut to keep us away from roads. But, after pounding along a lengthy track, we came to a sign warning of a sheer drop. However, **Sig Green** came to the rescue, spotting a way out that was little more than a scramble down a bank and over a wall. This discovery seemed to save us from too many encounters with the terrifying torches and loudspeakers of the hunter force of **Sgt Richard Sharp**, **Cpl Will Browning**, et al.

A couple of handicaps for our team were the presence of the non fish-eating vegetarian (much to the disappointment of the SQMS, **SSgt Nick Marsh**, who had gone to great lengths to provide a very nice trout). I was, however, sustained by the kind donation by the PSI, **SSgt Dave Langridge** of his stash of fruitcake. But I was amused to see that a number of people were turning the same colour green as their uniforms when the chicken decapitation and rabbit disembowelling took place!

First light on the last day of the ex saw us assembling close to the watermanship trg area, and the appearance of **Capt John Cullen** our PSAO, could only mean one thing. We were going to get wet. As we approached the crossing point with some trepidation, there was a mist rising off the water and it looked cold. 'That's steam.' said **Capt Cullen**. 'I've had it heated.' Porkies! Stripping off to the bare minimum, we made our floatation packs and swam across to the home bank, a hot breakfast and ENDEX.

Our final day consisted of improvised rafting, driver trg, CQB and various comd tasks. During the evening we had a Sqn smoker in a local hotel, where despite some tired limbs, we danced the night away - at least until the transport at 23.59hrs. The next morning we set off to join the Regt, having had an excellent first week. We had learned a lot of new skills, some of use to a vegetarian and some not!

The raft floats – just!

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Roden**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Bruce Singers**

ANNUAL CAMP – VISIT BY COMMANDER 2 (NC) SIG BDE

Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas MBE** kindly took time out of his busy schedule to visit the Sqn during Phase 2 of this year's Annual Camp in Pembrokeshire, Wales. Despite the fact that **Brig Thomas** has Welsh connections, venturing so far into deepest Wales alone during the height of the summer and on a Bank Holiday is not recommended. So he was provided with a Close Protection Party of the other Celts in the form of the Dep Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Col N Beacom QVRM TD** and Hon Col 2 Sig Sqn, **Col M Rolfe CBE JP DL**. All arrived suitably attired for a covert beachfront operation, and after a brief from the Sqn Ops Offr, **Capt Bob Davidson**, they proceeded to go into deep cover by joining in the potted sports competition on the beach. The competition was followed by a barbecue, where the visitors met and chatted with members of the Sqn.

GOC'S COMMENDATION

An Offrs and SNCOs Ladies Dinner Night held recently provided an ideal opportunity for our Hon Col, **Col Merven Rolfe CBE JP DL** to present a GOC 2 Div Commendation to our recently retired PSAO, **Capt WJA Naismith**. The award was made in recognition of the loyal support **Bill** has given to the sqn over the past 24 years. **Bill** was so overwhelmed by the surprise (or was it the port?), that following the photo call he dropped the frame! Fortunately the certificate was undamaged and both **Bill** and the Certificate have now been re-constructed and reunited.

Capt Bill Naismith (centre) receives the GOC's Commendation from Col Rolfe CBE JP DL. Sqn OC, Maj Roden looks on

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj SJP Spiers**
RSM **WO1 ACE Burdge**

After a year of 'on the boat of the boat', the Bde (and Sig Sqn) are finally deploying to Iraq to relieve 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) during the last 2 weeks of October. Cheesy handover photos are promised for the next edition!

We have seen a number of personalities move permanently ashore, including **Maj Alan Blackwell** and **Capt Phil Muir**, who will be guarding the home bank at HQ ARRC and as Adjt 1 Armd Div Sig Regt respectively. A fond farewell and many thanks for preparing such a happy and capable Sqn. New to the helm is **Maj Simon Spiers**, fresh from commanding a desk in London, ably assisted by **Capt Phil Waddell** as 2IC. The transformation at the top is completed by **Capt (QM) Angus Palmer** and new Tp SSgts, **Daz Kidd** and **Alfie Alford** – arriving all guns blazing by scoring a brace of goals apiece to defeat juniors at soccer. Final score: Offrs and Seniors 5 - Juniors 4. Better luck next time lads.

OPTAG TRAINING - *by Sig Parker*

In prep for our deployment to Basra on OP TELIC 3, the Sqn and all elements of the Bde took part in mandatory OPTAG trg at Sennelager Trg Centre. On our day, with the HQ Staff, we were split into three groups and undertook a round robin of the different trg stands.

The first briefing of the day was familiarisation of helis and LSs. The main point that sunk in was not to walk into or anywhere near the rotor blades and don't accidentally fire your weapon upwards towards the blades. If you're going to ND, aim downwards (through the fuel tanks)!

The next brief of the day was ROE from a very informative and decisive (but also a bit loopy) RMP WO. With a blank firing demo that provided clear (and humorous) practical reminders of the application of the ROE, this was the highlight of the day.

Next we ventured to a mine demo stand where we were bombarded (no pun intended) with the names, numbers and explosive power of several mines. I cannot remember much of the facts, but I certainly have a good idea of what they look like and will recognise one when I see one! The pyro set off to emphasise the bad practice of picking up random foreign items (as souvenirs) did get the point home. In the last of the walk-about demos, we were quite quickly volunteered to practise the mine prodding technique that we had just been taught, using various bits of our own everyday kit as prodders. (No sniggering at the back, there!)

After lunch, it was time to get back in the conference room for a series of briefs, ranging from the legal issues of being in theatre to the road conditions and driving techniques. All in all, a long but informative day that has given me a good insight into life in theatre.

JOCS COURSE - *by Sig Jones*

Sigs Malcolm, **Riley**, **Bell** and I attended a 5-day course on the Joint Operations Command System (JOCS), this being one of the ICS systems we will be operating on OP TELIC 3. The course took place at *HMS Collingwood*, and after the first couple of days of adapting to Navy routine (alarms at 6:30hrs when we didn't have to be up until 08.00hrs, and saluting the mast every morning and evening if we were caught out in the open) we finally got stuck into the course itself. Now that we are trained in the system, it will be our responsibility to ensure that all problems and issues are dealt with and that it remains operational in theatre.

RRW TRAINING PACKAGE - *by Sgt Little and Sig Young*

It was the 6 October 2003, and it was early, very early – 05.30hrs, as the Sqn got onto the transport and headed for Tin City, the Urban Defence Trg Area. Once there, we were split into 5 multiples of 3 bricks and allocated accn. After the briefings, the multiples split into their various duties, including tower guard, patrolling and QRF.

Whilst out on patrol, one of the multiples had an unexpected meeting with the local community, an experience that **Sig Brookes** will not forget in a hurry, as he had several locals try and pull him away from his brick. Luckily his commander noticed and rescued him.

Later in the day, one of the multiples was tasked to carry out a house search and arrest. This went extremely well, and under the control of **Lt Rob Bott**, 2 rifles, 2 pistols and IED equipment were found and two arrests made. Whilst we were waiting for the snatch wagons, the crowd tried to force entry to the house, but by this time the OC, **Maj Simon Spiers**, had arrived and helped to calm them down.

However, not long afterwards the crowds began to gather and demonstrate at the UN House, so the QRF were called out. Unfortunately, the QRF seemed to consist of the smallest members of the Sqn. Commanded by **SSgt Stroudley**, the QRF assessed the situation, and after trying to disperse the crowd, realised that the situation was getting extreme and so deployed a base line. The crowd became more aggressive and so the public order coy from RRW was called out, and an hour-long riot ensued. Bricks, bottles and petrol bombs were thrown. Finally, the crowd was dispersed and the Sqn continued with patrol routine throughout the night.

Cpl Thomas taking control during training

The next day began at 06.30hrs with the range phase of the package. This consisted of live firing with individual and pair fire and movement, break contact, and all the way up to a multiple attack. The DS were from the RRF, and they taught us and pointed us in the right direction, balancing wit with the serious message of what we were training to do. The day ended with a gathering in the Sqn bar to talk about the past day's excitement.

THE NEW SUBBIE - *by 2Lt Russ Moody*

The first posting from Sandhurst was always going to be the most daunting, and my first taste of the real Army was no exception. Although the majority of my luggage had been MFO'd, I was slightly wary at the airport. My baggage allowance was 20kg, and from my CFT trg, I knew that the remainder of my kit weighed considerably more! Fortunately, the nice girl at the BA counter somehow read 20kg and not 66, leaving me with more small round tokens to familiarise myself with Germany, and the liquid delights that accompany my new home.

The first week was hectic as ever. I was shadowing **Lt Rob Bott**, although I had time to slip away and take care of the relevant admin points. With the Unit preparing for deployment, I was thrust straight in, putting to good use the plethora of experience I learned at my 48-week course at RMAS. It seems that a lot of the job is just learned as you go along, which is fine with me.

Fortunately, the first few weeks had their fair share of social engagements. High on the list was the NW Europe Signals Dinner Night. **Maj Simon Spiers**, **Lt Rob Bott**, and **Lt Hannah Stoy** accompanied me to Rheindahlen. **Capt Angus Palmer** was to join us, providing a healthy representation from the Sqn. The night was great. I met a lot of new people from the Corps, and caught up with some old friends I'd not seen for a while. All in, a night enjoyed by all.

I was glad to be of use when the 2IC, **Capt Phil Waddell**, asked/told me I'd be running some ranges on the lead up to deployment. Imagine my horror when I was told that this would be the pistol range, and to expect all of the Bde staff! Fortunately, my trg ran true and the day went with no major dramas. Of course, I cannot take all of the credit for this; my thanks go to **Sgt Micky Piper**, who was always there when I shouted 'Help!'

The weeks have just got better and better. The PT programme is increasingly interesting, and the overall trg is reflecting the closeness of deployment. As I write, I am preparing lectures on subjects I learned myself just a few months ago. The job has so far proved to be as challenging and rewarding as I first imagined.

SSAFA BIG BREW 2003

On 18 September at Talbot Barracks in Sennelager, members of 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200) took a well-deserved break from their prep for OP TELIC 3 to have a good old cup of 'Rosey Lee' and a chinwag. In doing so, they managed to raise 140.34 for the SSAFA Forces Help Charity. **Capt KA Jones**, the Unit Welfare Offr gave a quick brief on the importance of the Charity and the work that they do and thanked everyone for their donations.

Sgt Little, Sgt Tilley, LCpl Backhouse, Sgt Crawford, Sgt Giffen and Capt Jones raise a mug to SSAFA

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Maj GN Addley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) D Watson**

Maj Addley has just taken over from **Maj Vickery** (who is now LtCol) and the Sqn is preparing itself for the trg year. The problem is that the Comd thinks we are already in the trg year and have been for the past 3 months. He certainly knows how to make people work. We have had range camps, AT expeds, sailing trips and exs, all combined with finishing the turnaround from OP TELIC. There is no sign of it easing up either, with a Bde SAAM, CAST, ITD weeks and another ex - all before Christmas. Never a dull moment.

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Richardson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Cox**

The Sqn has been back from Iraq for 4 months now and it's been a very hectic time, both work-wise and socially. During this time the Sqn has been turning round and preparing for exs. Socially we have entered many events: The Nijmegen 4-Day Marches, Osnabruck Garrison Gun-run, Garrison football event, AT, Garrison Basketball and Volleyball events and a 4 Bde off-shore sailing event. We also managed to organise a Junior versus Seniors cricket match, in which the Juniors have proved that they are the only ones to be considered for any testimonials at Lords.

So the last 4 months has been a very fluid time in Oscar Tp, with lots of people posted out and a few posted in. **SSgt Deano Cox** is covering the Tp Comd position while **Lt Holly Richardson** is at Blandford on her Tp Comds Course. **LCpls Steve Potts** and **Dave Doble** and **Sig Dougie McCutcheon** have gone to various units in NI, and **Cpl John Shambrook** and **LCpl Kev Hellyer** have both moved to 3 Div Sig Regt. Good luck on OP TELIC 2. Finally, a fond farewell to **LCpl Al Easton**, who has left to pursue a new career in 1 (UK) Civ Div. Good luck, mate. Welcome to **Sigs Paul Donoghue**, **Lenor Bedford** and **Ash Rodway** from 11Sig Regt. We hope you have enough time to get you bearings before a very busy year ahead. Congratulations to **Tony** and **Nicki Crutchley** on the birth of their daughter **Sophie**.

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Limbrey**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Lawn**

The Tp has had a very busy time since returning from OP TELIC, with many people's feet hardly touching the ground since coming back. It has not been all work, work, work though. The Sqn hosted the Garrison six-a-side football competition. After winning their group they went on to play 4 Regt RA in the semi-final, narrowly losing 2-1.

Lt Limbrey, **Sigs Virtue**, **Bow**, **Stroud** and **Lyon** made up part of the Sqn Team for this year's Nijmegen Marches. With four gruelling hot days, they came 6th out of 40. Well done them! With the hot sun making it hard going and many teams dropping out, thousands of people lined the streets helping to keep up the team's spirit - especially the local women!

We welcome **2Lt Fulthorpe** (who will take over from **Lt Limbrey** next year) and say farewell to **Sig Andrew Anderson**, who is off to Kosovo for a 6-month stint to practise his trade. Enjoy climbing up all those poles and the spiders in those pits!! Farewell also to **Cpl Craig Morrison**, who departs shortly for PJHQ.

EXERCISE MERCURY RAT DIAMOND II

After a few months on OP TELIC and a spot of POTL, it was time to get back into the swing of things for the men and women of 204 Sig Sqn. This involved a spot of AT in Bavaria. The OIC for the ex, **Capt Kev Barker**, managed to swan off on another EO course during the planning phase and left it in the capable hands of the trg wing to sort out. Deployment day arrived and we all headed off for the Multi Activity Lodge, Hubertaushaus in Obersdorf. After a few briefings from the lodge manager and CI, we drew stores for the following days' activities, of hill walking, rock climbing and kayaking.

After the first day, everyone was keen to get on with the rest of the week and get the most out of the great facilities on offer at the lodge and the general area of Obersdorf. There were the usual performers, with **Sig Daz Kewely** a contender for the GB kayaking team (or was it a change of CEQ to Submariner?) The hill-walking group had the delights of listening to **LCpl Michael Woolnough's** explanation of how goat's horns were made of wood. Interesting! No one had the heart to tell the poor lad. The climbers enjoyed the instruction of **Cpl Shackleton** for his words of wisdom and encouragement like 'Get up there, you weak individual!' or 'Don't fall now, or you'll hurt yourself.' The days flew by, and soon it was time for R and R, which consisted of white-water rafting over the border in Austria. **Capt Rickman** and the RSM had joined the lads for a couple of days away from the office and threw themselves into the activities. The rafters set off and **LCpl Witham** and **Sig Wilkes** were encouraged by their instructors to try to drown the 2IC and poor Ops Offr - but to no avail, as the two skilfully evaded their pursuers. Changeover day came and with it, another set of keen individuals arrived ready for their few days' AT. A special mention must go out to **Sig Taff White**, whose enthusiasm and effort was unsurpassed throughout the week. The ten days passed quickly and soon the tps were on their way back to Osnabruck. The staff and facilities of MAL were of the highest order and are to be recommended to any unit wishing to run AT in Bavaria.

EXERCISE BALTIC RAT

A crew of six from 204 Sig Sqn competed in the 4 Armd Bde Sail Trg Week, EX BALTIC RAT from 3-9 September. An armada of eight yachts with teams from across 4 Bde left Kiel and headed north into Danish waters.

The first three days of the ex involved sail trg and bringing our team together as one unit under our skipper, **SSgt Mark Fitzpatrick**. This allowed us to learn the art of sail changing, boat handling and spinnaker gibing. By the end of this, we were ready for the racing - except **LCpl Scott Quinn**, who still doesn't know how to use the heads. After each hard day's trg, we were starving, and the only way to enjoy the local traditions and atmosphere was to go in hunt of the traditional pizza and beer hostelries that adorn the local harbours.

The three races soon came around, with conditions varying from calm to Force 6. On the first day, I was trying to plot the course down below, being thrown about and not feeling too bright. On the second day, the winds stopped dead and we had to find our own amusement. Stranded in between two check points, we used the time to raise **Sig Andy Anderson** aloft in the bosun's chair to the top of the mast, and to play 'dodge the jellyfish', which entailed diving in from the front of the boat and making it to the rear steps before being attacked by the jellyfish. Eventually this day's racing was abandoned. Between races, we stopped at some very lively Danish ports such as Svendborg and Sonderborg to rest and partake in some local culture.

Although we didn't win any of the races, we all had an enjoyable introduction to sailing, experiencing foul wind and rain with the exhilaration of beating upwind with the leeward toe-rail submerged (whatever that means).

1 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC **Maj PEJ Drew**
RSM **WO1(RSM) AJ Shadwick**

SQUADRON FIELD FIRING EXERCISE – *by Sig Stevens*

Saturday 13 September saw 215 Sig Sqn deploy onto the prairie at BATUS, Canada for EX FIRST PUNCH, the Sqn Live Firing package. This six-day package consisted of a number of different ranges, located all over the prairie, giving us wide experience in field firing, cross-country driving, navigation and practice in the set-up and tear-down of our HQ.

