THE wire

February 2004

The Royal Corps of Signals

WHAT ARE YOU WEARING? *- by Col (Retd) Cliff Walters*

There has recently been a flurry of activity within the Corps to ensure that everyone is correctly dressed with their new Tactical Recognition Flash (TRF). Such items of dress are important in the Army because they promote our identity and give us a sense of belonging. They are good for morale. Of course, they are also of operational importance. But, what are you wearing? I thought the background to the TRF might be of interest to those who are not already aware.

There are photographs of Royal Engineers of the signal service wearing white over blue armband in the late 19th Century. It is not known precisely why these two colours were chosen. The most likely explanation goes back to the days of naval and army signalling by semaphore. The flags that were used were often (but not always) white with a blue horizontal stripe across the middle. The white over blue armbands continued to be worn throughout the Great War.

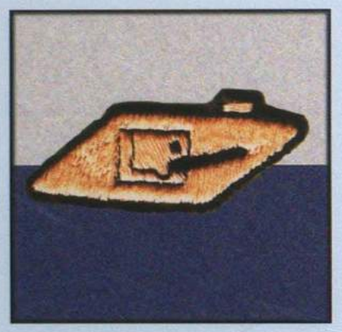
An Army Order of December 1920 authorised the wearing of the 3fi-inch wide armband by members of the Army Signal Service. This may have been because most signallers immediately after the formation of the Royal Corps of Signals were only on secondment and wore their unit cap badge: they did not yet wear the 'Jimmy' cap badge. The armband would therefore have given all signallers a single identity. There is no record of an entry under Royal Signals, but it is known that between 1920 and 1939 despatch riders and linemen continued to wear the armband.

'Arm of Service strips', as they were called, were formally introduced in September 1940, and worn just below Corps or Divisional insignia. The strip was equal blue and white, with white at the rear. It was cut in felt and issued in two separate pieces that had to be sewn together onto the sleeve of the battledress. By 1944, the strip was being mass-produced as a single item with the colours embroidered onto a khaki background. Many Commonwealth signallers wore a white over blue square during this time. Some form of strip was therefore worn by Signallers throughout the war.

The situation after WW 2 became somewhat haphazard, especially when No 2 Dress replaced battledress and combat kit was introduced. At this time, there were different instructions for different forms of dress. The strip then became more of an operational recognition flash and was worn, particularly by airborne signallers, to enhance operational efficiency on the battlefield. Inexplicably, the insignia became square with white on top of blue. It thus became an item for 216 Sig Sqn and its antecedents for recognition on the Landing Zone (LZ).

For the remainder of the Corps, there was a policy of 'minimalism' as far as insignia on the arm were concerned, and in the 1980s very few Royal Signals units were authorised to wear any insignia whatsoever. Uniformity across the Corps was the order of the day.

Throughout the 1990s insignia were increasingly re-introduced into the Army as whole, at Brigade and Division level. This has culminated in 2003 in the recent decision for members of the Corps to wear the white and blue TRF once again.



TRF worn in 1942 by Lt LRL Redshaw NZ Div Sigs, serving with an Armd Regt

How the TRF is worn in 2004

TRF on Sig D Cantrill serving with 8th Army in Italy in 1943

Lt HG Robson interviewing BBC's Frank Gilbert in Normandy, 20 June1944. His TRF is clearly visible

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The Wire

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FRONT COVER
Haven't we been here before? 'The Royal Engineers Signal Service Officers' Mess and Wireless Station, Basrah, 1917' a water colour by Maj JP Wildeblood RE, which now hangs in the Corps Museum, Blandford. Has anyone on OP TELIC seen it?

BACK COVER
Christmas in Iraq. The MND(SE) Service of 6 Lessons and Carols in the Arrivals Hall at Basrah International Airport, 24 December 2003.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE....

WE HAVE BOWMAN

The BOWMAN system is now a reality. After a year of trials, the BOWMAN Trials Team reports that the system is now ready to roll. They explain what it is and how it works on Page 2. 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) are currently re-equipping with BOWMAN. See their initial report on Page 75.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS TRADE CHANGE

The trade of IS Op is to be changed to Information Systems Engineer (IS Engr), and trg is about to begin to produce many more. The move is in response to the forecast need across the British Army for increasing numbers of IT operators. Read the details, and how it might affect you on Page 5.

LANYARD TROPHY

Lanyard Trophy 2003 was held on Dartmoor on 10 October 03. Once again, the dedication, persistence and sheer guts shown by all teams who participated in this gruelling 40-mile endurance test was astounding. Many Units report on their team's performance in this event: HQNI and 15 Sig Regt on Page 13; 21 Sig Regt (AS) on Page 33; 36 Sig Regt on Page 61; 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) on Page 15; and 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216) on Page 15.

OPERATION TELIC 3

The Editor spent the last 10 days of December with troops in Iraq. During this time he visited all Royal Signals units in theatre and shared Christmas with some of them. Read his report and unit reports in the extended News From The Gulf section starting on Page 63.

TA SOLDIERS BRING USEFUL KNOW-HOW TO IRAQ

We all know of the useful comms and IT skills the TA contribute to ops abroad. But on OP TELIC, two TA soldiers have put two different sets of non-signals know-how to good effect. On page 63, 37 Sig Regt's **Cpl Judy Dunn** serving with 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200), tells how she applied her civilian job experience to the re-establishment of the Iraqi banking system. And on Page 56, **Cpl Brannigan**, serving with 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209), just happened to know a man who knew how to turn obsolete Iraqi coinage into much-needed funds for local charities.

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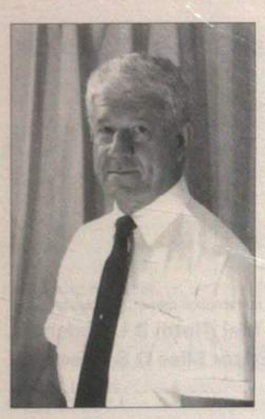

EDITORIAL

The Corps had an extremely busy 2003, and rose to and succeeded in the many challenges we faced. But life doesn't stand still. Everyone remains well aware that there continues to be more to do to push our boundaries forward. During my visits to both Units and RSA Branches, I have been impressed by all the forward thinking I have observed. Following their successes during 2003, our people at all levels seem to have been less concerned with celebrating them and more concerned with the planning and preparation for the next steps. In this, the first edition for 2004, I wish you all, the Serving and the Retired Corps, every success in your endeavours during the coming year and beyond.

Continuing with my visits, I was privileged to spend the last 10 days of December in Iraq, where I was able to visit all Corps Units (and a small NZ det) currently deployed on OP TELIC 3. I was hosted by 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, whom I thank for designing the programme and clearing the way to make everything work. Being on the ground with Signals people of all ranks and sharing just a few of their experiences with them in theatre, I was able to get much more of a feel for what they were doing, how they were doing, the conditions under which they are working and how they felt about it all. And as a bonus, I was able to share Christmas with some of them.

I was greatly impressed that, despite their working long hours, under difficult conditions and often on tedious tasks, they are quietly and efficiently getting on with the job in hand. They are also demonstrating a high level of flexibility, in that many are frequently doing extra jobs outside their normal trade areas. Some are finding the time to be involved in local charitable works, such as refurbishments of schools and other civil facilities. Demonstrating the principle of 'soldiers first, tradesmen second,' others are joining colleagues in other corps on foot, vehicle and water patrols. Their response to the local population is very positive, despite the poverty and culture differences. They are in good heart, and appear to appreciate the importance of the job they are doing in Iraq.

Whilst in theatre, I was also able to convey to individuals and units the aims of *The WIRE*, particularly its role as a record of the Corps informal history. In this respect, a number of useful stories and photographs were immediately forthcoming, with promises of more to follow. As a result, via *The WIRE*, the rest of the Corps is now becoming better informed of these units' operations and achievements in Iraq. My only regret is that there were sometimes more stories and photos than I can publish. However, those that I don't use will be deposited in the Corps archives.

To those units currently in theatres other than Iraq, don't be dismayed that the focus in this issue on OP TELIC. Your turn will come. I'm hoping that my next visit will be to Northern Ireland. Where next, who knows?

This edition is the first for my new Deputy Editor, **Dawn Haselden**. In post only since December, she has already demonstrated a flair for the job, together with a great deal of imagination, initiative and enthusiasm. Much of this is evidenced in this issue. **Dawn** is a great person to work with, and already we have developed some sound ideas for the future. I welcome her and am confident that she will make a major contribution to *The WIRE*.

We also see with this edition, the start of free issues for junior ranks. The allocation has been made from the returns that units have submitted so far. As things settle down, there may need to be some adjustments. Also, some units deployed on ops may wish to have some copies delivered in theatre. Please keep this office informed of your needs in this respect.

BOWMAN TRIALS UPDATE

The BOWMAN Trials Team formed in January 03 and is a Tri-service, all arms sub-unit that is lifed for two years to the BOWMAN project. Currently 61 strong the R SIGNALS element consists of 1 Capt, 1 WO2 (YofS), 1 SSgt (FofS), 1 Sgt RS Op, 2 LCpls RS Op and 1 Sig RS Op. The team was the first element of UK armed forces to be equipped with BOWMAN with 40 TUM FFR converted in March 03. Since this time, the team has been conducting extensive trials of the system both in the laboratory at the General Dynamics (UK) factory in Wales and in the field around the country.

A BTT det on field trials

WHAT WILL BOWMAN MEAN TO YOU?

BOWMAN will deliver a fully secure, digital voice and data radio bearer system plus an IT infrastructure and special-to-task software applications. It also delivers the infrastructure that links the bearer and IT elements in the form of the specific platform harness, whether, for example, it be for an AFV436, *HMS Albion* or a Chinook. On top of all this, it gives the system managers a range of software tools to plan and control the connectivity. In short, BOWMAN is more than just a radio!

To give you a flavour of some of what it will do for you the user, here is a quick look at the radio element and the key software application that you will all get to know in time, ComBAT.

BOWMAN RADIO RANGE

BOWMAN provides a full range of VHF and HF radios, plus a new capability in the form of the UHF High Capacity Data Radio (HCDR). All manpack radios have embedded GPS, with veh installations having a separate Applique GPS Receiver.
The VHF range is based on the ITT Advanced Digital Radio Plus (ADR+) which will provide fully secure voice and data down to section level. This is an excellent radio, with a common and intuitive menu structure and range and co-site performance that exceeds the CLANSMAN equivalent in virtually every case. The full VHF range is as follows:

BOWMAN VHF Radio	CLANSMAN Equivalent	Remarks
UK/PRC354	UK/PRC349/350	5W section radio
UK/PRC355	UK/PRC351	5W manpack radio
UK/PRC356	UK/PRC352	355 with 16W Amp
UK/PRC357	none	Veh mounted 355
UK/VRC358	UK/VRC358	20W Veh mounted
UK/VRC359	none	50W Veh mounted
UK/ARC341	none	Air platform radio

N.B. All radios provide Fixed Frequency (FF), Frequency Hopping (FH) and Free Channel Search (FCS) modes of operation.

Two ADR+ radios mounted in a Dual Radio Mount (DRM) in the same space as a single VRC353.

The HF range is based on the Harris RF-5800 Falcon II radio. Again, this is a field-proven design, based on one in service with the US Armed Forces (those of you who have used WOTAN will find it very similar). An extremely capable radio, it provides FF, FH and Auto Link Estab (ALE) modes of operation. As with the VHF, all manpacks have embedded GPS. The full range is as follows:

BOWMAN HF Radio	CLANSMAN Equivalent	Remarks
UK/PRC325	UK/PRC320	20W manpack radio
UK/PRC327	none	Veh mounted 325
UK/VRC328	UK/VRC321	20W Veh mounted
UK/VRC329	UK/VRC321/2	100W Veh mounted

The final part of the radio range is the VRC340 High Capacity Digital Radio (HCDR), which has no CLANSMAN equivalent. It is a data only UHF radio providing a cellular backbone across the battlefield.

ComBAT

The principal software application that will become familiar, is the Common Battlefield Application Toolset (ComBAT) that sits on all BOWMAN user data terminals. The two key interlinked components of ComBAT are firstly, the provision of Situational Awareness, i.e. 'Where am I? Where are my friends, and where is the enemy?' and secondly, access to all the operational staff work templates and R2s that the British Army uses.

BOWMAN – AN OPERATOR'S VIEW - *By Sig Jones*

We all know that the BOWMAN project has been around for a long time and that it has had a lot of bad press. But it's finally here! 12 Mech Bde are already in the conversion process, and by this time next year at least three more units will be converted. Soon your vehs will be taken to Ashchurch to be fitted out with BOWMAN radios and your SQMS will be stocking up on BOWMAN kit.

The Harris RF-5800 radio

The new HF and VHF radios do work, and so do the new data terminals. CLANSMAN will remain a museum piece, showing the old kit we struggled with in the dark ages. BOWMAN will bring the British Army right in to the 21st century. The main differences you will notice are, secure digital voice on both HF and VHF, combined with a Windows-based secure data e-mail system.

It is true there are some teething problems with the software at the moment, but it is new equipt and it is pushing the boundaries of secure comms technologies. These problems are being overcome, and the system as a whole is improving as we work with it. The truth is that BOWMAN works!

Any one who can operate current radio equipt and can use a computer will be at home with BOWMAN. The data terminals will provide the user with up-to-date digital mapping of their own AOR, or the entire theatre with up-to-date locstats of all units displayed on the screen (thanks to GPS), which will greatly assist commanders at all levels. As for voice, clear digital quality will make transmissions easier to receive and log without having to resort to 'Say again all after....'

Look forward to BOWMAN. It is coming to make your life easier, from the highest commander in the field to the basic signaller.

COMMAND LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT FOR ROYAL SIGNALS

Everyone in the Corps should know about CLM. CLM is a progressive and Army-wide trg programme that has been established to develop non-operational comd, leadership and management skills in NCOs and WOs. CLM starts from Jan 04 and replaces the following courses:

Education for Promotion (EFP);

R SIGNALS Junior Comds', Segts' and WOs' courses.

In principal, CLM trg will be given to those selected for promotion.

The training delivered will consist of:

Mandatory CLM development for all NCOs;

Progressive development, building on in post experience;

AEC delivered education packages, broadly replacing EFP1 and EFP2, but spread across 3 courses at Cpl, Sgt and WO2 level;

Courses at RSS to replace RSJCC, RSSC and RSWOC. These will be a combination of the CLM-mandated trg and Royal Signals Special to Arm Trg.

POINTS TO NOTE

CLM courses are not Pass/Fail courses, but attendees have to achieve required standards in a range of competencies. Failure to get a 'green' on a competency will not stop the promotion for which an individual has already been selected, but he/she will need to have 'green' on all competencies before being eligible for the subsequent level of promotion.

Soldiers who have been selected for promotion will be loaded as a priority.

Soldiers who have already completed the old EFP, RSJCC, RSSC and RSWOC courses will not have to complete the equivalent CLM courses, as they will have 'grandfather rights'.

ENTRY STANDARDS

Basic Skills Literacy Level 1: The entry standard for JCLM Part 2 (AEC) is Basic Skills Level 1 in Literacy or an equivalent qualification (see para 7 to Annex A of DCI 53). Where a soldier does not hold the required qualification, formal screening should be arranged through the local AEC.

Physical Employment Standards (PES): There is no centrally mandated PES for CLM courses, and ITD fitness will no longer act as an initial filter. Individuals who are Temp LE (downgraded for a period of 3 – 12 months) or Permanently LE (permanently downgraded) will be allowed to attend the course. However, those who are downgraded are required to bring a certificate from their RMO to advise RSS of any activities they cannot do. Individuals in receipt of a sick-chit[1] should not attend the R SIGNALS element of the CLM course until they are fit for employment (FE).

COURSE LOADING PRIORITIES

Priority 3:	Those soldiers likely to be promoted.
Priority 2:	Those soldiers selected for promotion but not in post.
Priority 2a:	Those soldiers selected for promotion but still not in post 8 months later.
Priority 1:	Those soldiers selected for promotion and in post.
Priority 1a:	Those soldiers selected for promotion and have been in post 8 months.

JNCO CLM (JCLM)

Consists of 2 parts, which should preferably be delivered with the R SIGNALS (A&SD) element first. JCLM is for LCpls selected for promotion to Cpl and eligibility will depend upon trade:

Sys Eng Tech:	On award of Class 2.
All other trades:	On selection for promotion to Cpl.

JCLM Part 1 is a 20-day course delivered at RSS and loaded by MCM Div. The first course runs from 11 - 31 January 04.

JCLM Part 2 is a 3-day course delivered at AECs, bid for by units.

SNCO CLM (SCLM)

Consists of 2 parts that must be delivered in a specified order with the AEC element coming before the R SIGNALS element. SCLM is for Cpls selected for promotion to Sgt and eligibility will depend on trade:

Sys Eng Tech:	On completion of Class 1 course.
All other trades:	On selection for promotion to Sgt.

SCLM Part 1 is a 15-day course delivered at AECs, bid for by units.

SCLM Part 2 is a 15-day course delivered at RSS and loaded by MCM Div. The first course runs from 18 - 31 January 04.

(Note: SNCOs will have to be assessed as 'green' in all competencies of JCLM before they can attend supervisory training (i.e. FofS/YofS/Supvr R/Supvr IS).)

WOCLM

Consists of 2 parts, which may be delivered in any order. WOCLM is for SSgts selected for promotion to WO2.

WOCLM Part 1 is a 15-day course delivered at AECs, bid for by units.

WOCLM Part 2 is a 5-day course delivered at RSS and loaded by MCM Div. The first course runs from 16 – 20 February 04.

BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES (BIT)

Under CLM, BIT will become a mandatory requirement for promotion to Sgt. It is therefore planned to deliver this trg as part of the R SIGNALS JCLM course. In the past, accredited BIT trg has been run at RSS and a small number of soldiers have gained BIT qualifications. For individuals who are not already qualified, the BIT course will be delivered as a bolt-on module to the R SIGNALS SCLM course.

ASSESSMENT, REPORTING AND REMEDIATION

CLM assessment is based on how well a student performs against the given competencies during CLM courses. For each competency the student will be graded either 'Competent' (Green) or 'Not yet competent' (Amber). All CLM trg will be formally assessed.

Where 'Amber' is recorded, the remedial action to be taken by the student/unit will be noted in a Remediation Plan (RP) attached to the course report. A separate RP will be provided for each competency graded Amber.

On receipt of a Remediation Plan (RP) the CO/OC is to arrange for its implementation and on completion arrange for the necessary UNICOM action.

A copy of the A and SD trig report plus the remediation action report carried out by his unit, will be sent to MCM Div for inclusion in an individual's P File.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO YOU GET FROM THE CLM COURSES?

There is a broad range of opportunities for you to enrol on various civilian qualification programmes by using the CLM courses to show trg completed. The accreditation process has been designed to be simple and to provide clear progression through all three CLM courses.

FURTHER INFORMATION

You can find out more from:

Unit Chain of Command;
Your RCMO;
Local AEC;
DCI (A) 53;
DCI (A) 109;
DCI on Accreditation of CLM courses (to be published in early 04);
R SIGNALS/Int Corps MCM Div Roadshows (visits to units).

This article is not a formal authority for CLM issues. Formal guidance is contained in the above reference documents.

AND FINALLY...

CLM affects every R SIGNALS soldier's career, so it is suggested that you have the appropriate info regarding CLM in your PDR. A copy of the relevant Annex for your career stage (JNCO, SNCO or WO) from DCI(A) 53 will also be useful. Why not copy this article for your PDR now?

[1] Sick Chits are issued for illness/injuries that take anything from 1 day to 3 months to recover.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS INFORMATION SYSTEMS ENGINEERS ROSTER

Introduction

The introduction of the Information Systems Operator (IS Op) roster that followed the Corps trade review in the late 90s was an important step in the development of the Corps' capability to field modern CIS. The migration of this trade into IS Engineer (IS Engr) will be a crucial second step in this development. The aim of this short article is to explain the rationale behind the changes and how they will be managed, and to encourage suitable members of the Corps to consider transferring to the roster.

What are the changes?

Most readers will know that the extension of the IS Supervisor (Supvr IS) roster down to SSgt and the introduction of a rigorous selection process in line with our other supervisors is already in place. However, we have also identified that there is a pressing need for an IS trade structure that incorporates Sigs and LCpls at Class 3 and Class 2. Work is in hand to migrate our existing IS Op posts into this structure and to increase the size of the roster, marginally at the expense of some other trades. This Sig to SSgt roster will allow direct recruitment, whilst leaving the door open for internal transfer. The other adjustment is the name change from IS Op to IS Engr, which is not CEQ change but simply a change of name.

Why are the changes necessary?

The simple fact is that our experience with Digitisation Stage 1 has convinced us that we will not be able to find enough serving individuals in the Corps, or from across the Army at large, with the right skills to fill the growing number of IS jobs. Whilst there will still be opportunities for suitable serving individuals to transfer from other trades, most of those entering the roster will do so from the outset of their military careers after completing Phase 1 and Phase 2 trg.

The change of name from IS Op to IS Engr is a purely practical decision. From a recruiting point of view, it seems that the title of 'engineer' is more attractive and understandable to the general public than that of operator. Of course the change also brings the IS specialist more closely into line with our existing trade of Sys Engr Tech. The first recruits entering the new roster will join the Army in mid 2004 and undergo basic and trade trg before joining their first units early in 2005. A new Class 3 course for direct entrants is being designed now, with the first course planned for October 2004. Trg for those transferring into the IS Engr roster from other trades will vary, depending on previous IS experience and qualifications.

What happens now?

If you are an IS Op, you need take no further action. The title of your trade will simply change from IS Op to IS Engr in April 2004. Those members of the Corps in other trades who think that they may wish to transfer to the new roster, should start by consulting their local RCMO. Whilst every case will be different, those who have a genuine interest and ability in IT are likely to find that early transfer to the IS Engr roster will open up new opportunities in a trade that is firmly focussed on the future technological needs of the Army. Finally, for those in the world of recruiting, details of the new trade will be circulated shortly by Recruiting Group with the aim of recruiting the first individuals into this roster from mid 2004.

THE CORPS SERGEANTS' MESSES FUND

The Royal Signals Sgts' Messes Fund was established in 1997, primarily to provide a source of funding for projects and acquisitions that would enhance the standard of presentation or comfort in R SIGNALS WOs' and Sgts' Messes and other Messes whose membership includes R SIGNALS WOs and SNCOs. The terms of reference of the Fund have since been expanded to include subsidies for major Corps WO and Sgts' Mess functions.

The Fund's income is derived from individual contributions of one quarter of one day's pay made annually on a voluntary basis by all R SIGNALS SNCOs and WOs. Contributions are collected quarterly from source by the Army Pay Office (APO) under the terms of QR 5.613A. It should be understood that contributions to the WO and Sgts Messes Fund are entirely separate from, and additional to, the voluntary One Day's Pay contribution which all members of the Corps are asked to make. The fund relies upon a regular income from contributions, so it should be obvious that the greater the number of contributing individuals, the more can be done to enhance the standard of our Messes. Individuals who do not pay into the Fund are effectively benefiting unfairly from the contributions of their peers.

Grants from the fund may be made for the purposes of financing, in whole or in part, Mess improvements, including the purchase of items such as silver, pictures and specialist furniture for any R SIGNALS WOs' and Sgts' Mess and for other Messes in which R SIGNALS WOs and SNCOs are members. It is a fundamental principle that the Fund should not pay for those aspects of building maintenance, refurbishment, equipt or basic furniture that should properly be paid for from public funds. The Fund should not be regarded as an alternative to public funding, although it may be used to complement or enhance Mess facilities that have been provided at public expense. Grants may also be made to finance in part, major Corps functions.

A Committee, consisting of all supervisory trade groups, decides on financial allocations, and in the last year it has allocated grants to those units detailed below. The current value of this fund is approximately £49,000.00. Full details of the Fund can be found in SOinC(A)'s PD 210. The Committee's next meeting will take place on 8 April 2004. Bids for grants should be received by 8 March at the latest.

GRANTS ALLOCATED FROM THE CORPS SERGEANTS MESSES FUND

30 Sig Regt Leather furniture	£6,393
40 Sig Regt Royal Signals Dinner Service	£2,000
12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) Royal Signals Prints and Frames	£500
101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215) Leather furniture	£1,700
3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn Leather furniture	£1,500
14 Sig Regt Regimental Insignia	£750
Total	£12,843

ROYAL SIGNALS SHOOTING ASSOCIATION

The aim of the Royal Signals Shooting Association is to improve operational shooting standards across the Corps by encouraging participation in service competition shooting (using service weapons) as well as sport shooting including full and small bore target rifle, air weapons and clay target shooting.

The requirement for all soldiers to have the highest standard of basic skills requires no further illumination than UK's participation in the Campaign Against International Terrorism, with personnel deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq. All of our soldiers, both Regular and TA, are and will be required to be competent and confident in using their personal weapons to defend themselves, their comrades and equipt in the course of their routine duties. Being just a good tradesman is no longer sufficient. Benign environments no longer exist – neither does a clean break between combat and combat support troops. Self belief and the ability to react quickly under stress comes only from the confidence gained through intensive trg in basic, and now essential, field skills – the most important of which is use of personal weapons.

Service rifle competition shooting is one of the best ways to stimulate interest, hone skills and take pride in skill at arms training. It is also well recognised that competition pressure or nerves has a similar effect on an individual to the stress felt while on operations. All service rifle, LSW and pistol competitions are designed and continually modified to have direct operational shooting trig value and require a high level of individual fitness as well as the ability to shoot from all positions, with and without a respirator, up to 300m.

FUTURE EVENTS FOR 2004

THE ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING (CORPSAM) 2004

CORPSAM 2004 will take place at Ash and Pirbright Ranges during the period 26 March – 02 April 04, and is run concurrently with Joint CORPSAM, involving the RE, RLC, REME and AGC. It the open to all R Signals Regular and TA personnel, as well as attached other arms, who are also eligible to shoot in their own Corps in complete teams. The outline programme is as follows:

Friday, 26 March	Practice day
Saturday 27 – Sunday 28 March	TA CORPSAM
Monday 29 March – Friday 02 April	Regular CORPSAM

THE CORPS CLAY TARGET SHOOTING COMPETITION 2004

This is the first R Signals Clay Target Competition and will consist of a 50-bird sporting competition shot concurrently with CORPSAM over 31 March – 1 April 04 at the Bisley shooting ground. The competition is open to any serving members of the Corps and shotguns, cartridges and coaching for novices will all be provided. It is hoped that this competition will create further interest in Clay Target Shooting across the Corps, with the formation of a Corps Clay Target Team by the end of 2004. 21 Sig Regt (AS) have completed a CPSA standard Skeet Range in Colerne and several units already compete in Divisional and Army competitions.

For further info contact **Capt Graham Reith**:

Tel: (Mil) 94566 5036 Mob: 07752 193133
(Civ) 0141 224 5036 email: grahamreith@hotmail.com.

THE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

'I think I've heard of the Officers' Association, but what do you do?'

What indeed! We are not a high-profile or demanding organisation, but among those who know, the Officers' Association has a tremendous reputation for its work with like-minded charities to help those who have contributed a lifetime of service to the Crown, and now need help themselves. The Association has been in the charity business since it was formed in 1920 to provide support to ex-officers of the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines, the Army and the Royal Air Force, their widows and dependants. Its charitable work is divided into three main areas of activity – employment, benevolence and homes.

The Employment Department provides a free service to help ex-officers of all ranks and ages find suitable employment - whether they are just leaving the Services, or have been out for some time and are changing their civilian jobs. We find jobs for hundreds of ex-officers every year over a wide salary range, both in UK and overseas.

Through its Benevolence Department, the Association provides advice and assistance to those in financial distress and help towards the cost of homes' fees; - last year we dispersed nearly a million pounds in benevolence grants ex-officers and their dependants less fortunate than ourselves. Such financial assistance includes allowances and grants towards specific household and disability-related expenses. Our advice covers a wide range of age and health-related subjects.

We also own and manage a very high quality residential home for single male and female ex-officers. Set in its own magnificent grounds overlooking the Teign estuary in South Devon, *Huntly* offers an excellent standard of accommodation in a caring and friendly environment, where each resident has a centrally-heated private room with en-suite facilities. Residents can participate in a range of activities both within the house, or in the local community and beyond. Residents pay a standard fee, which offers excellent value for money. They can enjoy all that *Huntly* has to offer, in the friendship and comradeship so reminiscent of their time in the Services.

The Association also manages a small tranquil estate of twelve bungalows for disabled officers and their families at Leavesden, just outside Watford. The bungalows and communal garden at *Macdonnell Gardens* are maintained to a high standard by the Association, who also provide the residents with welfare support through one of their local Honorary Representatives.

We hope this short article has given you a feel for the work of the Officers' Association. We have come a long way since 1920, when destitute ex-officers, many highly decorated, were to be found selling matches outside London railway stations. Today, as before, the Officers' Association is here to help you, whether in finding employment when you leave the Services, or supporting you in later life either through benevolence assistance, or perhaps a place in *Huntly* or *Macdonnell Gardens*.