Bde Main and Step-up at the start of EX IRON HAMMER

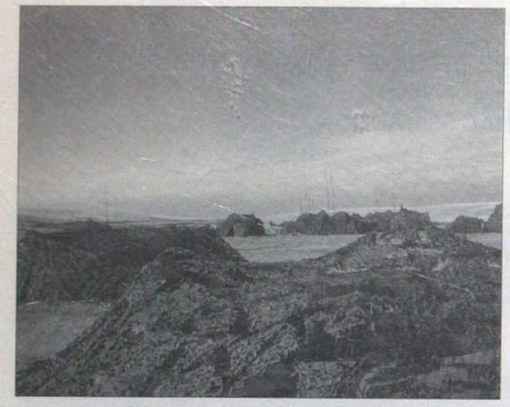
We started off the package zeroing all personal and support weapons, and then went into pairs and fire team fire and manoeuvre. The second day saw us running all over the place on the section attack ranges, which were great fun but quite tiring. The second of the section attack ranges involved a tank stalk, which meant we fired the LAW 94 Outdoor Trainer - the first time most of us had fired it.

Tuesday, the third day of firing was the best day by far, even though it snowed all day - yes it snowed all day and it was only 16 September! The three ranges, conducted in the snow, were defence of a HQ, trench clearance and battlefield inoculation. These ranges gave us the opportunity to fire a variety of weaponry, including GPMG, LAW 94, 51mm Mortar and L109 grenades. The battlefield inoculation was a section attack over an obstacle course - extremely hard work, but excellent fun. The obstacles comprised a low-wire entanglement, a mixed-level wire entanglement to run and jump and duck through, tunnels to crawl through, a wooden arch to climb over, two-roll high concertina wire to get over and a bunker to assault. The method of getting over the concertina wire was for a nominated person to run and launch themselves onto the wire front down so the rest of the section could run up behind them put a foot on their back and leap over the wire. I was that nominated person!!

Lt King leads his Tp across the prairie

The final phase of the trg saw us deploying to yet another area of the prairie to form a Sqn laager. Once in loc, we had to prepare a defensive position down to stage three, dig shell-scrapes for stand-to positions and then conduct detailed tasks.

Sabre Tp conducted an ambush. Support Tp a clearance patrol and Bengal Tp a fighting patrol. The Sqn position was then attacked, resulting in a fighting withdrawal to the ERV and ENDEX. Overall it was a very successful exercise, which everyone enjoyed immensely.



Bde Main HQ established in the field

EXERCISE BEAR DAWN – *by Sgt Manley*

With the Sqn currently taking part in EX IRON ANVIL in Canada, opportunities arose for some members to take part in some AT. A variety of packages were available, from parachuting to ice climbing. Reports were circulating that the ice climbing was more of a Special Forces selection, so I felt fortunate to be on EX BEAR DAWN. This consisted of a five-day package with a different activity undertaken each day.

On the first day, my sec were off trekking, getting the duller activity out of the way early. Off we set in our issued Berghaus clothing, only to remove it 500m later, as the temperatures soared. Most people were soon down to shorts and boots, trying to improve their squaddie tans. The views were fantastic, and the packed lunches almost a two-man lift. As the hike finished and we were heading back to camp (the tented village), we saw our first bear - a small black bear, looking for packed lunches. We sped round the car park in a vain attempt to get a few photos, but the bear escaped before we could get him in our sights.

The second day was one for the water babes. We loaded the trailer with the kayaks and headed off for a local lake to practise our skills and drills on still water. Before this, the mandatory swim test was required and was absolutely freezing, even with the wetsuits provided. Once the lake was mastered, it was time to hit the white water - well sort of! It was probably the same strength as the Thames but still too powerful for me. I spent half the time talking to the fish or emptying my kayak.

On the next day, mountain biking sounded easy, but uphill certainly meant uphill, and downhill was what could only be classed as white-knuckle stuff. The route was hard - one particular downhill stretch seemed to be a 1:2 decline with a hairpin bend at the bottom. It was a case of head down, hold tight and pray - what fun!

Day four arrived and so did the rain. Rock climbing was on the agenda, but because of the conditions, it had to be changed from an outdoor rock face to an indoor trg wall in Banff, the Canadian Beverly Hills. Dressed in our Berghaus waterproofs, we looked a little out of the ordinary. Where they had Rockport, we had Ron Hills - a quick exit was required.

The final day was the big day of white-water rafting, something I'd wanted to do before I arrived in Canada. The rain poured non-stop all day, but no one cared. The whole day was a real laugh, with the three different crews trying to board and capsize the others. All in all, it was a fantastic experience, an opportunity not to be missed!

EXERCISE WAPTA DANCE – *by LCpl Winzar*

EX WAPTA DANCE is one of the AT packages currently on offer to exercising tps on EX IRON ANVIL, currently taking place at BATUS, Canada, and which **LCpl Masters** and I took part in. The package is an introduction to alpine mountaineering, and is designed for beginners as well as seasoned pros.

It was five days of intense physical activity, which included glacier walking with crampons, crevasse rescue techniques, and the ascent of three peaks in the WAPTA Icefields. The accn was a wooden hut at 7,500 ft ASL. Although quite basic, it was a very welcome resting place at the end of each strenuous day's activity. A stable diet of army rations ensured that we were recharged ready for the next day's fun.

After the fourth day's activity, and fearing the onset of cabin fever, we returned to meet up with the other tp on AT to share a barbecue and a few beers, happy to have survived!

12 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj Chris Paterson**
RSM **WO1 Carter**

The hectic pace of life has continued in the Sqn since returning from ops in Kosovo. We have managed to fit in a number of AT expeds as well as a mil trg package at Lydd/Hythe ranges. Some Sqn pers have even managed to fit in leave! Now the Sqn's focus is very much geared toward Bowmanisation, with 12 Mech Bde being the first to convert. The process is now well underway and the Sqn is looking forward to an extended eighteen month Trg Year, which will culminate in BATUS in Spring 05.

EXERCISES ACE DEAL, ACE HIGH AND ACE FLUSH

Following the return of the Sqn from Kosovo, the HQ Tps became involved in the 'ACE' series of exercises. ACE DEAL, ACE HIGH and ACE FLUSH were to be the Sqns final run-outs with the CLANSMAN system prior to the long awaited transition to BOWMAN. With this package falling in the summer months, it was hoped for a better weather program than last years 'ACE' series, which was endured through the mud and rain of February on the plain! It all kicked off with the customary plug-up on the square before finally getting out into the field on the Friday evening.

EX ACE HIGH was the Tp-level phase, and was held on the Aldershot Trg Area, where the Tp got to practise and brush off the cobwebs on Unit SOPs, complex builds and all the basic det drills. A number of lessons were given by the Tp NCOs, who imparted their infinite wisdom to a worried looking bunch of junior sigs! By the following Wednesday, events were flowing smoothly, and everyone was getting in the swing of things as we departed for Hawley. Both Tps combined at this stage to simulate a full HQ build in prep for visits by the OC, Bde Staff and ultimately the Bde Comd himself.

Following a successful visit from the various staff officers, we recovered both Tps back to Aldershot for a brief turnaround before the low loaders took us to our familiar second home on Salisbury Plain!

We were greeted with a morning of rain and wind as we rolled through a replen on old Carter Bks. We moved into a Sqn-level ex, designed by the Ops Team to test our abilities to communicate effectively between HQs. Normal service resumed and the staff arrived to the usual impeccable build and service as only Alpha Tp can provide! The ex then finished and the guys got a welcome rest and barbecue, before moving back to Aldershot.

EXCERCISE ACE SECOND STAB (TIGER)

The Sqn mounted an AT ex to trek across Corsica over the period 10-25 July. The route was the *Grand Randonée 20* (GR 20) running from Calenzana in the north to Conca in the south, climbing 2,000m over a distance of 170 km. The route is interspersed with refuges run by a French agency that provides sources of water and rations. Led by **Lts Barker** and **Smith**, the exped was manned by a team of hardy NCOs, **Cpls Scott**, **Connolly**, and **Lowe**, and **LCpls Mitchell** and **Walls**.

A pre-exped trg weekend was organised in Snowdonia in conjunction with 14 Sig Regt, under **Lt Bermingham**, to verify basic mountain fitness. The weather for this was cold and wet, completely different from Corsica. Snowdon was ascended on the Sunday, replicating the approximate altitude to be climbed in Corsica each day.

The GR 20 route itself was mostly well marked, and could be followed easily in clear weather. This allowed participants to concentrate on the terrain, which was mostly rocky and difficult. In the dark the route was hard to follow and wrong turns were easy. The weather for the duration of the exped was extremely hot, and whilst this was expected, it turned out that the year was one of the hottest on record.

Fighting back exhaustion on GR20

The highlights of the trip were undoubtedly the Cirque de Solitude, offering stunning views and breathtaking walking, and the Cascades des Anglais, where for years, English walkers have cooled down in the clear blue pools after a hard day's trekking. In addition, the return drive along the east coast to the start point in Calvi was arduous in itself - comparable to the worst of Alpine driving.

It must be said that actually completing the route was immensely satisfying to those who made it all the way. At times, it felt like the heat and endless rocky ascents and descents would beat the group, but team spirit, big pasta meals when possible and a total aversion to failure took the five travellers across most the of length of Corsica and back again. The reward was some quality time on the beach!

EXERCISE ACE MECURIAL DIAMOND (DRAGON)
- by LCpl Ladley

On 11 July, twelve members of 12 Mech Bde and Sig Sqn (228) flew out to the British Kiel Yacht Club in Germany to take part in the 10-day EX ACE MERCURIAL DIAMOND (DRAGON). This annual Corps sail trg regatta involves a long distance sail along the coast of Denmark.

The trip got off to a good start with the arrival of bacon butties at 06.30hrs helping us on our way for the flight to Hamburg. Things were to get better on the flight when the hostess came by with two rounds of free drinks! On arrival in Kiel, some of us went to explore the local town to experience some German hospitality. In fact we met only 3 locals, one of whom happened to own a bar! So we felt it our national duty to be gracious guests. After an interesting evening interacting with our inebriated hosts, we turned in for a good night's rest. The following day was the beginning of our 10-day voyage across the Baltic Sea. We split into two teams and took to our yachts, *Tern* and *Grebe*. Our skippers for the trip were **Majs Appleton** and **Tyce**. The job of First Mate fell to **SSgt Croxon** on *Tern* and **Sgt Piper** on *Grebe*, with remaining 10 of us (the majority of whom had never sailed before) split between the two yachts. In total there were 8 teams made up from Regular and TA RSigs units throughout the UK and Germany.

The learning began straight away, and any of the more romantic ideas of sailing (i.e. sunbathing) were quickly dashed as we began hoisting the sails and learning how to tie various knots, as well as how to tack and jibe (turning the boat in simple-speak). The technique involved pulling in ropes very quickly to control the sail and alter the course of the boat. Of course they're not called ropes, they're called 'sheets' - just one of the many strange names given to parts of the boat that we would quickly become familiar with.

It wasn't until the second day that we hit the open sea. All worked well and as the first week passed, everyone soon found their part to play, whether as a natural born sailor, **Sig Murray**, or as our own naked chef, **Cpl Smudge Smith**. The weather was beautiful the moment we arrived, and stayed pretty much that way, although the light winds were not ideal for sailing. However, we did manage to do enough sailing to get us ready for the races.

The early races were around a short course, and we managed to get quite a few in. We then progressed to longer races, which lasted the whole day, and even into the night on one occasion. The ninth day was a chance for the wannabe skippers to have a go in the novice race. **Sgt Piper** and **Cpl Smith** took to up challenge and, although we didn't get a formal place, it was a well-fought battle between our two yachts.

The event finished back at the British Kiel Yacht Club with the presentations. Even though neither of our boats had actually won a race, both walked away with a prize. *Grebe* won the award for 'Most Determination and Improvement', and *Tern* was the 'Spirit of the Regatta.' The whole experience was both great fun and very challenging. By the end of the 10 days, we all achieved our Competent Crew qualification and most of us would happily take to the high seas once more. If anybody is planning a boat trip and requires crew they need look no further than 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

EXERCISE CAPEL TIGER

EX CAPEL TIGER was a Sqn level 2 AT ex conducted in Snowdonia National Park over the period 12 – 24 July. The ex was split into two one-week packages, allowing maximum participation for Sqn personnel. The facilities at Capel Curig Trg Camp were utilised for the duration of the ex. The first 3 days were split into three level 2 trg activities – climbing/abseiling, walking and kayaking. The fourth day of the ex was an opportunity for personnel to chose a non-recognised activity of their choice. These included mountain biking, quad biking,

fishing, golf, horse riding and an overnight trek. All in all, the ex was a success with the only downside being the weather. However, this did not dampen the spirits and all personnel enjoyed the break away from Montgomery Lines.

Taking a break during EX CAPEL TIGER

EXERCISE DEVIL SPADE

EX DEVIL SPADE was a Sqn range concentration conducted at Hythe and Lydd ranges over the period 7 – 10 September. We went to St Martins Plain Camp, Shorncliffe, to begin the 3-day package, with the objective of getting Sqn personnel up to Stage 4 field firing. The first day got everyone into the swing of things through various shoots, including grouping and zeroing, APWT (for those who required it), IBSR and a GPMG shoot (which resulted in the dry grass catching fire, though range control were happy to 'let it burn!!' much to the relief of **Lt Matt Jones**). There was also a pistol APWT laid on especially for the OC, **Maj Chris Paterson**, who thankfully passed – just! The second day included a pistol range, MMTR, fire team assessment, and the evening was filled with a LNV shoot. On final day a march and shoot competition was organised. The march was conducted along the sea front of Hythe and culminated with a competition shoot on Hythe ranges. 2 Sec were the overall winners, with a fine overall performance by **Sigs Maureen Bowen**, **Tim Bartlett** and **Wayne Sturdy**. The final shoot of the day was an introductory automatic fire shoot before returning to Aldershot.

BOWMAN ADVANCED SIGNALLER COURSE
- by Cpl Webster

Most people in the Corps will have heard about this new system and thought it would never arrive. Well, for 12 Mech Bde it has! The Bde has been chosen to be the first to convert to BOWMAN and is due to reach Collective Performance Level 5 as a BOWMAN Bde by June 05. To this end, I and nine other personnel from 228 Sig Sqn undertook the first BOWMAN Advanced Signaller Course. The course was run by Westland and was based in Pirbright, running over a 3-week period. It was certainly unusual for me to be loaded onto the first course, as I'm an Area Systems Op who knows little about radios. But the course has given me an insight into how the 'dark side' works and has placed me in good stead for my future career in the Corps. I have now also developed a sound knowledge of how the KVs will be generated/filled and distributed, which is exactly what I will be doing, once the Sqn has converted to BOWMAN.

BOWMAN is the Armed Forces replacement for the ageing CLANSMAN radio system. The BOWMAN project covers all the VHF and HF radio configurations used as manpacks or installed in land, sea and air platforms. These radios are also interoperable with CLANSMAN and other NATO compliant radios. The CLANSMAN interface is vital, as most units will not be receiving BOWMAN for a few more years.

The BOWMAN System can provide both secure (digital) and insecure (analogue) voice and data comms to all levels of communicators be they a foot patrol or Bde staff. With a GPS installed in each set, there is also the ability to determine your exact loc, velocity and time, 24 hours a day, in all weather conditions, anywhere in the world.

The course was exhaustive but very interesting. I found it challenging in different ways, but thoroughly enjoyable. We had computer simulations of the actual equipt. We simply used a mouse to click on a button to simulate the actual method of operating the equipment. This was not as good as getting hands on the equipt, but it served its purpose.

LCpls Bob Yuille, **Thompson**, **Jim Ronald** and **Martin Pearce** have stayed in Pirbright until December to become in house instructors. Who could imagine **LCpl Thompson** as an instructor? I wonder how long the computers stay intact - or should I say the students?

DEFENCE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES AGENCY (GERMANY) 252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

OC/SO2 **Maj AL Hayden**

FAREWELL TO MAJ AND MRS PICKERSGILL
- by Capt Eric Udell

Finally after 15 yrs' continuous years service in BFG, **Maj Garth Pickersgill** is on his way. The former Warsaw Pact countries will have been totally shocked and amazed by the British Government's commitment to send one British Officer to Germany for almost the entire period of the Cold War, and then to allow him to remain here for a period to ensure that this episode of world history would not recur. This commitment may have been a major contributory factor in the demise of the aforementioned Pact and the destruction of the now historically famous dividing Wall.

The Sqn said a fond farewell to this highly-respected and well-liked Sqn OC on Saturday 16 August, with an appropriate 70's theme night. **SSgt Andy Lloyd** organised the send-off for **Garth** and **Miriam** in the RAF *Blues Club*. For some, it was a step into the mysterious past, with an opportunity to dress in strange clothing. For others, it was just a slightly more extended reach to the rear of their wardrobes to find the correct attire. All members of the unit wish you both the very best of luck with your new appointment in Blandford, and good luck for the future.

WELCOME TO THE NEW OFFICER COMMANDING

We extend a warm welcome to the new OC/S02 Strat Dev, **Maj Ashley Hayden**, who joined us on 1 September from 16 Sig Regt down the road. We hope you enjoy your tour with the Agency. Welcome to DCSA(G).

ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT HUMAN RESOURCES

Adjt **Capt CJ Udell**
SSM **W02 (SSM) G Steel**

DINING OUT W02 (SSM) DAVE STEWART AND W02 GRAHAM WEAVERS *- by W02 (SSM) Gaz Steel*

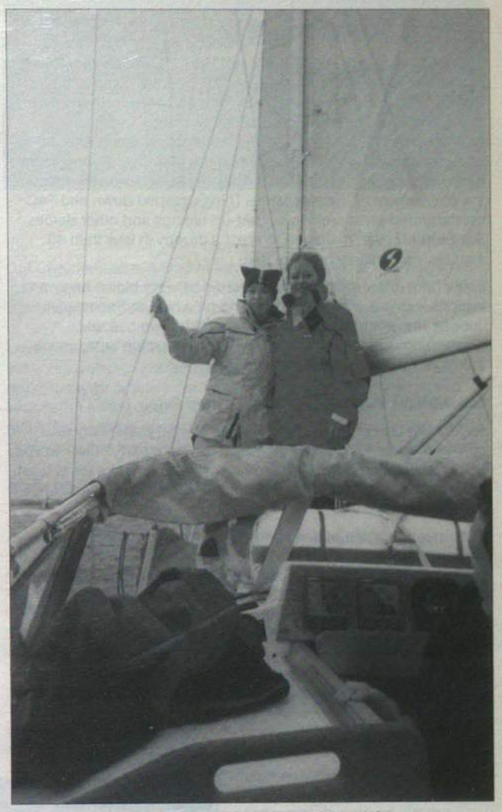
To mark the retirement of two more Corps WOs, a Ladies Dinner Night was held on 29 August at the Rheindahlen Support Unit WOs and Sgts Mess to commemorate the end of 22 years' colour service by **W02s Dave Stewart** and **Graham Weavers.**

Proceedings got off to nervous start when, with minutes to spare, **W02 Dave Stewart** and his new bride, **Natasha** had still not arrived! 'Late for his own funeral,' was one of the comments passed. Dinner eventually began (only a few minutes late), an event thoroughly enjoyed by all. The usual round of formalities followed, providing the opportunity for **W02 (SSM) Gaz Steel** to deliver the speeches and presentations. He was so impressed with his own performance that he even decided to purchase a bottle of port to share with the gathering! A great night (early morning) was had by all, and our best wishes go with **Dave** and **Natasha Stewart**, who are posted to 71 (Y) Sig Regt for his final 6 months service, and **Graham** and **Brigitte Weavers**, whose previous post having now been civilianised, are staying with the Agency.

THE BALTIC EXPERIENCE 2003 *- by LCpls Kane and Oxley*

LCpls Oxley and Kane departing Kiel harbour for the New World

During the end of August and the beginning of September, we, **LCpls Jackie Kane** and **Marie Oxley**, went to Kiel Trg Centre, to brave the cold waters to take part in a sailing regatta around the Baltic Sea. During the experience, we were fortunate enough to stop off at various ports in Germany and Denmark. This being a sail trg ex, part of the time spent at sea involved our being taught various sailing drills, including 'man overboard' drill – but with a dummy body; not a person! Having had a barrel of laughs along the way, we both fully enjoyed the week, and have lasting memories of water, water - and more water. We both now look forward to continuation trg in the spring, and would recommend this experience to anyone who is interested in taking up sailing as a hobby. This was an extremely useful insight into the sport.



LCpls Oxley and Kane splicing the mainbrace

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj Justin Hodges**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) RC Douglas**

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Mark Bentley**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Chico Towers**

RSG *- by Cpl Harvey*

We deployed on our first CAST under the leadership of **Lt Bentley**, setting up the various tents and maintaining a Radio room and Comms Ops with much success. We were aided on this ex by our Forward HQ, run by **Sgt Towers**, enabling us to do a change of control from CAST. This went very smoothly. Our thanks go to **LCpl Mark Reay**, who proved to be a sterling asset to the Tp and to **Sgt Joe Smith**, **Cpl Scotty McDonald** and **LCpl Aitken** for leaving three members of the Tp (including me) behind at Sennelager. Cheers lads! We now look forward to the next 2 exs, where we aim to reach perfection.

FSG *- by Sig Hiscocks*

FSG deployed early on the morning of Monday 15 September on EX MERCURY HALBERD II. The first slow time set-up was chaotic, but under the leadership of **Cpls Hague** and **Flannagan**, I soon slotted in and learned to get used to the madness around me.

During the first week, FSG quickly began to bond and work as a team. New sigs such as **Sig Boldy** and I, soon found our feet and got to see the field army at its best, aided by good examples of NCOs like **LCpl Reay**. A special mention has to be made of **LCpl Sunderland**, who managed to tear down an EVHF in no less than 2fi hours – a personal best!

In the second week, we moved to CAST(G), where FSG again occupied a new loc and went about setting up under the eagle eye of **Sgt Towers**. Under his direction, we set about fine-tuning everything we'd already done. On Thursday night, after the staff

had left our loc, we were pleased as punch that all had gone well. We occupied ourselves with character-building exs, where the sigs proved their worth. The ex was seen by all as a huge success, and everyone involved took something away. It was a brilliant two weeks for us all.

TAC - *by Sig Wildman*

TAC deployed on EX MERCURY HALBERD II, initially only 200m from FSG. We soon discovered that things were going to be far from smooth. **LCpl Veal's** det was far from battleworthy, but he did well to produce some spectacular bodges. The most memorable of these was a PU12 mast erection, using Allen keys and screwdrivers as mast pins. Once the *Changing Rooms* team had finished redesigning TAC, a flurry of moves followed, much to the amusement of the night shift. Things calmed down and TAC concentrated on improving our set-up timings and other details. **Sig Bennett** even managed to erect a droopy in less than 40 minutes - a personal best I'm told!

Aside from a few minor hiccups, cobwebs were blown away and lessons learned, with the ex finishing on a high at Sennelager. Just for the record however, the cam net I drove over in diminishing light was not clearly marked with mine tape, and is therefore FSG's fault, not mine...

SQUADRON SUMMER SOCIAL - *by Sgt Paton*

As 262 Sig Sqn is growing nicely in size, what better way to commemorate this wonder than by throwing a party! Over to you, **SSgt Dudley** and half a dozen other willing volunteers (or at least they were willing after some inspiring words of encouragement from the RSM!)

After much banging of heads and deliberation from the committee, the proposed tone of the night was soon beginning to change from a night of beer and general mayhem to a night of civilised jesting, mockery and quaffing of fine wines, beers and spirits. With just a couple of hours to go, the committee completed the final touches. **SSgt Craig Dudley** and I dashed down to the Martkauf supermarket to grab some tablecloths (in Corps colours of course) and candles. The candles set us back about 6 each and we broke at least two before even getting to the counter. The evening itself came together with the entertainment consisting of live music, a disco, presentations and a live formation dance performed by the *His and Hers Pink Shirts* display team (alias the 2IC, **Capt Orr** and his good lady guest).

Soon everyone from the Sqn was gathered in the function room. The proceedings commenced with presentations, with **WO2 (RQMS) Lindsey Manktelow** receiving her Warrant at long last. Congratulations from all the lads. The Sqn then bid a fond farewell to **Sgt Jules Moulson**, who leaves us for pastures new.

The entertainment and superb food (in conjunction with the occasional lager shandy) ensured the evening was a resounding success. Our thanks go to the Social Committee and those wiling volunteers who helped the band and DJ out the next morning.

FOOTBALL FRIENDLY – *by SSgt Lee*

On Wednesday 1 October at the Oyster pitches at PRB Gütersloh, the football team of the Corp's youngest Sqn took to the field. Ironically they were to play the BFG Minor Unit champions, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn. No one could have expected what would happen during the next ninety minutes.

262 Sig Sqn kicked off and straight away went on the attack. After only a few minutes they were leading. Following good work down the left from **LCpl Henderson** and **Sig Taylor**, **LCpl Dave Aitken** found himself in acres of space and finished well. There were no more scores for the rest of the first half, but both teams had chances.

280 Sqn started brightly in the second half and had several chances to equalise. The best of these was when a penalty was given for hand ball, but **SSgt Al Lee** saved well. After about fifteen minutes, 262 Sqn began to find their feet again and took control. **LCpl Aitken** slammed home from just inside the box with 25 minutes remaining, finishing off a well put together move. It was now continuous pressure from the home team until the final goal. Swift work on the right from **Sgt Chiko Towers** and the RSM placed the ball at the feet of **LCpl Dickinson**. He moved left then right and finished from twelve yards.

The final score was: 262 Sig Sqn: 3 - 280 (UK) Sig Sqn: 0. A very promising start to the sporting life of the Corp's newest Sqn.

280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Russell Edwards**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Andy Dixon**

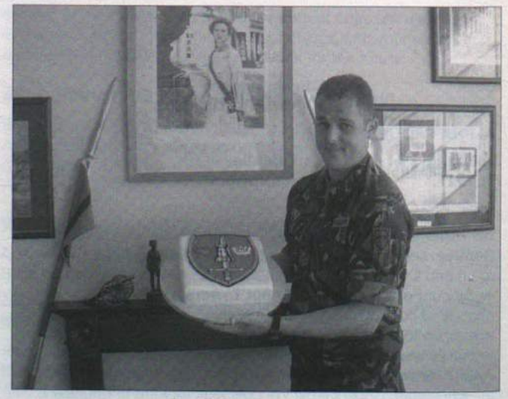
The last few months in the Sqn have been fairly busy. With the summer block leave period over, it's time for everyone to get geared up for the 5-month busy period before Christmas. We have plenty to do before then, including Battle Camps, exs, trg days and at least three different op deployments.

We welcome back the lads from their Bosnia tour. In August, they received a visit from the Tp Comd, **Capt Dawes** and **SSgt Gartside**. We are sure they are glad to be back in the Sqn, especially with November's Battle Camp coming up! Meanwhile other members of the Sqn are getting prepped for EX COBALT FLASH 2, a NATO ex which gets underway on 6 October. All in all, we have a lot to look forward to and a lot to get on with.

THE SSAFA BIG BREW UP

280 Sig Sqn's contribution to the SSAFA Big Brew Up was held in the Sqn hangar on 24 September. Despite op commitments, the turnout was better than expected. Special thanks to **Cpl Parker** of the LAD for his creative genius in the shape of a polystyrene cup and saucer, and to the to the wives of the Sqn for providing the cakes.

With just the Sqn turning up, we still managed to raise over €400 (half the combined total raised by 7 and 16 Sig Regts). We all enjoyed the opportunity for an extended NAAFI break and the chance to increase their waistlines with loads of cake and tea, including the FoS's cake.



The FofS's fantastic cake

JULIET TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt J Dawes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M Pavier**

Juliet Troop now has a new Tp Comd, **Capt Jase Dawes**, who arrived in late July and a new Tp SSgt, **SSgt Mal Pavier**, who joined us in September. We also welcome **Cpl Ward** and **LCpl Atkinson**. **Cpl Rhys Hughes** heads off to 30 Sig Regt, **Cpl Stevie King** to 21 Sig Regt (AS), and **SSgt Paul Gartside** has also left us.

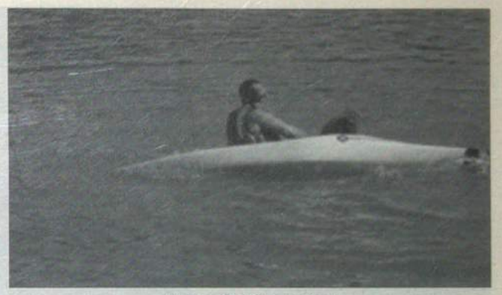
KAPE TOUR - *by Sig Love*

Earlier this year 280 (UK) Sig Sqn sent four keen, enthusiastic soldiers back to UK to work with The Royal Signals Mobile Presentation Team (RSMPT) in Blandford. After a short stay in Blandford off we went up to Fairford Airbase, where we set up as part of the 'Army Village' at the annual International Air Tattoo. After going through a short safety brief, we were shown to our luxurious tented accn, which we were to share with soldiers from other arms of the British Army. After a quick shower, we followed the crowd to the very thoughtfully provided beer tent, which also housed a disco.

The first day at the show, which was open purely for the local schools, went surprisingly well, with comd tasks involving the use of hand held radios enticing youngsters to the stand. The second day, the main opening day, saw the much-anticipated arrival of **HRH the Duke of Edinburgh**. He showed a lot of interest in the Army contribution towards the show. Thinking he would come to our stand, **Cpl Jo Neal** kept a beady eye out but was greatly disappointed when he didn't. The third and final day saw a frantic pack-up of all the Army presentations, and the race was on to beat each other out of the main gates. Three hours later, it was our turn to leave and to head back to Blandford and then back to Germany. Everyone on the KAPE Tour enjoyed themselves thoroughly, and we would highly recommend anyone taking part if given the chance.

EXERCISE BAVARIA BACKSTOP - *by LCpl Allen*

Juliet Tp set out on their annual AT ex in August. Located beneath the Austrian Alps, Wertag was set in perfect scenery and some of the most beautiful surroundings in the world. The 10-day ex consisted of kayaking, hill walking, rock climbing, mountain biking, and white water rafting.



Rolling Cpl Chacksfield

Cpl Chacksfield excelled at kayaking, completing three different rolls, thanks to expert tuition from **Cpl Jones**. His partner in crime, **Cpl Standley** fooled many a lady into believing he was part of the Australian Jackass crew. Rock climbers **Sig Barrelli**, **Sig Love** and **LCpl Tarrier** were always first to the top, making it look easy. Hill walking was led by our MLT, **Sig Jones**, a good opportunity to practise our map reading skills. **Pte McPherson** took us on a little detour - for about an hour and half! **LCpl Allen** managed to climb up and down the mountain before falling on the tarmac road at the bottom, to produce two cut knees!

CGS1/MCM1 – A QUICK DASH TO IRAQ - *by Cpl Marsh*

MCM Comd **Lt Jon Davies**
CIS Team Leader **W02 (FofS) Dicky Dickinson**

It began, back in June when fifteen members of the Sqn were put on standby for possible deployment to Iraq. With much trg, ITDs and a quick OPTAG package thrown in by the SSM, the lucky fifteen were soon ready to move. The well-known phrase, 'It's OK. We will know more on Tuesday' started to rear its head. Then our numbers dropped, and fifteen became nine. All was going well, apart from not having any summer leave or even a confirmed tour start date. After a couple of 'on the bus, off the bus' moments, and on the third time of saying goodbye to family and friends, we actually left.

Making rock climbing look easy

It was then into yellow and off to NATO HQ in Holland, to fit the trucks ready for the task ahead. With a shopping list as long as your arm, we worked hard to get all systems up and working. **Sgt Andy Butterfield** and **Cpl Gordy Donaldson** had days of fun sorting and rewiring the comms shelter. Just like in the TV programme *Changing Rooms*, **Sgt Jukes** and **Cpl Marsh** soon changed an empty boxed body into a computer geeks centre. Overall, our task was made a little harder due to the fact that it was 'A' Level results week and then Freshers' Week in Maastricht. As you can imagine, it was hard to keep focused on work with two hundred excited 18-year-old college girls running around town. But as true professionals, we do like a good challenge. We borrowed ex pool equipt from AMF and anything else that we could lay our hands on to make CGS1/MCM1 come to life.

With a tearful goodbye from the Polish general, we packed the trucks into two Ukrainian transport planes and ourselves into a small leather-seated Lear jet. After three and a half hours our first stop was Turkey.

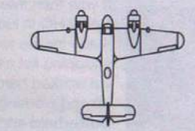
This impressed **Cpl Jock Taylor** and the rest of the smokers, as sitting on the air pan for an hour right next to the fuel station, there was no chance of a fag. From there it was on to Kuwait, where we arrived at the wrong airport, giving the airport customs nightshift a nice surprise. After an hour and nearly having to give up **Cpl Mat Hutchinson** as a gift to the guards, we made it to the military site. A couple of hours later, with the trucks safely unloaded (well the TSGT Trailer will not be quite the same), we were ready for bed. But we then discovered that our beds were some 120km on into the desert. So nearly 40 hrs after leaving Germany, we arrived at LSA1, and our beds.

MCM1 set up and ready to go

Next morning (if you can call 04.00hrs morning) seven US Army HETs (tank transporters) picked up the slow and heavy trucks ready for our two-day trip up-country. **Cpl Donaldson** packed extra water to give out as aid to the locals at the Iraq border crossing, and he distributed them in a spectacular fashion, by rolling the trailer over. The rest of the trip also had its moments, like the 50 miles across dust tracks with zero visibility at 50 km/h in a 40-veh convoy. By the end of the dirt track all of the drivers really did drive 'using the force!' The only point in two days the convoy took a wrong turn was in downtown Al Hillah, where we removed most of the power lines on the main street with our vehs. As you can image, this impressed the locals no end. With the convoy stuck fast in the city centre and a rapidly growing crowd, thoughts of *Black Hawk Down* sprang to mind. But within the hour, we arrived at our new home, Camp Babylon.

Once in the Polish-run camp at Babylon, it took some shaking of hands, nodding of heads and lots of sucking air though teeth to get a site. Nevertheless, **Lt Jon Davies** finally managed to get us some land to set up the det and start work. The complex quickly took shape and the links dropped in as quickly as we had hoped. Some things did not go to plan - like our power. **LCpl Neil Haggar** had an interesting time keeping his two air-cooled generators running in 55° C heat. He was very near to calling for a priest to administer the last rights on one gene, but found that American HUMMV's engine parts do come in quite useful.

So links are in and troops are happy. All we need now is Sky TV and a cool beer. But alas, 'We'll know more about that on Tuesday!'