Our benevolence work is conducted by a dedicated band of volunteers up and down the country. We rely very much on donations to provide the continuing welfare support for those less fortunate than ourselves, many of whom have served in the defence of this country and have suffered as a result. Can you help us in return? Perhaps you could spare some time to become one of our Honorary Representatives, or maybe contribute to our work? Donations of any size are most welcome. If you can help in any way, or you require more details, please contact:

Gp Capt John Hollowood RAF (Retd)
Assistant General Secretary
The Officers' Association Tel: 0207 3895203
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London SW1Y 5JY E-mail: ags@oaed.org.uk
Website: www.officersassociation.org.uk

ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA - The Place and the People

The Place and the People. As part of a major fund-raising appeal, Third Millennium Publishing is publishing, on behalf of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, the first ever single volume portrait of this famous London institution, entitled ***Royal Hospital Chelsea - The Place and the People***.

Chelsea Pensioners are held in great affection throughout the world. However, few people are aware that the Royal Hospital is not only one of the architectural and historical wonders of London (it is one of **Sir Christopher's Wren's** masterpieces) but also contains complete hospital facilities, caring for the daily needs of the Pensioners.

This beautifully illustrated 192-page book, which contains newly researched archive material and specially commissioned photographs, describes the Royal Hospital's purpose, its achievements and how it has developed over the years. As well as tracing the history and wonderful architecture of the 300-year old Hospital, the book's widely respected author and TV presenter, **Dan Cruickshank**, also captures the fascinating stories of the Chelsea Pensioners themselves - their personal memories and how they live today.

Royal Hospital Chelsea - The Place and the People includes a foreword by **HRH the Prince of Wales**, Patron of the Royal Hospital Appeal, and will be officially launched in March 2004. The bulk of the proceeds from the sale of the book will go towards the Appeal.

To reserve a copy of the book at a special pre-publication price of £30.00 (incl postage), contact: Third Millennium Publishing, Farringdon House, 105 - 107 Farringdon Street, London EC1R 3BU. Tel: 020 7837 4004, E-mail: info@tmiltd.com Closing date for the pre-publication offer is 27 February 2004.

RUGBY - ARMY v NAVY

Tickets are now available for the Army v Navy Rugby Match at Twickenham on Saturday 01 May 04.

Tickets for the Royal Signals area of the stand and the Royal Signals Bar can be had from:

Rosie Miller
Chief Clerk
243 Sig Sqn
Elbe Block
Erskine Barracks
Wilton
Salisbury
Wilts SP2 0AG

Tel: Mil 94331 3146
Civ 01722 433146
Fax 3759

Prices:		
	Adult Ticket	£15
	Junior Ticket	£7 (under 16's)
	Family Ticket	£30 (2 Adults and 2 juniors)
	Car Park Ticket	£10
	Coach Park Ticket	£50
	Corps Bar Ticket	£2.50

Ticket requests are to be accompanied by a cheque made payable for the full amount to CENTRAL BANK 21 SIG REGT and (for security reasons) a nominal roll of all those attending.

Tickets will be sold on a purely first come first served basis and will be distributed after 01 Apr 04.

BOOK REVIEW - *OUR STOLEN YEARS*

- Reviewed by Bernard Redshaw

Compared with that of many WW2 soldiers, **Leslie Smith's** war was a short one. But as he stepped ashore at Normandy on D +8, he wasn't to know that. Neither was his devoted wife, **Gracie**. *Our Stolen Years*, the wartime diaries and letters exchanged between this couple, is a compilation by their son, **Martin Salter-Smith**, and vividly reflects the fears and uncertainties they experienced during **Leslie's** deployment in Europe. For much of this time, each of them was experiencing danger, **Leslie**, from the German forces in France and Germany, and **Gracie** from the Luftwaffe bombing of Liverpool. Added to this, the unreliability of the only means of communication between the two, the heavily censored and much delayed letter, caused them further stress and anxiety. And during this time, their first child, **Paul** was born and was not to be seen by **Leslie** for many months.

Unfortunately, there are very few of **Gracie's** letters, so we don't always know how she was responding to the many letters sent by **Leslie**, save from his replies to her. But it is very evident that they drew immense strength from their Catholic faith. And although you can feel the tension in the letters, you can also see how each was attempting to play down the fears and hardships they were experiencing.

The writing is vivid and fresh, and surprisingly, the syntax and turn of phrase is very similar to present day use. The link writing, the prologue and the epilogue by **Martin Salter-Smith** is excellent, helping the reader follow and understand the couple's experiences well. This book provides a very useful piece of social history, reflecting the experiences of many couples during WW2.

Our Stolen Years, ISBN 1 903970 72 5, is published in paperback by Central Publishing Ltd, West Yorkshire.

ARMY APPRENTICES SCHOOL
HARROGATE
INTAKE 59C (September 1959)

All members are cordially invited to a 45th Anniversary Dinner.
To be held in Harrogate on Saturday 4 September 2004

For more information contact:

Lt Col (Retd) R Ian Buckley IVIBE on

(01423) 569876 or
ian.buckley7@ntlworld.com

MOVEMENTS

DECEMBER 2003

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col JA Terrington	Royal School of Signals
Col DJ Whitby	J6 Div PJHQ(UK)
Lt Col DG Halstead	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Maj RW Taylor	G6 HQ LAND
Maj AM White	HQNI
Maj DA Wright MBE	MS(B)
Capt MP Boyle	7 Sig Regt
Capt DS Coslett	HQ NI 15 Sig Regt
Capt SM Knight	DCOS HQ SOinC(A)
Capt JTD Wright	J6 Div PJ HQ(UK)
Capt J Malcolm	30 Sig Regt
Lt CM Holland	222 Sig Sqn, 3 (UK) Div
Lt FS Keith	Army Tech Foundation College
2Lt EC Cuthbertson	12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228)
2Lt SRA Drescher	16 Sig Regt
2Lt DG Galey	7 Sig Regt
2Lt KJ Griffiths	7 Sig Regt
2Lt OP Lees	16 Sig Regt
2Lt RA Lowe	3 (UK)Div Sig Regt
2Lt JR MacRae	1 (UK)Armd Div Sig Regt
2Lt WH Mawby	30 Sig Regt
2Lt DJ McGuckian	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn(262)
2Lt HJJ Olivier	2 Sig Regt
2Lt DP Palmer	21 Sig Regt (AS)
2Lt CG Parkes	14 Sig Regt (EW)
2Lt BB Price	Cyprus Comms Unit
2Lt AK Reid	3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (203)
2Lt IJ Scaife	280(UK)Sig Sqn
2Lt MS Skeet	21 Sig Regt(AS)
2Lt JA Snelgrove	14 Sig Regt (EW)
2Lt S Vaughan	30 Sig Regt
2Lt TJC Walton	3(UK) Div Sig Regt
2Lt AF Wardle	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (261)
2Lt PJ Whillis	19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209)
2LtCK Whittley	2 Sig Regt
2Lt AH Williams	1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt

JANUARY 2004

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col GH Hume	DCSA
Lt Col CJ McIntosh	J6 Div PJHQ(UK)
Maj AJ Tuson	RMAS
Capt CM Dixon	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt J Fradley	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Capt AHT Garrett	SHAPE ACE CommSec
Capt SC Jeffery	HQ NorIreland
Capt BA Knight	SDCSA(G) Enterprise Management
Capt SM Lockwood	35 Sig Regt (V)
Capt A Scott	Mil Int Bn

RETIREMENTS

DECEMBER 2003

Name and Rank	*Date*
Maj NW Massey	01 Dec 03
Maj CJ Whitehead	01 Dec 03
LtCol A Robertson	02 Dec 03
Maj JAB Floyd	12 Dec 03
Maj D Drinkall	14 Dec 03
Maj DR Davey	29 Dec 03
Capt NP Fanning	31 Dec 03

JANUARY 2004

Name and Rank	*Date*
Brig CL Le Gallais CBE	31 Jan 04

NEWS OF TRAINING

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

COMD **Col MJM Dyer**

THE ROYAL SIGNALS LEADERSHIP COURSE - A PLEA FROM THE COURSE OFFICER, RSLC 123

The Royal Signals Leadership Course (RSLC) is a physically and mentally demanding four-week course designed to provide leadership trg and assessment for potential YofS, FofS, Supvrs IS and Offrs. It is intended to provide unit comds with an independent assessment of an individual's strengths, weaknesses and potential. It is also an excellent opportunity to develop the ability of the Corps' future WOs and Offrs, giving them the tools and confidence to enable them to prepare for their selection boards to the best of their ability.

Having just returned from running a RSLC, it would seem that units are currently using it for a number of different reasons. The arrival interviews for the course included the following reasons for attendance:

'My unit wants to see if I'm fit enough for PT Corps selection.
'I want to have an enjoyable time; it's all an experience isn't it?'
'Don't know really .....'

To ensure that suitable and prepared soldiers attend the course, units should bear the following in mind:

The time limitations on the course mean there is a very limited revision element. The RSLC focuses on leadership. The underpinning tactical knowledge, used as a framework for assessment, has to be provided by the unit. Students therefore need to arrive with up to date ITDs and a working knowledge of sec level tactics, including sec battle drills and sec defence.

The course is not looking for 'racing snakes', but it would be useful if the candidates were able to meet the Army's basic fitness standards. This would save the unit and the individual embarrassment, and the RSLC valuable time.

The recommendation box completed by the CO or Sqn OC on the course Application Form is crucial. This should give an idea of the student's potential and ability, any upcoming selection boards and any areas the unit feels requiring particular attention. This gives the RSLC the opportunity to give priority to units who are sending suitable students and to provide those units with the feedback they require. Comments such as 'I support this application' doesn't give us the information we need.

The course is not a replacement for unit cadre courses and peer group assessments. There are no final placings and students are assessed against the Trg Objectives, not against each other.

It is a mistake to send a student purely to provide something to include in a CR. The RSLC is not a pass/fail course; it provides a detailed report on students' failings as well as their strengths. An RSLC report written on an unsuitable or unprepared student will do more harm than good.

Individuals should not be sent as a four-week stopgap. The course is physically and mentally demanding, and requires considerable motivation from the students. Individuals not motivated or prepared for the course, limit benefits for others.

The RSLC is a Corps institution, but the current tendency to send the wrong people for the wrong reasons is undermining its usefulness and credibility. The course is a superb opportunity, but any benefits to the Corps, the unit and the individual are directly proportional to the selection, and preparation of the individuals sent on it.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

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

REGIMENTAL SPORTSMEN'S DINNER

The Regt hosts two Sportsmen's Dinners, one in the spring and the other in the autumn to celebrate two different sporting seasons. This could be considered excessive, but when you consider the throughput of soldiers, it is important to ensure that many deserving individuals and teams receive their due recognition before they are posted. The dinner makes an appropriate end to a season, providing an occasion when representatives from the various sporting disciplines can gather in a social setting, to celebrate and recognise those individuals who have made the extra contribution to their teams. This can take many forms, not necessarily in sporting excellence, but also the courage to compete, the commitment to train, the determination to succeed - or indeed, in a supporting, role such 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, sportsmen and women of the highest calibre as our guest speakers. This time we were honoured to host **Clarence Callender**, a former SSgt, who completed 22 years in the Corps before recently retiring. His last post was as a recruiter in London, and as luck would have it, there were a few of the soldiers he had recruited at the dinner. It's a small world! **Clarence** delivered an inspiring speech about the values of sport in the Army and the goals that he aspired to and achieved whilst serving including successfully representing Great Britain at the Olympics. The CO presented 43 sets of well-earned Regt Colours on the evening. The coveted prize of Sportsman of the Season was awarded to **Sig Williams** of 1 Sqn who has represented the Army, Corps and Regt at Soccer and at Cricket. The evening was concluded with **Clarence Callender** presenting the CO with his Olympic blazer, which will be displayed in the Corps Museum.

REGIMENTAL INTER SQUADRON BOXING NIGHT
– by Cpl 'Eski' Eskdale

After weeks of long hard trg, the final event of the 11 Sig Regt's Harrogate Cup arrived. All Sqns entered a male and female boxing team, who alternated the early morning and evening trg sessions. The unique Blandford weather system didn't help the squads. as every morning it rained right on cue and stopped once the trg ceased. However, they persevered and put their all into it. With different members of the cadre taking different areas of trg, all sqn had varied programmes in place, some using the excellent gymnasium facilities of Blandford Camp, and the all weather running track.

When finally the big night of the finals arrived, all of the boxers were well prepared. The first bout of the evening was between **Sig Woods** of 2 Sqn and **Sig Chisolm** of 3 Sqn. Both young ladies were slightly more nervous than the rest of the boxers, as they had the honour of opening the night's boxing. After a valiant

Fighting Spirit - Sig Holmes (L) boxes with Sig Hoy

struggle by **Sig Woods**, the fight was stopped in the third round, **Sig Chisolm** being judged by the referee to be the better boxer. However, young **Sig Woods** had shown the courage, determination and self-discipline required of any soldier. This bout set the standard for the evening, and everyone lived up to it. It would be wrong to single out any individuals, but after the break came **Sig Holmes** for 1 Sqn and **Sig Hoy** for 2 Sqn. This was a closely contested bout, with a great deal of support being voiced for **Sig Holmes**, the only boxer from 1 Sqn who had made it through to the finals.

At the end of the evening, the winners were announced, and it was 3 Sqn in first place. This was also the final event of the Harrogate Cup, which went, once again, to 3 Sqn. Following the prize giving and a few words from the Garrison Comd, **Col MJM Dyer** the guests, Offrs and Seniors, boxers and coaches retired to the WOs and Sgts Mess for a curry and a few well-deserved beers.

It was an excellent night and a new experience for all the Phase 2 trainees, and their first taste of an Army Regtl boxing night. It was made more enjoyable by the entertainment provided by the 1st Bn Cheshire Regt drummers, especially the display at the end of the evening with their luminous drumsticks.

BLANDFORD SUPPORT SQUADRON

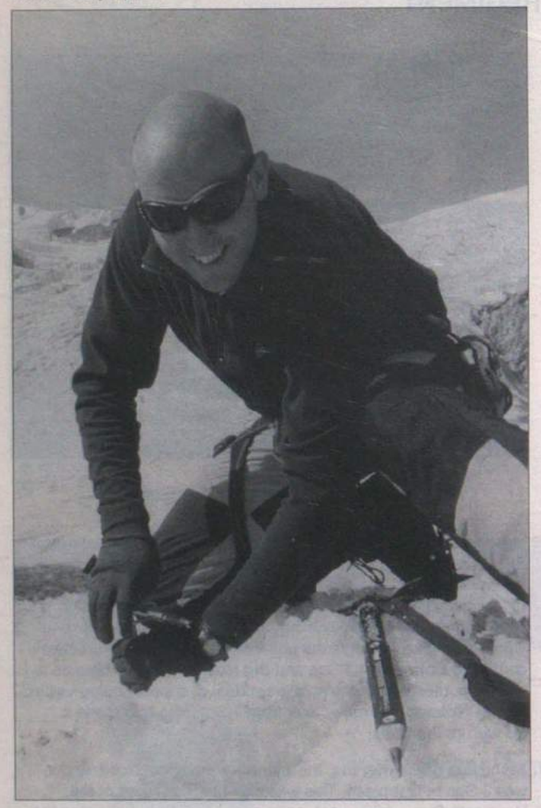
OC **Maj John Mackay**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Davies**

EXERCISE AUSTRIAN DIAMOND

In August members of the School departed on a journey to the American Forces Recreation Centre (AFRC) Garmisch in Austria for two weeks of AT. The exped climbed the Unterer Glacier (for

trg purposes) the Goss Venendiger (3667m) and the Gross Glockner (3798m), which included work above and below the snowline.

The first few days were our introduction to the mountains, getting used to the altitude and living in the excellent Austrian mountain huts. Although the weather was hot and sunny, the whole group had to master the tools of the trade and, thanks to the instruction of **WO2 Gaz Davies**, were soon proficient in the use of ice axe and crampons. He also taught us how to rope up, move together safely over the glacier and crevasse rescue techniques. There was a lot to learn, but the four of us worked well together and the basic skills were soon mastered. It was hard work and we were all exhausted during those first few days, retiring at night to compare blisters and enjoy a well-earned rest whilst discussing the next day's plan.



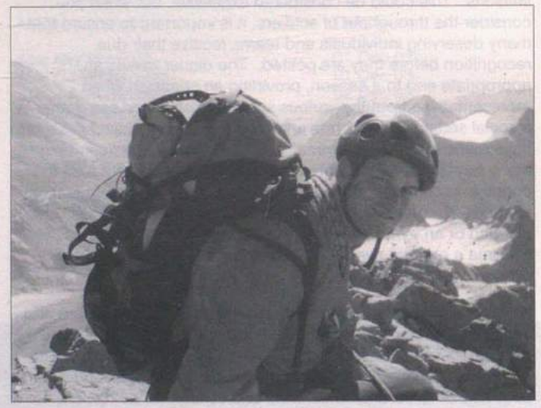
Sig John Thomson learns the ropes on the Unterer Glacier

Toward the end of the first week we were ready to tackle something more challenging. So after an hour of picking a route over the moraine, we came to the edge of the ice and found a group abseiling down the Ragenkees Glacier to avoid some large crevasses. After a solo recce, **WO2 Gaz Davies** decided to go directly up and through the icy maze. The sun was hot, which soon made the snowfields treacherous and heavy going. **LCpl Paul Vaughan** 'volunteered' to lead, picking his way round some enormous crevasses.

On Saturday with **Cpl Stu Green** leading the way, we quickly descended to the Venediger Haus, where we camped at Hielingenblut and enjoyed an evening of the local hospitality. The next day was a day of rest. However after church, we drove to Glockner Haus to examine the route for the next week's ascent of Gross Glockner the highest peak in the area at 3,978m.

After an early start, we laboured up the Wiener Hohen Weg, which was steep at first but soon settled into a steady, but very exposed route. This led onto a steep rocky scramble that was exposed to rock falls, so caution had to be observed, especially with other groups moving on the mountain. After rounding the final corner, we were presented with a fantastic panoramic view over the whole western side of the Pasterze Glacier. It took over four hours to reach the crowded summit, but the incredible views made it worthwhile. We booked into another Austrian mountain hut ready for the next day, and were witness a dramatic helicopter rescue higher up the mountain.

On Tuesday we woke early and ate our *fruhstuck* before setting off across easy ground for 10 minutes before ascending steeply towards the summit ridge. We rested in a small bergshrund before **WO2 Gaz Davies** led a 30m ice pitch to the first rock belay. Once we reached it, the ridge itself was relatively easy, but it was a very exposed and busy bottleneck between Kleiner and Gross Glockner. The last section then rose steeply out of the gap and then followed an easy path to the summit at 3,798m. *Berg Hiel* and photographs, we then started down. The going was slow due to the crowds and then to make matters worse, **WO2 Gaz Davies** twisted his knee jumping a small step. Our leader was in pain and could not climb so he decided we should abseil. Four pitches later and dodging rock falls, we finally made it back to the easy ground. Choosing to descend a less technical route via the Studlehutte proved to be a mistake, as it took nearly five hours.



Cpl Stu Green on the summit of Gross Glockner

The next day, **WO2 Davies** limped to breakfast, his knee now swollen. Getting down was going to be difficult. It took four hours to get back to the Pasterzen Haus, where the owners showed their sympathy by giving us free drinks. Another change of plan was called for. It was decided to use Thursday for R and R. Friday was not a good day. Our injured leader informed us over breakfast that his knee was not going to get better. Realising that completing our aim of climbing the three highest mountains in Austria was over, a group discussion followed and we decided to head home early Saturday morning. Two out of three isn't too bad! After a big breakfast on the Saturday we headed back to Calais via Sonthofen. The journey went well, and after 900 miles we arrived in Blandford Camp at 02.00hrs on Sunday morning.

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JC Boisvert** RCSigs
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Nige Roberts**

EXERCISE OUSTON WARRIOR

It was a normal rainy day in Blandford when the Phase 2 trainees of 1 (Ouston) Sqn deployed to Salisbury Plain on EX OUSTON WARRIOR. The ex was organised to refresh the Sqn's mil skills. The first night was uneventful as it was mainly preparing for the weekend's activities. However it continued to rain for most of the night.

Saturday set off quickly with lessons on patrolling and anti-ambush drills with practical exs. The CO, **Lt Col Hudson** and the RSM visited us in the afternoon to see the final product. After a meal of compo, we then prepared for a night navex. While the trainees were tabbing around the countryside, **Cpl Jay Allen** did his best to qualify for the golden blanket award stopping only long enough for a quick impromptu karaoke session with the current batch of pop idols. The night navex was a success apart from one of the secs deciding to follow the yellow brick road around the trg area.

On Sunday putting all our newly refreshed skills into action, we were taken through an ambush. All trainees agreed this was the most enjoyable phase, as there was a lot of pyrotechnics and blank ammunition to go round, making it very realistic. After the 'battle', the Padre joined us for a field service, with the rain holding off just long enough, proving that the Padre does have some influence. · After a clean up of the area, the happy if slightly damp trainees were taken back to Blandford Camp to clean their kit down, get some sleep and return to normal trg. Despite the rain, it had been an enjoyable, if hard weekend.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SSM Youngson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Taffy Williams**

EXERCISE CATTERICK SWORD

November saw 64 of 2 Sqn's soldiers deploying to Salisbury Plain Trg Area for a low-level tactics ex, under the direction of **Capt Robson**. The weather was the typical SOP of rain, wind and cold, reinforced by the OC's words, 'Its not training, if its not raining.' Not that the weather affected **Cpl Gus Angus** in his 3 star DPM tent, complete with heater and shower basin. The stands worked on a rotation of casualty extraction under fire, taught by **Cpl Nat Roberts**. **Cpl Morrison**, currently on his upgrader course, gave instruction on the assault and **Cpl Rigg** taught the Harbour lesson - which would not have been out of place if it were taught in a swimming pool. Anti-ambush was taught by **Cpls Sean Ablott** and **Gus Angus**. The trg culminated in a veh ambush and an assault on a defended strong point. The assault was over 2kms, with in depth positions, and the Phase 2 soldiers fought every inch of the way, not faltering once. Their conclusion was that it was enjoyable, but they want more. So units, watch out! You are due to receive some steely-eyed killers!

BADMINTON HORSELESS TRIALS

The Badminton Horseless Trials is an event organised every year to raise money for charity. There is a choice of a 5 or 9-mile cross country route, both containing horse jumps which participants have to get over without a horse (hence the name 'horseless trials'). There are several age groups and both male and female teams, with a choice to run either as individuals or as a team. At the end of the day, medals and trophies are given to the winners in each category.

This year the Regt entered 25 under-18s from 2 Sqn. There were five teams of 5, two female and three male. The ladies' teams came first and second in the female 5-mile event, and the male teams came first, second and third in the male 5-mile event. 2 Sqn also received an overall best forces team trophy. We raised £600 for cancer research and had a thoroughly enjoyable day.

(HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Miles Webb**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Tony Ward**

3 (Harrogate) Sqn welcomes **Sgt Hawtree** and farewells **SSgt Bartlett**, wishing him all the best for the future. It has been a busy time for the Sqn, which has been working hard not only to retain the Harrogate Cup, but also in trade trg.

SQUADRON CHARITY FUNDRAISING

During the summer, the Sqn took part in a charity train-pulling event at the Swanage Railway and raised over £1,800. Three cheques have now been handed over to good causes, one of which was the Dolphin Research Centre in Florida. This Dolphin Research Centre works with children, and the benefits of its work is very close to home. The cheque was taken by **SSgt Sid Crowton** and his wife **Debra**, when they took his daughter, **Amelia** and two nurses to the Centre.

Amelia was born in the Archbishop Makarios Hospital, Cyprus, weighing less than 2lbs. She is now five years old and is unable to speak, see or walk. But she has a lively personality if entertained continuously. Going to the Dolphin Research Centre in Florida for 5 days' therapy is a great help to her. The interaction with the dolphins is great to watch and she really enjoys the noises they make and the feel of the their skin. **Amelia** was also given an hour of therapy by a trained consultant. The experience was greatly appreciated by **SSgt Sid Crowton**, his wife and the many helpers, as they too had the chance to swim with the dolphins and get pulled around the enclosure where they live. **Sid** and **Debbie Crowton** would like to thank everyone who gave money to support the Centre, **Cpl Lance Buckle** who organised the train pull and **W01 Frank Roberts** for the use of his steam trains.

3 SQUADRON TRADE TRAINING SUCCESSES

The Lightning Trophy is awarded to the best trainee on Courses BSEM 003 and 006. **Sigs Reid** and **Parkinson** of Lightning Tp have both won this award. With their maturity, intelligence and hard work, they have impressed all their instructors and Tp Cadre, achieving outstanding results in both theory and practical assessments. Congratulations to both of you. The Cogent Award for the best upgrader was won by **Cpl Jackson**, who not only performed to the highest standards on his course, but also contributed to the Sqn's successes by managing their Rugby team.

Amelia with one the dolphins at the Research Centre

ARMY

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT (LICHFIELD)

CO **Lt Col Nick Chapman Cheshire**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S McLarean**

1 (TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC **Maj Phil Baker**
SSM **WO2 Kenny Marsh** Para Regt

PERMANENT STAFF INTER SQUADRON BASKETBALL COMPETION

The most recent event in the permanent staff sports competition was the basketball competition held in the gym on the 1 December 03. This is the eighth event of the twelve that make up the competition held over the trg year. All sports are represented, so every member of the permanent staff has the opportunity to represent the Sqn.

On the day of the competition it was apparent that the other Sqn had been standing their players in growbags, as they were certainly a lot taller than our team.

After a first decisive victory over 28 Eng Sqn in the league stage, **Capt James Savage** had to retire with a bad back, and after the next league game against HQ Sqn, we lost **Capt John Higginson** and **Sgt Charlie Karma**. So we played the next two games without a substitute, winning one and losing one. We were then delighted to be through to the final stages.

In the semi-final against C Sqn, there were only four of us left. **Cpl Steve Peterson** had disappeared and, after much complaining, **Capt Steve Lockwood** gave us a player. From the C Sqn bench came **Capt Alan Foot**. This man was awesome in attack and defence and ensured we defeated C Sqn soundly.

With C Sqn dispatched, we awaited the outcome of the other semi final between HQ Sqn and 28 Eng Sqn. This was a fine game of Basketball with 28 Sqn just defeating HQ Sqn. So all was set for the classic showdown that everybody wanted to see: Signals v Sappers in the final. But we still had only four players and there was no way we would receive any quarter from the RE. Then, like the 7th Cavalry in the movies, **Capt John Higginson** arrived just in time, and we had a full team.

The Sappers had all the star players - they had been able to rest players during the tournament. We had just the bare five with no subs, so everybody thought it would be a walkover for the RE. It looked like they may have been right as they scored several early points. They had not, however, accounted for two exceptional performances from **Cpl Smudge Smith** and **Cpl Cheryl Purcell**. They both attacked relentlessly and drove into the heart of their defence scoring at will. We *Sappered* their will to resist. With a final score of 18-10 it was a great victory and a great team effort. We are now two points ahead in the overall competition with four events to go, so bring it on!

COOK TROOP - *by Sgt Charlie Kama*

Tp Comd **Capt James Savage** Para Regt
Tp Sgt **Sgt Charlie Karma**

AT in week 9 brought its usual highlights with the Tp having great delight in deploying to Leek AT Camp to rough it in tents. Thursday 24 September saw us deploy to France for The Battlefield Tour and on to The Somme, where the true effect of the plight of those who fell for their country seemed to have a lasting effect on the recruits. Coupled with this was the souvenirs and mementos that they managed to obtain, and the handouts given by The Battlefield Tour Company.

Week 10 and on to Shooting Camp 2, where thanks to the diligence of the Trg Staff, the recruits eventually passed their APWT (TS).

EX FINAL FLING saw the soldiers deployed to SENTA, where all the warnings about having its own weather system, etc, came starkly into light. The weather conditions definitely prevailed and the howling gales and heavy rain helped tax the troops and their reserves in completing the final ex. H hour on Friday 10 October, and bloodcurdling cries could be heard across the valley as Cook Tp assaulted the objective. All the hard work put in to the CMS(R) had finally been put into perspective with Speed, Aggression, No Movement Without Fire and Comms displayed that morning. After vanquishing the enemy (Phase 2 Recruits from Blandford), Cook Tp regrouped on the area only to be given QBOs to the effect that they had to do a casevac to Dixies Corner whilst moving tactically. As it turned out to be an inter-section competition, **Cpl Mac Macpherson's** section eventually won the race to make it back to Dixie's, much to the disgust of **Cpl Brian Hughes**, showing brains over brawn was the name of the day. Then much to the delight all, the Tp was picked up by heli and made the 30 min hop from SENTA to Lichfield instead of 3 hours by Daf. It also gave them a vision of how they would be deploying in the future, should they deploy on ops.

The roller coaster ride continued with all sorts of administrative things to be done prior to Pass-Off Day. On Thursday 16 October, the Band played and we marched on with bayonets fixed and all mums, dads relatives, etc smiling eagerly, awaiting the spectacle that was about to unfold. All the hard work, late nights, headaches, heartaches, tears and toil had been forgotten as the names of those who had been given awards unfolded: Best Recruit: **Sig Baker**; Best PT: **Sig Body**; Best Drill and Turnout: **Sig Daveta**; Best Shot: **Sig Cardwell**; and Best Endeavour: **Sig Duggan**.

Farewells to **Cpls Mac Macpherson** and **Dave Neal**, who have moved to other Trg Teams and a warm welcome to **Cpl Jamie Slade** from Townsend Tp and **Cpl Stu Daynton** from Bagnold Tp. Congratulations to **Capt James Savage** on his recent engagement to **Katie** and to **Cpl Bri Hughes** for moving into his own flat.

MATHER TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Jane Squires**
Tp Sgt **LSgt Farrar**

We welcome **Cpl Dave Neal**, joining us from Cook Tp. **Cpl Phil Farrar** is now in the hot seat as local Sgt and slowly getting to grips with the unenviable tasks of IC Admin, handing out of rations and Pace Stick Drill. **Cpls Neal** and **Roderick** are diverting their attentions away from trg whenever possible and getting themselves off on diving trg at every opportunity. **Cpl Proud**, our resident Para has finally grasped the trade structure of the Royal Corps of Signals (it's only taken 9 months). **Lt Squires** is busy juggling the job with Army and Corps rugby, but does make it into work occasionally, often to rest the injuries sustained on the pitch!

Life in the Tp is busy as ever. With 30 recruits currently in trg, the trg team are preparing for EX FINAL FLING and the prospects of Brecon in January. The bets are on for top recruit, but currently the competition is stiff and many obstacles lie between here and the finish post, so we'll have to wait and see the results on that one.

SMITH TROOP - *by Sgt Green*

Tp Comd **Capt Harriet Cairns**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Andy Green**

Smith Tp is named after **Sig Kenneth Smith**, who on 10 January 1945 found a time bomb in a house his unit were occupying on the island of Ist, off the coast of Yugoslavia. As he carried it away from the house, he was killed as the bomb exploded, but he saved the lives of both civilians and his comrades. For this deed, **Sig Smith** was posthumously awarded the George Cross.

We started the course with 40 recruits, but due to injuries and standards not being met we finished with 18. This ultimately meant that the 18 recruits to finish the 12 weeks didn't have a full pass-off parade. However, the pride that they felt on that day was not diminished and a parade of sorts went ahead. **Sig Balshaw** finished as the Best Recruit. **Sig Cumiskey** was the most improved over the 12 weeks. **Sig Carey** was the best fitness, **Sig Hornby** the Best shot and **Sig Beecham** achieved Best Drill and Turnout.

Best Recruit, Sig Balshaw

A huge welcome to **Cpls Steve Peterson** and **Scoot Wallace**, who replace **Cpls Rose** and **Wildblood** who have both moved to different training teams. Farewell and congratulations to **Cpl Joe Cavney** who moves back to Dover, with his wife, **Catrin** and the recent birth of their baby girl **Cerys**.

TOWNSEND TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt JC Higginson**
Tp Sgt **Sgt S Fitzgerald**

The Tp has recently returned from the AT and Battlefield Tours in Leek and Normandy respectively. This allowed the recruits to have a well-earned break from the rigors and pace of life at the ATR and allowed them to see the Tp staff in a somewhat more relaxed atmosphere. All involved thoroughly enjoyed the week, which included Pegasus Bridge (of **Cpl Waters MM** fame), the D Day beaches and various cemeteries, including the American one which has the graves of the **Niland** brothers who were the inspiration behind *The Saving Private Ryan* story, and the cemetery at Ranville where rests **Lt Col Smallman-Tew**, Royal Signals of 216 fame. All in all a great experience, which I would thoroughly recommend.

C SQUADRON

OC **Maj Katrina Reynolds**
2IC **Capt Steve Lockwood**

Firstly a warm welcome to **Maj Katrina Reynolds** and her husband **Jon**, who join us from 49 Bde; to **Lt Paul Gudonis** and his wife **Emily**, from 216 Sig Sqn; and welcome back to the Corps to **Cpl Kemp**, who rejoins us from QARANC. Farewell and good luck to **Capt Debbie Coslett**, who moves to 15 Sig Regt; to **Capt Steve Lockwood** and his wife **Dawn**, who move to 35 Sig Regt (V); to **Sgt Critchley** and **Sharon**, who are posted to 8 Bde and to **Cpl Di Turner**, who is posted to 30 Sig Regt.

Despite the harsh demands of trg, the Sqn managed to have a few personnel involved in recent AT expeds, which were mounted by ATR (L). **Capt Debbie Coslett** did yet another disappearing act on EX BOLIVIAN DRAGON (or was that EX CHILEAN DRAGON?). Because of hostilities in country, the embassy could not guarantee the safety of exped members, so the loc had to be changed at the last minute. Needless to say, the mountaineering exped was a great success. **Capt Al Foote** and **Cpl Di Turner** also managed a couple of weeks sailing in the Canaries on EX CANARY GOLD. Who said its all work and no play? Finally congratulations to **Sgt Frew**, who has been selected to represent the Army at fishing, yes, that's right - fishing! Well done.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col NP Metcalfe MBE QGM**
RSM **WO1 D Mitchell**

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SJ McConnell**
SSM **WO2 Lappin**

THE LANYARD TROPHY

The Lanyard Trophy took place in Dartmoor Trg Area on 20 October 2003. HQNI and 15 Sig Regt entered a female team, and after several weeks of preparation, the team were still not quite aware of the gruelling task ahead of them.

Trg in the Province proved difficult. Despite weeks of monotonous road sessions and covering several laps of camp, each off-camp trg session had to be planned well in advance to obtain security clearance. That aside, the team managed to get a couple of quality trg days in the Mourne Mountains, covering several summits including that of the great Slieve Donard, (the highest peak in NI) and a more enjoyable coastal walk between Bangor and Hollywood.

A few weeks before the big event, **SSgt Pam Mitchell**, **Cpl Sally Hubble** and **LCpl Kirsty Burgmans** carried out a recce of the Dartmoor route. It was only during this recce that the alarm bells started ringing, and telltale signs revealed that this route was going to be like no other before it. A two-day recce proved to be far too short; several check points were not covered and the best routes were not found. And aside from this, the competition was being run late in the year and daylight hours were few. Competition Day kicked off with breakfast at 03.30hrs, some last minute tinkering with our kit, then on to the start line. The start was en masse, and it proved to be a case of follow my leader between Checkpoints 2 and 3, before there was any sign of daylight. Then injuries began to appear, and on arrival at Checkpoint 3, **LCpl Kirsty Burgmans** sadly, had to pull out.

The remaining of seven continued, in bitterly cold, but thankfully dry conditions. More injuries plagued them and progress was slow. Our chances of completing the course in daylight seemed a distant thought. By Checkpoint 7, most of the team were struggling, and **Cpl Laura Hayes** reluctantly agreed to pull out in order to give the rest of the team a chance of completing the course.

Six team members carried on. Morale was at an all time low and the team were still suffering injuries. By Checkpoint 9 we were losing light quickly, and by CP 10 we found ourselves once again in complete darkness, with the hardest navigational part of the course still to come.

A fatigued team set out to Checkpoint 11, and the finish was now within our grasp. With no daylight and a significant drop in temperature, team members were showing signs of exhaustion. This, and the added need of navigating in the dark with no landmarks to follow made conditions very hard.

However, at this point, and in view of the conditions, **SSgt Pam Mitchell** decided that she could not risk the safety of the team, and so withdrew them from the competition. It was a very disappointed team that made their way back to Checkpoint 10. A brilliant effort had been put in by all those involved, including the admin team. Well Done!

THE SQUASHABLE SIX

It started with a ball, a squash ball. **Maj Stewart McConnell**, OC 233 Sig Sqn had a dream. His dream was to have top players from the Regt play for the Corps. So he embarked on his quest by arranging a couple of gladiatorial death matches to pick out a chosen few to put in a challenge at the Corps Squash Championships at Aldershot on 12 and 13 November 2003.

Once in Aldershot, we registered the team, entering in both the Open and the Team Events. Right from the off, it was apparent that we were 'a little out of our depth.' **Lt Jez Wadia** and **Sgt Geordie Tonks** put on brave performances against formidable opponents (the Gurkhas), as did **Maj McConnell**, who did manage to get into the second round of the over 35s Open Event. **WO2 (RQMS) Ian Good** and **Sgt Szeremeta** also competed in the over 40s, in which they put good performances against well-seasoned veterans. All in all, the team put in a brave attempt, but was clearly outclassed. We vowed to be back next year - after a bit more coaching.

However, we did have a champion amidst our ranks. **SSgt Pam Mitchell** became the ladies champion. Hooray! The fact that there were no other ladies there had nothing to do with it. We know you would have beaten any challengers, **Pam**.

McKELVIE CUP – RUGBY COMPETITION - *by Sig Udall*

The Inter-Tp Rugby Competition was held at Lisburn Station sports pavilion on 13 October 03. It involved 4 teams of 7 rugby superstars from TM, Romeo, India and NCC Tps. Or so we thought - but the NCC roughnecks had to pull out, being far too fragile to compete.

The first match was India Tp v TM Tp, a long and exhilarating battle for both teams. The TM warriors fought hard and well, making some good tackles and scoring some good tries. India Tp weren't going to be put off by this - they could smell victory in the air. Even though they had lost one of their top guys (**Cpl Neil Cansfield** broke his arm in 3 places and was evacuated to hospital) they still managed to win the match.

As for TM Tp, **Sig Marc Hayes** just managed to avoid a broken nose when he went in for a tackle. **Sgt Brett Spruce** came away with a minor leg injury (although he must be commended for his over acting!), and **Sgt Jaffa Jeffs**, he took a minor knock to the head (no damage there. then).

The second match was TM Tp v Romeo Tp. TM may have been beaten by India Tp, but they still had the determination to out do the Romeo roughnecks. TM Tp team Capt, **Cpl Scott Duffie**, scored an excellent try in the first half, and the rest of the team took some heroic tackles from **Cpl Lee James**. This inspired the rest of Romeo Tp to put in some hard hits. It was a good display, earning them a well-deserved victory and putting TM Tp well out of the picture.

The final battle was between India Tp and Romeo Tp. It was an exciting and skilful match, both teams scoring some good tries and making it exciting and enjoyable for the spectators by playing a high standard of rugby. Romeo Tp came away with the victory, with India in second TM third and fragile old NCC holding up the rear - again.

It was a great day, and there was without doubt, some true rugby talent and keen sportsmanship demonstrated on the sports pitches of Lisburn Station.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj G Inglis**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Hogg**

THE STEELE-MORTIMER ROWING COMPETITION

The Steele-Mortimer Rowing Competition took place on 26 October 03 in the leisure centre of Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn.

2IC Echo Tp, **WO2 Tilley**, Int Corps, had organised the event for personnel serving in NI. For the first time in its short history, he managed to get a team from 225 Sig Sqn to take part, as well as a female team consisting of ladies from various departs in the Regt.

The event is a 100 Km rowing sprint on Concept 2 rowing machines, and the teams (which must contain at least one Int Corps member) come from all over UK.

The team comprising of Int Corps, Royals Signals and RAF personnel, had put in some serious trg for the event by discussing it for at least 20 minutes before it started. The actual event lasted a backbreaking 5 hrs 47 mins. They came second to the JCUNI team, who have won the competition several times in the past. No one has looked at a rowing machine since the event, nor do they mention the sore behinds.

The sufferers were: **Sgt Newell**, who rowed like a metronome; **Sgt Reid**, who at his slowest rowed faster than **WO2 Tilley**, Int Corps; **Sgt Smith**, Int Corps; **JT Kennedy**, RAF; **Sgt Rammer**; **Cpl Procter**, RAF; **Sgt Cross**, AGC and **Cpl Matt Stowell**.

CO'S CUP SWIMMING COMPETITION, 7 NOVEMBER

Having spent many an hour plodding up and down the pool trying to better times, to perfect tumble turns and to relearn forgotten strokes, the day was finally upon us. It all had to come together to enable the Sqn to win a trophy that had not been in our cabinet for some years.

First up for the Sqn was **Cpl Steve Livers**, who pit in a sterling effort, but was beaten to the touch in the 50m freestyle. **Cpl Matt Stowell** (butterfly), **Cpl Katie Smith** (backstroke) and **Sgt Brad Bradley** (breaststroke) won the next three individual races leaving 225 in a good position.

The 4 x 25m Individual Medley was the final individual race and funnily enough, the three entries just happened to be the three team captains. Again this was very close, **Sgt John Getty** just beating **Sgt Jaffa Jeffs** to the touch.

During the 4 X 50m relay swims the Sqn did admirably, not dropping below second in any race, but requiring the 100m relay team to win their race for an overall win. The four Sqn swimmers, looking a little nervous, took their places. By 300m, the race was won, **Cpl Stowell**, **SSgt Eddie Edwards** and **Paul Rowlands** leaving **Sgt Steve Read** to cruise to victory.

The Regt 2IC presented the following trophies:

Best Swimmer	**Sgt Getty**
4 x 100m Relay	**225 Sig Sqn**
Competition Winners	**225 Sig Sqn**

Overall the competition was a very good result for the Regt, identifying new swimmers for next year's NI Championships. All they have to do now is the training

39th INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC	**Maj S Evans**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Downie**

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt SR Bennett**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt PP Corcoran**

OPS SECTION

Congratulations to **Sigs Bromhead**, **Wilson**, **Smith** and **McGuinness** on their promotion to LCpl. A warm welcome to **Sig Stu Blakeley** from 7 Armd Bde and Sig Sqn, and a sad farewell to **Cpl Lindsey Payton** who leaves on promotion to Sgt to 4 Cadet Trg Team, London.

TM SECTION

We have said goodbye to **Cpl Chittick** and his lovely wife, and welcomed **Cpl Turnbull** from 21 Sig Regt. We have not seen much of him since his first PT lesson because it is rumoured that he is still running his BPFA. We also welcome **Emily Dilger** who was born on 1 November and not surprisingly, she still looks older than **LCpl Tommo Thompson**.

A few techs took part in the Lanyard Trophy, but the tech presence didn't last long as **LCpl Benny Williams** dropped out due to internal blisters

RIGGING SECTION

Another fun packed month passes by for the 39 Bde riggers. With our manning down as **Sgt Gaz Jordan** and **Sig John Dent** go snowboarding in Austria, we knew we were going to be in for another tough month!

A big well done to **Sig Pete Caines** for passing the Rigging Course, and to **Sig John Dent**, soon to be LCpl - it gives every young signaller hope.

LANYARD TROPHY - *by Sig Bromhead*

It was once again that time of year for the gladiators of the Sqn to be called into the fray. It was Lanyard Trophy time. After a few weeks of solid trg and careful dieting the sculpted athletes were ready to go. After a peaceful ferry crossing and a relaxing minibus journey, the weary travellers finally reached the start point of their crusade.

After a good night's rest our intrepid team set off into the darkness with fire in their hearts. Unfortunately, it was not long until the terrain and weather started to take its toll. **Lt Bennett** managed to spur his team on from checkpoint to checkpoint, helped by **Cpls Chittick** and **Barnes**, who volunteered to be front markers. Not one for shirking his team responsibilities, **Sig Bromhead** kept a constant watch at the back to make sure no one fell behind.

Then disaster struck, as **Sig Bromhead** stumbled, sustaining a foot injury and was forced to retire at CP 4.

Undeterred, the team pressed on, but at CP 6 cruel fate struck again, and **Cpl Driver** also fell foul to a foot injury.

As darkness fell, the team still had a long way to go, but on they pressed. Unfortunately the dream of winning was over at CP 9. With low visibility and more team members carrying injuries, the heart-wrenching decision was made to retire. But the Sqn looks forward to next year's event, ready to lay a few ghosts to rest.

NORTHERN IRELAND RECRUITING *by Cpl Peach*

The responsibility of Soldier Recruiting in NI is the joint responsibility of 15 Sig Regt and 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. The two units have provided stands at a number of recruiting events over the past 18 months, with bi-monthly recruiting days and the odd weeklong job fair. Recently 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn took part in two major recruiting drives, a week-long Army Jobs Fair and a Recruiting Day.

THE ARMY JOBS FAIR, BALLYMENA

With a number of recruiting days cancelled due to OP TELIC, it was decided to have a week-long Jobs Fair involving both Combat Arms and Support Arms. This was held in Ballymena in October from 12 – 17 October 2003, and was visited by over 60 schools and colleges from all over the Province, and the Cadet Forces of all three Services. No exclusions were made for religion, with both Catholics and Protestants attending the event.

The Royal Signals stand consisted of a small Tac HQ, two 12x12 and two 9x9 tents on the back of two Landrover 110 FFRs fitted for RATT. The Landrovers were fitted with Trend teleprinters allowing traffic to be sent from one veh to another and voice comms were provided by the HF VRC321 radios. The idea was to

The welcome sign

allow a hands-on experience, giving the visitors something to take away with them - instead of the usual 'Here is our kit; thanks for coming.' Dotted along the side of the tents were various action photographs of the Corps, with a dedicated section given to RSS, as this was where the potential recruits would learn the skills necessary for employment.

In addition, there were tables displaying various items of equipt. These included an armoured laptop computer, a STUIIB secure telephone in a briefcase, a Kipling HF secure data burst transmitter and a TV/VCR, which played the Royal Signals *Vital Link* Recruiting video. After an initial welcome brief, the visitors were encouraged to walk around the stand and play with the equipt. With ages ranging from as young as seven right up to students completing their degree, there was something to interest the most inquisitive minds. However, the best tool for recruiting were the soldiers themselves. Lively motivated individuals explaining both the highs and lows of life within the Corps is always a great way to alleviate the myths of Army life.

There was on average ten groups of visitors per day. These groups had anywhere from 30 to 80 people in them and were allocated 20 mins to look around the stand.

Each new group brought new questions and new enthusiasm to what could be a very long day for the recruiting staff, and although we may need a badge saying 'I haven't killed anyone,' most of the questions were about wages, deployments and trg. The idea of AT seemed to go down well, and the fact that we get paid every day of the year, whether we were at work or on holiday somewhere exotic, brought gasps of disbelief to some people.

The many people using the radios to talk from veh to veh brought new definition to the term 'voice procedure.' The one incident of the teacher in one veh telling the student in the other, to watch his language, was priceless.

Overall the presentations throughout the week were quite enjoyable, and what seemed like a bit of a jiff job was actually a really great experience. Obviously there were groups more interested in the Signals than other stands, and no doubt every new stand would seem more inviting than the last, but at the end of the day most people were talking about the comms stand. Even the head of the Recruiting and Liaison Staff (NI) came across and told us that whatever we were doing was having a massive impact, and that we should keep it up.

The whole event was a great success with over 1,600 visitors showing keen interest in the Royal Signals way of life and the service we provide in the bigger scheme of things.

Many thanks to 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) for the use of the Landrovers and to the CO of NITR in Ballymena for allowing the whole thing to go ahead in the first place.

One lesson we learned was to make sure that the messages stored in the teleprinter were cleared after each group has gone through. Groups from different backgrounds were leaving messages for each other on the printer, which could get a bit embarrassing if some of these were read by the groups that followed.

RECRUITING DAY IN KINNEGAR 16 NOVEMBER 2003

Although not of the same scale, an afternoon recruiting initiative held in Belfast was also manned by the Unit. Visitors this time included school careers officers and local Job Centre staff.

Members of 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) made the trip across the dual-carriageway and provided extra manpower for the stand. The set-up was on a slightly smaller scale with only one 12x12 tent with two Landrovers attached to the back, but the same hands-on approach was again implemented.

The Royal Signals stand was once again well received by everybody, even managing to convince one of the members of the TA that she may as well join the real thing, much to the dismay of her OC.

People talking about the stand after the presentation was over

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

BALKANS SIGNAL SQUADRON OPERATION OCULUS

OC **Maj Tom McCappin**
SSM **WO2 Billy Duggan**

After saying a fond farewell to the outgoing 98 (Balkans) Sig Sqn, who must be commended for having done an excellent job, the new Balkans Sig Sqn has taken shape. Drawn from units across the Corps, with a good mix of remaining TA and Regulars, we also have our Dutch and Canadian partners, with whom we are looking forward to working with - and experiencing their culture!
The Sqn YofS, **WO2 Clarke Fatchett,** and FofS, **WO2 Paul Stevens**, are currently getting to grips with the plethora of comms and CIS equipt the Sqn is responsible for, to ensure that SFOR CIS and comms for both the MNB (NW) and HQ UK NSC are maintained above the expected standard!

UK NSC (BOSNIA) TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Graham Dorrington**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Fisher**

Many thanks to the outgoing Tp, who left us a fine legacy to build on. They proved that personnel from different units including, 14, 16, 33 and 34 Sig Regts and the other 15 or so units represented here, can work together in harmony to achieve high quality results. So now the new Tp takes up the gauntlet to build upon these and to maintain the good working relations with the Dutch and Canadians we inherit from our predecessors.

Maj Chris Edwards (L) hands over to Maj Tom McCappin

As **Lt Graham Dorrington** and **SSgt Andy Fisher** take the helm, we all expect the operating systems and software left by the old Tp will hold up. The ISIS administrators, **LCpl Pete O'Connor**, **LCpl Kat Cullern** and **Cpl Stu Haughan** were delighted to find *Minesweeper*, *Solitaire*, *Free Cell* and *Pinball* were still installed. The ISIS team is responsible for administering the users in the Banja Luka Metal Factory (BLMF) and Sipovo.

The Theatre System Control Point (TSCP) crew, headed up by **Sgt Toby Brooksbank**, take on the challenge of being the font of all knowledge for comms in Bosnia. They are the control centre for circuits in Bosnia and the main point of contact for any comms problems arising. **LCpl BJ Smith** decided he wanted to stay on for another six months (is he mad?) just to make sure that the Regulars keep up the fine work the TA have established.

The HOTO for the COMMCEN went well, with **LCpl Andy Dean** and **Sig Andy Sutton** taking the first night shift. In true R Sigs tradition, they came through admirably, and were followed by the IC **Cpl Paddy Grills** and **Sig Chris Monks** on the day shift. The reduction of British forces in Bosnia has resulted in a reduction in traffic, which has given opportunity for the lads to keep on top of their trade trg and to go into JMH in greater depth than at RSS. Also **Cpl John Botting** has decided to oversee the new Tp for a further 6 months. Although the traffic rate is low the banter is high, keeping morale up.

Sgt Alwyn Murray and **Cpl Paul Whenman**, head up the Overseas Distribution Agency (ODA). The Sigs Maintenance And Repair Team (SMART (B)), is led by **Sgt Les Welsh**. They do a great job of keeping the telephones talking - mostly with gossip about them, but nevertheless doing a great job. **Sig Al Aston** is making the Camp his own by masquerading as a Sergeant Major. And **Sigs Rhys Williams**, **Ross Toshack** and **Ainsley Gray** are putting great effort into building up the reputation of the Tp.

The ISM side of life remains the domain of **SSgt David Thomas**, **Sig Angela Dowling**, **Sgt Leslie** and **Cpl H Roles**, all of whom extended for a further six months! Finally we must send a big hello to those members of the Tp on Ops in Corsham. You know who you are!

UK NSE (KOSOVO) TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Gordon Stanger**
Tp SSgt **SSgt AJ Perkins**

The first couple of weeks have been hectic as we completed the HOTO from the previous Tp. This, with booking into theatre and various other admin items, has meant a little stress getting into routine, but after three weeks, everyone seems to be settled. Most are now getting on with the job with gusto!

Everyone has completed their European tick test, enabling them to drive in Kosovo, but certain individuals thought they were now qualified to drive tractors! We have been keeping on top of our mil trg, with some keen individuals even practising their leopard crawling under Corimecs to retrieve dropped keys.

We have been well received in theatre, and have been invited to attend various Halloween functions. The evening was an experience, and our hosts were excellent.

If the first three weeks are anything to go by then I am certain that the next six months are going to be interesting, to say the least. With the Festive Season fast approaching, it's clear it's going to be a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

MNB (NW) TP

Tp Comd **Capt Samms** (CA)
Tp SSgt **Sgt Bèrubè** (CA)

The Tp has been busy with the HOTO and the new team are settling in and preparing for the onslaught of winter. The Tp is

made up of 10 Brit, 11 Canadian and 11 Dutch personnel. The Brit contingent are from 1 (UK) Armd Div, 16 and 33 Sig Regts.

With the language and accent barriers solved over a few cappuccinos in Canada House, we proceeded to the serious business of running the Tp. As with most HQs, every job is Priority 1 and the Staff are excellent at keeping the flow of jobs at maximum. Travelling is very much part of the job, with sites supported including Vellka Kladusa, Zgon, Mrkonjicgrad, Sipovo, Glamo?, Bugonojno, Sarajevo and Banja Luka. (We can almost pronounce some of them!) The systems we support range from Sat Comms headed by **SgtMaj Wensink** (NL), to IT systems (CRISIS, SUN) headed by **SSgt Reid**, and Tech support, headed by **Sgt Geddes**, for the comms infrastructure. With facilities and welfare support second to none, this appears to have the makings of a good tour.

Our Canadian friends wish to use this forum in future updates to explain some of their traditions and signals history. Hopefully we can persuade the Dutch to also contribute.

*My greetings to our Canadian and Dutch colleagues. I would be delighted to receive something from you for The WIRE. I laid down foundations for this with **MSgt Peeters** and **SgtMaj Tarko** when I was there at BLMF in August 03 - Bernard Redshaw, Editor.*

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

ARMY

HEADQUARTERS 2nd (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

Comd **Brig JE Thomas MBE**
COS **Maj J Rowley**

During the last two months we have seen the departure of **WO1 (YofS) Mark Whiting** who has left the Army after 22 years to take up a job with Gloucestershire Police. We wish him and his family all the very best as he starts his second career. We welcome **Capt Hannah Owen**, our new SO3 Ops/Trg. She arrived as the Bde HQ deployed on EX HORSESHOE 4, and left after a week to attend her JOT Course. Our AGC Staff Assistant, **WO2 Matt Church** has moved to 21 Sig Regt (AS) while **WO2 Tony Heeney** has moved in from Catterick.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

The Bde's steady state commitment of IRs for JCUFI and OP OCULUS (Balkans Sig Sqn) continues. Prep for 97 Sig Sqn's deployment to Bosnia and Kosovo in May 04 is well under way. This is a composite Sqn drawn entirely from TA personnel within 2 (NC) Sig Bde and will provide the UK contingent of 2 + 54 for the BSS for the period May - October 04.

Our NC Regts have had a busy period providing ICS support to all nine Regional Bdes and LONDIST over the last few months as we moved towards the declaration of Strategic Defence Review New Chapter (SDR NC) FOC on 31 December 03. The culmination of this was the concurrent Pillar 2 support to 5 Regional Bdes and LONDIST during the Bde FTX in November. The comms planning team from 10 Sig Regt have deployed to Afghanistan, Falklands and Kenya whilst installation teams from Lima Tp have completed installation tasks in Brunei and Bosnia.

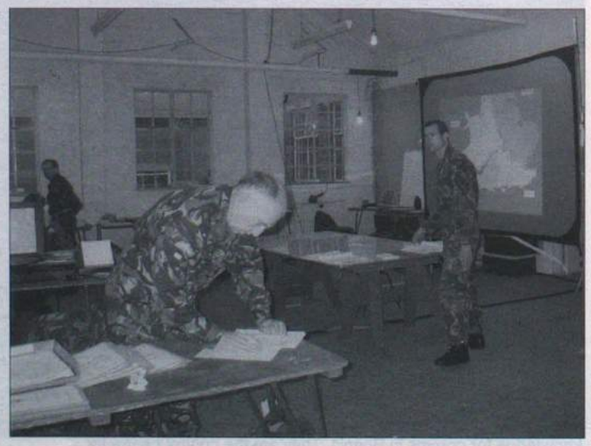
EXERCISE HORSESHOE 4

The Bde deployed on its annual FTX, EX HORSESHOE 4 over the weekend of 21-23 November. The ex not only tested our NC systems, but also involved support by most of the Regts to their Regional Bdes in an Integrated Contingency Planning role.

The Bde HQ moved out to Longmoor, where it rained continuously throughout the entire ex, and where 47 Sig Sqn (V) had put together the HQ build. Much was learned and re-learned, showing how essential it is to get out regularly and exercise at this scale.

With six Regional formations exercising concurrently, it required a broad imagination to take in all the scenarios and merge them into a cohesive picture. The Plans Team has always had a broad imagination, so that was the easy bit. What was harder was writing a Rugby World Cup Final into the scenario.
At ENDEX the Comd expressed himself tolerably content, but with much to go away and work on and a clear message to build on the considerable progress made with the Regional Bdes.

COS's daily Ops Meeting around the bird table - or is it just bluffing!



Capt Chris Biddulph surveys all!

RUGBY WORLD CUP

Despite our warning, the organisers of the Rugby World Cup chose to hold their Final during the weekend of the Bde FTX. This resulted in a tasking to provide a large screen in Longmoor Camp for 'a few of the people on ex.' On the day of the Final, despite numerous tech problems, a large projected image was produced. A 'few of the people on ex' turned out to be approx 300 (298 infantry (English), 1 Australian and 1 organiser (Scotsman)). As the game developed, it was unclear as to whether the Australian or the organizer was at most risk if anything went wrong. In the event, the projector bulb resisted the temptation to blow, and the Australian perfected the discretion component of valour. A good result!