81 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Tillotson**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Caruthers**

857 TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Cropper**
Tp SSgt **SSgt McLeish**

857 Tp annual deployment in 2003 was to Episkopi Garrison, Cyprus, in support of HQ BFC and Cyprus Communications Unit (CCU). The Tp deployed 26 soldiers of all ranks from 10 May – 11 June. The aim of the deployment was to work with the Regular personnel of CCU, to provide additional manpower for ongoing tasks, and to facilitate the exchange of working practices and ideas.

857's specific task was to complete PROJECT HURRICANE, an installation of underground copper cable to increase the capacity and reliability to end-users in the Garrison. The integration predominantly took the form of Cat-5 cable installation in HQ BFC buildings. The project was successfully completed on schedule. During the deployment 857 Tp bid farewell to **LCpl Dave Pye**, retiring from service after more than 27 years with the Sqn. The occasion was celebrated in style with an evening at *Michael's* kebab restaurant, recalling many fond memories. All those in 857 wish him well for the future.

The coming months will quieten down for the troop, as most of the annual trg and deployments are now completed, but planning is underway for 2004, and who knows what opportunities potential mobilisations could bring.

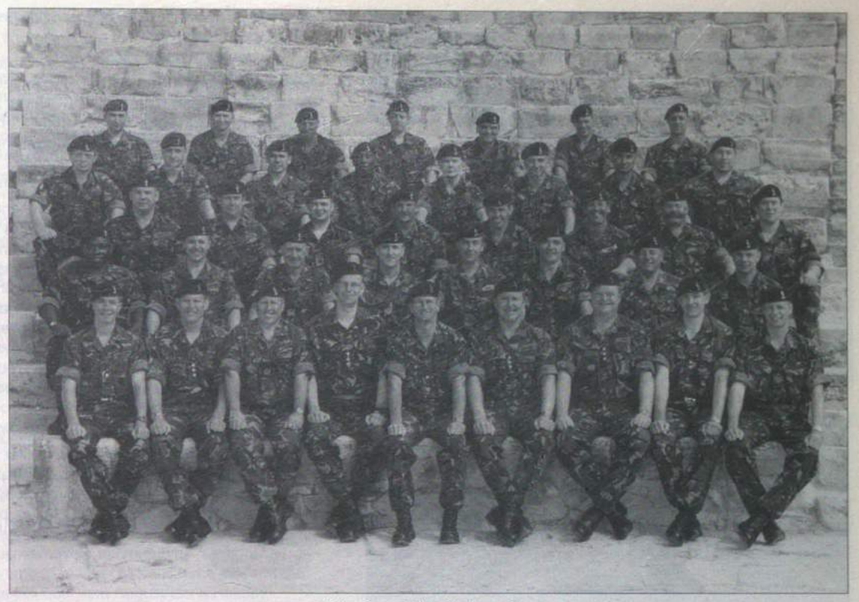
854 TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Steve Clout**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Marty Allen**

854 Tp also deployed to Episkopi Garrison during May-June 2003, to work on PROJECT SPITFIRE. This project involved installing, jointing, testing, terminating and changing over 1,800m of 100-pair copper cable, replacing an old cable that was past its time (a bit like some of the 854 lads). Working in the blistering heat is something 854 take in their stride, especially down on Nissi beach.

854 Tp also got involved with various integration projects, where the lads worked alongside CCU tps in various roles, including some external cabling and Cat-5 wiring in the library.

It was time for **Sgt Neil Weaver** to try to impress the lads again, glad that he wasn't the only one in the Tp who used a facepack and cucumber to keep the wrinkles at bay. One Monday morning half the Tp were found on parade showing the remnants of their beauty treatments. Needless to say, their efforts didn't have the desired effect – they still looked awful! The same **Sgt Weaver** then demonstrated his technical aptitude when he left the washing machine door open, flooding the utility room and sending his smalls flying! But he wasn't the only senior to impress. **SSgt Marty Allen** managed to brighten up the Mess Manager's day by flooding not only his own room, but also that of his colleague downstairs. Next time he'll wash his kecks in the washing machine like everyone else (remembering to close the door)!



81 Sig Sqn at The Curium, Cyprus

As usually happens, sport featured on the calendar, with 81 Sig Sqn taking on the local 5-a-side team of chefs (and coming second), and the 11-a-side team from CCU (second again). Go-karting was another competitive afternoon for the lads, with 854 coming both first with fastest soldier (**Lt Mark Ascott**), and last (in the 854 Team effort).

SSgt Mark Egan worked hard to gain the trust of the dozen or so passengers who braved a trip into the clouds with him. The fact that he had just passed his flying test didn't seem to put him off, until he was heard saying 'We must have been flying on fumes that last trip.' Hopefully he'll remember to watchthe fuel gauge next time.

CYPRUS COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (CCU)

OC **Maj Matt Hanson**
USM **WO2(SSM) Dave Smith**

AKROTIRI SECTION – *by Cpl Mark Aplin and LCpl Chapman*

OC **Capt Ben Psaila**
SSgt **SSgt Paul Batley**

Life continues apace in the Forward Mounting Base, RAF Akrotiri. Just when we thought we had heard the end of OP TELIC, we now have to put right anything that wasn't installed perfectly first time around. Still, it's better to be employed all day every day on a job we love, rather than painting wagons.

We still manage to make some time for sport, and continue to hold our own against the rest of the Station, being narrowly beaten by some dubious refereeing decisions in the Station 6-a-side League. We have also finally ended Dhekelia Sec's winning run in the Griffon Cup, coming out on top in the ten-pin bowling competition. Well done to everyone who took part, especially our professional bowlers from Transmitters.

This month in Akrotiri, we are celebrating a very rare occurrence, an addition to the Inst Mechs, **LCpl Johnny Neill**. What with **LCpls Neill** and **Fell** returning from the Falklands, we can now almost manage two ranks on our morning parades! We also welcome **Cpl Ebdon** from 16 Air Asslt Bde Sig Sqn (don't think you'll be deploying quite as often anymore). Unfortunately, the increase in our numbers isn't to last, as **LCpl Fell** is off to 39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn soon, and **Cpl Lewis** is off to Blandford on his Class 1.

DHEKELIA SECTION - *by Cpl Taylor*

OC **Capt Dean Richardson**
SSgt **SSgt Watts**

The FHM calendar has turned one more page closer to Christmas, and the autumn has begun here in Cyprus, with the temperature dipping to 32° C – a whole degree, and it's freezing. As always with August and September, the mood has changed within the Sec. The premiership has started. All red-blooded males' thoughts are now thoroughly back to the beautiful game as we eagerly await the start of the Major and Minor Unit's football season.

This year, it kicked off with a Garrison 6 a-side competition. Dhekelia Sec, under their newly qualified coach, **Cpl Smith**, entered a team of nine with modest ambitions. These ambitions were soon surpassed as the Sec Team topped group one. They then easily moved past the semis by destroying the opposition, literally - even an ambulance crew got on the pitch. The final was a hard-fought affair against an SBA side who hadn't lost a game. By this stage, the Sec side hadn't had a single goal scored against them, and **LCpl Jimmy Wilson** pulled off a superb save in the second half from a well-taken penalty. The final score was nil-nil. A penalty shoot-out ensued, but the Sec's shooting was as

LCpl Vinten competing in the Army water-skiing champs – in much colder water than in Cyprus!

accurate as pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey, resulting in the Team being runners up. Certain individuals (**SSgt Watts, LCpl Jones** and **Sig Vant**) are now auditioning for parts in the forthcoming Pizza adverts, and are already wearing brown paper bags on their heads. A special mention must also go to **SSgt (FofS)**

Mick Lingard, who had to retire early as his wife told him to be home by five for his tea!!

The British Army Water-skiing Championships took place at Nottingham recently and we were represented by **LCpl Mark Vinten**. He not only represented CCU, but also British Army Cyprus and was the only RSigs entrant. The event involved a combination of mono-slalom and trick skiing. **Mark** finished third overall in his category, novice one ski. He is now back at work, and yes, he is still wet behind the ears.

The Sec's IQ level has seen a decline recently, with the postings of even more Techs. One of these, **Cpl Jim Stocks** has, in his time here, completed one thousand and ninety five crosswords. That's one for every day of his last three years. Is this a record? Another is **Sig Andy Pyle**, the entertainer, the joker, the comedian, and a man who doesn't like Wednesdays because they mess up weekends! And finally **Sig Taff Davis**, who is now being sponsored along with Arsenal and the England rugby team by O2! A mention must also go to **Sig Sprules**, who has his own customised twin cab, with front lights, twin taillights, shiny alloy grill and an engine in the back.

The Sec continues to provide the necessary comms throughout Dhekelia, and is keeping busy on all fronts. We are still undefeated in all Griffon Cup Competitions, but are unsure of how we will do in the ten-pin-bowling. Ooh, the life.

Finally, congratulations to **Sig Chris Rutter**, who is about to get married.

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT DIGBY

CO **Gp Capt JC Rigby** RAF
COS **LtCol S Sharman** R Sigs

OPERATIONAL CO-ORDINATION SQUADRON

OC **Maj Dave Stapleton** R Sigs
2IC **Capt Lucy Brereton Martin** R Sigs

It would be great to say that life at Digby is slowly returning to normal after a busy OP TELIC, but after 6 months here, I still haven't worked out what 'normal' is. We still have people deployed all over the world working for many different formations in greatly varying situations, and we have received some particularly good feedback and results. We have new projects and initiatives happening all the time, and life seems just as hectic as always. I keep thinking it will calm down soon, but hope is fading fast. The last couple of months have seen a migration of personnel from 4 Sqn to OCS. First **WO2 (Supvr Radio) Clark**, who is now working as the Projects WO in OCS and then **Capt Lucy Brereton Martin** followed suit, joining OCS as 2IC. We say goodbye to **Sgt Kerry Smith**, and wish her luck as she embarks on married life and a new job at RAF Marham. OCS also bids farewell to **WO1 (Supvr R) Troy Phillips**, who is promoted to Capt and posted to 14 Sig Regt at last.

1 SQUADRON

OC **Maj Steve Graley** Int Corps
2IC **Flt Lt Paul Hamer** RAF

It's been a quiet few months in 1 Sqn, the most notable incidents being the changes in the upper echelons. Goodbyes to OC and 2IC, **Maj Andrew Barrow** Int Corps and **Flt Lt Rick Kelly** RAF, heading off to climates new. Welcome to their replacements, **Maj Steve Graley** Int Corps and **Flt Lt Paul Hamer** RAF.

LCpl Rob Westhead departs for Germany to EOD duties. We farewell **Sgt Shaun Thicket**, who is leaving the Forces for a civilian post at Digby. **Cpl Karl Stubbs** returns to RAF Digby after a tour with EOD. We welcome **LCpls Buckland**, **Foran** and **Leigh**, who have recently joined us.

LCpl Matthew Paintain gets double congratulations on his recent marriage to **Lucy** and the birth of his son, **Ben**. **LCpl Chris King** marries **Kelly** very soon. We wish you all the best for the future.

LCpl Paul MacNicol is completing a short trip to Bosnia in prep for his 4-month stint in the Falklands over Christmas with **LCpl Ryan Lacey**, who is already down there. Hello to **WO2 (Supvr Radio) Ball** and **Sgt John Chambers**, who are currently both in the Balkans.

2 SQUADRON

OC **Sqn Ldr Neil Lamont** RAF
2IC **Capt Lindsey Robert** Int Corps

Congratulations go to the OC and his wife, **Heather** on the birth of their daughter, **Sophie**.

4 SQUADRON AND QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

OC **Maj Mark Brookes** R Sigs
QM **Maj George Burrows** R Sigs
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Smith** R Sigs

Wednesday 17 September saw most members of 4 Sqn and a sprinkling of VIP guests assembled outside JSSU (Digby) to say a fond farewell to **Maj Barry Spiers**, our QM for the last three and a half years. To start the day's celebrations 4 Sqn personnel paraded (all 15 of us) ready for his inspection at 08.45 hrs. At 09.00 hrs scouts were despatched to find him. An officer had been given the task of keeping the QM occupied whilst we finished setting up and then to bring him out at 08.50 hrs. The officer (who will remain nameless) managed to keep him busy all right. But he just forgot why he was doing it!

What a fine sight greeted the Major when finally he stepped out to take the parade. Then it was a quick sprint around to the back of the complex, where his staff had set up the mandatory 12 x 12. Silverware had been borrowed from the Sgts' Mess, blue drapes and balloons decorated the tent, and in all, 30 people sat down to a sumptuous farewell breakfast.

WO2 (RQMS) Smudge Smith recounted the Major's good works over the last few years, and presented him with his official gifts (specialist tools for his wood lathe - woodturning is the QM's hobby). In his reply speech, the QM thanked all his staff for what had been a very pleasant morning. He said he'd no idea that anything had been going on, despite seeing his staff skulking around, whispering in corners and avoiding him whenever possible (no change there, then). The day continued with go-kart racing, followed by a cheap and cheerful bit of nosh and lashings of ginger beer in Lincoln to end the night.

We welcome the new QM, **Maj George Burrows**, and hope he will enjoy the job here at JSSU (D).

DIGBY MOTORCYCLE CLUB

Armed with a large consignment of canned refreshments, a barbecue and enough food to kill a small rhino, our team set off for Cadwell Park for the 10th round of The British Superbikes. **Capt Nigel Humphries**, **WO2 Timmy Stevens**, **SSgt Dave Marrs** and **Sgt Taph Willumsen** sited the camp as close to the toilets and scran wagons as possible, and finally the order was given to open the first crate of lemonade.

The next morning, after some remedial tent packing lessons, the group finally managed to fit a 9 x 9 tent into a 9 x 9 tent bag and then it was time to watch some racing. The bikes roared into life and the crowd went wild as the first of the two races got underway. The races were hard-fought, and we all managed to watch most of them, despite having to make time for more lemonade. Then it was time to recover to peacetime loc, and the team bid each other farewell until next August Bank Holiday weekend.

DODENTOCHT - WAY OF THE EXPLODING FEET

- by JT Andy Campbell

It didn't sound like that much of a task, a mere 100km (that's 62.5 British miles) to be completed in 24 hours! The Dodentocht or Deathmarch is an annual event held in Bornem, Belgium. Up to 10,000 people of all nationalities take part, and about one third finish.

The six plucky Digby representatives were **Flt Lt Tony Parker** RAF, **SSgt Dave Marrs** R Sigs, **SSgt Bernie Topham** Int Corps, **JT Oliver Perkins** RAF and myself (all from Digby) and **JT Wazeaah Laher** RAF (from Oakley). The travel arrangements were superbly thrown together by **SSgt Marrs**.

We crossed the Channel, and were soon heading for Bornem, where we were to camp for the night. After a few geographically challenging moments, we eventually found the campsite, picked a spot, and pitched the tents. We awoke to the sound of foreign language and much movement around us. Later, whilst filling out our entry form at Registration, **JT Perkins** and I were approached by a pretty young lady, who wanted to interview us for Belgian TV. I couldn't think of two better ambassadors for our great nation, so we agreed.

After much laughing at the prospect of me on Belgian National TV, we headed into the town centre with about quarter of an hour to go before the start. After a longish wait, we eventually went over the start line.

We stayed together in a group of six for the first couple of kms, but then started to spread out. At the 30km checkpoint, our walking style was showing signs of wear. After about 50kms, **JT Laher** picked up an injury and couldn't continue and **JT Perkins** had to pull out shortly afterwards with a back problem. By this time, the remainder of the group was well spread out, and everyone was beginning to feel the mental and physical strain. After almost 24 hrs, I was on my own, but the end was literally in sight. The streets of Bornem were lined with cheering onlookers, clapping and shouting congratulations to all of us still heading for the finish. At just after 20.15hrs, some 23 hrs and 16 mins after starting, I completed my 100th km. I was presented with flowers, a pineapple, a certificate with my checkpoint times on, and, most importantly of all, a medal! **SSgt Marrs** had finished earlier at around 16.00hrs, with **Flt Lt Parker** after him, followed by **SSgt Topham**. The whole experience was one I'll never forget, although whether or not I'll repeat it is a different question.

Thanks especially go to **SSgt Dave Marrs** for his outstanding off-the-cuff admin.

The Death March Team before.....

.....and after

NATO SATELLITE GROUND TERMINAL F17 BALADO BRIDGE

OC **Capt Chris Gill**
FofS **WO2 Richie Paterson**

The Station has been relatively busy this summer with the build-up to the biennial inspection and with the extensive efforts applied into generating significant financial donations to a number of extremely worthy causes. We have also said goodbye and good luck to **Cpl Gordon Campbell**, who is posted to Blandford for his Class 1 up-grader course and to **Sgt Craig McGowan**, who has now joined 61 Sig Sqn (V) in Edinburgh. His replacement, **Sgt Mark Spittles**, has quickly adjusted to the Stations routine, but has had to leave us temporarily for an extremely arduous SATCOM trg course in Italy, which lasts until Christmas. Inter-unit sporting competitions and combined activities have

Our cheques to CHAS

flourished throughout the summer, thanks to the support and commitment from the *HMS Caledonia* in Rosyth, 242 Sig Sqn in Edinburgh and 2 (City of Dundee) Sig Sqn (V). Events have included sporting days, barbecues, quiz nights and an invite onto *HMS Invincible*. Hopefully next summer will be equally as enjoyable.

FUND-RAISING FOR CHAS, TRAILWALKER AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The Station has a long-running affiliation with the Children's Hospice Association of Scotland (CHAS) and this year we raised £1,000 for them.

We also raised £2,000 for Gurkha Welfare Trust and Oxfam (GB) through Trailwalker (UK) 2003, £93 for Children 1st and £50 for the Loch Leven Playgroup. Without doubt, this has been our finest year for innovative and productive ideas to raise and provide charitable donations for extremely worthy causes.

TRAILWALKER 2003 - *by Capt Chris Gill*

I last took part in Trailwalker in 1988 in Hong Kong. Since the event moved to the UK, I've never been in a place to have another go at it, until coming to Balado Bridge. For those not in the know, Trailwalker is a 100km (62-mile) run/walk along the South Downs Way from near Petersfield to the outskirts of Brighton, all in aid of Gurkha Welfare Trust and Oxfam GB.

I managed to persuade enough guys, and eventually, our team consisted of **WO2 Richie Paterson**, **SSgt Mark Robinson**, our secret weapon, **Sgt Simon Hurst** and myself. **Simon** had taken part in Trailwalker (UK) on five previous occasions, so he had a wealth of local knowledge.

With our support team of **Sgt Stuart Sanderson** and **Cpl Fraser McCallum**, we travelled from Scotland on Friday 25 July, taking over 12 hours to reach our overnight accn at SEME, Bordon. Having registered that evening at the Queen Elizabeth Country Park, we enjoyed a very tasty barbecue and a chance to catch up with some familiar faces from amongst the organisers of 2 and 30 Sig Regts.

The following morning we back at QECP for the 07.00hrs start, with the weather looking not too bad. It was very overcast but

Our Trailwalker 2003 Team

that suited us. The first couple of stages went well, with our getting well ahead of our intended 4mph. Our support crew met us at all but two of the 11 intermediate checkpoints, and we made good use of these in the early stages. However, **Simon** had bad cramp during Stage 3, and had to receive some impromptu stretching to get him to the next Checkpoint. Once there, he was able to receive a bit of a massage and get some isotonic fluids inside him. But on the next stage, he turned his ankle, but managed to keep going.

Around the same time **Richie**, having had a change of shoes, started to suffer from blisters, and for the next few stages had to keep treating them. All of this, coupled with a change in the weather from overcast, to light drizzle, then on to steady rain, conspired to make life difficult for us. But we kept going, and with hot soup, tea and coffee at the checkpoints, we switched off and just kept plodding the last couple of stages. With the light beginning to fade, we donned head torches at Checkpoint 10. For much of the way we had been either just ahead of or just behind a team from 30 Sig Regt, but after Checkpoint 10 they overtook us, and that was the last we saw of them.

Crossing the line in 16 hrs 27 mins, we felt justifiably proud of ourselves. We subsequently discovered that we were 13th out of 254 starters, and 10th out of 116 all-male, non-veteran teams. We were certainly not a team of gladiators, but some past experience and a good game plan, coupled with a lot of bloody-mindedness saw us through - much to the surprise of a lot who saw our team make-up at the start. We're happy with that!

SPORT

RUGBY

WOMEN'S RUGBY - ROYAL SIGNALS v OAKMEDIANS

The inaugural match for the Royal Signals Ladies Rugby Union team went with style. The match was played at Bournemouth Sports club under floodlights against Oakmedians, an established civilian side. The Corps started on the attack, taking the game straight to the opposition. Signals held play in Oakmedian's half for quarter of an hour, before a lucky break and a strong run from the Oaks No 15 led to the first try of the match (unconverted). Play continued evenly within Oaks' half, with Signals pushing forward. Our play was rewarded by a successfully kicked penalty by **Sig Nat Lewis** after 20 minutes. A period of good continuous play followed, with the new players holding the defence well, in particular **Sig Kim Smith**. After 35 minutes, Oaks' experience and persistence paid off as they broke our defence, scoring the second try of the match (unconverted). Signals finished the half holding their own, with some brilliant play in the centre of the field from **LCpls Rocky Rokovada** and **Jess Limbert**.

Signals started the second half with renewed energy and drive, once again taking the game straight to Oaks. We were rewarded early on (5 minutes) with a penalty, again successfully kicked by **Sig Nat Lewis**. Play remained tight throughout the remainder of the match in favour of the Signals, who were rarely back in their own half. **LCpl Tagilala** pushed hard and created some good solid play.

The final score was 6-10 in favour of Oakmedian's. All players who came to the match played, many starting their first ever game, and producing some excellent performances. It was a particularly good score against the current South West League 2 Champions, and most definitely a strong and promising start for the Corps, who are setting their sights high for the Merit Table.

Thanks go to **LCpl Lee Whetton**, who was instrumental in establishing the new Corps side, and to **SSgt Chalky Meek**, who coached the girls to the high standard they reached on the night.

The team was: **Maj Westerman**, **Lts Squires** and **Ellis**, **LCpls Noble**, **Phillippo**, **Fisher**, **Tagilala**, **Phillips**, **Limbert**, **Rokovada** and **Brown** and **Sigs Navunicagi**, **Loftus**, **Wildman**, **Izzard**, **Marsh**, **Gilbert**, **Pardoe**, **Smith**, **Atherton**, **Smith**, **Elliot** and **Maclaren**.

ORIENTEERING

ROYAL SIGNALS ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2003

For the first time in many years, the Corps Championships was held in Germany, hosted by 7 Sig Regt. Considering its loc, there was an excellent turn out of both units and individuals (more than 110).

Maj Nick Bateson demonstrated he was back on the scene after a period of injury, by re-claiming the Men's Open title, closely followed by another old-timer **Maj Terry Crosby**.

There was a bit of a shock in the Ladies' Open category, as the developing talents of **Sig Stef Bogart** proved good enough on the day to beat several pre-race favourites. Having honed his skills this summer at the Corps' trg camp in France, another emerging talent, **LCpl Andy Price**, proved far too good for any of his rivals, easily taking both the Under 25 Short Course and Individual titles.

Ladies' Open

1st	**Sig Bogart**	21 Sig Regt
2nd	**Lt Clifford**	16 Sig Regt
U25	**2Lt Panting**	2 Sig Regt
Short Cse	**Maj Rayner**	11 Sig Regt

Men's Open

1st	**Maj Bateson**	11 Sig Regt
2nd	**Maj Crosby**	JSU(C)
M35	**WO2 Griffiths**	2 Sig Regt
M40	**Capt Craig**	2 Sig Regt
M45	**Maj Bell**	JSU(C)
U25	**LCpl Price**	35 Sig Regt (V)
Short Cse	**Cpl Ransom**	WTC

Major Unit	UKSC(G)
Minor Unit	HQ 1 Sig Bde
TA	35 Sig Regt (V)
Ladies	2 Sig Regt

The Corps will be challenging the might of the RAF in March/ April 2004, with another Corps trg camp to follow that in early summer.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: MajGen A H Boyle CB

Association Office
RHQ Royal Signals
Blandford Camp
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 8RH
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals

Welfare Secretary
Tel (mil) (9)4371 2089
Tel (civ) 01258 48 2089

Membership Secretary
Tel (mil) (9)4371 2090
Tel (civ) 01258 482090
e-mail: rsa@rsignals.net

Soldier Recruiting Panel **Brig NF Wood**
Officer Recruiting Panel **Brig SGM Gordon**
Unit-based Branches Panel **Brig N Moss**
Advertising Panel **Brig CA Brown**
Vice Chairmen **Wales** **LtCol JG Billingham**
N Ireland **LtCol CN Lightfoot**
Scotland **Maj R Sampson CBE**

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A F Carter MBE
Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C P Conlan
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr P J Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

MajGen Tony Boyle (Chairman, RSA), **Col Andrew Carter**, **LtCol Carl Conlon**, **Maj Mark Davison**, **Jan Cornick** and **Peter Cuckow** send seasonal greetings to all Life Members, Associate Members and their families. We hope that your Yuletide is an enjoyable time and that the New Year brings you continuing good health. **Mark** is 'on loan' to HQ whilst **Col Andrew** is trekking in Nepal.

2003 has been a good year for the Association. The main highlights were the vast improvement to our website (which has brought in numerous new members), a highly successful AGM, a memorable Annual Reunion and the ongoing thrust of the Chairman's vision on the future of the Association. On the sadder side, we have lost many good friends – they will however, live on in our memories.

My personal thanks goes to all Branch Chairmen, Secretaries, Treasurers and Membership Secretaries for their help and cooperation during the past year. A special 'thank you' to all those Branches that, when asked, have provided representation at funerals of former members of the Corps. Our gratitude also goes to all Branch Standard Bearers for their invaluable contribution. Finally I'd like to thank all those who have given me a hard time during the year (I'd like to, but I won't).

BRANCH NEWS

Tom Davies is the new Hon Secretary of the Cornwall Branch, and can be contacted at: 4 Parc Dellen, Croft Farm Park, Luxulyan, Cornwall PL30 5EW, Tel: 01726-852085. By now, all Secretaries should have received the calling notice for the AGM on 27 March 2004. Secretaries are asked that, when sending the list of their Branch membership to Assn HQ, they show the regimental number against the names.

EMAIL ADDRESSES

Please don't forget to inform Assn HQ if you change your Email address. This, along with postal addresses and telephone numbers will not be disclosed to any unauthorised persons.

RSA WEBSITE

The RSA Website now has a 'Lost Contact' page for those wishing to trace former friends. Adverts for news of old pals may be placed on this page. Send entries to RSA Admin Officer by post/fax or by e-mail to rsa@rsignals.net See the website at www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals Please state what contact means you would prefer: i.e. your phone no, e-mail address or you may even have 'c/o RSA HQ'.

CONCESSIONARY PASSPORTS

The Home Office recently announced a scheme to provide free one-year passports to veterans wishing to attend 60th Anniversary Commemorative Events in 2004 and 2005. The conditions of eligibility are as follows:-

> Applicants must have taken part in the action being commemorated, or be the spouse, widow, widower, or partner of a person who took part. Carers, in cases of need, will also be able to obtain a concessionary passport.
>
> The applicant must be travelling as part of a group arranged by a veterans' organisation.
>
> The applicant must be eligible for a British Passport.

Further details are available from Assn HQ.

SUEZ MEDAL

A new campaign medal for service in the Suez Canal Zone during the period 1951 to 1954 has been instituted. The eligibility criteria have now been given Royal approval. Full details are available from Assn HQ, but in essence they are:

> Qualification service will be 30 days or more continuous service in the Suez Canal Zone between 16 Oct 1951 and 19 Oct 1954.
>
> Service at sea will not count towards the qualifying period.
>
> If qualifying service was brought to an end before the completion of the specified qualification period on account of death, wounding or other disability due to operational service, the reduced period of service will be sufficient qualification for the award of the appropriate GSM with Clasp.
>
> The grant of BEM or above, or Queens Commendation for Brave Conduct for service in the Suez Canal Zone between 16 Oct 51 and 19 Oct 54 will also qualify the recipient for the appropriate GSM and Clasp.

Veterans of the Canal Zone, or the next of kin of those who have died, will need to apply in writing, giving full name, date of birth and service number (the NOK of those who served will be required to supply supporting documentation) to:-

> Army Medal Office, Government Buildings, Worcester Rd, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire WR9 8AU.

All applications will be dealt with strictly in the order they are received and claims will be acknowledged on receipt.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following recently enrolled Life Members. We hope that those who haven't already done so, will join their nearest Branch. Please contact Assn HQ if you would like the contact for any Branch – or see our web site.

Rank/Name	Branch	*Service*
Sgt Nigel Allen	Bournemouth	1975-02
Sgt Andy Dawkins	Exmouth	1984-date
Cpl Paul Watterson		1979-89
WO2 Dick Tredwell		1979-03
SSgt Chris Parry-Davies		1967-92
Cpl Arthur Johnson		1962-67
Sig Victor Johnson	AFSR Assn	1956-58
Sig Ken Beale	West London	1947-52
Maj Chris Whitehead		1984-03
Sig Len Smith	AFSR Assn	1951-53
Sgt Fraser Murdoch		1985-99
LCpl Elly Murdoch		1986-99
LCpl Victoria Sargeant		1992-96
Sgt Bryan Challice		1976-92
LCpl Nick O'Mahony		1986-96
Cpl David Cressey		1961-70
SSgt Ernest Elliott		1937-59
Capt Tim Grey		1994-03
Sgt Dawn Gaynor	Reading	1994-date
Maj Gary Stratton		1974-date
Sgt Fred Bradley	AFSR Assn	1945-48
Pte Carolyn Hooper (Wright)		1963-65
WO2 Lance Thornton-Granville		1972-03
Cpl Ashley Alexander		1972-86
2Lt Darryl McKerr	Hull	2001-date
Cpl Barbara Logan	Edinburgh	1988-97
Sig Harry Hamilton		1965-71
Sig Stuart Tucker		1992-96
Sgt Aubrey Hollister	AFSR Assn	1950-57
Sig Jonathan Chilles		1990-96
Sig Patrick Howarth	Spennymoor	1959-61
Sig Daren Watts		1991-97
WO2 Brian Cumming MBE		1951-83
Sgt Clive Thompson		1972-92
Sig Warren Bell		1991-96
Sig Allen Doughty	Peterborough	1969-73
LCpl Don Pearce		1942-46
Cpl Alex McLaren		1983-98
Sgt Geoff Barden		1963-87
Lt Col Christopher Donaghy		1967-03
Sig Wilf Brunsdon	AFSR Assn	1945-48
Lt Col Ian Noble		1969-03
Cpl Drew Prout		1988-01
LCpl Dave Thornber		1976-87
Cpl David Brown		1976-88
WO1 Norman (Dixie) Dean		1968-92
WO2 Dave Paterson	Sheffield	1974-date
Capt Gary Cundy	Sheffield	1980-date
SSgt Dave Preston	Dorset	1973-95
Cpl Trevor Webb	Cambridge	1995-date
Sgt Harry Kidney	AFSR Assn	1938-46
Dvr Jim Pyett	Eastbourne	1943-47
Sig Lee Tomlinson		1988-96
Cpl Carolyn Studham	Bristol	1968-77
Sgt Sue Stafford	Bristol	1971-83
WO2 Gerald Farey	Bristol	1976-88
Sig Andrew Motteram		1976-82
Lt Col Ian Simpson		1952-73
Sgt James Miller		1937-46
Maj Dennis Burge	254 OBA	1945-77
Maj Simon Walker	Reading	1991-date
WO1 Monty Close		1963-87

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Jane Knight**

Our Dinner, held in September in the Garrison Officers' Mess, was a splendid occasion to which we were happy to welcome the SOinC(A) as our guest. The RBL Farnborough Band, under the leadership of Bandmaster **Eddy Brown**, made this a gala evening with a fine selection of music and the inclusion of as many regimental (and maritime) marches as we were able to identify as a tribute to individual members and guests. The support of the Sqns, friends from Reading Branch and our members and guests contributed to making this a most convivial evening. Our thanks go to the OCs of 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228), **Maj Chris Paterson** and 251 Sig Sqn, **Maj MJC Dempsey**, the PMC, and to who did much of the hard work and supplied us with labour. The food and the presentation could not be faulted, due to the efforts of Mess Manageress, **Karen Bramley**, and Chef, **Suzi Palombi**. We were sorry that **Mary Pagan**, whose exquisite floral arrangements decorated the tables, was indisposed at the last moment and missed the event. Many others contributed to making this an evening to be remembered.

The SOinC(A) tells the President's wife of his latest fishing exploit – the one that got away

Shortly after this, several of our members attended the Annual Dinner of Reading Branch, which was a most enjoyable evening and at which we enjoyed great hospitality.

BATH AND DISTRICT BRANCH

Chairman **Eddie Pickup**
Secretary **Bob Vale**

Just like all the other branches, Bath and District have been busy over the past year trying to increase membership and also encourage a more youthful membership. Whilst we have not been entirely unsuccessful, we could still do with more. We extend a warm welcome to the following new members, who have helped reduce the overall average membership age to 96: **Phil Abbot**, **Alan Duncan**, **Alan Dunbar**, **Joe Albon**, **Ron Kirkwood** and **Dave Sparkes**.

Whilst we are not completely devoid of ideas, the Secretary would like to hear from any Branch that has successfully increased its membership and how they achieved it. As a lot of you are aware, **Bob Vale** has never been shy about plagiarism and taking the credit for other people's ideas.

The Branch has been dragged into the 21st century and now appears on the Corps website. **Rosemary Vale** seems to be about the only one who knows what that means, but at least we are now on view worldwide, which must be absolutely terrifying for some yak herder in Outer Mongolia.

During the year, a number of successful events have been organised, including a curry lunch in May, a barbecue in August and the Annual Lunch in October. None of these events could have been held without the support of the local units, 21 Sig Regt (AS), 2(NC) Sig Bde and HQ DCSA. In particular, the help of **Brig JE Thomas MBE**, **LtCol I Hooper** and **WO1(RSM) GC Smith** has been greatly appreciated, and the Branch extended Associate Membership to all three. We were grateful that they all accepted, and they were presented with their membership cards by **Eddie Pickup** when they attended the Annual Lunch as our guests. The Branch will be making every effort to strengthen ties with the serving units in the Bath area over the coming year, and it is hoped that with the help of **WO1(RSM) Smith**, we may be able to reduce the average age to around 80.