Well done to Iain Brownlee for keeping the Grenadier Guards happy

AIRWAVE

The Land AIRWAVE Project Implementation Team remains fully focused on all aspects of AIRWAVE under the direction of SO2 AIRWAVE, **Maj Tim Langford**. AIRWAVE is now operational in 29 Home Office Police Constabularies in GB. The first cluster was successfully established in the south of England, allowing cross boundary comms between Wiltshire, Hampshire and Dorset Constabularies. AIRWAVE and SAINT were successfully utilised during the Bde FTX and the CCRF exs over the weekend 21-23 November 03. SAINT was also utilised in support of the CAMBRIAN PATROL ex in Wales with outstanding results.

Capt Bob Nixon and **Mr Don Fraser** have just returned from the world congress TETRA summit, which was held in Copenhagen. No mention must be made of the 1-hour train ride from the Airport to the centre of the capital to find their hotel, only to discover that the hotel was near the Airport. Who was it that said, 'Officers and maps don't go together?'

The immediate Main Effort will be the roll out of 200 hand-held terminals and 50 transportables to enable the AIRWAVE team to conduct train the trainers courses throughout GB. The operational focus is to deploy over 1,200 radios across Land Command in April 04.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

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

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

The Regt is still enjoying a period of AT interspersed with veh maint. The Sqns are certainly still making the most of the CO's post op directive while it lasts! Here are just a few of the things that we have been getting up to over the last couple of months.

INTER SQUADRON RUGBY 10 A-SIDE COMPETITION
- by Capt Lawes

The Annual Inter Sqn 10 A-Side Rugby competition was held in Herford on 15 October 03. This was the first event in the CO's Cup since the Regt had returned from OP TELIC. The HQ Sqn team had been hand selected by **Maj Trev Keates** and his sidekick **Capt Brummie Lawes**.

There were high hopes as the team warmed up ready for their first game against 211 Sig Sqn. As anticipated, it was an easy victory with tries scored by **LCpl Pearce** and **Cfn Massive Masiwini**. We were so confident that even **SSgt Carl Overton** got a run out for 2 mins to show he had lost none of his skills - really! Old heroes such as **SSgt Mitch Mitchell** and **Sgt Paul Hounsell** were brought from retirement to support the team. The second game,

The HQ Sqn rugby team

against 201 Sig Sqn, proved to be tougher than anticipated. 201 hit us hard from the start and had some very talented players that HQ Sqn hadn't noticed until they were running past us scoring tries! Alas the game was lost; the Sqn managed to pull back 2 tries in the second half but our overall fitness had let us down. We went on to win our last game against 212 Sig Sqn by 2 tries, But 201 Sig Sqn were the worthy overall winners on the day. Thanks go to **WO2 (QMSI) Dave Wells** and his team of PTIs for their superb organisation of the event. OC HQ Sqn had the honour of awarding the CO's Rugby Cup to 201 Sig Sqn. All teams enjoyed a great day of controlled aggression and good sportsmanship. Roll on the next event.

The CO, Lt Col A P Bristow, with the Burgermeister of Herford Herr Thomas Gabriel and his wife watch the PT session on the Regimental Square.

VISIT OF BURGERMEISTER HERR THOMAS GABRIEL

The Regt was privileged to receive a visit of the Burgermeister for Herford, **Herr Thomas Gabriel** during CO's PT on 17 October 03. The Burgermeister had specifically requested to visit the Regt to speak to the soldiers post OP TELIC, and in good German fashion, buy the soldiers of the Unit a beer. Before the soldiers could enjoy the free beer and food on offer, they were put through their paces by **WO2 (QMSI) Wells** and his PT staff as part of the CO's PT parade. The gym staff had set up an obstacle course on the square with the use of a couple of GS Bedfords and gym equipment. It was a special parade with **Padre Joe Moesel** and **Maj Bruce Kingston**, the RAO making an appearance (they had obviously heard about the food and beer, but not about the PT lesson). As the Burgermeister approached, the PT lesson was at its final stage, which was a race between some of the Offrs. **Capt Chris Drew** was drawn against HQ Sqn's archrivals, 201 Sig Sqn, represented by **Capt Jim Hawkins**. Honour was preserved for HQ Sqn by **Capt Drew**, who showed the young would-be how to negotiate the course in a record-breaking time. The parade then retired with the Burgermeister to the gym for a well-earned beer, provided by Herforder Brewery and poured by our very own Provost Staff.

THE LANYARD TROPHY - *by Cpl Stevenson*

At 05.00hrs on Friday 10 October, the 24 members of the Lanyard Trophy team met outside the Hammersmith Bks Gym. Having overcome the initial challenge of fitting everyone's personal kit into the vehs, the marathon journey from Herford to Dartmoor could begin. 12 hrs later, we arrived at Okehampton Camp to be welcomed with the bad weather and poor visibility. One or two doubters emerged – but too late to pull out now guys!

Saturday morning marked the start of a week's route recce and final build-up trg. Throughout the week, morale remained high with notable contributions from **Sig Saunders** and **Cpl Eric Low** practising his Norman Wisdom routine, throwing himself to the ground at every opportunity. The male team gelled together well proving itself capable of accurately navigating in the worst of conditions, even if there was usually a delay while **Capt Bosworth** and **WO2(FofS) Frangleton** decided which particular barrow or group of standing stones had been reached.

All team members did benefit from the revitalising beverages offered in the local public house at Okehampton; though this may be in part due to the Guinness hat promotion in a number of establishments. LCpl Martin was ready to drink enough pints to get everyone a hat with the plan to wear them as the team crossed the finish line. Thankfully the idea was soon forgotten.

Monday 20 October, the start of the competition, was the usual nervy affair, and teams not wanting to set off to fast or too slow, led to a pile-up at the first gate. Both the Regt's teams started out well, the female team finding itself ahead of the males into CP1. Having settled in for the day's tabbing, our team covered the first half of the course relatively quickly, spurred on by our admin team

The male team approaching Checkpoint 9 with Capt Bosworth still warming up

The female team approaching Checkpoint 9, encouraged by the RSM and SSgt Crawford

and Sqn OC, **Maj Lucas**, and the RSM, who had travelled over for the day. By the time CP6 came, we had lost our two-team members allowed in the rules, and looked set to maintain our momentum through the latter half of the course. However, from this point on, the majority of the team suffered from energy deficiency and slowed to a snails pace. **Sgt Collins** deserves a mention for finishing despite falling behind and being barely able to lift his legs for a good 20 miles. Through sheer willpower the male team finally crossed the line in the dark, with a time of 16 hrs 1 min, relieved to be able to drop the Bergens for the last time. The female team finished, with all its members, in at time of 17 hrs 56 mins.

Both teams are to be commended for their efforts in competing in and finishing the competition, bearing in mind the lack of trg time due to earlier op commitments. And a big thank you must go to the admin team, **SSgt Crawford**, **Sgt McNeilly**, **Sig Wilson** and

The Admin Team. L-R: SSgt Crawford, LCpl Neill, Sig Dunwell, Sig Wilson, Sig Saunders and Sgt McNeilly

Sig Dunwell, without whom there would have been no brews or stickies, and no one to push us on when the going got tough.

211 SIG SQN ADVENTURE TRAINING – BAVARIA

Leaving Herford bright and early on a Monday morning, the fleet of minibuses headed south for two weeks of AT based at the Hubertushaus Lodge in Oberstdorf, and organised by **WO2 (SSM) Lloyd**. Seven hours, four Big Macs and two wrong turnings later, the adventurers arrived at what can only be described as the best Army lodge in Bavaria. Awesome food, great facilities, outdoor games (including midnight table tennis), en-suite bathrooms and satellite television were good enough for most - and that was before the AT started!

The first week was a round robin of activities comprising of white water kayaking, rock climbing and trekking. Sitting effortlessly in

Sig Robertson enjoying a tricky climb.

his canoe, **WO2 Lloyd** would stay still in a fast flowing river, laughing wickedly as the lesser-experienced soldiers battled against the currents. Questioning why on earth anyone would want to dip the nose of their canoe into a thundering rapid whilst paddling backwards, again saw most of the course swimming for safety, praying for the calm waters of an inland lake.

Borrowed from 201 Sig Sqn, **Cpl Steve Lloyd** took us for our introduction to rock climbing. In an effort to find the ultimate climb site, and best looking locals, **Cpl Lloyd** visited a different climb site every day. After learning how wonderful the figure of eight knot is to everyday climbing, most of the troops were surprised to learn just how much fun climbing is and how good they were at it - especially when there were some admiring spectators nearby. Equipped with some very good, but extremely painful, sticky shoes, many of the climbers managed some climbs that would have been impossible in their issue silver shadows.

IThe third activity in the first week was trekking under the gallant leadership of 211 Sig Sqn's very own mountain goats, **Cpls Holloway** and **Cogram**. Stopping almost every five minutes to admire the view, the dynamic duo led teams up the Grunten, down the Breitachklamm and up a couple of mountains in between. With only one horrendously steep ridgeline causing some concern, everyone who went trekking felt they achieved something on the day, mainly the magnificent views across the Allgäu.

The second week gave the adventurers the chance to concentrate on their chosen discipline and advance their skills to a recognised level. **WO2 Lloyd** took the extreme swimmers back to the fast flowing rivers for more ice baths and sideways paddling. Such was the ferocity of the river in places, that even **WO2 Lloyd** broke his paddle, despite over 32 years' experience in the canoe.

Six brave trekkers tightened their bootlaces and stayed on with **Cpls Cogram** and **Holloway** to improve their mountaineering skills and appreciate some more stunning scenery. Visiting the most southerly village in Germany, Einödsbach, the team practised their micro-navigation skills whilst they learned about hot and cold injuries, trekking up mountains around Hindelang. **Lt Gaw**, **LCpl Garrett** and **Sig Chadwick** managed to achieve their Summer Mountain Proficiency award after climbing the steepest hill they could near Wertach.

Inspired by the film *Cliffhanger*, a large proportion of the group decided to improve their climbing skills and set off to find the ultimate pitch. At the first sign of rain, they headed for an indoor climbing wall for some technical instruction. On the last day they had such sore hands and forearms, they went swimming for the day and soothed away their aches and pains in the popular saunas and hot tubs.

The two weeks were a huge success and everyone achieved something. With the lodge available for personal holidays as well as organised exercises, many of the adventurers have vowed to return and advance their qualifications - or just utilise the gorgeous scenery and abundant facilities.

REGIMENTAL BATTLECAMP – A SIGNALLER'S VIEW
- by Sig Gemma Patterson

The annual Regtl Battlecamp on Sennelager Trg Area was five days of mud, guts and other such exciting things. Three of the five days were on the ranges, where we all proved to be close to sniper standard (well sort of). We carried out our APWT and then moved on to a live firing package, culminating in a defensive shoot. It was also the chance for some of us to have our first attempt at firing the GPMG and practising with the ODT simulator for the LAW. However, in the evenings we had other tasks to carry out. For example on the Monday night there was a navex, where **SSgt Caprio** treated us to wandering around in the cold wet mist looking for cyalumes. This was the ultimate entertainment, especially when I managed to fall into the deepest darkest pit imaginable! After our initial rubbish map reading, we managed to navigate our way back to the start point with our newly revised nav tactics.

The last two days of the ex was a patrol competition on a trg area near Osnabruck. For the patrol competition our secs were to patrol around twelve stands of military orientated tasks. One of these was a river crossing taken by **Cpl Lowe** - not a very nice experience, especially those scared of water like my sec comd, **Cpl Noble**! Just when everyone thought it was time to come back to camp to our warm beds, there was another exciting challenge for us, a stretcher run carrying our sec comds. Finally, the time that every soldier dreams of when they're on exercise, ENDEX! I can honestly say that this year's Battlecamp was a lot of fun, and I am looking forward to next year's.

102 US SIGNAL BATTALION VISIT TRUNK NODE 041 - *by Sgt Greg Miller*

It's strange how you walk into a room expecting one thing and walk out with something completely different. Well that was how it was with 102 US Sig Bn, based in Wiesbaden. **Lt Kerry Larsen** and I went down to Wiesbaden to combine a PX installation card run with a liaison visit. We weren't looking for anything major, just an insight to the ways of the US! An hour later we walked out of a lengthy Q and A session with a Partner unit!

On 5 November, four representatives from 102 Bn came to us to see how it works at our end. After a lengthy briefing with **SSgt (YofS) Martin Reed**, they were probably all wishing they hadn't. When we'd shown the 3 Offrs and 1 SSgt around all the kit we had at the time (which wasn't a lot!), we rounded off the day with the traditional Brit Bonfire and Fireworks. By this time they had had a couple of hours in the Officers' Mess Bar with free drinks, followed by a visit to the Glühwein stand, and then a few beers at a local restaurant! All in all, a very worthwhile and interesting visit, with more to follow.

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col Stuart MacRostie MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Dick**

The CO would like to congratulate the following who were recognised for their efforts on OP TELIC as part of the 2 Sig Regt Gp:

MBE	**Capt Andrew Forbes**
	Sig J Bentley
QCVS	**WO2 M Bullivant**
	WO2 (FofS) B Palmer

Joint Comd's Commendations
Capt Mick McKenna
Sgt R Kirk
Sgt G Beswick

All of 2 Sig Regt congratulate **Lt Col MacRostie MBE** on receiving the Royal Signals Institution Silver Medal and a much-deserved QCVS.

CHILDREN IN NEED

The Phantom Flan Flingers of old York Town struck again and again this month. No-one was safe from the dastardly custard pie assassins as they leapt from the shadows without warning, striking with impunity before fleeing the scene. Not the Colonel, not the RSM and certainly not the QMSI! But it was all in a good cause, with contracts being taken out for hits at the bargain-basement price of a £5.00 donation to Children in Need. Overall, including efforts to sell parking places to the civvies, the soldiers raised £1,000.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SA Clarke GM QGM**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) P Haughton**

The latest orienteering event both Div league and Regtl was conducted at Strensall Common, organised by **Capt Craig**, **WO2 Hubbert** and **WO2 Griffiths**. Unfortunately, the lack of rain made going very dry and fast under foot. Much to the dismay of SSM, 214 Sig Sqn, HQ Sqn won the Regtl competition, as his ringers from the composite Sqn (30 Sigs Regt) were discounted. An excellent effort from 246 Gurkha Sqn, who were runners up.

CATERING DEPARTMENT

RCWO	**WO2 Smith**

COMBINED SERVICES CULINARY CHALLENGE
- by Sgt Rose, Team Captain

2 Sign Regt's Catering Dept entered its team into this year's CSCC, competing for the Army against RAF and Navy, as part of the 15 Bde (NE) Team. As team Capt/Coach, I had a team with a little or no experience in this style of catering. Trg for the event took place a week prior to the competition at the Army School of Catering, Aldershot, with classrooms allocated to each Unit. The week of the competition arrived and the Army Team Captain was keen to retain the coveted CSCC. Most of the RAF team had been training for three weeks or more, resulting in an almost clean sweep in the Blue Ribbon Events, all gaining championship points.

Sgt Rose, **Cpl Byrne** and **Pte Partridge** earned a respectable Bronze Medal in the Inter-Services Field Team Challenge. **LCpl Howell** (22 Regt RA) won Senior Vegetarian Dish. **Pte Whiteham** earned himself a Certificate of Merit in the Novice Open Pasta. **Mrs Rose** won two Silver Medals in the Senior Decorative Cake. Given their limited experience, t was a good result for this team. They have gained invaluable experience and look forward to achieving higher standards next year, representing both the Army and the Regt.

COMPETING IN THE COMBINED SERVICES COMPETITION
- by Pte Whiteham

Before being posted to 2 Sig Regt, I was told that I would be competing in the CSCC with other chefs from the Regt. I was told that I would be preparing a pasta dish and have a time allocation of 25 mins to complete my dish from start to finish.

I practised non-stop for a week to get my dish to perfection. I had feelings of nerves, but also excitement, as I thought this would be a great opportunity to show off my culinary skills. Eventually the time arrived for me to prepare my dish for real. At this point, I felt apprehensive and extremely nervous. I had to prepare myself mentally and stay focused through out the 25 mins of the Competition.

As the first 5 mins passed, I started to feel more confident and had adapted to my surroundings. I strived towards the final minute of the competition and everything had fallen into place just as I wanted it to. My finished dish looked appetizing and my presentation was done to the best of my ability. I walked away feeling confident and pleased. When I was told that I had won a Certificate of Merit and Third Place, I felt that all my hard work had paid off, and I had achieved a great deal.

The whole experience has taught me that it is important to adapt quickly when under pressure, to have good time-keeping, presentation and hygiene when competing in a high standard competition. The whole experience has made me want to compete in future competitions and it has given me an incentive as a chef.

EXERCISE TECHNICAL TROT – *by Cpl Tommo Thomas*

On Thursday 13 November 2003, members of TM Tp took part in EX TECHNICAL TROT. This was organised by **SSgt Dave Covey** and **Sgt Bernie Lovick** and allowed members of the Tp to practise their map reading skills around the canals and rivers of Selby.

After splitting into three teams, we were given a question sheet and a selection of grid references. This done, the guys set off and just prayed the rain would hold off. At one point it seemed that **WO1 (FofS) Russ Batley** was contemplating a river crossing for his team when the path up the left side of the River Ouse ended and backtracking seemed like an option he did not want to take. Once back on track, the teams met at a grid reference, which had a public house within smelling distance. We are still not sure if the smell of alcohol was coming from the beer pumps or the landlord, as he had enjoyed a tipple already and it was only 3 o'clock.

After a light refreshment or two, we continued on our trot, but the rain had started and the light was getting low. By 17.30hrs all the teams had arrived at the final grid reference, which was marked, on the map with the symbol 'PH'. Fortunately we found a pub and all sat down for a well earned beer and some grub while my team and I tried to explain why we were not wet like the others two teams. Ever heard of public transport?

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Stu Gillespie**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Neil Cooper**

For the past month Viking Tp have been busy preparing for the long-awaited second CORMORANT System Field Trials. We are now working alongside members of 30 Sig Regt, and after a few teething problems the trials are now well underway. Helmets are an essential item for the new veh, unless you are lucky enough to be under 5ft. For anyone who has suffered 'Panzer Rash' in the past these vehs are no better. As **LCpl Ricky Baron** finds out on a daily basis, it doesn't matter how much you duck, the door frame always gets you! But just in case the trials haven't kept us busy enough, then there are always the background activities to be getting on with, such as ITDs, NBC, PT and sports to get us massive.

Just prior to the trials **Capt Ed Boag**, **LCpl Luke Hitchen**, **LCpl Mac McCulloch**, and **Sig Woody Wood** took part in Cambrian Patrol. Having invested in a vast amount of trg, they had to withdraw, due to a combination of injuries and the severe weather conditions.

The last couple of months have been quite confusing for Saxon Tp, with members on ops in Tampa, Afghanistan, Falklands and the Ascension Islands. People have also been detached to recruiting, boxing, parachuting, Cambrian Patrol, ISM, Leconsfield and the Tp Comd's course, and **LCpl Wyllie** and **Sig Snape** are about to escape for 4 weeks to take part in the Corps Ski Championships in Austria. On top of all that, the System Field Trial has just commenced for CORMORANT, which is taking up all the remaining manpower.

PARACHUTING AT JSPC NETHERAVON – *by Sig Clark*

The fortnight began with **2Lt Panting**, **Sig Cox** and **Sig Clark** starting ground training: how to exit the aircraft, steer and land the parachute. It was all very interesting stuff, but what was running through my mind was 'When are we going to get up there?' That was soon to come. After revision on reserve drills, to which we paid extreme attention, the moment of truth came. The weather was good and we were ready to jump. On the way up to 3,500 ft no one knew what to expect, so the general feeling was to try to remember all the trg and piece it together within a few short seconds whilst plummeting downwards. Once landed, some closer to the drop zone than others, we were all buzzing. We got back up there straight away with new parachutes, leaving the packing lesson for the next day. With a bit of confidence in us, the second jump was much more enjoyable and we tried a few spirals and flares, before moving to the drop zone for landing.

Much of the same occurred over the next two weeks, with most people progressing onto dummy ripcord pulls, and some even onto free-fall. Altogether we managed to squeeze in 14 jumps, which was very lucky for the time of year. After a brilliant but very tiring two weeks, we all headed off for a quiet weekend. I'm sure no one will forget this course too soon. What goes up must come down!

COMPOSITE SQUADRON

OC	**Maj C Cook**
SSM	**SSgt D Icke**

Composite Sqn is made up of Viking Tp personnel from 2 Sig Regt and members of 250 Sig Sqn, 30 Sig Regt. The Sqn was set up to carry out the second CORMORANT System Field Trial running from 10 November through to 12 December under the comd of **Maj Clive Cook** of 30 Sig Regt and **SSgt Dougie Icke** acting as the SSM.

The start of the trials took off slowly with the det comds signing for their vehs, and crew carrying out a full CES check of the equipt. Link Engineering ensued, using a variety of different methods, which included Non-Line-of Sight (NLOS), with a direct fibre connection between the vehs configured on the Short Range Radios; Line-of-Sight (LOS), using the new 12m masts with Band-5 shots; and Satellite links through Talon, 501 and 503 dets to enabling connection with the UK Node in Oakhanger.

Other systems were also introduced for interoperability with CORMORANT testing, such as ATacCS, JOCS, LOGIS and Ptarmigan. Members of the RAF visited to test the interoperability of the RTTS DLAN equipment, the RAF's deployable airfield trunk comms system.

Two Local Area Support (LASp) crews were kept busy providing secure voice and data facilities and deploying their 30-100 Digital Voice Terminals (DVT) for the HQ, causing numerous headaches for the det comds, **Sgt Paz** and **LCpl Jarvis**.

The Core Elements (CE) provided ATM switching and mgt of the resilient and secure network. The CLASps (combined CE and LASp vehicle) provided WAN gateway support with the main subscriber access facilities combining both voice and network connectivity.

The Bearer Modules (BM) and crew deployed several times during the trials, testing out their Short Range and Medium Range Radios under the watchful eyes of **Sgt Howard**, all of which proved very successful. And for the first time we were treated to the delights of the Long Range Bearer Module (LRBM), the tropospheric scatter transmitter system, big brother to the BMs and the bain of **Sgt Rob Bird** and **Cpl Nikki Roberts'** lives.

But it wasn't all work and no play; big laughs were had by all. During the trials, there was an anonymous hit squad formed to 'Custard Pie' victims after receiving tip offs and £5. Amongst the targets were **Sgt Greg Cox**, **SSgt Dougie Icke**, **Maj Hiorns** and **Maj Clive Cook**, with all proceeds going to Children in Need.

The successful Badminton team.
Rear L-R: Cpl Bishnu, Lt Buddhi, LCpl Karna, and LCpl Rudra. Front: Sig Bipya Sig Dhan, Sig Barun

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

EXERCISE FORGED HALBERD - *by Sig Nieman*

We set off from York on the 29 October, heading off towards Germany to support EX FORGED HALBERD. We were due to leave Hull at 21.00hrs and arrive in Rotterdam at 08.00hrs the next morning, so we decided to set off from camp at 15.00hrs. However, our early start was scuppered by the breakdown of a Radio Relay veh, which had to be replaced. Eventually we got to Gütersloh, where set up the HQ, to be up and running on the Monday.

The first week of ex went quite well. The staff officers didn't use the HQ, so we had a very quiet time of it. For the second week, we had an 8-hr drive down to Drewitz, (about 100 km outside Berlin), where again we set up the HQ. However, there was a distinct temperature difference. Whereas it was fairly mild in Gütersloh, in Drewitz it was freezing! After the staff officers had finished with the HQ, we drove back to Gütersloh, where we turned all our vehs around, moving back to Brüggen for our last night in Germany before returning back to England.

246 GURKHA SIG SQN

OC	**Maj Ade Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Tarabahadur Pun**

The Sqn main effort for this November was the preparation for the forthcoming Equipment Care Inspection (ECI). Despite some installation involved on CORMORANT Systems Field Trail (SFT), we achieved an excellent pre-report.

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT WINS BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Royal Signals Badminton Championships were hosted by 21 Sig Regt (AS) at Colerne, over the period 10 – 13 November 03. Despite various commitments, the Regt entered a 6-man team (3 pairs), all from 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn and led by **Lt Buddhi**. Team trg had begun late, but as the matches progressed, our skills developed. We reached the final, pitched against 11Sig Regt, the current champions. Players from both units played extremely well, but, after a hard-fought match, 2 Sig Regt became outright winners. **Lt Col I Hooper**, CO 21 Sig Regt, presented the prizes. Well done lads!

CAMBRIAN PATROL

The 2 Sig Regt Cambrian Patrol Team was made up from members of 214 Sig Sqn and 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn. Trg started with lessons on NBC, Recognition, BFAT Aid-memoir, Mine Awareness and Map-reading, along with a steady increase in physical trg, building on distance and weight. The team trained in both Sennybridge and Otterburn training areas, and a trip to ITC Catterick was made for instruction on the GPMG and techniques for conducting OBUA.

Following the training we had high hopes. The initial stages of the competition; the kit check, radio procedure and orders went excellently. Then the main body of the competition began. The first stand was BFAT, which was completed well thanks to our trg. While patrolling over the next hill, the weather turned and we were caught with no cover with visibility reduced to only a few yards. We navigated by the scout, **LCpl Stu Wylie** moving as far forward as we could see, and then all marching to him. This continued for some distance with the visibility worsening.

Disaster struck when the **Cpl Gough** injured his ankle. We got him down off the hills and raised comms for a 'no duff' casualty. This ate away at the time allocated to get to the next RV. **Capt Boag** decided to leave the sec 2IC and push on to the RV, in the hope that the patrol could still make the timing. But, with the team minus its 2IC and two team members suffering from the cold, the hard decision was made to extract the team from the competition.

However, the team was not fazed. Every member had learned something from both the trg and the competition. Some good PXR points were raised for next year's team. With all members wishing to carry what was learned from this year's entry forward, the potential for a strong team next year is high.

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col GR Norton**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Manktelow**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Barry Spiers**
SSM	**W02 (SSM) Shepherd**

We welcome the new OC, **Maj Barry Spiers**. He has arrived into a period of intense activity, with EX ARCADE WARRIOR and EX ARCADE FUSION taking place only days after his arrival. What better way to get to know the personalities in the Sqn? .

We all say a very fond farewell to the outgoing OC, **Maj Mick Campbell** and his family. His new unit's gain is our loss. **Cpl Williams** AGC has left, with our congratulations, on promotion to Sgt to Cyprus (lucky so and so).

QM T DEPT

QM (Tech)	**Capt CFB Hymas**
RQMS (T:	**W02 PV Davis**

It has been yet another busy period for the QM (T) Dept, the transition to UNICOM is now complete and all Sqn's are now running their own child accounts (yes, it is possible). Away from UNICOM, dept life has proceeded at the normal break-neck speed with Regt Tasko's becoming more common place than **W02 Davis's** stunning track suits. We have had a couple of new arrivals, **Sgt Howard** has joined us from 2 Sig Regt and **Sig Evans** has joined us straight from the factory.

TM Troop

Tp Comd	**WO1 (FofS) Swift**
Tp SSgt:	**SSgt East**

We welcome some **LCpl Houlker-Gordon** and **LCpl Wynter**, both fresh from Blandford. Congratulations to **Cpls Clements**, **Darwin** and **Thomson**, who have just got their second up. We say goodbye to **Cpl Sheehan**, who is off to 243 Sig Sqn, **Cpl** Williamson, who goes to 15 Sig Regt and **Cpls Golding-Smith** and **Moffat** who are both off to 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Capt S Richardson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) D Welch**

CHARLOTTENBURG TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt AT Limb**
Tp SSgt:	**SSgt L Johnston**

A really eventful month for Charlottenburg Tp, the biggest piece of news being **Sig Bentley** being appointed MBE for his services in Iraq, an astonishing achievement of which he is very proud. Congratulations on behalf of the Tp. Further congratulations go to **Cpl Ben Pember** after completing his Skill-at-Arms course, before moving straight to Blandford to complete his Class 1. Congratulations also to **Cpl Matt Hulbert** on passing the Drill Course. We welcome **Cpl Billy Watt** from Sysex Tp RSS Blandford. We say a sad goodbye to **Cpl Matt Knowles,** who has moved to 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; and **Sig Kate Brimfield**, who has moved to 30 Sig Regt.

Two members of the troop took part in this years Cambrian Patrol, **Sig Bentley MBE** and **Sig Carlyle**. Well done boys. And a massive well done to our boss, **Lt Limb** on keeping the Regt's Lanyard Trophy Team together, finishing a very credible third overall. Finally, we congratulate **Sig McCallion** on his new arrival to the family, **Charlotte**.

BRANDENBURG (SATCOM) TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt K Milner**
Tp SSgt:	**SSgt O'Neil**

Yet another eventful month in Satcom Tp, after EX WARRIOR took place on station, it was back to the grindstone, ready for the trek up to Sennelager (and down to Bavaria) for EX ARRCADE FUSION.

We say goodbye to **Cpl Wright**, who has moved to 231 Squadron, **Cpl Jules Dolan**, who has gone to 11 Sig Regt in Blandford, and **Sigs Harry Horsham**, **Terry John** and **Baz Mears**. Good Luck at your new postings. We welcome **Cpl Greg Dick**, **Cpl Mandy Howard**, **LCpl Lee Wilde**, **LCpl Sean Martin**, **Sig Dan Taylor**, **Sig Si Byrne**, and **Sig Bird' Boyle**, to the Tp. Finally, good luck to **Cpl Greg Dick** and **LCpl Taff Colwell** who are currently on their Class One courses.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Fallows**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) K Read**

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Serge Wartemburg**
SSgt	**SSgt Billy Kidd**

We welcome **Sgt Wright**, from 229 Sig Sqn, **Sgt Wilkinson**, from 16 Sig Regt and **Sig Folkes-Walker** straight from the factory. Congratulations to newly promoted **Sgt McIntosh**, whom we say farewell to as she moves on to Regt Ops. And farewell to **Sgt Barry Jenkinson**, who leaves on promotion to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt.

QUEBEC TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Tim Cooper**
SSgt	**SSgt Paul Millington**

Being the linemen and techs of the Sqn, Quebec Tp plays a vital role in every ARRCADE FUSION and WARRIOR ex each year,

under the comd of **Maj Andy Fallows** and accomplices, **WO2 (FofS) Cleminson** and **WO2 (YofS) Brown**.

With the demise of the helpdesk, we were instructed to move between the tents and look eager to deal with problems. This involved the FLOORWALKERS (as we became known to the staff) having to get to grips with a tricky helmet-beret-helmet drill, the complexity of which some had still not mastered by the end of the ex. The PRRs we were issued with, proved to be very useful in saving time locating people and passing information quickly.

During the ex, we celebrated the promotion of our most experienced linemen, **Sgt Kez Brown** and **Cpl Robert McEwan**. We were also joined by **2Lt Kathleen Eloff**, who was seldom spotted without her jar of Nutella. At the same time, we were saddened to see, **SSgt Paul Millington**, leave for a posting to 30 Sig Regt.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj G Ingram**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) S Littlefield**

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Lorna Giddings**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Boughen**

We welcome out new Staffy, **SSgt Dean Boughen**, who has quite recently proven his worth in the troop bowling team, and **2Lt Giddings** takes over as our new Tp Comd. We say goodbye to **Cpl Gaz Hall** who is now the Regt's newest RP. Congratulations to **Cpl Richard Teale** on his recent promotion to Cpl and also to **Sig Jo Pritchard**, now **Jo Lee** after her recent marriage.

DELTA TROOP

Tp OC	**Lt Wilson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Hulse**

We welcome **SSgt Stew Hulse** from 2 Sig Regt, and say farewell to **SSgt Tony Taylor**, who is posted to RMAS, to **Cpl Kerry O'Connor**, posted to Harrogate and **Sig Shona Lister**, who has returned to the TA in Glasgow. Congratulations to **Sigs Grant Roberson** and **Wayne Armstrong**, who were both promoted to LCpl.

Delta Tp has recently deployed on a number of ex during the past couple of months, deploying one SAN on EX FORGED HALBERD to 262 Sig Sqn in support of 102 Log Bde. The Tp also deployed on a Signals Compatibility Exercise with our American allies. **Sig Trebilcock** also had the privilege of being the official face of Abacus during EX ARRCADE FUSION, which involved posing to a camera, being taken to heaven by a willing pilot in a Gazelle and finally discovering her unique taste for buttercup cough mixture.

REGIMENTAL FEMALE LANYARD TROPHY TEAM

The team was assembled in August and the trg began. We quickly got to know every single track and hill (both of them) like the back of our hands. Two months later, we were off to Dartmoor. Following the male team's minibus to the port was traumatic in itself, especially stopping in Dunkerque and being informed that we were definitely at Calais (boys and their map reading!).

For a week prior to the event we stayed in a haunted fort near *HMS Raleigh*. We still can't be sure if it was the phantom drummer boy keeping us awake all night or **Sig Vicky Orton** talking in her sleep. The trg on the actual competition ground was vital, and by the big day we had selected and walked our entire route.

On the competition day, we rose before the birds ready for a five o'clock start. It was a mass start, with all the teams running blind in the dark to be the first out of the gate. Despite **LCpl Abby Noble** being mowed down in the first hundred metres, thanks to **Capt Belinda Robson's** map reading (and memory), we got an excellent start, beating most teams to the first checkpoint.

Unfortunately **LCpl Abby Noble** and **Sig Vicky Orton** were forced to stop after CPs 3 and 4 respectively. This meant the remaining 6 had all to finish. Despite seeing ice cubes and other various imaginary objects scattered about the moors, **Sig Emily Izzard** was determined to finish and won the award for the most bush stops.

Crossing the finish line were **Capt Belinda Robson**, **Lt Lorna Giddings**, **Lt Jo Wilson**, **Lt Lucy Webster**, **SSgt Francis** and **Sig Emily Izzard**. The team finished in 15 hours 7 minutes in a very respectable second place in the female competition, and fifth overall in the entire competition - beaten by only three male teams.

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col P W Glibbery**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The CO's visits to the regional Sqns and the div HQs they provide close ICS support to continue at a pace. A recent CO's conference in Donnington, ably hosted by 241 Sig Sqn, was very successful and a number of wksps took place to progress ongoing regtl issues. The Adjt, **Cap Nik Bruce**, currently suffering from sleep deprivation following the recent birth of his son, took the opportunity of two nights away from home to catch up on his sleep! All the different depts in RHQ are heavily engaged in the Land DII Convergence De-lamination Project, ongoing ISIS and LCSS(R) routine support, et al.

Our congratulations go to **WO2 (FofS) Ian Walling** of 600 Sig Tp on being awarded the MBE. He and his wife **Danni** are looking forward to their trip to Buckingham Palace for the actual investiture in the New Year. Also, our congratulations go to **SSgt Dave Lavery** on his recent promotion to WO2 in the Comms Planning Office (CPO).

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Ian Dobson**
SSM	**WO2 Mel Crowther**

Since the end of the Summer Ceremonial season, 238 (London) Sig Sqn have had a busy time. We have endured the Regtl Battlecamp, AT in Wales and deployed some of our troops to the Gulf. With the Winter Ceremonial season, most were involved in some way, whether for the Lord Mayor's Show, Remembrance Sunday, the State Visit of President Bush or the State Opening of Parliament.

The Sqn welcomes **Sgt Powell** and his wife, **Angela**, from Hereford. We bid farewell to **Sig Lamb** and his family who fly off to Cyprus shortly. **Sgt Dana Grills**, having completed his FTRS attachment, has headed home to Canada. Congratulations to **LCpl Kev Keenan** for his recent promotion and **LCpl Kath Carbery** for a earning a distinction on her recent RMA 3 course. A final mention goes to **Sgts McSween** and **Powell** on successful completion of the RSSC. It's a pity the CLM comes in soon, rendering all that effort in vain.

ADVENTURE TRAINING - ANGELSEY - *by Cpl Johnson-Birks*

For this year's AT, in an attempt to break away from the usual, much liked, tried and tested venue of Penhale Camp, Newquay, we ventured into parts unknown... Wales! Here the troops would be able to walk away with a military AT qualification, instead of the empty wallets and sore heads from Newquay. We took part in a number of events, including Sea Kayaking, Canoeing, Mountain Leader and Summer Proficiency Mountain Leader and Caving.

Cpl Neil McElhinney, was the only member of his course from 238 (L) Sig Sqn to progress to the Canoe Instructors Course, and was able to practise these skills on a group of unsuspecting Army Cadets. The Sea Kayaking Group encountered some rather hostile Welsh weather amidst conditions comparable to *The Perfect Storm* and losing soldiers at sea almost became a reality. After he'd been 'rescued', **Cpl Dan Cattermole** was asked why he didn't use his flare. He thought that he would get in trouble for wasting military equipment!

The MLT course experienced its own fair share of Welsh hospitality, and it was soon realised that leaving troops to their own devices with a map and compass was a mistake. With a torrential downpour, cold weather, mist, fog and a perilous ridge that challenged even the steadfast **Sgt Angie Thickett**, they got a little more than they bargained for.

Nevertheless, after the tents were erected to shelter us from the elements, the group snuggled around torch light, hot scoff, a warm drink (laced with something suspiciously warmer, yet very welcoming) and wise words from our instructor **Oustian McDonald**. All the struggles, troubles and woes of the week were soon forgotten.

A small group headed by **WO2 (SSM) Mel Crowther** spent the week caving in Ripon. They caused chaos in nooks and crannies, getting stuck in potholes, learning new skills like abseiling, ladder climbing, single rope techniques and lastly recovering after nights of navigating around York!

EXERCISE BRUNO WARRIOR

EX BRUNO WARRIOR was the 10 Sig Regt Annual Battlecamp held at Stanford Training Area (STANTA) and organised by the Tp OC, **Capt Abby Parkinson**. It was split into two phases, with half the Sqn attending the first week and the remainder, the second week.

The ex was based around a NATO peacekeeping scenario in the make-believe land of Cocktobia. It began on the first day as a relaxed 'just here to keep the peace' atmosphere and developed into a 'kill the bad guys' as the week progressed.

The first couple of days were split into different learning scenarios, First Aid, IEDs, Anti-Ambush Drills, Veh Check Points (VCPs) and orienteering. Each sec was assigned a Sec Comd and 2IC who changed each day. After the lessons finished, the ex moved into the peacekeeping phase, with the secs rotating through the bks security duties. CIVPOP (looking suspiciously like our seniors) regularly visited our NATO compound asking for food and help. Dealing with these 'locals' wasn't too difficult once we stopped laughing at their attempts at the Cocktobian language. Most of the time there was no interaction from the seniors' and we learned quite quickly how to diffuse the various situations. We even got a visit from **Kate Adie**, who managed to get the PI Sgt, **Cpl McElhinney** tongue-tied with only a few probing questions.

Over the last couple of days, the scenario changed, and we were charged with seeking the enemy out and capturing their leaders. This culminated in the obligatory final attack, after which we all patted ourselves on the back for a job well done and retired for the night before tackling the assault course.

SQUADRON SUMMER FUNCTION - THE WILD, WILD WEST - *by LCpl Kath Carbery*

The Bruno Bar had been transformed into a scene from a Clint Eastwood film. The saloon doors were swinging, the tequila was flowing but the Sheriff, **SSgt Andy Cannadine**, was not in town. Wanted posters had been sent out for the various criminal elements of the Sqn, including Mad Dog Mike, Chiggers the Kid and The Rat.

Mad Dog Mike, Chiggers the Kid, The Rat

The evening's entertainment was to raise money for *Help a London Child* and the Scientific Exploration Society and was meticulously organised by **LCpl Kath Cranberry**. The agenda included Karaoke, a Tequila Bar, hot chilli eating, gun slinging and of course fancy dress. Everyone put great effort into their costumes, especially **Sgt Shaun Childs**, who arrived as Wurzel Gummage claiming he thought the theme was 'The West Country' rather than 'The Wild Wild West.' A thoroughly enjoyable night was had by all. We are still picking the hay out of the carpet.

Left to right - Cpl Perrin, Cpl McElhinney, Maj Gen (Rtd) Sutherall, Cpl Stevenson and Cpl Clarke.

THE BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL - *by Cpl Perrin*

During the first week of November, members of Ops Support Tp volunteered their services to the Poppy Appeal in Central London. This extensive operation is run by the headquarters of the RBL in Pall Mall.

At 09.00hrs we deployed on to the streets of London armed with red collection pots, trays of poppies, stickers and crosses. **Cpl Dave Stevenson** and I set up shop in Westminster Station, whilst **Cpl Neil McElhinney** and **Cpl Andy Clarke** went to Charing Cross Station.

As soon as we had positioned ourselves opposite the turnstiles, we had queues of people wanting poppies and putting considerable amounts of money in the collection pots. Our ceremonial dress made us the centre of attention in the station, and I lost count of the number of people coming up to chat to us and to take photos.

With the Field of Remembrance service at Westminster Abbey on the Thursday, this was the busiest day. The old comrades were very generous and a lot of large notes were stuffed into the collection pots. One ex-serviceman was chatting with us for nearly an hour about his experiences during WW2 and how he lost several of his best friends on the beaches of Normandy, when he was only nineteen.

On Friday morning we met **Maj Gen Sutherall**, who thanked us for the effort we put in, and we ventured back onto the streets of London to scavenge for more money. By the end of the day our wrists were aching from carrying around so much dosh. Over the four days, the Tp had collected a staggering £2,120.03. Hopefully the use of 238 Sqn personnel in helping the Poppy Appeal will become a yearly event. I found it a very rewarding experience.

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

With members away in all corners of the globe, the past couple of months have been quite hectic. EX FERRATA DRAGON has been a major event for the Sqn this year. In July **WO2 (FofS) AJ Matless** took 12 members of the Tp away for 3 weeks' AT in the Italian Alps.

Our tech force of **Cpls Matt Davis** and **Sarah Berry** and **LCpls Craig Gardner** and **Steve Henderson** deployed at short notice to Basrah on OP SYNERGY. They will be spending the next few weeks driving civilian engineers from the Synergy Team around the theatre of Ops. We miss these peacekeeping stalwarts, and wish them a safe return.

LCpl Kerry Stewart enjoyed her four cold months in the Falkland Islands before handing over to **Sig Taff Long**, who arrived dressed only in a T-Shirt with the temperature at -10°C.

Sig Trig Beasley and **Cpl Roy Organ** have both passed the selection course for 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn. Well done!
Congratulations to **Cpl Mac McMillan** and his wife, **Gayle** on their new addition to the family, 7lb 4oz **Logan**. Congratulations also to **Sgt Iain Hamilton** who has recently married **Emma**.

We welcome our new TOT, **Capt Andy Garrett MBE** from 14 Sig Regt, our new Wksp SSgt, **SSgt Bob Watson** from 15 Sig Regt, **LCpl Gaz Forrester** from 8 Inf Div and **Sig Carl Demwell** from 16 Sig Regt.

We say farewell to **WO1 (FofS) Pete Hodson**, who leaves on commissioning to 10 Sig Regt; to **Sgt Scott Burman**, who is off to 225 Sig Sqn; to **Sgt John O'Brien**, who is off to civvy street; to **Sgt Joe Smith**, who goes to 102 Log Bde; to **Cpl Kev Clarke**, who goes to 642 Sig Tp; to **Cpl Steve Miller**, to 1 UK Armd Div and Sig Regt; to **Cpl Chris Denman**, to PJHQ and to **Cpl Andy Dunn**, to JSSU Cyprus. Good luck to you all in your new units.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Nick Beecher**
SSgt	**SSgt Pete Nealis**

We welcome **Cpl Tracey Hendin**, from 261 Sig Sqn to take up her new post as ADA crypto accountant. Sadly, we farewell to **Cpls Russ Craig** and **Eddie Hart**. **Russ** is posted to PJHQ and **Eddie** to Blandford on his Class1.

We congratulate **Sgt Judith Allsop** and her husband **WO1 Larry Allsop** on the birth of their first child, **Fred**. Congratulations also to **LCpl Kev Hebenton** on gaining his second stripe, and to **Cpls Mick Frain**, **Emily Ironmonger** and **Eddie Hart** on passing their Class 1 entrant test.

Two mysterious Christmas guests.

The Sqn held its annual Christmas function at Garratts in Aldershot. This year's theme was 'the 70's' and the show was stolen by **Sgt Andy Dobson** and **Cpl Emily Ironmonger**. The entertainment come in the form of a disco and **Cpl Eddie Hart**, who was doing his thing on the dance floor from 7 until closing. Everyone from Elvis, Mac Daddy, The Village People, John Travolta and the hippies attended to make the night a big success. A big thank you goes to the girls at SHQ for all their time and effort in organising this event.

Cpl Eddie Hart has recently successfully completed the RSJCC at Blandford. Prior to the course, he spent a month's wages to the course on lots of Gucci kit, and now after the course, he doesn't know what to do with it. Well done to **Sgt Lee Cook** on passing his SSgt's course.

Let's not forget **LCpl Eric Richards**, who is serving with JCUFI. **Eric** is working in SYSCON and is due to return to the Sqn in February after some well deserved POTL. Eric's wife, **Natasha** was a guest at the Sqn Christmas party and was hosted by **Capt Colin MacKay**.

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col CJ Thackray**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) J Renshaw**

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT FEMALE LANYARD TROPHY TEAM

Out on the start line with all the other 19 teams on Monday 20 October at 05.00hrs, we all set off across Dartmoor. Our choice of route put us at the back by the first checkpoint, which left us trying to catch up for the rest of the 40miles! Unfortunately, we lost one member with a head injury just after CP2 and the other with bad blisters at CP 3. It was now a case of everyone keeping going - aches, pain, and agony for some. We were going to finish what we had started! We didn't do a particularly good job of catching up, but we reached the finish at last, just after 01.00hrs on Tuesday. Yes, after twenty hours and four minutes of walking, the 6 remaining members of the team crossed the finish line, securing 12th place. Whilst it was great to finish, we were more concerned about going to our beds!

Our team of eight was: **Lt Hodson**, **Sgt Herbert**, **LCpl Cartmell**, **Capt Crawford**, **LCpl Phillippo**, **Sig Hughes**, **Sig Kirkbride** and **Sig Yarwood**. What an achievement, girls! We look forward to seeing those mad enough to do it again next year- maybe slightly quicker this time?

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Guy Richards**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Gaz Greaves**

QM(T) DEPARTMENT

QM(T)	**Capt Tivey**
RQMS(T)	**WO2 Ironside**

At the time of writing the Dept is not surprisingly, frantic with the impending Regtl deployment on OP TELIC. With some 70% of the Dept, including the QM himself, already deployed to Um Qasr, it has been a time of great effort for those yet to deploy and the few who will remain in Javelin Barracks.

It has been a frustrating time for all concerned – 3 locs to man and the manpower of only one Dept. Despite being a big lad, **Cpl Mac Davies** has been unable to spread himself thinly enough to help. Also it is worthy of mention that **SSgt Mark Pollock** was seen putting golf clubs into his comfy box prior to his departure to Um Qasr. We expect a vast improvement in his bunker shots on his return in April!

Congratulations to **Sig Hutt** on his impending promotion. Farewell to **Sig Michael** to 30 Sig Regt. Welcome to **Sig Ross Ardley**, from 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; to **LCpl** Donna **Frankel**, from 30 Sig Regt; and **Sigs Williamson** and **Bailey** from the factory.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1 (FofS) Hamilton**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Hindson**

TM Tp has been very busy during the past few months. There are now many people awaiting deployment or have already deployed to Iraq. **Cpl Dunn** is off to Baghdad and **LCpl Greenwood** is deploying to Basrah. **LCpl Gildea** is deployed in Um Qasr and **SSgt Black**, **LCpl Fowler** and **LCpl Tutty** are attached to 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn at Basrah Palace. There are many more deploying soon, including **Sgt Ward**, who off to the Falkland Islands soon.

It won't be easy for those staying back at Elmpt. The Tp is being re-named as Refurbishment Tp and being moved to the other end of the airfield, where **SSgt Hindson** and his bunch of merry men are stripping and re-building the fleet of 16 Sig Regt vehs. Finally we say good luck to **Cpl Parry** and his family who are posted to 21 Sig Regt.

HQMT

MTWO	**WO2 Batley**

The Regtl MT is still busy as ever, providing tpt for the Regt's deployment on OP TELIC 3 and preparing the vehs, which are going into Out Of Use. We're still managing to do all this on a Sqn MT manning level, and getting the lads away on courses and leave before we all deploy in the New Year.

We say farewell to **Cpl Barker**, who is posted to 14 Sig Regt (EW). Famously, after receiving his promotion to Sgt, he saluted the CO twice with his left hand in front of the Regt. Thanks for the donation to Children In Need!

Hello to **Cpl Stu Mead**, and welcome back from Trg Wing; to **Cpl Jacko Jackson**, posted in from 7 Sig Regt; and to **Sig Benson**, who has come straight from the factory in Blandford, just in time to deploy on OP TELIC. We would just say, 'have fun' to **Sgt Scotty Tremain** and to **Cpl Shane Wilson** who deployed with 230 Sig Sqn on OP TELIC.

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Cooper**
SSM	**WO2 SSM Storey**

The Sqn has had a busy few months after just completing its major ex period with the ARRC, and has discovered that it is far easier to provide and fix comms than it is to work out what the staff table is supposed to be. The tps put in some long hours and worked very hard providing the service to the Staff - rightly earning themselves a thank you from the Bde Comd on his last ex.

SHQ is a little depleted at the moment due to **WO2 (FofS) Clapham** parting with his 2 day old motorbike, landing himself in hospital. We wish him all the best and a speedy recovery - and we'll phone him often from Iraq to tell him what the weather is like. **WO2 (YofS) Emsen** is soon moving to Regt Ops ahead of the Sqn's deployment on OP TELIC 3, so hopefully, we may know what's going on.

MAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Kane**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Greenwood**

MAN Tp have been extremely busy over the last month, what with EX ARRCADE FUSION and preparing for our deployment on OP TELIC 3. EX ARRCADE FUSION was the usual ARRC affair, however, when we were not on shift, we carried out PT and extra trg for OP TELIC. During the ex, we had two new arrivals, **Sig Rea** and **Sig Panayiotou**, who were lucky enough to arrive at the Regt, get their kit, and then deploy into the field with us. After completing the three-week ex, we were given a rare treat, in the form of, 'You will have every truck we have CES'd and signed over to the SQMS in five days time.' As if we didn't have enough to do! All in all, it has been a very busy period for us all and every one

concerned has worked very hard. By the time you read this, MAN Tp will be no more and we will be in our relevant Tps in Iraq. While we are in Iraq, we spare a thought for three established Tp members who will be leaving, **Cpl Scotty Scott**, **Sgt Joey McGuire** and **Sig Andy Duncan**.

Congratulations to **Sigs Ashfield**, **John** and **Wright** for their promotion to LCpl. Well deserved lads and good luck with your new responsibility!

H TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Griffiths**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt MacPhee**

Firstly, we say goodbye to **SSgt Ali Watkins** who is off to RSS Blandford. Goodbye also to **Cpl Lake** and **Sigs Spotswood**, **Reynolds**, **Naylor** and **Kingan**. The new arrivals are **Sigs Moffat**, **Morrison** and **Meredith**, all straight from the factory. Congratulations to newly-promoted **Sgt Farrow**, proving that there is hope for us all. Welcome back to **LCpls Sanderson** and **Kervell**, who have just completed their Class 1 upgrading course, and big respect to **LCpl Sanderson**, who came top. On the sporting front, **Cpl Lowe** has done the Tp proud with his outstanding performance in the Supreme Fitness Challenge, coming first in his age group. **Cpl Lowe** was also on form when he represented the Regt in the BA(G) Road Relay Champs. The Regt romped home in first place. Not satisfied with this, he represented the Regt again for the German Luftwaffe 10k Road Champs, where again the Regt did the business. **Sig Waller** has continued to do well in her Judo, picking up Army colours for her efforts.

EX ARRCADE WARRIOR was quite successful for the Tp. It began with the undocumented and unauthorised reloc of some tentage and other items of kit, which **Sgt Doick** swore blind he had not sold to the local farmer to feed his wife's shopping habit. However, this and other trivia aside, the build was eventually completed and a good job done by all.

EX ARRCADE FUSION proved to be hard work, but the Tp worked well together and got the job done. On this ex, we had our new SNCO, **Sgt Farrow**, to help with the proceedings, and considering it was his first ex since arriving in Elmpt Station 3 years ago, he did a cracking job. After the ex, the Tp received a lot of praise for their hard work. The SSM managed to occupy our limited free time by organising some early morning PT and an ITD package. All in all, this was a very successful ex and the ARRC is very confident it can deploy anywhere at anytime if it has H Tp at its disposal.

As well as the ARRC exs, a few fortunate members of the Tp managed to deploy to Brunei as part of the Land CSSR Team under 10 Sig Regt. They installed major copper and fibre links in the local British Army camps. With Brunei being the main deployment area for the Far East and the main jungle warfare trg area for British tps, it proved to be an enjoyable country to work in. Temperatures regularly hit the late thirties, and even the occasional torrential downpour throughout the six-week tour was enjoyed by all deployed. The team consisted of **Cpls Partridge**, **Lake**, **Shubert**, **Sigs Spotswood**, **Tranter** and **Wilbor**. They well with counterparts from 10 Sig Regt, and enjoyed both their work and time off. Courtesy of some resident SAS instructors, they took part in an overnight visit to the jungle, and some of the team even managed to help with the winch trg of pilots from 7 Flt, AAC. For their last few days, the team visited Malaysia to spend some well-earned downtime, relaxing in the luxury of a five-star hotel - costing only £20 a night. On the whole, the tour was hard work but highly enjoyable, and proved that the role of the installation techs in 16 Sig Regt is indeed varied and still in great demand.

Lastly, congratulations to the guys who came off the promotion board and are now JNCOs. Well done to **Sig Hansen**, **Tranter**, **Goddard**, **Grieves**, **Vance**, **Reynolds**, **Hartshorne**, **Naylor** and well done to **LCpls Crooks** and **Wells**.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Bates**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Howard**

During the past month, Supt Tp has been kept busy on some very successful exs, effectively testing our Hicom, Promina and Ptarmigan skills.

Sig Monty Burns rejoined us for EX ARRCADE FUSION after successfully completing P Company. On this ex, we ran the EXCON Comms build smoothly, and **Sig Glass** excelled himself with his VTC efforts.

We say goodbye and good luck to **Cpl Danny Miller**, who is off to 21 Sig Regt (AS), **Cpl Si Heptinstall**, to 251 Sig Sqn and **Cpl Ginge Birkbeck**, who has departed to Blandford for his Class 1 Course. We welcome **Cpl Hudson**, who has just joined us from Cyprus.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**Lt Col RD Meinertzhagen**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Jolly**

11 SIGNAL BRIGADE BOXING COMPETITION

Following last year's victory at York, 14 Sig Regt (EW) took the responsibility of hosting the 11 Sig Bde Novice Boxing Competition on 7 October at Cawdor Barracks, Brawdy. The event was supported by over 500 personnel from 2 and 30 Sig Regts and the host Regt. **Brig Le Gallais** opened the proceedings, which saw eight keenly-contested scoring bouts, followed by three special bouts.

Drummers from 2 Royal Anglian and pipers from 30 Sig Regt provided atmospheric music and amusing entertainment throughout the evening. The RSM, **WO1 Jolly**, did a superb job as MC on the night, ensuring the event ran smoothly and on time. The overall competition winners by a clear margin were 2 Sig Regt, and all who attended the night agreed that the overall standard of all the boxing was very high.

After the boxing, all the seniors and officers retired to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess where, since this was British Food Week, they feasted on locally-grown produce and continued to celebrate each unit's individual boxing successes until the early hours of the morning.

LANYARD TROPHY 2003 - *by LCpl Williams*

This year's Lanyard Trophy was run on Dartmoor by last year's winners, 21 Sig Regt. Although Dartmoor is normally renowned for its high rainfall and wetlands, the dry summer meant that the teams' wet weather prep for one of the hardest events the Corps has to offer, proved a tad unnecessary.

14 Sig Regt (EW) had carried out several weeks' trg prior to the competition, using the Pembrokeshire Coastal Path. The event on Dartmoor was scheduled to start at 05.00hrs, so competitors found themselves awake at 03.00hrs to begin their physical and mental prep. As we lined up on the starting line along with all the other teams, I am sure that I was not alone in wondering if I had done the right thing by volunteering for this event!
The starter's gun went off, and we all raced up the first hill, with 216 Sig Sqn, 7 and 21 Sig Regts setting a blistering pace. Our team plan was to keep touch with the first five leading teams; our theory being that this event was a marathon, not a sprint - therefore pacing ourselves from the outset would be essential. It was a dark, crisp, but clear morning, which made nav far easier than expected. Daylight was with us by Checkpoint 3, where we took our first admin stop of the day. As planned, we were amongst the first five teams, and were quickly away to maintain our good progress. At Checkpoint 5, we found that we had lost vital time due a nav error - a minor setback, but we felt confident that we could make it up over the next few checkpoints. At Checkpoint 6, **LCpl Williams** and **Sgt Disley** found that they had sustained blisters from the morning's initial exertions, but luckily, as this was a designated admin stop for all teams, they had the chance to treat their feet before setting off again. **Cpl O'Mahony-Doran** and **Sig Spalding** provided excellent admin support at Checkpoints 6, 9 and 10, and we were given moral encouragement by the **RSM**, **WO1 Jolly** and 226 Sig Sqn SSM, **WO2 Burrows** throughout the competition. And so we marched on to Checkpoint 7 and 8, where sadly, **Lt Lish** came down with an injury which would knock him out of the event - much to his frustration. Tired legs and weary minds carried the team towards Checkpoint 11. The light was failing rapidly, making this leg seem longer than any other. As we looked back to see, dotted across the moor, the head-torch lights of teams behind us, we were spurred on towards the finish. The relief of crossing the finishing line was evident on all our faces, but the sense of pride in just completing the event made us all feel elated, despite our tiredness. This year's Lanyard Trophy was one of the toughest competitions that I ever have participated in. We won a respectable 6th place with a time of 17hrs 17mins. I'm sure we all slept well that night. I know I did!