And then what I did was..... MajGen David Horsfield and LtCol Ivan Hooper

The Annual Lunch was held in the Sgts Mess, 21 Sig Regt (AS), Colerne on Wednesday 15 October. The guests were all expected to sing for their supper, (well lunch really). **Brig John Thomas** gave us an update on the Corps. Everyone was impressed to learn of the involvement of the Corps in so many theatres of operation and it was also encouraging to learn that the recruiting levels were holding firm. The Brigadier then dropped a bombshell on **LtCol Ivan Hooper**, CO, 21 Sig Regt (AS), by inviting him to give a brief account of the Regts involvement in various ops. Up to this point, **Col Ivan** appeared to be enjoying his lunch. But in the true spirit of the Corps he came up trumps, and gave a very humorous and informative brief on the Regt's doings on op deployments. The RSM on the other hand, was deputised as usher when certain members had difficulty in finding their seats. At least the RSM was a guest in his own mess, and knew instinctively where everything was. Once again **Roy Platten** did the Branch proud by acting as both Standard Bearer and Toastmaster.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs J Barrett**
Secretary **MajGen J M TW Badcock CB MBE DL**

72 souls boarded a one and a half decker luxury coach on 5 September to venture forth to Paris - ostensibly a culture trip, but also an opportunity for the Hon Sec and Hon Treas to display their respective skills in the art of organisation.

And so it turned out. Despite the usual administrative excellence of them both and the unusually prompt arrival of all Members of the expedition, a small disaster struck as soon as the coach arrived, in the shape of a very badly damaged front window on the upper deck. We got as far as Dover, to await the arrival of a replacement vehicle, which of course delayed our departure and subsequent arrival on French soil, a matter of some two and a half hours. This necessitated our going direct to the previously arranged restaurant for dinner instead of the original intention of firstly going to our hotel where we could scrub up and change into something stunning for the evening. However, no matter! The informal travel-worn appearance and perhaps unsavoury bodily perfumes contributed to an atmosphere of gay abandon, no doubt enhanced by the unlimited quantities of wine served with dinner.

Alas, the arrival at the hotel at such a late hour brought the sad news that the bar was closed. This was probably just as well, as we were destined to be up at 'sparrers' in the morn to take to the Seine for a cruise, tour the City and to be dropped off for 3fihours 'free time' - rather like being dropped off the back of a 3-tonner in the Pennines and last one back is a sissy. However, we all finally assembled at the appropriate time, having explored the beauties of the Capitol, negotiated once again the Asian toilets and being generally overawed by the sheer charm and grace of some of the historical architecture. After a leisurely wash and brush-up at the hotel, we assembled for an arranged dinner at yet another restaurant, followed by a visit to the Sacré Coeur church in the area of Montmartre, under a starlit sky - quite enchanting. We finally returned to our hotel in musical mode, where the musicians amongst us (left over from last month's Morris Dancing) rendered some country/rugby ballads.

Sunday morning saw us boarding the bus complete with kit and wending our way to the splendours of the Palace of Versailles. Here we were again overwhelmed by the opulence of the architecture, made rude but appropriate remarks in describing the tortuous cobble stones on the pedestrian way to the Palace and tried to ignore the North African vendors of silk scarves, handbags and watches who shadowed us all the way. By mid-dayish we were once again on the road, returning to Calais to join the ferry across The Channel. Seventy-two very tired travellers arrived in Canterbury to continue their respective ways home having seen Paris, enjoyed some good company, made new friends and generally had a greet weekend. Well done, the Committee, but more particularly the Hon Sec and the Hon Treas.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Bill Lovett has had a spell of ill health and is confined to hospital for a few weeks. **Roy Andrews**, recovered from something nasty which required chemotherapy, is now well and looking forward to organising the next Reunion of 260 Sig Sqn (SAM). **Peter Foakes** is hospitalised, having surgery, which to date has been successful. But he will require more hospital time before **Peggy** can welcome him home.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) P Burton**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) JB Greenwood**

In June **Fred Corr** was elected as our new Honorary President in succession to **Geoff Dyer**. **Fred** has, over many years, held the posts of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

At the end of June along with all the other RSA branches, a group of our members made the pilgrimage to Blandford for the Annual Reunion, where they enjoyed renewing friendships and generally participating in the events that had been scheduled.

Earlier this year, we introduced the idea of having occasional guest speakers, and at our July meeting we were honoured to have a talk by **Rev David Eaton**, who is both our Branch Padre and Padre to 36 Sig Regt(V). **David** gave a very interesting talk on his duties as an army Padre and how it differs from his normal duties in his own parish of Pitsea. He explained how he assisted with those TA soldiers recently called up for the Iraq conflict and how our own Branch had been helping out with support in the form of parcels and correspondence to them. At the September meeting, we had a very interesting and informative talk from **Bdr Graham Cobb**, lead French horn player in the Royal Artillery Band. He explained the different training accorded to Bandsmen and destroyed the myth that they are all glorified stretcher-bearers.

Reviewing our coming events, we have a trip arranged to Ypres for the end of October and nearer to home, on 8 November, at the Queens Theatre, Hornchurch, we will be seeing a performance by the Royal Artillery Band. We have a visit arranged to see the REME Museum at Arborfield for 7 December with a meal arranged in the Sgts Mess.

We have one of our main events of the year coming up in the form of an Italian Supper and Dance Evening to be held on 15 November, where we are expecting our usual large turnout. Further in the future, we have our Annual Dinner Dance, arranged for 13 March 2004, with guest of honour expected to be SOinC(A), **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC**.

Although we have a thriving Branch here in East London, we always welcome more members and encourage any potential members living in East London, South and East Essex area to join us. Serving TA members are also very welcome. Our meetings are held in the Sgts Mess of 36 (E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 20.00hrs on the fourth Tuesday of each month except December.

LINCOLN BRANCH

Chairman **Mr FG Patman**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) DG Wood MBE**

Sadly, we have to report the sad loss of the wife of our wife of Secretary, **Maj (Retd) Derek Wood MBE**. **Shirley Wood** died after a short but savage illness in Lincoln County Hospital at 09.30hrs on Saturday 1 November 03.

Those in the Corps who knew **Shirley**, will know what a very special, happy and warm person she was. She was very brave throughout her illness. Her sharp wit and sense of humour impressed the doctors and nurses as she fought a very hard battle. But this time round, the cancer beat her and took away a very special person, who will be missed by a large family of four children and 7 grandchildren.

So a 50 year relationship comes to an end, and those of you who knew them as a couple will know that it was a very strong bond between **Shirley** and **Derek**, built on love and respect for each other. **Shirley** was very much part of our Corps life and, like so many Army wives, she followed **Derek** around the world on so many postings.

The Corps wives will know and understand that it takes a special kind of lady to stick by a soldier through 30-odd years of separations from not only her husband, but from friends and families left behind in the UK.

We would like to feel that to mention her passing in this way will serve in recognising the importance of our wives to us, and their invaluable and much-needed support as we carry out our soldierly duties.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Secretary **SSgt(YofS) I Wolfe**

The Branch has had two meetings since our last notes and at each we have been fortunate in having a speaker to add to the interest. After a short meeting in August, we heard **Mr David Orr** speak on the origins and activities of the Home Guard in WW2. Those of us who are a little older and remember the Home Guard were quite surprised at some of the facts he had researched, particularly the difference in name between our local Guard and that in GB and the fact that ours were controlled by the Police rather than the Army. The picture gallery also created quite a lot of interest.

In September, after a short meeting, we had a talk of a very different kind. **Sgt Dave Loney** of the Police Service for Northern Ireland (Dog Handling Section) gave a very well illustrated talk on the procurement, training and use of dogs in the Police. Not every dog is acceptable, and the utmost patience is required for a long period in order to train the dog and its handler. If any hopeful lawbreaker were to hear this talk, I am sure he would have second thoughts.

We look forward to hearing **LtCol Robert Kelly**, outgoing CO, 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) at our October meeting in two weeks time. More on this in the February issue.

A welcome awaits any serving or ex-Signaller at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Why not check out our website for what's on?

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Pauline Tennant**
Secretary **Hugh Nealon**

Since we last appeared in print we have continued with a very busy programme. Just to pick out some of the highlights from June onwards, we held an very enjoyable informal dinner, attended a band concert at Kneller Hall and the RSA Reunion at Blandford.

In July, by the kindness of **Brig** and **Mrs Martin Roberts**, another splendid Garden Party was held at their home. The garden looked wonderful and the sun shone on us. A very good way to spend a summer afternoon.

In August our Hon Sec hosted a successful barbecue, attended by about 40 members and friends. We then made our annual visit to Sandhurst for the final rehearsal for the Sovereign's Parade. A luncheon on the Watercress Line brought us round to September, when some of us went to the Royal Hospital Royal Signals service.

So to 11 October, when we held our 33rd Annual Reunion Dinner. Our guests of honour were **Brig** and **Mrs David McDowall MBE ADC**, **LtCol John Regan OBE** (County Field Officer RBL) and **Mrs Regan**. Other guests included **Maj** and **Mrs Rob Healey**, **CSM** and **Mrs Chris Coates** and **Ms Avery**, all from the Army Technical Foundation College at Arborfield. We were also delighted to welcome representatives from Aldershot, Brighton, Salisbury, South Staffordshire and Swindon Branches and, of course, their standards. I think we all had a good evening, and judging by the level of conversation and laughter, I am pretty sure we did.

SHROPSHIRE BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) John Wall MBE TD JP**
Secretary **David Warner**

With memories of our glorious summer fading rapidly like a suntan, to be replaced by thoughts of Christmas, we decided to break our 2003 silence by giving a brief kaleidoscope of Branch activities throughout the year. **David Warner** our new Branch Secretary, has now got his feet under the table. Before the caravanning season began in earnest, he organised a most interesting visit to MOD Donnington, Telford, to view their private collection of small arms and weapons acquired from all over the world. The collection can only be seen by special arrangement with the CO. We were grateful to be allowed to view this fascinating collection before it is broken up and distributed to military museums throughout the country.

Earlier in the year, the Branch responded enthusiastically to **MajGen Boyle's** paper, *RSA, The Future*, culminating in our Chairman, **John Wall**, attending the RSA AGM and Special Meeting in London in April. We have a vested interest in the outcome of **MajGen Boyle's** initiative, because old age and sickness continue to take their toll, and unless the changes result in the introduction of new blood, the future of the Branch looks bleak. The Branch may be 45 years old and financially solvent, but if it wasn't for the NS and TA element, it would have folded long ago.

However, we are still functioning, and numbers-wise, one of our most successful and interesting visits this year was to the BT National Network Management Centre at Oswestry, Shropshire. Joining us on this occasion were our wives, together with a few invited guests and about a dozen of our serving colleagues from 95 (Shropshire Yeomanry) Sig Sqn (V), with whom we are endeavouring to establish closer working relationships for our mutual benefit.

For those who have not been there before, the visit was an eye opener at what goes on behind the scenes of a major telecommunications company, and the role BT plays in our everyday lives.

Last year, members of the Branch and their wives joined forces with WEM Chamber of Commerce (whose Chairman happens to be our Welfare Officer, **Brian Harrington**) to hold a Bowls Night at the picturesque Woodlands Club in the Village of Clive, Shropshire. The weather was appalling, but despite the absence of our star bowler, **John Wall**, who was on holiday, a good time was had by all.

Tragically, The Grim Reaper took his toll in 2003. **Ken Evans** (76) from Newport, Shropshire, **Roger Woosnam-Savage** (71) from Nantwich and **George Barkley** (76) from Shrewsbury have passed on. We managed to muster a good turn-out for both **Ken** and **Roger** with the Branch Standard, and in the case of **Roger**, joined by **Maj Brian Ivison**, the previous Area 2 Rep. Unfortunately, due to late notice, our representation at **George's** funeral was restricted to our Chairman, **John Wall**, and NRPS **SSgt Brian Resoun** from HQ 5 Div, which was also represented by RO, **LtCol Peter Williams**.

Finally, may we wish all readers of *The WIRE* the Compliments of the Season, and remind them that the Branch hold regular meetings at 19.30 hrs on the third Wednesday of the month (with the exception of June, July, and August) in the WOs and Sgts Mess, 5 Div HQ, Copthorne Bks, Shrewsbury. New members are always welcome, but for security reasons they are advised to liase with either the Secretary or Chairman beforehand on 01743 350606, or 01952 613938. Further information about the Branch can be obtained from the RSA Website Home Page.

SOUTHAMPTON RSA

Chairman **Mr SL Smith**
Secretary **Mr AAT Dear**

SKITTLE EVENING

A skittle evening, with supper was held on Friday, 19 September at the *Ship Inn*, Redbridge. This turned out to be a very good, one could even say, a hilarious evening. Twenty-five senior citizens turned up, including Branch members and guests from the Dunkirk Veterans Assn, London RSA and two ladies from the WI. The raffle, organised by **Ruth Dear** realised the sum of £27 for the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund and an excellent ploughman's supper rounded off the evening.

BRANCH ANNUAL PICNIC

The Branch Annual Picnic took place in the New Forest on 14 August. **Alan** and **Jean Keen** (with dog Shannon), **Ruth** and **Tony Dear**, **George** and **Vera Packer**, **Claire Lidecott** and her Mum, **Doris**, **Tony** and **Beryl Hull**, **Peter Loveless**, **Sid Smith**

Our Skittles Evening. We eventually did play a game or two – honest!

and **Norman Davies** all made the effort. It was a beautiful hot day, but luckily with a cooling breeze. Much conversation, some serious, some ribald. **Tony** and **George**, with the help of **Alan** tried flying their kites with only a modicum of success. **Sid** arrived on his motorbike suitable attired, as beholds an ex-DR. All in all, a good day, even though the traffic through Lyndhurst was horrendous.

NEW MEMBER

The Branch welcomes new member – **Cpl Mark Alastair Gibson**. Our newest recruit, he is a prison warder in Portsmouth.

TRIP ON THE WATERCRESS LINE

On the 31 August, a party of six representing the Southampton Branch joined the Reading Branch to sample a nostalgic trip on a steam train and at the same time enjoy a first class lunch in the First Class dining car. In the party were **Tony** and **Ruth Dear**, **Claire Littlecott**, **Doris Bevington** and two guests. **Tony** met a couple on the train who had served in the Corps but did not belong to any Branch. Hopefully they will now!

EARL MOUNTBATTEN MEMORIAL

The annual Memorial Service and Parade was held in Romsey on Sunday 7 September. Our Branch was once again represented. Chairman, **Sidney Smith** carried the Wessex Branch, BKVA Standard, Standard Bearer, **Bryan Littlecott** carried ours and **Claire Littlecott** and Secretary, **Tony Dear** made up the rest of the party. Despite fewer numbers in the congregation this year, the Parade still manages to attract a good response from the Services.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Belated congratulations to **Wayne** and **Laura Broadhurst**, who celebrated their fourth anniversary on 4 September.

Congratulations in advance to **Tony** and **Jean Hulse**, who will celebrate their 29th anniversary on 7 December.

AWARD FOR SERVICE TO THE RNLI

Four decades of work with the Hedge End Branch of the RNLI Ladies Lifeboat Guild have been officially recognised with the award of a special thank you certificate to 85-year-old **Mrs Marjorie Chapman**. or **'Cis'** as she is known to everyone and all her friends at the RSA Southampton Branch, is the wife of **'Jumbo' Chapman**, a long serving member of the Branch

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The Branch Annual Christmas Lunch takes place at the Archers Road Social Club, Southampton on Tuesday the 2 December.

The festive season is once more upon us, so from all at the Southampton and District Branch a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all other RSA members out there.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

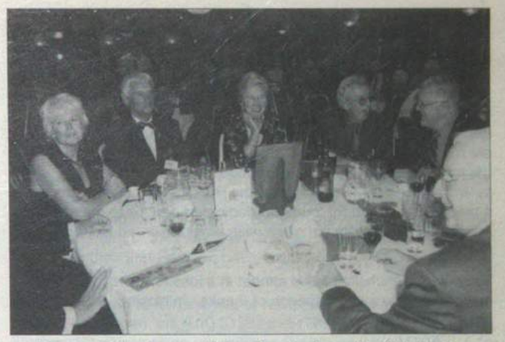
On a Sunday morning in September we attended divine service at the Royal Military Hospital, Chelsea, where we parade with the In Pensioners, are inspected by the Governor, and march in to the drum beat. **Harry Ruff** paraded our standard. We were joined by Reading Branch members and a large party from the Sheffield Branch, a jolly and enthusiastic lot who have attended our service for several years. We hope this will continue. After the service we adjourned to the In Pensioners Club for much-needed refreshment.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mr Mick Teague**
Secretary **Mr Tony Hull**

Our 5th Annual Reunion was held over the weekend 4/5 October at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Watford. Several members and their wives booked in on the Friday from lunchtime onwards, so that they could meet old friends and make new ones. As everyone arrived, either **Tony** or **Beryl Hull** issued nametags, as the picture shows. A carvery had been booked for the Friday evening and 48 people enjoyed a very good meal, adjourning to the bar afterwards.

On Saturday morning, some people took advantage of the facilities offered by the hotel, which included a swimming pool with Jacuzzi, sauna and steam rooms. There was also a gym with weights, etc, but not many people seemed keen on that idea! Some people went shopping in Watford, Harrow or to the Brent Cross Shopping Centre, and one adventurous couple, **Michael** and **Gillian Broadbent**, went to Waddesdon Manor to see the



Pam and Mike Sanger, Marian Bermingham, Ron Elliott, Alan Davies, John Beasley

gardens and aviary, as it had been raining on their previous visit.