We eventually finished exhausted and relieved to have survived the night. The pleasure in realising that we had achieved a respectable 9th place, made up for the nighttime trials and tribulations, and as a result, we are already planning to 'clean up' at the next event. We are even hoping to recruit some more crews from the Unit to up the ante and enter as a Unit team next year. I bet **Colin McRae** is shaking in his crash helmet!

Just a walk in the park?

EXERCISE BUNSEN BURNER - *by Lt Kelly Rhodes*

EX BUNSEN BURNER is a tri-Service, cross-country night nav ex, which took place this year at RAF Benson on the weekend 1/ 2 November. The event covers 170 miles driving over a varied terrain of muddy tracks, gorges, steep hills, airfields and minor country roads.

14 Sig Regt (EW) submitted a team of absolute beginners, with **Capt Ray Morrison** REME, as navigator, and **Lt Kelly Rhodes** as the skilled driver. A Wolf Land Rover was 'acquired' from the Regt with the understanding that we would bring it back with no major bumps (a promise we hoped to keep, but couldn't possibly guarantee!).

With a start time of 20.30hrs on the Saturday night, we set off expecting a long, tiring night. Amazingly, we were pleasantly surprised. The 7fi hrs seemed more like 70 mins. This was no doubt due to the frequent adrenaline rushes caused by the near-death experiences we shared whenever we started bouncing or sliding sideways on the cross-country sections in the rain. Or perhaps it was just the Red Bull!

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

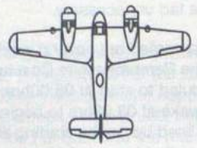
OC	**Maj JE Sutton**
SSM	**WO2 K Scott**

EXERCISE FOXES HIKE

On Tuesday, 14 October, 19 soldiers from Tango Tp set off for Capel Curig in North Wales to attempt the gruelling challenge of yomping up Mt Snowdon. The aim was to undertake some challenging AT as well as using it as a charity event to raise money for the Army Benevolent Fund (ABF). The exped started with a hair-raising and belly-churning 4-hr minibus mission to North Wales. Early next morning we embarked on a somewhat shorter journey to the car park at the base of Snowdon. With the weather looking good, we took off in fine spirits, taking the scenic and classic horseshoe route. Shortly in to our walk, **Sig Nash** began to drop back, so **WO2 (SSM) Kev Scott** halted the exped to swap Bergens around (his had two people's kit in it!). Upon taking the Bergen **Sig McMahon** somehow stumbled backwards on a small rock towards a sheer drop – and needed to be saved by a girl, **Cpl Chloe Cowen**. How embarrassing! After a 2-hr climb, we all eventually arrived at the top of Snowdon, where despite the horrendous wind, we had to strip down to our ABF tee-shirts for the mandatory cheesy photo. We then sat down to admire the view and devour the contents of our lovely 'horror bags,' which had been kindly provided by the chefs from Capel Curig.

We were soon off again and although it was a long way back, being all downhill, it didn't seem so bad - and the thought of a wonderful ice-cold beer was driving us on. After having lagged behind on the way up, amazingly, **SSgt** John **Brooke** was now at the front all the way down. Exped Leader **SSgt Jase Bayles**, kindly stopped us every five minutes to show us the beautiful scenery. Cheers Staff! We eventually arrived at the finish RV, where we were welcomed by the minibuses, and headed back to Capel Curig. That evening, after a quick shower and change and with aches and pains put aside, we were ready for the evening's entertainment in Bangor. Sadly, the rest is too naughty to tell!

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)



CO **Lt Col I Hooper**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) GC Smith**

By the time this article is published, **Lt Col Ivan Hooper** will have handed over command to **Lt Col Olly Halstead.** Sadly the RHQ team must also bid a fond farewell to **WO2 Mark Summerville**, who moves on to HQ GEO Engr Gp and **WO2 Steve Davis**, who moves to 32 Regt RA. Welcome to their replacements, **WO2 Matt Church** and **SSgt Dave Cottage**, joining us from 2 Sig Bde and 3 Regt RSME respectively. We also wish the recently deployed OP TELIC 3 JHF Sig Tp a successful tour and a safe return in the New Year.

The Regt recently marked Armistice Day with a full parade in number two dress, including Bugler, Piper and the 11 hour chime of Big Ben followed by lunch and refreshments. All involved give thanks that they are able to be in a position to remember those that have fallen before us.

Recently the Regt has also been visited by more 'stars' than a film premier. We received a final visit from **Maj Gen IOJ Sprackling OBE** before he handed over as Master of Signals. Also featuring in the visitors book are **Brig N Caplin**, Dep Comd JHC, **Maj Gen N Cottam**, GOC 5 Div and **Lt Gen Sir Redmond Watt KCVO CBE**, Comd Fd Army.

2 years with the Household Division and still out of step! The CO despairs with Maj Steve France during Comd Fd Army's Visit

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

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

November has seen the Sqn say farewell to the outgoing SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Adie Chapman**, who leaves the Corps on completion of his 22 years' service. A true professional soldier, his services will be sadly missed. We wish **Adie** and his family best wishes for their new civilian life. Stepping sharply into the SSM post we welcome **WO2 (SSM) Anthea Burdus** to SHQ.

Another loss to the Sqn management team is **WO2 (RCWO) Emma Jessell** RLC who leaves us on a well-deserved promotion to WO1 to fill an FSWO post based at Bassingbourne. Welcome her replacement, **WO2 (RCWO) Burgess** to Colerne.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj RJ Lovett**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) DR Taylor**

After a busy few months turning the Sqn round from OP TELIC, we can now enjoy a slower pace of life in the run up to the silly season. Everyone is currently involved in the Regt Board of Officers giving people the chance to hone their counting and equipt identification skills. SHQ welcomes **Sgt Daz Daniels** to the Ops team.

EXERCISE REMEMBRANCE DRAGON

EX REMEMBRANCE DRAGON was part of 21 Sig Regt (AS) Remembrance weekend commemorations. The aim of the exped was to walk in the Brecon Beacons to a remote memorial of a downed WW2 aircraft. In total 18 members of the Regt deployed on the ex.

The route for the first day was the Pen-y-Fan Horseshoe route, starting with a very steep wake-up call up in mist and low visibility onto the ridgeline. After a fun and tiring day on the hill it was back down the campsite to put up the tents and cook-up a boily for tea, before sampling the delights of Brecon town!

Next day, to get up to the memorial for 11.00hrs meant another early start. Yet again the weather was overcast. Starting at the waterfall, we started the steep climb onto the ridge under the cover of mist under the lead of **LCpl Drew Connor**. The group then walked off the ridge to the Memorial for the Act of Remembrance. In a short service at the Memorial, a WW2 poem was read, with a two minutes' silence and placing of memorial crosses to commemorate those who have lost their lives in passed conflicts. Although remote in location there were over 70 people at the Memorial with the same idea. The exped proved to be a fun and different way to spend Remembrance Weekend, whilst giving everyone a chance to get some fresh air in the hill and practice navigation.

Time to remember

EXERCISE FINAL FLIGHT

EX FINAL FLIGHT is an ASG PTARMIGAN ex for RSS Comd Courses. This year, the exercise for Tp Comd TC56 took place in the Dorset Area over the period 20–24 October. Juliet Tp was tasked to assist with the ex by attaching TN 040 to ASG, which provided an extra deployable capability to TC56.

Prior to the deployment, it was very important for J Tp conduct various PACEX to identify and rectify all faults in prep for deploying on EX FINAL FLIGHT. A trunk training PACEX took place during the week 29 July 6 August. All of J Tp assets and some from H Tp were attached for the duration of the trg. Trg comprised two phases, the first phase in a classroom revising all aspects of the AS Op trade, and the second in the field.

To keep the momentum going on, EX BRIGHT KHUKRI was conducted in a non-tac posture within Azimghur Barracks, Hullavington and Keevil during the period 15–19 September. The main intention was to conduct a trunk ex to continue trade trg and familiarization of J Tp personnel for EX FINAL FLIGHT. During the ex, the CO visited the ex loc and was delighted to receive such high quality briefings from 'young guns' such as **Sigs Krishna** and **Lokaji** and noted the rapid progress and development of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn. Other visitors included 220 Sig Sqn OC, **Maj Lovett**, and SSM, **WO2 (SSM) D Taylor**, who were equally impressed with the way J Tp has easily adapted into the life of 21 Sig Regt (AS). Moreover, we also managed to deploy some of the TN assets and manpower on EX EAGLES EYE, a regtl ex that took place in Azimghur Bks, Corsham and across Salisbury Plain over the period 6–19 October. This gave the Tp a fantastic opportunity to work with other Regtl assets in a tac posture.

After the completion of a succession of trunk trg/exs, we finally deploy to Blandford Camp on 19 October. As the exercise progressed, confidence started to rise and det drills began to improve. By the end of the ex a strong, professional and all-round performance became evident. All in all, it proved to be a very useful learning experience for all who were involved in the ex. EX FINAL FLIGHT was without a shadow of doubt a great success for us.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SO France**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) MA Brown**

The Sqn has enjoyed a period of relative calm in the past few months, making full use of the time to busy itself with some necessary admin. There have been plenty of opportunities for sport, and true to form, we have continued to perform in the CO's Cup and in the recent basketball and the swimming competitions.

The turnaround of personnel from the second tour of OP TELIC is complete and now sees **Lt Lucy Fish** leading the Regt's forward contingent in Iraq. The past few days has seen the return of personnel from POTL, just in time to assist with the Regtl Board of Officers and our return to High Readiness.

EXERCISE RED BEAUFIGHTER

The first week of this two-week ex entailed blowing the cobwebs away - very useful for the new blood posted into the Tp. We deployed to STANTA in Norfolk, where the weather was glorious - we couldn't quite believe it. Before the comms trg commenced, there were lessons for individuals to give them confidence in delivering them. These ranged from starting a fire without matches, through to gutting and preparing a fish. The 'fire starter' was **Sig Becky Barnard**, who was a great hit with all the Pyromaniacs (who seemed to consist of all the blokes - funny that). The fisherman was **Sig Guy Tipping**, who had the task of gutting the fish on a hot day.

For the second week, we deployed to Salisbury Plain, where the weekend consisted of an assault course, mil skills trg and a vehicle-borne navex, involving cross-country driving over much of Salisbury Plain. Following orders on the Sunday evening, the Tp then embarked upon the Sqn phase of the ex, when the Tp was occupied in the passage of traffic, site-moves and the inevitable convoy ambush between locs just as everyone was getting tired. The ex finished with a re-org at the Tidworth wash-down, before extracting to Camp.

LANYARD TROPHY 2003 – AN ORGANISERS PERSPECTIVE

- by Capt A Balsdon

For those not in the know, the Lanyard Trophy is a Corps team endurance march competition, covering approximately 40 miles over arduous ground with a Bergen weighing 40lbs (25lbs for female teams). Historically, the event is organised for the Corps by 216 Sqn. Teams comprise at least one Offr, one SNCO and 8 ORs. To encourage participation, female teams require only 6 ORs. To be placed in the competition, the Offr or SNCO must finish with at least 7 others (5 for female teams).

Because 21 Sig Regt (AS) won the 2002 competition, the CO, **Lt Col Ivan Hooper** (ex OC 216 Sqn) requested that his Unit organise the 2003 event. Thanks Colonel!

The 2003 competition was run over the period 19-21 October, having being postponed from May 03 due to OP TELIC, and was administered from Okehampton Trg Camp (OTC). The route meandered over the North moor of Dartmoor National Park, through a series of 12 checkpoints.

Planning started in September 2002 with a visit to Colchester by the event organiser to glean whatever information was available. Next, was a visit to OTC commandant to brief him on the scale of the event and to plan possible routes. Listening to local knowledge, and taking note of the CO's instruction 'the competition should be as challenging navigationally as it would be physically', it was decided to stay within the bounds of the military trg area of the North moor. This had advantages in that, amongst other things, land clearance did not have to be negotiated and the competitors did not have to drive to the start at silly o'clock in the morning.

It was decided to introduce measures to ensure that the host unit could not offer favouritism to their own teams. To that end, adjudicators from outside units were stationed at some of the checkpoints to ensure all teams reported as complete teams and that they were checked off correctly before being allowed to continue. Safety issues, which would lead to disqualification if flouted, were enforced at the team captains' brief.

By the deadline, 21 teams from 19 units had declared their intention to enter. At 05.00hrs on the day, from an illuminated start line, to the sound of *The Ride of the Valkyrie* (to the amazement of the CO) 19 teams started, 3 TA, 5 female and 11 male. Some teams went off like hares, others more sedately, knowing that they had a long day ahead of them.

216 (Air Asslt) Sqn led from the front, with the second and third teams hard on their heels, making good viewing for the visiting VIP/CO/OC's. At the end, 21 Sig Regt (AS) were second to 216 (Air Asslt) Sig Sqn by 31 minutes followed by 7 Sig Regt in third place. The female teams of 21 Sig Regt (AS) and 7 Sig Regt put in outstanding performances. 21 Sig Regt (AS) won the female competition, coming fourth overall, only 2 hrs 10 mins behind the male team winners. 7 Sig Regt ladies were only 42 minutes behind 21 Sig Regt (AS) ladies and fifth overall. The TA competition was not so well contested, with only 63 Sig Sqn (V) finishing the course. But, considering the difficult route and the amount of time required to prepare for the Lanyard Trophy, credit must be given to all who participated, regardless of how far around the route they got.

Having been on both sides of the fence now and realising just how much there is to consider in the preparation of a prestigious Corps event, I have decided that it is preferable to participate than organise! That said, the Unit has been congratulated on running a slick and efficient competition and thanks must go to all involved, including the adjudicators and the chef support from a few outside units.

The overall results were:-

Team	*Time*
216 (Air Asslt) Sig Sqn	12hrs 15 min
21 Sig Regt (AS)	12hrs 46 mins
7 Sig Regt	14hrs 1 min
21 Sig Regt (AS)	Female 14hrs 25 mins
7 Sig Regt	Female 15hrs 7 mins
30 Sig Regt	15hrs 30 mins

1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt	16hrs 1 min
14 Sig Regt (EW)	17hrs 17 min
63 Sig Sqn (V)	17hrs 48 mins
1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt	Female 17hrs 56 mins
2 Sig Regt	18hrs 26 mins
16 Sig Regt Female	120hrs 1 min
16 Sig Regt	16hrs 29 mins - 5 finished
11 Sig Regt	19hrs 39 mins - 5 finished
3 (UK) Div Sig Regt	16hrs 45 mins - 7 finished
39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn	withdrew CP 9
15 Sig Regt Female	withdrew CP 10
43 (Wx) Sig Sqn (V)	withdrew CP 10
36 Sig Regt (V)	withdrew CP 11 – 2nd TA

LANYARD TROPHY – A COMPETITORS PERSPECTIVE
- by Sgt Sean McIlroy

As usual, the Lanyard Trophy was set over a course that will remain in the mind for a long time to come, and as the current holders, there wasn't much pressure on us to do well… much!

As always, prep before the event was vital, so a significant period of time was spent trg for the event and familiarising the team with the ground - ranges permitting!

A pre-event recce showed that Dartmoor in October is not where you would wish to be after nightfall if you're trying to take the fastest possible route from A to B across open ground. With this in mind, one of the team's secondary objectives, beyond the obvious one, was that they were at the finish before last light.

Setting off Okehampton Camp at stupid o'clock, the team embarked on the 40-something mile march along with a load of other nutters from the Corps. From the early stages, both teams from the Regt figured high in the pecking order, and by the halfway point, the male team were settled into a competitive position, whilst the females were enraging some of the other lead male teams as they passed them. The course proved to be as challenging as anticipated, although both of the Regt's teams succeeded in destroying their anticipated completion times. Post-event discussions were to last for several weeks, but suffice to say, the male team's performance and final second position was a spirited attempt to retain the Trophy. The female's winning first position was outstanding and their position of fourth overall was nothing short of remarkable.

For many of the individuals, this was their first Lanyard Trophy, and as is commonplace, many were quick to swear that it would be their last. But they all say that. See you next year!

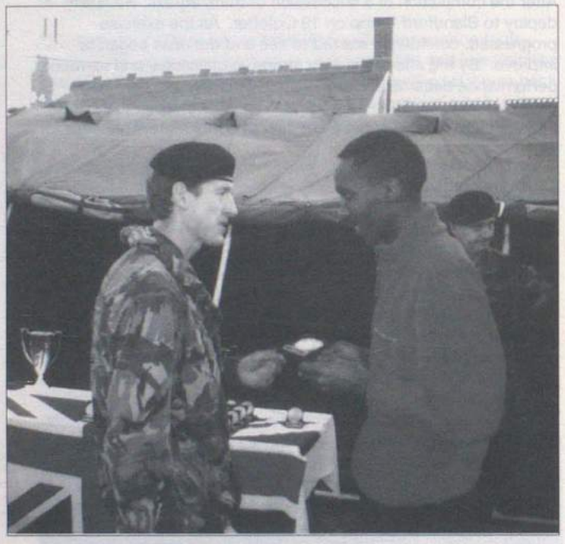
ARMY CROSS COUNTRY RELAYS 2003 *- by SSgt Castle*

The Regt entered seven teams (5 male and 2 female) in the Army Cross-Country Relay Finals held at Aldershot on 5 November

The men's competition was won quite convincingly by a margin of more than three minutes. **SSgt Castle**, **Cpl Conlon**, **Cpl Smith** and **Sig Chepkwony** ensured the trophy was on its way back to Colerne. The Corps had not won this event since 1992.

The men's B team also finished in a creditable seventh place, along with fine performances from the C, D and E teams. The female team was not to be outdone, winning their competition to make it a fine double for the Regt. **Cpl Morris**, **Sig Bogard**, **Cpl West** and **Capt Courage** also ensured a convincing win in their competition, along with a good result from the B team.

In the Individual category, **Sig Chepkwony** and **Cpl Morris** ran the fastest legs of the day, along with **Sig Laycock** in the junior event. The Regtl running teams now look forward to a successful season to add to their brilliant start.



Sig Chepkwony receiving his medal as fastest individual from Lt Col Horn MBE APTC

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col IPF Vingoe**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Hancock**

The CO congratulates all members of his Regt who have recently been selected for promotion on the recent LCpl and Cpl Boards. Well done to one and all.

In fitting with many contributions to the Corps magazine, the current activities of 30 Sig Regt are as wide and varied, as they are at times bizarre. The following extracts of Regtl life are proof of that life in 30 is as fun and demanding as ever.

EXERCISE RAMPANT BIRDSONG – *By Capt Sean Keilty*

At 04.00hrs on Tuesday 21 October 03, eleven bleary eyed members of 30 Sig Regt departed on EX RAMPANT BIRDSONG, the 11 Sig Bde WW1 Battlefield Tour. Picking up various other members of the Bde on the way, not least **Maj Colin McGrory,** Bde DCOS and organiser of this very memorable ex, we arrived in Belgium to the strains of an original recording of *It's A Long Way To Tipperary* a popular song of the day by the Irish music hall comedian, **John Judge**.

Our first visit of the tour was to the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery at Brandhoek, burial site of **Capt Noel Chavasse VC and bar MC** RAMC. From here, we went on to our overnight accn in Ypres (or Ippres, its Belgian name). Here we found many sites of interest, including St Georges' Hall and St Martins' Cathedral, and of course the Menin Gate, memorial to over 54,000 lost souls, whose bodies were never found. The nightly playing of the Last Post at 20.00hrs at the Gate was as memorable as it was touching - a fine start to the ex.

The next morning started with coverage of the five Battles of Ypres. This included the day that became to be known as the 'Break of the Innocence of Ypres'. On 22 April 1915, during the second Battle of Ypres, gas was used against British and allied troops for the first time. A very poignant visit to the CWGCC at Essex Farm followed. This is the very much still intact Canadian Clearing Station, commanded by **Maj John McRae** who, inspired by the early growth of poppies between the wooden crosses of the graves of the fallen, penned the poem *In Flanders Fields*. It was also here that the grave of the youngest known soldier to die on the Ypres Salient is buried, **Rfn AJ Strudwick**, aged 15 yrs. The rest of the morning was spent at the site of the reclaimed British Army trench system and museum at Sanctuary Wood. British blood was again spilled, as **Cap Sean Keilty** managed to crack his head open in the tunnels. From Sanctuary Wood we made our way by coach past Hooge, site of the first use of flame-throwers by German troops, and on to Tower Hamlets. Here **Pte Sage** of the Devonshires, having been shot through the eye and with bodily parts removed by a grenade, still managed to fight on, winning the VC for his bravery. The rest of the morning was taken up with a wreath-laying ceremony at Tyne Cot CWGCC. Interestingly, this is the largest CWGCC in the world, so named by the Northumberland Infanteers, who likened the area of German bunkers to the lines of Tyneside miners' cottages of the time. We then paid a visit to the Brooding Soldier Canadian Monument at Vancouver Corner. This impressive 35 feet high solid piece of granite commemorates the Canadian dead.

The Battle Tourists below the Brooding Soldier Monument

NUNEATON CARNIVAL PRAM RACE – SUNDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2003

'Anyone got a spare pram?' A rather curious request from **Capt Danny Roberts** at a recent Offrs' coffee gathering. But not so curious, when uttered from the lips of the Regtl PR Guru! OC LAD is renowned for his local contacts and rather unusual charity work. True to his reputation this was one of his better ones, a pram race through Nuneaton town centre. And so it transpired that 5 Offrs from the Regt joined the colourful parade of local teams, with *Bertha*, our large, very robust and bigger than anything else on the road (including some cars!) pram taking pride of place. The race itself had to be completed via 10 tasks, ranging from digestive biscuit eating to singing *Happy Birthday* to Aunt Sally in the middle of a very busy ASDA supermarket - all to the bemusement of the local populace. In true 30 Sig Regt form, we crossed the finish line as convincing, if a little knackered, winners.

The Glorious Pram Racers: Capt Sean Keilty, Capt Mark Stoter, Lt Mark 'Baby' Barratt, Capt Danny Roberts REME, Capt Alex Clixby

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT LANYARD TROPHY TEAM 2003

Lanyard Trophy 2003, organised by last year's winners, 21 Sig Regt (AS), was 40 miles of arduous terrain on Dartmoor National Park, carrying 40lb Bergens. Our team was: **Lt Muirhead-Smith** (IC), **WO2 Philpott** (2IC), **Cpl Brennan**, **Cpl Cranny**, **Cpl Kemp**, **Cpl Manning**, **Cpl Tipper**, **LCpl Mackay**, **LCpl Russell** and **Sig Cox**. They finished in sixth place with a time of 15hrs 30 mins.

In our chosen profession, we sometimes complete tasks that are deemed 'character building' - things that we do not generally enjoy at the time, but can laugh about and be proud of afterwards. The Lanyard Trophy rates very highly as one of these experiences. Due to the nature of our Regt, with copious ops and deployments, team trg was largely disrupted, and special mention must go to **WO2 Philpott**, **Cpl Brennan**, **LCpl Russell** and **Sig Cox**, all of whom took part in the event with very little trg. Thanks also to the support team, **Sgt Dhir** (IC), **LCpl Cannon**, **LCpl Alerman** and **Sig Warner**, without whom the experience would have been considerably more painful! Although we were not as successful as last year, out efforts were far from wasted. Many lessons were learned, some the hard way, all of which will make the experience for next year's team easier and faster.

EXERCISE AFRICAN SHIELD 03 – *by Sig Gwilliam*

EX AFRICAN SHIELD was a joint force ex with the South African National Defence Force, which took place from mid October until early December 03 on an air base at Snake Valley, near Johannesburg. We departed Bramcote at 01,00hrs, arriving at Brize Norton at 03.00hrs to book into the honeymoon suites at the Gateway Hotel. The following morning we flew to Ascension Island, where we over-nighted before proceeding to South Africa the following day. Upon our arrival at the Airforce Gymnasium, we were given numerous briefings on the dangers of mixing with local nightlife etc. Arrival drills complete, we then set to work setting up the JTFHQ tentage, which was hard work, as we only had 30% of out normal manpower. Once the tentage was established, we set to work installing the ACUs, lights and comms, interspersed with days by the pool. Notable events included a well-earned R and R trip to Durban with **Sig Beckett** and **Sig Ware** and **Sig Wilkes** wowing the locals with the demolition of 2kg of steak in 9 mins.

256 prepare for the off

EXERCISE ARDUOUS CYGNET – *by Sig Mandir Kumari Rai*

The CO's Cadre Course, run by 30 Sig Regt Trg Wg took place between 02 and 20 November 03. Impressively, all 24 students on the course lasted the duration, despite the best efforts of the elements and the DS. The three-week course was a thoroughly test of physical stamina, leadership, fieldcraft and other mil skills. During the first week in Bramcote, we concentrated mainly on drill, tactics, map reading, weapon handling and PT. With our basic skills finely honed, it was time to move north to Catterick trg area, where we spent much of the second week reinforcing our knowledge and learning inf tactics, theory and a practical execution. Our final week was spent in the field. Initially, we were very lucky, with the weather remaining fairly dry. However, on the final night Catterick trg area earned its reputation for being a tough place to train. As the weather closed in, we deployed on recce patrols, sec attacks and into defensive posns. Retrospectively, the ex was very rewarding, although at the time, very few of us enjoyed it in its entirety. Thanks to all the DS, especially **Lt Nick Muirhead-Smith** for stepping in at the last minute to take over from **Capt Jules Tydeman**, who had to deploy to OP TELIC. In short, it was an excellent ex, but far more enjoyable as a memory!

TRAILWALKER (UK) 2003 HEROES' RECEPTION – 250 GURKHA SIG SQN

To celebrate the endeavors of all who took part and organised Trailwalker (UK) 2003, a Heroes' Reception took place at City University, London on 20 November 03. The event, which is constantly growing in size and stature, raised the phenomenal sum of £350,000.00 in aid of the Gurkha Welfare Trust and Oxfam. The evening itself was a great success with a mix of Gurkha cultural dancing, presentations and stories of exploding feet and atrocious weather. A huge thank you to all involved. See you all on the South Downs, on 17 - 18 July 04.

SCHOOL REBUILDING TASK ON OPERATION TELIC – *by Sig Ward*

The crew from 501 Purple have had the unexpected but enjoyable task of being part of George Bush's reconstruction of Iraq, even though we limited ourselves to helping reconstruction (and in some cases, the rebuilding) of schools in 1 KINGS AOR. The Det, based at the Al Sharat hotel in Basrah, consisted of **LCpl Henley**, **LCpl Prem**, **LCpl Pollard**, **Sig Ward** and **Sig Maclean**. We visited several schools throughout the area, conducting various tasks wherever we went. The main thing that struck the det was the warm welcome wherever we went.

SSgt Anita Smith gets acquainted with the locals

SSgt Anita Smith (or **Angel**, as the school children called her) always got the warmest welcome, and we were all able to interact well with the kids, with the language barriers being broken down by antics such as **LCpl Pollard's** juggling skills. The whole tour was great, but seeing the joy on the children's faces and knowing the reconstruction of schools would better their lives, made everything very rewarding.

CHRISTMAS DECORATING AT BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN HOSPITAL – *by Sig Brimfield*

The end of November saw Sqn 2IC, **Capt Jon Mayne** leading a band of merry helpers off to Birmingham. **Sigs Stevenson**, **Merrick**, **Coates**, **Brimfield**, **Card**, **Smith** and **Randall** were off to help give Birmingham Children Hospital a bit of Christmas cheer. The tps had raised money throughout the year, conducting activities such as car washes, and the Regt had also donated funds. We were therefore able to go armed with several boxes of decorations and one large Christmas Tree. Due to a slight admin error, we ended up with a 19ft tree, so after a little swift sawing, we had a lovely 14ft tree up in the outpatients dept, and plenty of decorations scattered around that area and the hospital's conservatory. The afternoon ended with the presentation of a cheque for £750 and some happy nurses.

Christmas Cheer courtesy of 258 Sig Sqn)
Back Row (L-R) Capt Mayne, Sig Card, Sig Stevenson, Sig Coates, Sig Brimfield
Front Row (L-R) Sig Smith, Sig Randell, Sig Merrick

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col EM Blyth**
RSM **WO1 JH Greenwood**

There has been plenty to keep the Regt busy, not least the Bde FTX in November. Members of the Regt remain in the Gulf, and it has been good to see others return, better soldiers as a result of the contributions they have made. The Sqns are focusing their attention on planning for next year's trg; the Regtl trg plan has been issued and is both varied and challenging. We are looking forward to a visit from the Master of Signals **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** early in the New Year and an overseas AT ex is also in the early planning stages. Recruiting remains a high priority, and some excellent PR initiatives are being pursued by the RSM.

The Regt FofS, **WO2 Bob Pullan**, and PSI Tech HQ Sqn, **Sgt MacDonald**, were technically challenged during November, providing a PA system for the launch of the Earl Haig Fund Scotland Poppy Appeal in George Square, Glasgow. HQ Sqn also attended the Remembrance Day Parade in George Square, and a small delegation from HQ and RHQ attended the Remembrance Service at the Erskine Hospital. The Regt donated £2,000 to Erskine Hospital, our local sponsored charity. The hospital first opened its doors at Bishopton, near Glasgow, in 1916 as an independent charity to care for wounded servicemen returning from WW1. Since then it has cared for more than 65,000 sailors, soldiers, airmen and women. Today, Erskine Hospital is the foremost and most modern care facility for ex-servicemen and

Members of 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) during Sqn level trg

women in the UK and cares for more than 550 personnel of all ages, in permanent and respite care.

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj AR Thompson TD**

Firstly, we congratulate **LCpls Lister**, **MacKay** and **Robertson** on gaining their first stripes, and **WO2 (SSM) Bertram** on her commissioning. Best to FTRS Tech PSI **Sgt Ali Jamieson** who is leaving to join the Police.

ANNUAL CAMP 2003

The ex phase got off to a good start with excellent results gained from the CO's inspection prior to deployment from Warcop Camp. This was the result of hard preparatory work by all Sqn personnel. First to deploy was the 2IC and SSM as the Sqn recce team only to find that they were on the same road as the Sqn packets going the other way. (Who gave that PARA a map?)

Comms in general were good, the only problem at one time being when the SCP arrived at a loc to find that the phone points that should have been connected by BT prior to STARTEX were not working. Luckily, thanks to the Comdt of Halton Camp, good use was made of an Ops room normally used for Operations. ENDEX for the Sqn was at Altcar camp, where the enemy took great delight in harassing us quite a few times. We did get our own back, resulting in one of the enemy dislocating his shoulder. On a happier note, **LCpl Gillian Grant**, **Sig Philip Chohan** and **Sig Willie Robertson** managed to have a flight in a Chinook helicopter thanks to the 2IC using his 'Airborne Brotherhood' influence. An experience they are not likely to forget.
The remainder of annual camp was spent at Leek in the peak district, participating in various very well-planned AT activities. The OC and **Lt Chris Buckley** were in charge of the mountain biking activity, and now the OC is now a hardened biker - as can be witnessed by the reduction in his waistline.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

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

The Sqn takes this opportunity to thank, and send our best wishes to **Capt AC Bryson**, who leaves us and the Army on retirement. His dedication and commitment extend over 43 years. He initially joined in 1959 as a Boy Trumpeter, but once old enough, transferred to the Royal Highland Fusiliers. He has brought a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Sqn and will be missed by all.

Congratulations are due to **Iain Davidson**, who has been recently promoted to Capt. A warm welcome back to **Sig McCluckie**, who returns to us from Canada, and to **Cpl Cambridge** back from OP TELIC.

RANGE AND ITD WEEKEND

A crisp weekend towards the end of October saw the Sqn head off to the ranges at Barrybuddon. The aim of the weekend was to zero weapons, conduct an APWT, some BCDT and NBC testing. The weekend was very successful, with many people passing their ITDs. We also held a smoker on the Saturday evening - in fact it was a BBQ (in Barrybuddon, in October?) The event was a great success, with a most amazing spread, and just enough space in the accn hut/messing hall/troop shelter for us all to cram in and set the world to rights.

RECRUITING

We have a number of new additions to the Sqn: **Sigs Campbell**, **Cunningham**, **Flynn** and **Stoppard**. Congratulations to **Sig Cunningham** who was recently awarded 'Most Improved' on his Recruits Course at Pirbright. Looking ahead, there is already a flourish of activity gearing up towards TA Open Day, on 3 April 2004. Our, **OC Maj Gordon**, is planning a monster day to look forward to, but is not giving anything away just yet.

Lt Chris Buckley (far left) lines up with his mountain bikers

SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

52 Sig Sqn (V) are represented in the Territorial Army Scottish Football Cup. Our most recent match was against B Sqn, The Scottish Yeomanry (V). The final score was 10 – 3, with goals from **Cpl Shearer** (4), **Cpl McPhearson** (2). Man of the Match was awarded to the PSI Tech, **Sgt McKeown**. The next match will be against 231 Tpt Sqn, RLC (V), based in Glenrothes.

2Lt Fernand recently competed in the Inter Corps Swimming and Water Polo Champs. As a Reservist, this is not the norm, but she was allowed to swim in the individual events as a guest, and in the Ladies Water Polo with the permission of the other teams. **2Lt Fernand** came second in the 50m freestyle race and first in the 50m backstroke. The Ladies Water Polo Team also came first in their competition.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Andy Bruce**
SSM **WO2 Rowena Clarke**

EXERCISE LOOK AT LIFE

This ex is now an annual event for the Sqn. The aim is to enable young civilians to participate in various military activities, sampling a part of TA life with a view to recruitment. The ex was conducted using 20 young personnel from Elgin Youth Café who, going by their enthusiasm and comments, thoroughly enjoyed themselves - especially the blank CQB range, conducted by **Cpl Billy Knight** and **LCpl Melia**. Thanks to all ranks who participated in making the week end a complete success. Also to **Capt Davy Crockett** from 2 Sig Sqn (V) for his help and experience.

ARMISTICE WEEKEND

November brought the annual Armistice Parade in Edinburgh and for the third year running, it was held in the Sqn's 'new' TAC at Lanark Road. Continuing an emerging Sqn tradition, we were joined by local RAF Cadets and colleagues from the Budesweher Reservisten in Herford. Although **Cap Peter Schneider** and his colleagues have joined us for the service before, this was the first time that they had joined the parade complete with German standard and ceremonial uniforms. The presence of German soldiers raised a few eyebrows among the 'old and bold' of the RSA, but all agreed that their presence was a welcome step and

demonstrated how reconciliation can follow even the most major conflict. Even the Padre got in on the act, expressing a heartfelt welcome to the visitors in German. However, it was the Germans' turn to be surprised at the end of the service, as PSI **Sgt Bob Harvey** had arranged for the German National Anthem to be played immediately the British one. Next year **Capt Schneider** has promised to sing along!

After the service, representatives from the Royal Signals, the Bundeswehr, RAF Cadets and the RSA travelled to the local war cemetery and laid wreaths on the Royal Signals and RAF graves there. Meanwhile, back at the TAC the troops and visitors were digging into the traditional curry and being entertained to a pub quiz by our resident DJ/Quizmaster **Sgt Martin Garner**. Despite the lack of a local parish Church for the parade (as enjoyed at our previous TAC) the new format has quickly become the norm and, as ever, its success is largely down to the efforts of PSI **SSgt Bob Harvey**.

EXERCISE HORSEHOE IV

On 22/23 November the Sqn deployed along with the rest of the Regt the Bde on EX HORSESHOE IV. As is the norm for an NCRS ex in November in Cultybraggen, turnout was fairly low, the exotic combination of location, weather and task being further exacerbated by the fact that the Rugby World Cup final was being played at the same time. Despite the absence of Scotland from the match, there was a remarkable outbreak of Australian National Pride in the Sqn. Just to prove that there are no hard feelings however, well done England from 61 Sqn! This was the first NCRS ex for the new Sqn OC, **Major Andy Bruce** and the last for departing Sqn 2IC, **Capt Domhnall Dods**, who is posted to Tayforth UOTC - part of a cunning plot by the CO to boost Offr recruiting in the Regt.

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER

Just before the endless round of Christmas parties kicked off, three members of the Sqn set off as part of a Regtl team for 2 weeks on EX MERCURY GLACIER, the Corps Winter Sports Camp and Champs. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of WL Gore and the local Gore Tex factory, the team this year was rather resplendent in some excellent wind-stopper jackets, available in any colour so long as it's green! Hopefully, the new kit will inspire them to bring back some medals this year.

33rd (LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col David Sommerville MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) M Browitt**

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj DA Titheridge**
SSM **W02 I Coburn**

VISIT OF HONORARY COLONEL

The Sqn hosted The Regtl Hon Col, **Col Professor Peter Toyne DL** Vice Chancellor of Liverpool University and former High Sheriff of Merseyside, during a trg evening in October. It is always a pleasure to see **Prof Toyne**, as his enthusiasm and generally exuberant manner provide a tonic to all who meet him. **Prof Toyne** doesn't like any fuss, and would rather sit and chat to as many soldiers as he can over a beer in the JRC bar. However, we always make a fuss of him, and our resident Chef, **Cpl Pete Marchant**, provided his usual excellent curry to mark the occasion.

The Sqn was also delighted that the Hon Col was accompanied by the CO, **Lt Col David Sommerville MBE**, and our new Padre, **Mike Newman**. **Mike's** parish is in Cheadle, where he presides over St Cuthbert's Church and, as it is not too far from our TAC in Rusholme, we are hoping that we will see quite a lot more of him in the future. It was remarkable to note, on the evening, how alike the Padre and our Foreman, **WO2 (FofS) Andy Owen MBE** are. **Andy**, who is a respectable 6ft 2ins, was dwarfed by **Padre Mike** and is such a dead ringer for him that he is now known as 'The preacher.'

MEDAL CEREMONY

During a ceremony held at RHQ in Huyton, several members of the Sqn were presented with medals by Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Brig CL Le Gallais OBE**. The SSM, **W02 Ian Coburn**, received a bar to his VRSM; **SSgt Faulds** was presented with his Long Service and

The Hon Col, CO and Padre pictured with some of the Sqn officers.

Good Conduct Medal; together with the NATO Medal with former Yugoslavia Clasp and the Queens Golden Jubilee Medal. Other recipients were **SSgt (SQMS) Dave Kerr**, **Sgt Duncan Anderson** and **Sgt Mark Ruthven**, who all received the VRSM; and **Cpl Roman Marczac**, who received his VRSM and the Queens Golden Jubilee Medal.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

On Sunday 09 November 03, the Sqn took part in the annual Remembrance Sunday Parade through Manchester to the Cenotaph in St Peters Square. The parade was under the command of **Lt Col Johnson TD**, RE, CO of 75 Engr Regt, based in Failsworth, Greater Manchester. The Exhortation was read by **Capt Warwick Davenport**, Chairman SSAFA Forces Help, Greater Manchester and The Trumpeters of the Greater Manchester Police Band sounded *Reveille*. Wreaths were laid by The Lord Mayor on behalf of the Citizens of Manchester and by

senior representatives of the RN, Army, RAF, the Kings Regt, the Reserve Forces, the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Constable and the County Fire Officer.

After the wreath laying ceremony the Lord Mayor and the Civic Party took their place in Albert Square in front of the Albert Memorial, escorted by the Greater Manchester Police Band, ready for the march past by Service and exService Organizations, who were led by the Kings Division Normandy Band.

The Sqn returned to Norman Road with the members of the Manchester Branch of the RSA to take part in a private wreath laying ceremony at the Memorial Plaque in the Drill Hall. The Association members then joined the Sqn and their families for the usual curry lunch and liquid refreshment,

Maj Dave Titheridge leads the Sqn on Remembrance Sunday

OPERATIONS

The Sqn still has members deployed on ops in the Gulf and in Bosnia. **Sgt Paul Duffin** has just returned to his family after a six month stint on OP TELIC 2 with 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt. **Sgt Hazel Trotman**, also serving with the same Regt, will be back home for Christmas.

Other Sqn members are deployed on OP OCULUS in Bosnia with the Balkans Sig Sqn commanded by **Maj Chris Edwards** of 35 Sig Regt (V), namely, **Sgt Alwyn Murray**, **LCpl BJ Smith**, **Sig Teresa Bastiman** and **Sig Walsh**. **W02 (FofS) Andy Owen**, **LCpl Sue Heaps** and **Sig Servane Gouda** were serving with the Sqn but have now returned to 42 Sqn while the remainder will be home for Christmas - with the exception of **Sgt Murray** and **LCpl Smith**, who enjoy Bosnia so much that they have been granted an extension of tour!

It goes without saying, that we are relieved at the safe return of most of the Sqn and wish those members still in theatre a safe and happy time for the remainder of their tour.

CONGRATULATIONS

Finally, all ranks of the Sqn congratulate **Cpl Andy Connell** on his recent marriage to former Sqn member, **Michelle Delooze**. **Andy**, who likes to do things with style, whisked **Michelle** off to Mauritius to tie the knot and enjoy a fortnight's honeymoon on that beautiful island. **Andy** was one of the first members of the Sqn to deploy to the Gulf on OP TELIC 1, and throughout his six month tour he served with TN 41 in 201 Sig Sqn as part of 1 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt.

Sgt Sean Maher with cadets from Merchant Tailor's School

59 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JWD Miller GD**
SSM	**W02 P Williams**

CADET TRAINING

A team of soldiers from 59 Sqn has been visiting Merchant Tailors School to help out the CCF with some cross flag training. The experience and knowledge imparted to the youngsters has been greatly appreciated and continues to be so. Maybe we'll see a few new faces into the Regular Army or TA in the not too distant future!

COMMANDING OFFIFCER'S COMPETITION

As holders of the Cup, 59 Sqn were in no mood to surrender the title this year. The A team, ably led by **SSgt Brian Gillbanks**, put in a tremendous amount of effort and were rewarded with a well-earned victory (again by a single point) from 42 Sqn.

LORD LIEUTENANT OF MERSEYSIDE'S CERIFICATE

Our congratulations go out to **Sgt Mossy Mossman** who has been awarded the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside Certificate of Meritous Service

The Winning team. Back: Lt Col Somerville (CO)
Sgt Mossy Mossman, LCpl Colin Sawyer, SSgt Brian Gillbanks, Maj Miller (OC Sqn)
Front: LCpl Martin Elliot, Sig Paul Goulart

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col G Hearn**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D Newton**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj C Jones TD BSc**
A/SSM	**SSgt J Harkin**

REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE 2003

Once again it was the Regt's honour to organise this year's Remembrance Parade in Middlesbrough on Sunday 9 November. The Parade, with dets from *HMS Marlborough*, *HM Bark Endeavour*, Tyne and Tees Regt, Pioneers and Sea, Army and Air Cadets, was brought to attention by the Parade WO, **WO1 Kev Appleby** before being handed over to the Regt 2IC and Parade Comd, **Maj Graham Jennings**.

Led by the Regtl Band, Standard Bearers and Civic Dignitaries, the Parade marched to the Cenotaph for a Service led by the Bishop of Whitby. Silence fell following the Last Post as the crowd joined with thousands across the country remembering the sacrifices made by British and Commonwealth troops in all wars. It was particularly poignant, given the number of personnel from Middlesbrough who are currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Following a reading from the CO, **Lt Col Garry Hearn** and the laying of wreaths read by the Adjt, **Capt Harriet Hebblethwaite**, the Parade marched past with the 'Eyes Right' given by OC Marching Troops, **Maj Chris Jones**.

As always, the event ended with a reception held at Brambles Farm TAC, with guests including The Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire, High Sheriff, the Chief Constable and Mayor of Middlesbrough. The catering, provided by the RCWO **WO2 Neil Berry** and his team, was of the usual high standard.

The Regt and particularly HQ Sqn is very proud of their local connections with Middlesbrough. It is right and fitting that that they take part and lead the Parade every year. Long may this tradition continue.

49 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

SGT EASTWOOD GONE TO WAR

In the middle of my Class 1 Tech Course, when I was told by phone by my OC that I may be called up to go to the Gulf on OP TELIC1, I was both proud and worried. Along with hundreds of other soldiers, I reported to Chilwell on 22 February, not knowing what to expect. Upon successful completion of the prelims, it was off to Grantham for four days of lectures and ITD trg.

I was then sent to Germany to join up with 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, where we had a couple of useful days at Rheindahlen collecting some extra goodies from the QM's Dept.

Next stop was Kuwait City, where the weather was warm, but tolerable. After more lectures and admin, we moved up to Rear Ech, to be greeted by the SSM. After much discussion about trades and experience, I was assigned to 211 Sig Sqn, and transported by truck to SHQ - a hot and dusty journey, but nothing compared with future moves.

I was assigned to Diamond 7, the support element with the EDs and Linemen, and introduced to **Sgts Rodders** and **Struthers**, and the other 10 techs. They all seemed like a good bunch and it looked as though I was going to have an interesting time.

The day before the war started, we were just doing our normal daily routine when suddenly a missile flew overhead from North to South. It was so low, we could see the writing on it. We all cheered, but when we were told it was from Iraq, reality kicked in. The War had started, and just being there was an event I will not forget. I was in Diamond 1, the heart of Div HQ, and I heard the declaration first hand. We saw columns of vehs moving day and night, and we could hear the noise of artillery in the distance.

We went into loc and started setting up. When the sappers arrived, they started building a sand mound all the way around our loc. The JCB was no more than 20 metres away from us, and it had just turned nighttime, when suddenly there was a huge bang. We all looked up to see a display like fireworks, with brightly coloured bits of shrapnel flying everywhere. We heard 'Stand To!' and everybody grabbed their rifles and headed towards the bang. Somebody shouted 'Medic!' and I thought we were under attack. When we got to the source of the bang, there was a sapper sitting in his JCB cab. He had set off a bomblet from an American cluster bomb and it had taken a 25 cm chunk out of his bucket. Next day, the EOD people went around and found over 200 bomblets and a load of mines!

A couple of weeks later, it was over. 212 Sqn took over the role of Div HQ, while we went off to guard a Gas Oil Supply Pipe (GOSP) pumping station. We were to relieve the Irish Guards, who had been tasked to move up to relieve the Paras, so they in turn, could go further forwards. We spent 2 weeks guarding the pumping station, with people out on roving patrols in cut-down Landrovers or sitting atop oil tanks. Everybody was able to chill out a bit, and it was enjoyable apart from the heat, which was slowly getting hotter and hotter.

Next stop was Basrah International Airport (BIA), where we parked on the aircraft apron. We used local resources, such as desks and bookcases, to enable us to get Diamond 1 set up, then we set

Sgt Eastwood on the roof of Basrah International Airport

about cabling up for Ptarmigan, radnets and computer networks. This took 3 or 4 days before the Staff arrived.

At this stage, more TA Tech Sgts arrived from the ERV, so we ended up with 4 TA Tech Sgts and 1 Regular Sgt. We ran the SYSCON help desk, and helped out on the OSC when we could - which was also run by TA personnel.

Overall, I spent 10 weeks at BIA, and when we could we made use of the running routes and had fresh rations, it got more civilised, and I began to enjoy it to some extent. In the end, I was sad to leave and I wish I could have stayed out there longer - for a number of reasons, personal and professional. But I am glad to be back, and still think fondly of the people with whom I served.

745 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt K Holdstock**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Openshaw**

Our main event in August was the Tp Open Day to coincide with the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the Hull Branch of the RSA. The day went very well. **SSgt Terry Shiels** found his true vocation with the coconut shy, while, on Combat Corner, **Sig Paddy Bryant** and **Sig Doris Carlisle** had quite a following of 5- to 10-year olds for face-painting. **Sgt Clint Eastwood** and our newly promoted **Cpl Joanne Sanlon** made lots of cash with the Bowling Stall, and **Sig Dan Stead** sold hot snacks and drinks. A big thank you goes to **Mrs Sara Eastwood**, **Mrs Janet Carr** and my good lady wife, **Emma**, for organising the Tombola. The man with possibly the hardest job on the day was **WO2 Alan James**, who had to entertain the RSA members from the different Branches up in the bar. The day raised £145 towards our charity of the year, the Children's Ward at Hull Royal Infirmary, where we hope to refurbish a games room for the older children to aid their recovery.

After a quick change of dress, the Anniversary celebrations began with drinks in the bar and the Loyal Toast. We then moved outside on a warm summer's evening for a concert by the Regtl Band and the presentation of the Fifty Year Pennant to the Hull Branch by the President of the RSA, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle**. The evening was rounded off with more refreshments and a superb supper. Well done to **Sgt Stu Key** his two sons, **Daniel** and **Harry** and **Sig Dan Stead**, who fed 160 people on one hot plate - allegedly!

After a very late night, it was up with the birds and back to the Bks to tab 12 miles in practice for the Great North Run in September, the other part of our charity drive for the year. We thank the Yorkshire and Humberside TAVRA, and Tp and Sqn personnel for all their assistance in making the event a resounding success.

Finally, well done and congratulations to **2Lt Darrel McKerr** on being commissioned. As Tp 2IC, he will be writing the next wire notes.

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JD Bailey**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) JT Howe**

Having returned triumphantly from OP OCULUS, **Lt Karen Ford** has been welcomed back into the fold. **Karen** has taken over from **Lt Jo Barr** as Tp Comd for 742 Tp. We are not sure whether it will be she or the Tp that will have their hands full. Welcome back, and the best of luck with the new appointment.

After many years of sterling service to the TA, **SSgt Martin Clarke** and **LCpl Mel Nelson** have found the pressures of other commitments too much and decided to move on. Both will be missed. Memories are still vivid for **Martin Clarke's** 'Naked Chef' routine at Leeds TAC last year! A more recent newcomer, **Sig Mark Mansfield**, has also moved on by joining the Regular Army. We wish all those leaving the very best for the future.

Eagled eyed *WIRE* readers will have already spotted that one of the two key posts have changed in 50 Sqn. **WO2 (SSM) John Howe** as taken over from **WO2 Les Middleton**. **Les** has moved over to the Regtl Trg Team, and **John** has moved from the Trg Team to take over the SSM slot for 50 Sqn. Good luck to both with their new roles.

OPERATION TELIC

Our band of returning troops deployed on OP TELIC is growing. **Cpl Matt Graham** is now on his POTL, and has already been back in the JRC, and **Cpls Jenny Jones**, and **Mick Donovan**, and **Sigs Ronny Robson** and **Pat Hutton** have also returned safe and sound. The only soldier still on the ground is **Cpl Al Urwin**, who will be back soon. **Pat Hutton** has also made her triumphant return, complete with an entertaining presence, at a recent JRC social at Darlington. Welcome back home to you all.

GOC'S VISIT

On Sunday, 19 October 2003, during our ITD weekend at Whitburn Camp, the Regt hosted a visit from GOC 2 Div, **Maj Gen Parker**. A comprehensive and challenging weekend was put together by **Capt Keith Williams** and his band of merry men and ladies from 49 Sig Sqn. The GOC having already attended functions during the previous six evenings, arrived in surprisingly good fettle - probably running on autopilot. He seemed glad to be visiting a well turned out Regt.

GOC 2 Div, Maj Gen Parker presents WO2 Stimson with his WO2 rank slide

A brief by the CO, ably supported by his Comd Team, set the scene for the GOC, who then asked pertinent and thought-provoking questions. There followed a walk around the ITD stands, meeting the BFAT Instructors.

On completion of the trg and with the Regt gathered, the GOC addressed the troops. He explained his thoughts and vision for the future of the TA, showing a great deal of concern for those who had been recently deployed on OP TELIC, and asked for their views on how they had been integrated into the Regular Units they had been backfilled into. He listened intently to the thoughts of the soldiers, particularly **Cpl Copeland**, who took the opportunity to bend the GOC's ear in a very tactful and diplomatic manner. The proceedings were rounded off with the GOC bestowing promotions on **WO2 John Howe**, **WO2 Les Stimson**, the new SSM of 90 Sqn, and **Capt Keith Holdstock**, Tp Comd of 745 Tp. Congratulations to all on your well-deserved promotions.

EXERCISE SPECKLED JIM

Having lost our most recent Bde ex due to external pressures, our ever-resourceful Foreman, **SSgt (FofS) Dave Cook**, planned and executed a brilliant ex, based on a CCRF-type deployment. Initially based from our TAC to prove equipt and engineering, the Sqn deployed TN 035, a Central, RRR, and SAN 666. Once the system was proved, the moves began, and the SAN was off to Barden Edge, with the RRR and Central already being at Feldom Gate. The network quickly came back together. Although this ex was only for the Saturday, the Tps really threw their hearts into it, and all worked very hard. Once all the assets were back safely in the TAC, we donned our glad rags and let our collective hair down. **SSgt Carol-Ann Phillips** led the games, with Twister proving the most popular. On the Sunday before turning round the dets, and to blow away the cobwebs from the night before, **SSgt Mick Hodds** had organised a swimming marathon at the local baths. So at 08.00hrs, we found ourselves pounding back and forth, clocking up the lengths. **Capt Paul Denning** led the winner to believe that they would receive additional rations with their brunch on returning to the TAC. How wrong they were. A truly excellent weekend, well put together by our Regular Staff. We all enjoyed ourselves and came back asking for more.

90 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Richard Lenton**
SSM	**WO2 Stimson**

TEES VALLEY YOUNG ENTERPRISE LEADERSHIP DAY
- by SSgt Cassidy

This two-day event was held 14 and 15 October 03. It was aimed at school children from schools and Colleges in the Tees Valley area, with the express purpose of preparation and team-building for their Young Enterprise projects next year. **SSgt Cassidy** (SPSI), **SSgt (FofS) Tibbetts**, **Cpl Hope** and **Cpl Law**) devised the plan for the event.

The day soon arrived, everything was ready for the kids, and fortunately the weather forecast for the two days was dry - a great relief, especially with a hundred attending the event. Fortunately, the kids would be arriving at our stand in groups of ten, which was ideal for our Die Hard adventure. In this, they had to defuse a bomb by putting exactly 4 litres of water into a 5-litre container, using only one 5-litre and 2 x 1.5-litre bottles. The bomb was one side of a mined area, and the water on the other. Over the two days, we had various degrees of success and failure (even some of the teachers couldn't work it out) and one group succeeded using a method we had not even thought of.

SSgt Faulder wonders what to do with 5 blindfolded young women

Day two ran along a similar lines, but was attended the local press. Unfortunately for **Cpl Law**, they required a volunteer to be photographed with the children, and he was the only suitable candidate. So for the next five minutes, he was subject to much abuse by the onlookers.

Our thanks go to various organisations who attended the two days, Grange Town Fire Station, Redcar and Cleveland College and 104 PNR Sqn (V).

35th (SOUTH MIDLANDS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col CR Owen**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) RG Dalton**

WELCOME BACK

The autumn period is traditionally a very quiet period for the Regt, hence the short notes that cover just a couple of prominent activities. Before leading into these, all members of the Regt would like to extend a warm welcome back to our OP TELIC 2 and OP OCCULUS augmentees. Thankfully all arrived back safely, and they are now enjoying an extended leave with their families, no doubt sharing their considerable and life-changing experiences with them. It is reassuring to note that all are looking forward to returning to normal trg early in the New Year. It was also good to see the majority of them at the various Remembrance Service Parades throughout the Regt. It's good to have you back!

TRAINING ROUNDUP

The lull after Annual Camp was short lived when the Trade Training Camp started in earnest on 17 October and carried on until 26 October. Many of those who could not attend Annual Camp, including one or two recruits, took advantage of the trade

Sig Alan Stone of 58 Sqn getting to grips with his training instruction

trg to achieve either Class 3 or 2 status. The trg took place at the Ptarmigan Trg Centre in Donnington and embraced Radio Relay, Radio Op and Driver trg. This took advantage of the considerable instruction skills held by members of the TA, and the trg team was well balanced with both Regular PSIs and TA instructors, including **Sgts Mick Bell** and **Ken Barker**, who showed they knew more than a thing or two about operating radio systems.

The Regular element included **SSgt Gaz Eastlake**, who organised the Trade Trg, **SSgt Waggy Wagstaff**, who provided the Radio Relay instructional skills and **SSgt Spats Brodie**, for the Switch trg. Happily, the twenty-five who attended this trg, walked away with valuable qualifications that were fully utilised and confirmed on the Regtl plug-up ex in November.

Sig Sam Fulthorpe of 89 Sqn. Can you hear me Mum?

Remembrance Sunday took centre stage in November, and contingents from throughout the Regt paraded in local towns and cities, the principal one taking place in Birmingham. As expected, all parades were well represented by members of the Regt, including those who had recently returned from ops - which was very much to their credit.

The following week our orienteering team were making yet another assault on the Army Individual and Inter Corps Orienteering Championships at Pembrey Forrest, Wales. The team, composed of **Capt Tom Jeffries**, **Capt John Middler**, **LCpl Andy Price** and **Sig Ben Rankin**, acquitted themselves well, but past glories evaded them, except for **Ben Rankin**, who succeeded in becoming the Army U25 runner up. At the end of the month, **LCpl Andy Price** and **Sig Ben Rankin**, the only available runners from the Regt, entered the Inter-Services Orienteering and Regular Army v TA event at Guildford. Happily, they found themselves members of the TA team that beat their Regular counterparts. Well done! Talking of success, our intake of OCdts has improved dramatically under the guidance of our Adjt, **Capt Charlie Roberts**, who has taken a personal interest in their trg and development. The Regt shall begin to see the fruits

LCpl Marianne Meek laying a wreath at Rugby Memorial Gates

of his endeavours early in the New Year, when many will complete RMAS. However, it has not gone unnoticed that the female cadets outnumber their male counterparts, and these are now affectionately known as 'Charlie's Angels'.