The private bar upstairs was opened at 17.30hrs so that people could meet up for a drink before dinner. The Ballroom looked very attractive and an excellent dinner was served at 19.00hrs after **Arthur Cotillard** had said Grace. After dinner, the Loyal Toast was given by Chairman, **Mick Teague**, and the toast to the Colonel-in-Chief and the RSA by Vice-Chairman, **Tony Bermingham**. In his welcoming address, President, **John Beasley**, thanked everyone for their tremendous support, and confirmed that the membership now stood at 211. He introduced six new members who were present, and welcomed back **David Walker**, who has returned from Australia to take up residence at Royal Hospital, Chelsea. **David** attended in his scarlet tunic. Tribute was then made to the following who had recently passed away: **Colin Jewell**, Ex-Staff and **Graham Worrall**, who had served in RAEC, and Ex-Boys, **Pete Saltiel**, **Richard King** and **Michael Delicata-Bennett**. **Marie Delicata-Bennett**, **Michael's** widow, was present, as she wished to keep in touch with the

Tony and Beryl Hull ready to issue nametags

Association. **Maj Jimmy Fyfe** was not able to attend, but did send a nice letter to Branch Secretary, **Tony Hull**, enclosing a gift for the raffle. **John Beasley** then gave a short résumé on the Corps, recommending *The WIRE* magazine to those who wanted to keep up to date with events and with other Branches of the RSA. He went on to thank **Tony** and **Beryl Hull** for their dedication and hard work. **Arthur** and **Daphne Cotillard**, who are moving to Australia, were also thanked for their support over the last five years, and they were then invited to present the award of Honour Membership of the RSA to **Tony Hull**. (This is a prestigious award for long and dedicated service to the Association). A lovely cut glass vase was presented to **Beryl Hull**.

Tony was overwhelmed and almost at a loss for words, but did manage to give a short speech of thanks. In closing, a toast of absent friends was made.

During the evening a picture called *Waiting for the Catterick Flyer*, painted by John Wardle, Ex-Cadre 1949-52, was auctioned and made £85.00 for the funds. The painting, a watercolour sketch, is of Darlington Station in late 1949, showing a soon-to-be Beverley Boy and two RSigs National Servicemen returning from leave. They and most soldiers at the time waited at Darlington Station next to George Stephenson's Locomotion. The artist was one of many who regularly froze at this spot. The successful bidder was **Mike Snowling**, who then presented it to the Chairman, **Mick Teague**, as a present. The bar in the Ballroom was open until midnight and it is understood that several members then retired to the hotel bar until 03.00hrs. It would appear that this had been another very successful Reunion.

19 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Chairman	**Mr GM Brew**
Secretary	**Mr CW Little MBE**

The 11th Reunion Luncheon of the 19 Sig Regt Assn was held at the North Staffordshire Hotel, Stoke-on-Trent, on Thursday, 11 September. In spite of illness and British Rail track work resulting in Stoke station being closed, 38 members enjoyed a few valuable hours together looking at photographs and renewing the friendships formed so many years ago.

In his welcoming address, our President, **Col Colin Gilbert**, noted that he had received a letter from **Capt Bunny Lord**, who was RSM when **Brig Max Maxfield** commanded the Regt and who has frequently travelled from his home in Holland to attend our reunions. Due to deteriorating health, his doctors have forbidden him to travel and he expressed his sorrow at not being able to attend on this day or on future occasions.

Col Gilbert then announced that contact had been made, through our website, with the Persatuan Bekas Royal Signals, the association of locally enlisted personnel living in Malaysia and Singapore who had served in 18 and 19 Sig Regts. An e-mail message of fraternal greetings was later sent to their chairman, **Maj Aziz Mahmud**.

Members of the Association have actively supported the creation of an Air Formation Signals Memorial, a crescent of nine copper beech trees, at the National Memorial Arboretum, and photographs taken at the Dedication Service last May attracted great interest. This phase of the project will be completed when the last five plaques will be dedicated at another service in May next year.

After lunch, Chairman, **George Brew**, announced that the working party set up to determine the Way Ahead for the RSA had studied the responses to questionnaires sent to members and had produced a short report. A copy of this was distributed to all present with a request for their further comments. In conclusion, **George**, on behalf of the Committee Members, presented to **LtCol Pat Soward**, the Association Publicity Officer, a magnificent Waterford lead crystal bowl with the inscription 'Presented to Pat Soward in recognition of his sustained support for the 19 Sig Regt Assn'.

MALTA LIBYA COMMAND RSA

(Incorporating Malta, Tripolitania, Benini, Benghazi, Cyrenaica, ElAdem 1947- 1979)

We celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the Malta Libya Association on 3/4 October 2003 at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Loughborough. 43 members attended, and it was said to be the best one yet. Members from far away places arrived during the weekend. **Barry Vargas** from Delhi was joined by his wife, **Carmen**, who enjoyed last years' reunion so much she flew 2,000 miles from Venezuela to be with us (how's that for a recommendation to join us?) **Alan Goodhall** flew in from Oman and joined his wife **Pauline** in N Ireland, who accompanied him to Loughborough. **Tony Mifsud**, who was locally enlisted in Royal Signals in earlier years, joined us from Malta. **David Thornton** and his wife **Ingrid** travelled from Geilenkirchen, Germany.

The first arrivals came on Friday and met in the bar (of course), and out came the photographs of the era to add to the nostalgia of the occasion. We held our AGM at 18.00hrs in the Charnwood Suite, after which dinner was served in the hotel restaurant. Then back to the bar for more nostalgia.

A trip on The Great Western Railway Steam Train had been arranged for the Saturday, starting from the old Loughborough railway station (which this year has been made a listed building) to Leicester and return. On arrival at Leicester, the weather turned cold, and members of the party who expected this continued on the bus to the town centre. But a few of us not suitably dressed for the occasion, returned on the train from Leicester to the warmth of the hotel.

In the evening we had our gala dinner, suitably attired in lounge suits or blazers. By 21.00hrs, the party had really started with a swing, to the sounds of **Ken Godfrey's** Jazz Band. We listened to lots of golden oldies and quite a few of us danced the night away. Very soon, the bewitching hour of midnight was upon us, and the Cinderellas began to drift off to bed. But a few stuck it out (in the bar) until the early hours.
On Sunday almost everyone was reluctant to depart, saying 'Roll on next year!' (3/4 September 2004). If you would like to join us next year, by yourself or with your partner, please contact the Secretary, **Patricia Andrews** on 01227 264551 or e-mail roypat.andrews0.ic24.net

THE HERFORDER ASSOCIATION

Chairman	**Jim Sloan**
Secretary	**Dave Smith**

RETRACING OLD STEPS 55 YEARS ON
- by Petra Henderson

The Soldiers of 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ Sig Regt and 4, 7 and 20 Armd Bde Sig Sqns based in their camps in Herford, got an unusual visit on Wednesday, 8 October from some of the former residents of these camps, several of whom had not set foot in Herford, let alone the camps for well over 50 years. A party of some 48 veterans and members of the UK-based Herforder Association (HA) had arrived for an organised tour of the camps and afterwards a visit to the Herforder Felsenkeller (The local brewery that kept their minds and other parts lubricated for some of their time in the past) as well as visits into town to see how much Herford has developed in the years since many of them had done their National or Regular Service there.

The HA is a group of mainly ex-Royal Signals members who have served in Herford between 1945 and today. They meet twice a year in UK, in locs such as Norwich, Llandudno, Dunoon, and Scarborough, but 2003 was different. This year they visited their old haunts to retrace old steps, carefully avoiding any pubs or clubs where they might still have a slate, and a fifty year old debt plus interest in old German money.

Thanks to the kind assistance of the acting CO, **Maj Simon Purser**, and the RSM, **WO1 Andy Baird**, not only was access to all camps made possible, but the veterans were also provided with numerous guides, young men and women currently serving with Royal Signals. As a result, comparisons of soldiering then and now, and many stories about pranks pulled that only someone who knew the local area or camp layout could understand, were swapped.

These mixed groups of young and old were also accompanied around the camps by several members of the press, including British and German TV, radio and newspaper reporters. (still more reporters turned up for the Brewery visit!)

Although the HA is mainly ex-Royal Signals, it is open to members from any branch of the Services, their families and civilian support staff, such as NAAFI or YWCA personnel, providing that they have some connection with the camps of BFPO 15. So it was no surprise to see members of some non-signals units on this particular visit.

One of these, **John Smith**, ex-118 Coy RASC (also known as 'Run Away Someone's Coming' - and a few more, unfit to publish) brought a copy of the December 1954 Christmas Menu from the Hammersmith Cookhouse noticeboard and had a long conversation with the current chief chef about changes in both the cookhouse facilities and the meal choices over 50 years. Another brought photographs of the Camps in German times and in 1952. **John** also remembered details of the earliest days of Herford in British hands, and using **Gens Horrocks'** and **Montgomery's** caravans as temporary sleeping quarters for off-duty guards.

A tour of the Camp facilities, the veh areas and stables, as well as the Parade Square brought back memories of times spent clearing snow, or doing a guard duty, or washing down vehs after many a muddy NATO ex, and also gave everyone an opportunity to stretch their legs after being confined to a coach for much of the previous day and half.

The group then crossed the Vlothoer Strasse to visit Wentworth and the studios of BFBS TV and Radio. The Station Manager, **Patrick Eade**, gave a short presentation of BFBS, its current role, and of the history of the service (which will be 60 in 2005), which was countered with many tales of listening to the various BFBS presenters and shows in the early days when it came from Hamburg and Cologne. An HA member, **Roy Andrews**, presented the Station Manager with an historic plaque and a tape of BFBS recordings from the 1950s, 60s, and 70s. Other members gave **Mario**, the BFBS Radio 1 presenter, a few interesting stories which were recorded for posterity and future use for their 60th Anniversary.

Later in the afternoon, after a tour of their premises, the Herforder Felsenkeller Brewery laid on a specially discounted lunch and as much free beer as everyone could manage. Then a presentation of HA plaques, some especially created HA neck-ties and a basket of products from Scotland (brought by the HA founder, **Jim Sloan**) was made to the Brewery Marketing Manager, **Herr Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger**, to the acting CO, **Maj Simon Purser**, and to the RSM, **WO1 Andy Baird**.

To honour the past and present members of UK Forces, (and remembering that Royal Signals are Honorary Citizens of Herford) the Herforder Brewery brought out their traditional horse-drawn beer cart for group photos to be taken.

As an added surprise bonus for the young soldiers who had accompanied the veterans through the camps that morning, the RSM allowed them time off to attend the Brewery visit, and several more also came to an evening pub event to get more interesting stories about past Herford life, and tips 'from the horse's mouth.'

There was a tinge of sadness for some HA members, when they visited the former site of the North and South Camps of 7 Sig Regt, only to find little or no sign of it. Today it is a brand new residential housing estate.

All in all it was an excellent event, and made a lot of people very happy. The HA wish to extend our thanks to all who made it possible, including the young men and women of the Serving Corps for their patience and care to the members of the party.

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF THE HERFORDER ASSOCIATION

The Herforder Assn came about during a chance meeting in August 2001 between **Jim Sloan** and another ex Herforder at Blandford, who said 'It is a pity that little splinter groups of only those from a specific tp at a certain time, are trying to form and have reunions.' **Jim** said 'We should organise an Association of all the lads who served in Herford, regardless of when, and to include those other arms, such as RASC, Catering, WRAC, etc. who served with the Corps.' So, with the agreement and encouragement of the RSA, the Herforder Association was born, with their first Reunion being held in Nottingham in October 2002.

Should you wish to join the HA, or have any enquiries, please contact **Jim Sloan**, on (UK) 01324 626173, e-mail: jimsloan1@activemail.co.uk, or **Dave Smith**, on (UK) 01294 465014, e-mail: dsmith4416@aol.com

ROYAL SIGNALS BAND ASSOCIATION

The Royal Signals Band Reunion Association now includes over a hundred members who meet for their Reunion at Blandford every year. On 10-12 October this year, the Tenth Reunion was hosted by the Corps Band, and 98 members attended a dinner at the Crown Hotel, Blandford Forum.

For any ex Corps bandsmen interested in joining us, full information may be obtained from the President,

Bill Lawson
Flat 27
Bryanston Court
Blandford St Mary
Blandford Forum
DT11 9LY
Phone: 01258 480 766

18 AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENT

18 AF Sig Regt was formed in Huddersfield, under the command of **LtCol JAI Watts** in November 1943. Nine months later, it landed in France and provided comms for HQ AEF at Versailles, moving later to Reims to serve the Air Staff to HQ SHAEF, and finishing the war in Europe at Frankfurt.

The Air Staff SHAEF disbanded in June 1945 and 18 AF Sig Regt returned to UK on 7 August, from where, after a period of re-organisation, it embarked for Egypt, arriving at Qassasin on 21 December 1945. At that time, the unit, now commanded by **LtCol G Thomson**, comprised 37 Officers and 837 ORs distributed among three companies.

From this date there is no history of the Unit until a note in *The WIRE* in December 1952, when it is mentioned as 18 AF Sig Sqn, under the command of **Capt EC Collett**. Later *WIRE* notes indicate that the unit strength had dropped to 30 at that time, but thereafter increased steadily until it comprised two sqns, based in Habbaniya (1 Sqn under **Maj AJ Hamilton**) and in Jordan (2 Sqn under **Maj McAnsh**).

It would appear that 4 and 18 AF Sig Regts amalgamated at the time of the move from the Canal Zone to Cyprus in September 1955.

If any readers can fill in details of the Regt's movements and activities during the years after December 1945, I would be very grateful if they would communicate with me.

Lt Col (Retd) PF Soward
'Shipton', The Hollow
Child Okeford
BLANDFORD FORUM
Dorset DT11 8EX
Tel: 01258-860647

D-DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Plans are afoot for an unofficial 60th Anniversary commemorative meeting of veterans at Caen Canal Bridge on 5 and 6 June 2004. **Sgt Nigel Brewin** will be parachuting into the Ranville DZ with his colleagues from the UK Round Chute Association (UKRCA). They will be dropped in WW2 uniforms using round WW2 parachutes from a Dakota in D-Day markings.

Currently, their plans are to drop on 5 June, the day before the official Services drop on 6 June. But it is quite possible that the Services will accept UKRCA as part of their official drop. In addition, the family of **Cpl Thomas Waters MM**, his nephew, **Arnold Settle**, and **Sylvia Atkinson**, his daughter, will be present to watch the events unfold.

If any one is interested in attending this event, keep an eye on the RSA Website and the next issue of *The WIRE*. However, if you are thinking of attending, book your accommodation now, as vacancies within the locality are already very difficult to find.

Go to it

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

HARRY RICHARDSON

Helen is seeking **Harry Richardson**, who was a RQMS during WW2, when he sustained facial injuries. He has Glasgow connections. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Helen** at: baz.lavery@btopenworld.com

ALBERT FREDERICK DAVIS

Information is being sought about the late **Lt Col (Retd) Albert Frederick Davis**, born 1915 and served in the Corps during WW2. Anyone who remembers him or has information about him is asked to contact family friend, **Chris Cragg** at Craggct@aol.com

SIG AP FAIRWEATHER

Mr Eddie Ledger is trying to trace the whereabouts of his former pal, **Sig AP Fairweather**. They served together in 1942/43 in 4 Indian Div Sig Regt (Red Eagles) in Egypt, when **Mr Fairweather** gave **Eddie** a rather nice Rolls razor. **Mr Fairweather** came from the Burnham-on-Sea area. Anyone who can help is asked to call **Eddie** on 01582 704132.

LES BROWN, JIM KENNARD

Former **WO1 (RSM) Dixie Dean** is seeking two people. Firstly, **Les Brown**, from Paisley in Scotland. **Les** served in 22 Sig Regt 1970-72 and then 24 Air Portable Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in Belfast. **Les** was best man at **Dixie's** wedding just over 30 years ago.

Also, **Jim Kennard** who was **Dixie's** Tp Comd. Believed to be flying helicopters in the Falklands for a civilian firm. Anyone who can help **Dixie** is asked to contact him at: Dixie@deann.freeserve.co.uk

'CHUBBY' CARTER, 'CASEY' CRANE, 'GINGER' HOWARD

Bob Arden is wishing to contact **Malcolm 'Chubby' Carter**, **'Casey' Crane** and **Malcolm 'Ginger' Howard**, all of whom joined up with **Bob** at Harrogate in 1961.

Anyone who knows of their whereabouts is asked to contact **Bob** at bob.arden@virgin.net

CORPORAL 'HOPPY' HOPWOOD

Roy Andrews wants to contact **Cpl 'Hoppy' Hopwood**, who attended the RM junior NCOs course at Stonehouse Bks in the early 1950s.

Would anyone who knows where **Cpl Hopwood** is now please contact **Roy** on 01227 264551 or email roypat.andrews@ic24.net.

CORRESPONDENCE

347(HOME SERVICE FORCE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Does anybody know anything about this HSF unit?

The HSF were established in 1985, as a part of the TA, with the specific role of guarding UK key points in times of war. They were disbanded in 1992 as the cold war threat diminished.

It appears that two R Signals units were formed, 348 (IC&CY) Sig Sqn, which was part of 71 Sig Regt and 347 (HSF) Sig Sqn. It appears that 347 Sig Sqn was located at Catterick and may have been administered by 11 Sig Regt.

RHQ has virtually no information on this Sqn and would like to be able to fill in this gap in the Corps history. It anyone can throw any light on this unit please contact:

Asst Regtl Secretary
RHQ, Royal Signals
Griffin House
Blandford Camp
Dorset
DT11 8RH
Tel: 01258 482 082

259 SIGNAL SQUADRON BADGE

From: **Stuart Graham (LCpl R Sigs)**
32 Lodge Way,
Irthlingborough,
Northamptonshire,
NN9 5YJ.
Tel: 01933 651565.
E-mail: grahamshd@aol.com

Dear Sir,

I was stationed with 259 Sig Sqn, Cyprus, 1964-1967. At that time the Unit was part of COMCAN (Commonwealth Communication Army Network). Since then it was taken over by the RAF and 259 Sig Sqn took on another role.

I am trying to make a picture containing the insignia of the units that I was stationed with during my service, but I cannot find any trace of the 259 Sig Sqn badge, which was a circular image of the globe with a zigzag bolt of electricity through it.

I would be very grateful if anyone who has the badge could let me take a copy of it.

Thank you in anticipation of your help.

Yours.....

OPERATION MARKET GARDEN

From: **Maj John Greenacre** AAC
ACSC 7
JSCSC
Watchfield
Wiltshire
SN68TS
JGreenacre@JSCSC.Org

Dear Sir

I am currently writing a dissertation as part of a Masters' degree at RMCS Shrivenham into signals comms in 1 Airborne Division during OP MARKET GARDEN. Are you aware of any of your members who served as signallers at Arnhem? If so I would be grateful if you could put them in touch with me, their recollections would be extremely useful.

My contact details are above, or:

4 Roman Walk
Watchfield
Swindon
Wiltshire
SN68RH
Tel: 01793 783218

Your help is appreciated

Yours.....

REUNIONS

CERTA CITO - SWIFT AND SURE

216 PARACHUTE SIGNAL SQUADRON 1948-1977

2004 REUNION

Our next Reunion will take place on the weekend

14/16 May 2004

Venue: Scotch Corner Hotel.
(Book early – Now!)

All who served with the Sqn between 1948-1977 are invited to attend

For more details contact:

Ralph Porter or Steve Marshal on:

www.216parasigs.org.uk

DONATIONS

Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Capt (Retd) H Jennings	£20.00
Maj (Retd) A Burns in memory of **Maj (Retd) FJC Wollaston**	£50.00
In memory of **Harry Hassall Anderson**	£120.50
R Waldron	£10.00
Mrs S Garland in memory of **Maj (Retd) FJC Wollaston**	£100.00
Cornwall Branch	£20.00
Peterborough Branch in memory of **Bill Brewin**	£25.00
Col and Mrs IG Swan in memory of **Col Gordon Neilson**	£40.00
QM's Dept, HQ York Garrison	£106.50
Mrs Fitzpatrick in memory of **Sig LJ Fitzpatrick** (apologies for the omission from the October *WIRE*)	£20.00
Beverley Ex-Boys Assn	£200.00
LtCol (Retd) John A Rose in memory of **John Haydon**	£50.00
Maj and Mrs JF Stokes in memory of **Maj (Retd) Wilf Hill**	£40.00
MajGen PAC Baldwin in memory of **Col Freddie Ramsbottom**	£50.00

LAST POST

Barkley - KG Barkley	Served 1946/49	Died 07/09/03
Booker - Capt RH Booker	Served WW2	Died 24/09/03
Brown - WJ Brown	Served WW2	Died ??/02/03
Carn - Maj EA Carn	Served 1943/56	Died 25/03/03
Chadwick - Lt AV Chadwick	Served 1937/46	Died 17/09/03
Courtney - AW Courtney	Served 1942/46	Died 30/10/03
Davis - LtCol AF Davis	Served WW2	Died 04/09/03
Dawton - Capt EM Dawton	Served 1945/66	Died 15/05/03
Griffin - Dvr CE Griffin	Served 1937/46	Died 18/10/03
Hill - Maj W Hill	Served 1940/67	Died 14/10/03
Jones - Cpl RJ Jones	Served 1939/46	Died 05/09/03
Leyland - Sgt HJ Leyland	Served 1972/81	Died 16/10/03
Millard - Sig RP Millard	Served 1950/52	Died ??/07/03
Moffatt - Maj AH Moffatt	Served WW2	Died 13/10/03
Neilson - Col WG Neilson	Served 1941/75	Died 17/09/03
Owens - Cpl ER Owens	Served 1939/46	Died 2000
Skitt - Sgt EC Skitt	Served 1939/63	Died ??/10/03
Turner - Sgt E Turner	Served 19??/70	Died 23/12/02
Watson - Sig DH Watson	Served 1939/46	Died 26/05/03
White - Mrs M White	Widow of Maj R White	Died 10/10/03

OBITUARIES

CHADWICK – Lt AV Chadwick (Chad) died 17 September 2003.

Arthur Victor Chadwick was born at the end of the Great War on Christmas Day 1918. He was brought up in Kent, and after leaving school, went to work for Ordnance Survey. In 1937 he joined the TA in Royal Signals.

Chad first saw action on the London Docks, but was soon posted to North Africa. Here he was commissioned and posted to 8 AF Sig Regt to command 129 Line Section in support of the RAF in Italy. During the advance through Italy, he trod on a mine and was slightly wounded. He was rescued by his Tp Sgt, **Sgt Leslie Drain**, who was awarded the BEM for the action.

In Italy, he spent some time in war-ravaged Rimini, where he made friends with a family called **Berti**. Their house had been badly damaged by shelling, and had no front door, so **Chad** scavenged about the nearby wreckage and found a door that fitted. Years later, when **Chad**, his wife and 9 yr old daughter returned on a visit, they were proudly shown the very same door, still bearing bullet scars. The same family owned a farm up in the hills, and when the townspeople were in danger of starving, the eldest son came to **Chad** saying that they had plenty of grain at their farm, but no means of bringing it into town. With his CO's permission, **Chad** organised 20 lorries to transport the grain to the mill. It is little wonder that his daughter, **Liz** remembers the rapturous welcome they got from the town when they visited. Such acts of kindness were typical of him.

He leaves a widow, **Cynthia** and daughter **Liz**.

DICKSON – Lt Col DA Dickson (Denis) died 17 June 2003.

Lt Col Denis Dickson was the son of **Lt Col Egbert Dickson**, (the founder, with his brother-in-law **Oscar Benson**, of the famous chocolates company, *Bendicks of Mayfair*), and grandson of **Sir John Frederick Dickson, KCMG OBE**, the founder of Port Dickson in Malaya, and Governing Agent in Kandy, Ceylon.

Denis Ayton Dickson was born in Taplow, Buckinghamshire on 1 January 1916. The country house in which he was born had been seconded as a maternity home for the wives of Indian Army officers during the Great War, and was later taken over by ICL. It always amused **Denis**, during his time with ICL in the 1960's and early 70's, to attend seminars in this house, and on one occasion he remarked that he had actually been born in the room in which the seminar was being held!

After school at Pembroke Lodge and Tonbridge, during which time he developed a great love for sailing, **Denis** entered RMA Woolwich, where he was awarded the Kitchener Scholarship, and the Agar Memorial Prize. After completing the Q course, he was posted to 2 Div Sigs, and went to France with the Unit, in September 1939, as OC 5 Inf Bde Sig Section. In December of that year he was appointed Adjt, and in June 1940, was evacuated through Dunkirk, arriving in Southampton on one of the last boats. It was during this year that he married his cousin, **Helen Benson**.

In 1941, **Denis** took over comd of 29 Indep Inf Bde Sig Section. This was an assault bde, and for the rest of the war he served in Combined Ops, taking part in the assaults on Madagascar in 1942. He then went to India, where he was attached to various Indian units and formations in Burma and Arakan, finishing up in Malaya.

After the war, he commanded the Boys Sqn at Catterick, and held staff appointments until 1950, when he was posted to Germany as 2IC Northern Army Gp Sig Regt. In 1954 he went on an exchange posting to Canada in the Sigs Directorate of the National Defence HQ. On returning to the UK in 1956, he was immediately posted to the 2 Brit Corps Sig Regt, taking part in the Suez operations. From there he went back to Germany as 2IC Brit Corps Sig Regt. His final appointment was as Chief Telecomms Officer at HQ Northern Army Group, where he had the distinction of being the first British Officer to serve under a German CSO. During this period, he had time to continue his passion for sailing with the Army's yacht club on Mohne See.

After retirement from the Army in 1960, **Denis** worked in the IT environment, starting with Ferranti, and progressing through the various mergers and takeovers during the 60's and early 70's.

In his final years before retirement, he rejoined RHQ Royal Signals as Historical Officer, where he was responsible for the Corps archives, setting up a registry and display of medals won by various distinguished soldiers. During this period, he also devoted himself to the Chalfont St Peter Branch of the RBL.

Denis retired from industry in 1981 at the age of 65, when he and his wife, **Helen**, emigrated to British Columbia, Canada, to be close to his daughter, **Lindsay**. In retirement, he devoted himself to looking after **Helen**, and was active with his local church in Abbotsford, where he regularly greeted new parishioners, led evening prayers, and read lesson on Sunday mornings.

Denis is survived by his wife of sixty-three years, **Helen**, his daughter, **Lindsay**, his son, **Jonathan** and three grandchildren, **Rebecca**, **Caroline** and **Alistair**.

EVANS - Cpl K Evans (Ken) died 16 April 2003 aged 76.

A native of Gnosall, Staffordshire, **Ken** commenced his Army career in October 1944, when he was called up for initial trg at Carlisle. Following this he was posted to R Signals, Catterick, for trg as an Operator, Wireless and Line (OWL). After further trg in UK, some of it at *The Grand Hotel*, Scarborough, (then owned by **Charles Laughton's** family, but requisitioned for sigs trg during the War), **Ken** was posted to India. Here he was involved in radio comms in the large Military HQ in Ranchi, firstly as a LCpl, then later as a full Cpl.

On return to the UK, he was posted to Fremington, Devon, where he was part of the sigs trg staff in the Experimental Equipt Wing. **Ken** was demobbed and transferred to the Z Reserve in October 1948.

Thereafter, for the rest of his life **Ken** maintained an interest in radio comms, and although he was technically well qualified as a Radio and TV engineer, and was in fact a member of RSGB for a while, he never bothered to take out an amateur radio licence. He did however, join the RSA Shropshire Branch about 20 years ago, and apart from recent times when illness and failing eyesight prevented him from attending meetings, **Ken** has been a very active member of the Branch throughout.

A well-known figure in Newport (Shropshire), where he had his own funeral director's business, **Ken** was given a big send off in Newport Parish Church, attended by approximately 300 mourners. Representing the Shropshire Branch and acting as bearers were the Chairman, **John Wall** (who also gave an address), Secretary, **David Warner**, Treasurer, **Phil Johnson**, Welfare Officer, **Brian Harrington**, **Malcolm Hines**, and **Ray Tipton**. The procession was preceded into the church by the Branch Standard Bearer, **Derrick Evans**. After the service, the coffin was conveyed in his own hearse to Gnosall Cemetery for burial.

HARRISON - Sgt W Harrison (Wallace) died on 1 September.

Wallace Harrison was born in the hamlet of Energlyn, parish of Eglwsylan, on 7 April 1917. After attending the village school at Penyrhoel, he gained admittance to Caerphilly Grammar School in 1928. In 1932 he was successful in passing the apprenticeship examination and became and Apprentice Tradesman (Instrument Mechanic) at Catterick in April of that year.

On reaching men's service, **Wallace** was posted to Egypt Signals in 1937, serving in the Middle East with the 7 Armd Div until 1943, when he returned to UK. He was wounded in the Battle for Tobruk. He subsequently served in France and Germany with the Special Communications Units (SCUs).

After demobilisation in 1946, he was employed as the Quality Manager of a large electronic company at Abercynon.

Wallace's funeral, held at Glyntaff Crematorium, was exceptionally well attended. Tributes from far and wide were paid to his good works and kindness. Truly he was a gentle man. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife, **Bette**, son, **Stephen**, and family.

ROBERTS – SSgt DG Roberts (Derrick) died on 19 August 2003.

Derrick Roberts served 25 years in the Corps, including postings at RSS and NATO, retiring in the rank of SSgt.

He had dedicated his life to his community, serving for many years as sub-postmaster of Bramshaw Post Office, the very centre of the village. He was loved and known to many as a truly exceptional man.

Derrick leaves a widow, **Vera**, who worked at his side for 51 years. They were due to celebrate their 51st Wedding Anniversary on 16 August. His children are **Derrick** 50, **Denise** 49, **Bob** 47 and **Philip** 36. His much-loved grandchildren are **Ryan** and **Sarah**, **Kimberley**, **Craig**, **James** and **Elliot**.

His funeral took place at St Peters Church, Bramshaw on Wednesday 27 August 2003. His coffin, draped with the Union Flag, was taken through the New Forest in a horse-drawn hearse. An RBL bugler was in attendance.

SMALL ADS

OFFICERS UNIFORMS FOR SALE

Mess Kit, 32-34" chest, 34-36" waist, size 8 George boots. £60. Service Dress, same size, size 8 brown shoes, SD and dress hats. £80.
Call **Ron Kirkwood** on 01225 769859 (H) and 01495 236413 (W)

THE CORPS WELFARE SECRETARY

– by Jan Cornick

One of the objectives of the Royal Signals Association is to provide comfort and relief, either generally or individually, to past and present Signallers and their dependants who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress. Some of these needs are met from the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund, which in turn is supported by the One Day's Pay Scheme. The Welfare Secretary in RHQ administers requests for such assistance and works through the caseworkers of SSAFA and Royal British Legion.

As Welfare Secretary it is my responsibility to co-ordinate the applications we receive, confirm the eligibility of the applicant and worthiness of the case, then prepare it for consideration by the Welfare Committee. If appropriate, other funding bodies are contacted at this point to consider sharing the burden of providing the assistance needed.

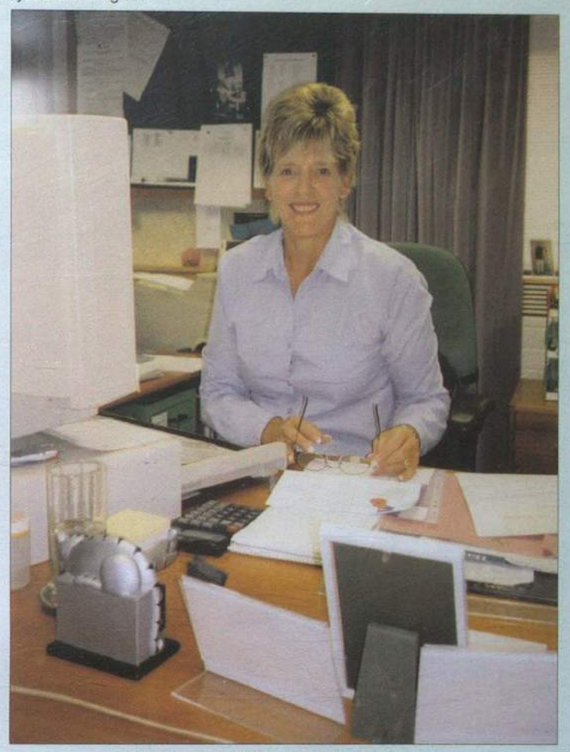
There are many areas where our assistance helps to bring comfort and relief. Here are some examples:

- Assistance with debts, but not credit card debts or bank loans;
- Education/retraining necessitated by illness or redundancy;
- Purchase of items essential to a reasonable quality of life, e.g. mobility aids;
- Limited assistance with funeral expenses, but not headstones;
- Residential/nursing home fees (for which we seek assistance from the Army Benevolent Fund);
- Respite/Convalescent holidays, where there is a clear need.

Grants are not made to individuals direct but through the sponsoring welfare organisation. Since the beginning of 2003 we have made 469 grants totalling £205,480.

During my eight years as Welfare Secretary I have found the work very rewarding, knowing that we are helping people in need who have nowhere else to turn. We receive numerous thank-you cards and letters. Below are extracts from just a few of them:

Assistance with the cost of a stairlift to enable the wife of an ex-Corps member to return home from hospital brought this response: *'May I thank you and all the team on behalf of myself and family for the wonderful help extended to enable my wife to return home. She and I are so delighted with the financial help given to install the stairlift. It is so warm and reassuring to know that this was given by former comrades'.*



Jan Cornick, the Corps Welfare Secretary

The daughter of a serving Cpl benefits from a special wheelchair

The elderly widow of a wartime ex Corps member was assisted with the purchase of an electric scooter she writes *'From the bottom of my heart I would like to say a big thank you to your Association for your kindness and generosity…. this has made a big difference to my life. Instead of being restricted to indoors and four walls, I can now go out independently and do many things I have been unable to do for years, shopping visit friends… My late husband would be so very proud of you all, thank you so much'.*

The daughter of a 93 year old widow wrote to thank us for assistance with the purchase of 'bathlift' *' This has meant a great deal to my mother as she can now have a bath in comfort and safety without the fear of being stranded. My mother is proud of the fact that this funding has been made available from yourselves based on my father's years of serving with the Royal Corps of Signals'.*

The daughter of a serving Cpl was born with a rare genetic disorder and required assistance in the purchase of a special wheelchair. His letter of thanks also included a photograph of his daughter *'enjoying the benefit of her new wheelchair, which will also benefit the whole of the family'.*

If you know someone who is a Serving or an ex-Corps member who could benefit from assistance, then please advise them in the first instance to contact their nearest SSAFA Forces Help or Royal British Legion County Field Office. Their telephone numbers are in the local telephone directory.