Finally, we were pleased to welcome Comd 143 Bde, **Brig Andrew Meek**, when he made his farewell visit to the Regt on Tuesday, 18 November. During his visit, he presented the LS and GC Medal (Mil) to **SSgt (FofS) Mick Fawcett**, **SSgt Gaz Eastlake**, **Sgt Colin Bentley** and **Sgt Steve McPherson**. All are to be congratulated on receiving this special award. The Comd then chatted freely to all ranks before the Sgts' Mess surprised him with a special farewell presentation of the *Wallace and Grommet* Despatch Rider, leaving him somewhat speechless but delighted. All members of the Regt wish him well in his retirement.

STOCKING FILLERS

Well that time of year duly arrived again when the Christmas Spirit is stretched to the limit by the merciless repeated rendition of our so-called Christmas favourites over the radio, discos and karaoke. Thankfully, the Officers' Mess were spared this torture during the highlight of their social calendar, the Council House Dinner. This prestigious event took place on Saturday 29 November in the palatial surrounds of the City of Birmingham House. As usual, the event was very well organised by **Capt Dave Tarrant**. Special guests included the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Birmingham, **Cllr John** and **Mrs Deirdre Alden**, who were welcomed by the Hon Col, **Col Brian Foxon** and the CO, **Lt Col Calvi Owen**. During the evening, the award of Best Subaltern was presented to **Lt Paul Rodenhurst**, farewell presentations were made to **Maj Mick Boxall** and **Capt Janet Lawrence** and a

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NEWS FROM THE GULF

IRAQ VISIT – *by Bernard Redshaw, Editor*

I was privileged to visit Iraq for the last ten days in December to visit signallers deployed on OP TELIC. As with other visits, the purpose 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 our soldiers are operating in theatre and the conditions they are working under; and to highlight to the rest of the Corps their achievements. Sharing Christmas with them was an added bonus.

The programme was tight but flexible, and allowed me to visit and speak with personnel of all Royal Signals units and one NZ contingent deployed in theatre. My hosts were 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, based at Basrah International Airport (BIA), and I am grateful to their CO, **Lt Col David Hudson** for backing the visit and to 2IC CIS Sqn, **Capt Ally Lawson**, who designed the programme, liased with all contacts, made and checked all the arrangements and cleared the way to make everything work. My thanks also go to all ranks in theatre from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, 7 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt, 20 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200), 21 Sig Regt (AS) Det and the NZ contingent for the interest they showed, the help that they gave me and for the sheer enthusiasm they demonstrated for this visit.

As with my Balkans visit in August, space does not permit me to cover all of the people or places I visited, but the following gives a flavour of what I came away with. The material that I have not used will all be archived.

HEADQUARTERS ACCOMMODATION

Currently, ops rooms, HQ offices, etc, are housed in quite luxurious buildings, such as BIA, Basrah Palace and other Palace complexes in Um Qsar and Baghdad. In due course these buildings will be handed back to the Iraqi authorities, but for the moment they are well looked after by our troops. Parts not in use have been sealed off and cable runs have been made with the minimum possible damage. Buildings are protected from attack by large concrete blocks, some 2.5 metres tall.

The terminal building at BIA was constructed and the end of the 1980's, but because of the two Gulf Wars and the no-fly zones imposed between, it has never been used as a civilian facility. About the size of Heathrow Terminal 4, it has been built to very high specifications, with impressive Middle Eastern décor, including beautifully carved wooden and ceramic wall panels and highly decorated ceilings.

One of the two restaurants has been brought into operation and is used to feed most of the troops in location. But, because the sewage treatment plant is not yet in operation, temporary toilet and ablution blocks have been installed to the rear of the building. Electricity is supplied by large banks of generators in the same area.

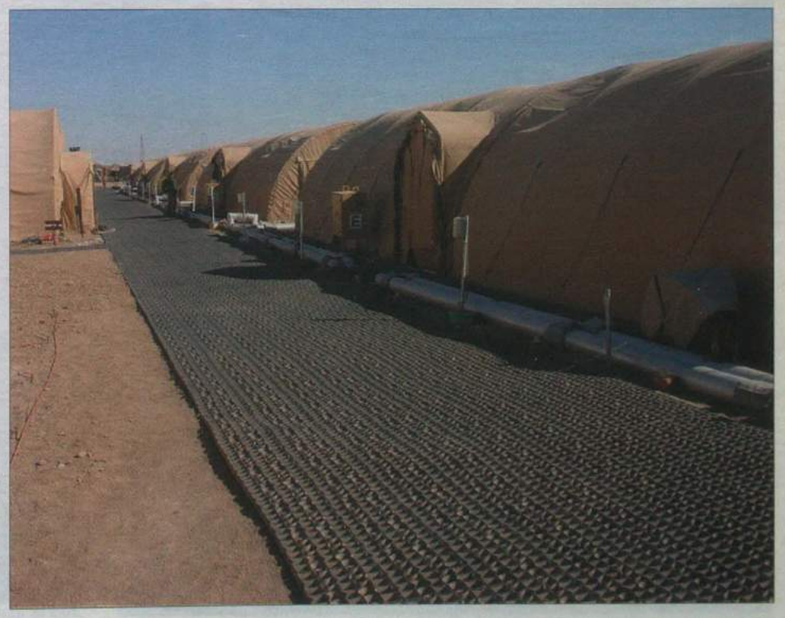
One of the lesser Basrah Palace buildings - currently housing 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn's QM Dept!

In Basrah City, 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn are currently operating in the spectacular Basrah Palace complex on the banks of the Tigris. Even the servants' accommodation here is quite luxurious, and a beautiful artificial waterway meanders among the many buildings on site.

LIVING ACCOMMODATION AND RECREATION AREAS

At BIA and Um Qsar, troops are accommodated in Temporary Deployable Accommodation (TDA) camps. These are doubled-skinned tent units with heavy polypropylene mesh floors, all linked together with doubled-skinned tented corridors. They comprise four-person sleeping units, ablution units, and recreation rooms, which include a well-equipped gym, an Internet centre and a TV/Video viewing room. Throughout, there is ducted air-conditioning/heating.

Adjacent to these units are flat, sandy sports pitches and the inevitable bar, where the two-can rule is strictly observed. At BIA, the *Baz Bar* has been improvised out of a combination



The TDA accommodation area at BIA

The Satellite umbrella in the Baz Bar

containers, canvas sheeting and cam nets. The seating has been provided from a crashed coach, and in one corner a sun umbrella has been fashioned from an upside down satellite dish 'liberated' from somewhere.

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

Showing the usual Corps flexibility, many signallers in theatre have, in addition to their normal duties, been doing tasks outside their normal trades. These have ranged from escort/force protection details, water patrols on the upper reaches of the Shat el Arab waterway, 'snatch' operations with infantry in Basrah City, to the many humanitarian projects, such as refurbishment of village schools and facilities. Many of the latter are part of the Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) programme carried out on behalf of the Dept for International Development (DFID). I was greatly impressed by the way that our soldiers were performing and their positive approach to the tasks, whatever they were. They are all upbeat and doing a great job.

Escort patrol duty on the way to Um Qsar

A YOUNGER SIGNALLER

Sig 'Massive' Harrison has been a soldier for only 16 months. The nickname comes from his being quite a slight individual. Hailing from Birmingham, he says that he has always wanted to join the Army. 'My dad, my step-dad and my granddad were all in the Army, and my uncle was in the RAF,' he says. 'And my step-dad was in Royal Signals. 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt is my first unit, and I'm very happy so far - more so to be on live ops.'

As we drove in convoy through Basrah City, I was greatly impressed by **Sig Harrison's** driving ability. For security reasons, we had to travel very fast, and we were doing up to 60 mph through dense and disorganised local traffic, having to keep within 20 metres of the Landrover in front of us. But his responses were excellent and his placement of the vehicle was perfect. When I asked how long he had been driving, he said since August (just four months).

As we approached some 3-storeyed buildings on our right, he warned our top cover crew to watch them carefully. 'Last week, we were shot at from there, Sir,' he said. Later, when I asked how he felt about be fired on, he said that he knew of the danger, but this had really brought it home to him. 'The training just kicked in, and we responded automatically. No-one was hit, but on reflection, it could have been worse. It was a reminder of what we are here for.'

Sig Harrison appears to be quite an active character. That evening, I noticed him taking his turn in *Baz Bar*, working hard and late to serve his mates. On Christmas Day, I saw him refereeing a table tennis match, and on Boxing Day playing and refereeing football. 'I've always loved sport,' he said. 'When I was fourteen, I was in trials for Birmingham City. During my Phase 2, I played a lot of table tennis at Blandford, and I used to play golf.'

When I asked him how he saw his future, he said quietly, 'I'm hoping for a good CR and then promotion. Just one step at a time.'

Sig 'Massive' Harrison

A TERRITORIAL OFFICER'S PERSPECTIVE

Maj Carolyn Murison, 94 (Berkshire Yeomanry) Sig Sqn is SO2 Visits, HQ MND (SE). She has served 8 years with the TA and is an environmental health officer in civilian life. She has been in theatre for 6 months, with 2 more months to go.

Since July, she has hosted 90 VIP visitors, among whom have been the House of Commons Defence Committee, **Rt Hon Geoff Hoon**, **Rt Hon Michael Howard** and **Helen Clark** (NZ Prime Minister).

'With everyone else so stretched on operational matters,' she asked herself, 'why an earth am I doing *this*?' But visits do have an important purpose. 'They can have a great deal of influence, if you get it right.' she says. 'Knowing what the VIP wants and what the Commander's objective is, are key.'

'I'm flat out all the time, but I'm having a ball,' she continues. 'I have heard so many briefs and have travelled so widely, I now know the country and the units so well I could become a battlefield tour guide.'

'Despite some of the comments to the contrary that we hear in the media, our soldiers are definitely doing the business here. You can see it all gradually coming together.'

Whilst flying over the area to the north of Basrah, I had noticed many crops growing under polythene sheeting. 'That plastic sheeting didn't get there as a matter of course,' **Carolyn** pointed out. 'It was the General's initiative. Whilst in consultation with local farmers, he became aware of the need, and quickly had tons of polythene sheeting flown in. Without it, this year's harvest would have been impossible. And this is just one of hundreds of small, but vital initiatives our soldiers have turned their hands to.'

She feels that the TA have been well received by the Regulars in theatre. 'About one third of my Sqn have been on OP TELIC. They bring useful outside skills to the job, and they have all done a good job.'

Maj Carolyn Murison hosting Gen Abizaid

THE LONE KIWI SIGNALS PRESENCE

Sgt Rax Worthy is, at present, the only RNZSigs soldier in theatre. An IS Op from 2 NZ Sig Sqn, he now doubles as a Rad Sys Op and Engr and is currently responsible for the strategic satellite rear link to NZ for the 51-strong contingent of Kiwi sappers and logisticians operating out of Fortress Lines, Basrah City. In addition, he looks after the local comms needs of the contingent.

Son of a serviceman (his father was in the RNZAF), **Rax** was born at Ohakea, the RNZAF's main base in the North Island. He has seen service in Bosnia and East Timor, some of which as an infanteer. He has been in theatre for 3fi months, with a further 4 months to go.

The sole signaller in the NZ team, he set up the satellite link by himself and has since trained a non-sig replacement in case he becomes a casualty. This also gives him the opportunity to join his colleagues on the extra activities they become engaged in: clearance patrols, escort duties and running the firing range. All in a day's work for your typical resourceful Kiwi.

'The facilities and the welfare provisions are good here,' he says. 'We fit in well with the Brits, although some of the things they do are strange. The food fight on Christmas Day was a bit weird – particularly after all the effort the cooks had put in.'

To show that he'd not been left out of the Corps family, **Lt Col David Hudson** arranged for **Sgt Worthy** to visit 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt at BIA. We hope he didn't find too many more 'strange things' going on amongst his Royal Signals cousins.

The resourceful Sgt Rax Worthy RNZSigs

CHRISTMAS 2003 IN BASRAH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
- by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

Despite operational demands, Christmas 2003 was celebrated in style in Basrah International Airport (BIA). The parts of airport building in use by the Army, and the adjacent tented accom lines all sported a wide variety of Christmas decorations, most of which had been sent out by BBC *South Today* viewers. Ops rooms and offices were strung with streamers and garlands and there were small Christmas trees on most desks. *Baz Bar* took on a very different look with its decorations. Pinned on a notice board in the main dining area were numerous Christmas Cards sent in from all over UK, with messages such as 'Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a safe return. From the mother of a serving soldier.'

At 16.00hrs on 24 December the resident padre conducted a service of six carols and six lessons in the main arrivals hall at BIA. More than 200 personnel from the three Services of all nationalities of MND (SE) turned up, as did the local Iraqi Radio, TV and press – the latter expressing much interest, but all keeping a respectful distance from the proceedings. Initially, the padre provided the accompaniment using his min-disk player through the Tannoy system, but the troops seemed to outstrip the music, so technology was abandoned.

Later that evening, there was a fancy dress competition at *Baz Bar*, with the theme of 'Heroes and Villains.' Great ingenuity was shown in the improvisation of costumes, and despite the official theme, most of had a Yuletide approach, ranging from Christmas trees to Santa's little helpers (complete with black fishnet stockings), to a variety of Santas in all shapes and forms. A fun evening was had by all, despite the mandatory 2-can rule.

Early on Christmas Day I accompanied Sqn OC, **Maj Simon Meadowcroft BEM** and SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Bob Low** on a visit to Signals outdets to deliver Christmas hampers (kindly supplied by Tesco). At the Shaibah outdet, we found **Cpl Berry** and his team all in good heart, despite the cold they had endured during the long desert nights. Perhaps the presence of the many nurses at the local BMH gave them the strength to endure such hardships!

The soldiers playing 'Race the Music'

Cpl Berry dives into his Christmas scoff box looking for booze

The soldiers scramble for their Christmas nosh....

....whilst the Officers frantically re-set the tables. L-R: Maj Simon Meadowcroft BEM, 2Lt James Caveen, Maj Guy Richards, Lt Euan Watson and 2Lt Marcus Speed

Back at BIA the seating in the dining area could cater for only about 120, and there were 600+ soldiers for Christmas Dinner. So a shift system was devised, with the Officers on hand to clean the tables as soon as they were vacated, and re-stock them with clean tablecloths, napkins and Christmas crackers. The chefs had done an outstanding job. As well as the traditional turkey, chipolatas, roast potatoes, Brussels sprouts and Christmas pudding, there was a wide choice of alternatives, including two giant *panettones* provided by the Italian contingent.

During the afternoon, there was a fiercely contended table tennis competition at BIA, which was won by the Corps' **Maj Richard Carter**, SO2 (Plans) J6.

After a light (very light) buffet supper, many soldiers gathered in the TV viewing area to watch **The Queen's** Christmas broadcast, before retiring to *Baz Bar* for their long-awaited two cans. For most soldiers, this was their first Christmas Dinner on operations. It was still a family event - albeit with a different family. But for many, their real families in UK had a deferred Christmas Dinner ready for them back at home.

Something big from Italy

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

MULTINATIONAL DIVISION (SOUTH EAST) HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col D Hudson**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) S Kelly**

Sometimes whilst a UK unit is part of a multi-national grouping, they change their title. On OP TELIC 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt became known in theatre as Multi National Div (SE) HQ and Sig Regt as will 16 Sig Regt who will replace them.

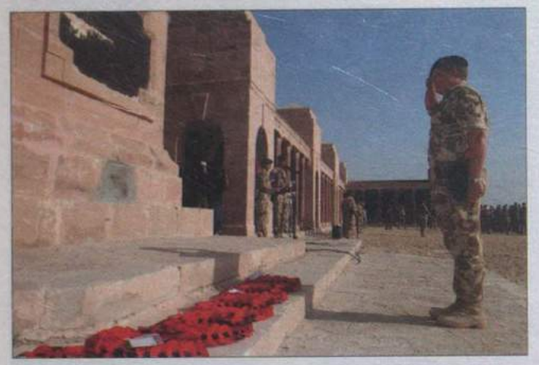
REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY IN IRAQ

On the morning of Sunday 9 November 03, personnel from units all over the South of Iraq set off for the Remembrance Sunday Parade at Shaibah Logistics Base. On arrival, we were pulled together into 3 ranks to reveal quite a sizeable turnout.

After some well-earned lunch it was back on the buses and the parade moved to the War Memorial west of Shaibah Logistics Base. **Maj Simon Meadowcroft BEM** laid a wreath on behalf of members of the Corps and this was later shown on Sky News.

It was a poignant moment when the names were read out of those who had died in recent operations in Iraq, highlighting the dangers we encounter here every day.

The parade went well, and after respects had been paid and many soldiers past and present had been remembered, the crowd dispersed to reflect on the day.



Maj Simon Meadowcroft BEM lays a wreath on behalf of the the Royal Corps of Signals at Shaibah War Memorial in Southern Iraq

CIS SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Simon Meadowcroft BEM**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Bob Low**

On 01 November 03 we grew by over 40% as **Capt Brian Kitchener**, late OC HQ Sqn, ran off to catch a plane home, leaving the comd of all the HQ functions to CIS Sqn. Anyway, the Sqn fights on, providing Comd Supt to **Maj Gen Lamb** and his staff. We welcome our new Foreman, **WO2 (FofS) Gary Pearson** and the Yeoman, **SSgt (YofS) Rutland** back from a short spell with 19 Bde at Basrah Palace. It shouldn't take long to pull him back onto the straight and narrow!

MAIN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Ewan Watson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Cheshire**

It has been an action packed period for those of Main Tp, who continue to refill the Burko Boiler in Diamond 1 with great courage and little regard for their own safety, frequently running the gauntlet of crazed Staff Offrs facing the unimaginable horror of no hot water for brews. Driven by the leadership of **Lt Watson** and the encouragement of **SSgt Cheshire**, the Tp has relentlessly vacuumed and taped things up in what must be one of the most hostile environments on the planet, a Divisional HQ.

A special mention must go to **Sgt Jim Lang**, who has successfully managed to administer a busy JOCS network and to **Cpl McLean**, who has worked hard with his team to improve the quality of Diamond 1 and protect us from the inevitable rain. Commiserations to **LCpl Delf** from the TA who has decided to go regular, as it's a better option than going back to his civvy job. Also, congratulations to **Sig Brooksbank** and **Sig Tyler** for being selected for promotion.

OSCA TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Marcus Speed**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Paddy Bickerstaff**

The last few weeks have seen the Tp increase in size with the introduction of the PMR (Private Mobile Radio) teams, headed up by **SSgt Burton**. With the role-out of PMR well underway, the PMR team and Force Protection Sec have been clocking up the miles throughout the Div's AO.

Sgt Simons enjoyed his time with TA soldiers in Iraq so much, he has been posted to 34 Sig Regt(V). With his departure came **Sgt Leach**, who appeared more than happy to volunteer himself to the BBC and *Western Daily Press* when they spent a week with the Tp in November. Over their stay, the media visited soldiers at deployed dets based at Shaibah Logistics Base and Al Amarah.

The Tp continues to provide and manage satellite comms over the south of Iraq and counts down the days until the 16 Sig Regt flag is raised.

AROUND IRAQ IN 60 DAYS - *by 2Lt Nic Berry*

As a 2Lt fresh out of RMAS, to find myself on ops in Iraq was quite daunting. With no direct responsibility for troops, I had a free reign to gain as many different experiences as possible from which I could draw upon in the future. I initially spent a few days at Basrah International Airport (BIA), which gave me time to meet the Regtl personalities at 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. From there, I was desert bound. First stop Al Nasiriyah, the home of the Italian Garibaldi Bde and the loc of my first victims, the OSCA Det, commanded by **SSgt Mark Carrick** and **Cpl Andy Cornfield**. The crew were more than happy to teach me about the equipt, most of which they had never seen before arriving in theatre, and they patiently answered my questions (and reminded me of them at a later date). Perhaps more importantly, in this relaxed environment I was able to appreciate the typical priorities of the tps whilst on ops, listen to their moans and groans and experience their hardships. My analysis concludes that food, Soccer AM, beer, posing for photos and pestering innocent individuals over the Internet are their primary concerns (am I right **Cpl Cornfield**?).

Escorting the BBC and Daily Press

To be fair, this Det had plenty to complain about. The ablutions were grim, the food was fair (but lukewarm pasta twice a day for 3 months can get anyone down) and the heat and dust was relentless, especially before the Italians invested in AC. Despite this, the morale was astonishing and the Det worked very well together and continued to bond with endless banter flying about.

After two weeks in the desert, I moved to the next loc, a place that was equally dusty, Shaibah Airfield. This vast airfield was about 5 miles across, and had been turned into an industrial estate full of kit. With the RLC on loc, the cookhouse served top quality grub, which gave the guys one less thing to moan about! There were two Royal Signals dets at Shaibah, the DSA OSCA Det manned by 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt and commanded by **Cpl Andy Ackers**, and BMH OSCA Det, which supported the field hospital with a crew from 7 Sig Regt, commanded by **Cpl Kirby** of 16 Sig Regt. As with the other OSCA Dets across the country, once all the kit had been set up, it was just a case of being on standby in case anything went wrong. Armed with Sky, DVDs, the Internet, a gym, Pizza Hut and suntan lotion, the guys managed to occupy their spare time quite effectively. Perhaps being in such close proximity to a host of nurses helped to maintain morale?

From Shaibah I was flown to Baghdad to visit the 7 Sig Regt troops at SBMR-I (Senior British Military Representative – Iraq). Baghdad was worlds apart from anything I had seen down south. There seemed to be a palace on every corner with marble and chandeliers everywhere you look. **Saddam Hussein** had certainly looked after himself in this region. Although at a glance you felt like you were in some exotic loc, there was a constant reminder in the form of gunfire to bring you back down to reality. These guys were always busy. Working in such close proximity to **Gen Sanchez** and his hierarchy, **Capt Caroline Woodbridge** and her team had become accustomed to hosting senior visitors. **LCpl Jones** and **Cpl Petch** were always in demand providing new telephone lines, I Net terminals and JOCS to personnel in the CPA and BSU (if they found time between rigging up their own personal entertainment systems!). For those lucky enough to get out and about on force protection jobs there was plenty to see: the Crossed Swords and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (both memorials to the Iraq-Iran war), **Uday Hussein's** lions and the ancient city of Babylon only 90km south. The north of Iraq is still more hostile than many areas further south. Whilst I was assisting **Cpl Petch** and **LCpl Jones** in constructing a microwave shot between the CPA and **Gen Sanchez's** villa, we witnessed the attack on the Baghdad Hotel and the mushroom cloud that it generated.

On my return to the Regt at BIA, I had the opportunity to complete EX GREASY MONKEY. This was a useful and fun ex with the purpose of giving me a better understanding of the work carried out in each of the support elements. I spent a morning in the Regtl Generator Bay, learning about servicing generators, but I'm sure that **Cpl Al Urwin's** sole intention was to get me covered in oil. That afternoon was spent with the LAD, helping with a twice-yearly on a Land Rover – amazingly I didn't break anything and the Rover is still on the road! I also spent time with the MT helping to service a DAF, and in the Tech Wksp, working through their inspection processes.

As a young Subaltern, you can on occasions be likened to a Butlins Red Coat. I found myself decorating the bar for Halloween, which included making Jack-o-lanterns out of watermelons and cyalumes, much to the bemusement of the Gurkhas from 30 Sig Regt.

After being exposed to a vast array of experiences and sigs equipt, and having generated a basic understanding of the needs of the tps I will eventually command, I am looking forward to developing my skills on my Tp Comds Course back in Blandford starting in November.

EXERCISE HOT WATER

EX HOT WATER was an opportunity for some members of the Regt to escape from OP TELIC for a few days and have a well-deserved amphibious ex.

Between 28 October-02 November 03, 12 lucky soldiers had the chance to go sailing on a 32ft yacht in Kuwait. The ex was split into two 3-day phases, with a crew of 6 personnel on each.

The usual sailing dangers of rocks, wrecks and other ships were there, but there were other hazards. Some of the beaches were rumoured to still be mined; anchoring was not possible because of underwater oil pipelines; and many zones could not be entered for risk of being shot at! The crews had to put their faith in the Skippers' nav skills, and managed to avoid any confrontations.

Packing the yacht away at the end of the day was certainly the least favourite part, but motivation came from the desire to get back to Camp Doha (the American base) and to the cookhouse which served every meal you could desire (and more!).

It being Ramadan, we had to wear long sleeved tops, so after a PX trip, the crew of Phase 1 headed to the yacht wearing identical blue tops, which some would say looked professional, but others would mistake the group for convicts on a prison day trip, with **2Lt Thompson** as the parole officer! The crew of Phase 2 looked more like a rap group with matching tracksuits, but they certainly got the attention of many American females!

The British Army respected Ramadan, so there was no eating, drinking or smoking in public, which meant that they had to return to harbour early to allow everyone to get enough nicotine in their system to survive the trip back to Doha!

The Phase 1 crew were: **2Lt Rachel Thompson** (Skipper), **Cpl Kev Hamilton**, **LCpl Matt Truman**, **Sig Lee Perry**, **Sig Scott Schofield** and **Pte Tony Weedall**.

Our voyage started with perfect conditions, clear blue skies and a good steady wind. We averaged 6.5 knots and managed to avoid a multitude of fishing boats that all seemed to aim for us!

Sig Schofield, LCpl Truman, Cpl Hamilton, Sig Perry, Pte Weedall

Pte Weedall when not worshipping the sun, was a good helmsman and had the yacht surfing until his mind wandered elsewhere and the yacht followed! **Sig Schofield** chose an alternative strategy, attempting to get every wave to break over the boat. **LCpl Truman** immediately bonded with the ocean and never looked back. As the sun was setting, we returned to the harbour, soaking wet, but with tales of adventures at sea.

Cpl Berry, Sig Cooper, Cpl Cornfield, Sig Mullen, Cpl Philips

On their second day, the skills learned the previous day were put to the test. Gusting 30 knots, it was the strongest wind Kuwait had recorded in months. A superb day's surfing was had, flying backwards and forwards between the fishing boats. We achieved a speed of nearly 8 knots - close to breaking the yacht's speed record.

The final day included revision and testing of the skills learned over the past 2 days. We had improved a vast amount, and even coped excellently with the fog that prevented us seeing land.

The Phase 2 crew were: **2Lt Rachel Thompson** (Skipper), **Cpl Richie Berry**, **Cpl Andy Cornfield**, **Cpl Adam Phillips**, **Sig Ben Cooper** and **Sig Wes Mullen**.

Luckily the wind remained for Phase 2, with another 3 days of excellent sailing in store. The average age of the crew decreased by 15 years and 'the boyz' came on board complete with matching tracksuits! Being Halloween, it was never going to be a quiet day. **Sig Mullen** created a steady rocking motion which became too much for **Sig Cooper**, who became the first (and only) crew member to dispose of his lunch (and his Oakleys) into the sea.

After a good introduction day, returning to harbour was a little more eventful, because the engine failed when we were trying to manoeuvre the yacht into its berth. With great crew work, and using wind and muscle power we avoided the rocks, most other boats and found a berth.

The second day was hotter, with the crew becoming hardened to the waves, and an enjoyable day was had by all. All had a go at helming, except **Cpl Phillips**, who had a cunning plan of always having a can of Coke in his hand when there was a change of helm, or he was sleeping! Returning to harbour was once again eventful due to the unusually strong wind, which was greater than the power of the small engine. This resulted in the fire hydrant at the end on the jetty getting knocked and water started spraying out everywhere! Luckily there was no long-term damage to the yacht or the fire hydrant.

The final day proved to be an example of perfection in many ways. We left the harbour without being able to use reverse, but excellent teamwork and ropes were used to swing the yacht to glide effortlessly away from the pontoon. The Genoa (sail at the front) didn't quite go up as planned, as **Cpls Cornfield** and **Mullen** had attached it upside down!

EX HOT WATER was a great success and hopefully the first of many op stand down exs to Kuwait. All personnel returned to Basrah having had a phenomenal time, and feeling refreshed and ready to continue with the final months of their tour. An information pack has been put together to be passed onto 16 Sig Regt and 20 (Armd) Bde HQ and Sig Sqn to allow them to organise similar exs.

257 SQUADRON (3 (UK) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT (REAR))

OC **Maj Nick Range**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Bruce**

It has been a busy period it has been for 3 Div Sig Regt Rear Party. We have seen exercising in Canada, a busy trg schedule back in camp and elements steadily flowing into and out of Iraq. It has also been hectic in terms of people posted in and out of the Regt. Amongst those we bid a fond farewell to are: **SSgt McGuinness**, **Sgt Lythe**, **Cpl Fazackerley**, **LCpl Elcock** and **LCpl Rudkin**.

The deployment in Iraq has been a fantastic opportunity for the majority of the Regt to gain valuable op experience. Many have been rotated though theatre, providing a chance to put learning into practice – not to mention the added bonus of saving plenty of money and leave!

With time available to undertake quality trg in bks, there have been several activities of note. The Leadership Week organised by **Lts Bennett** and **Chamberlain** was a complete success. Enjoyable and challenging, it allowed members of the Sqn to develop their skills and display their true mettle. **Cpls Masters** and **Mundy** also put together some excellent trg packages: one weeklong course conducting Class 3-2 upgrades, and another week covering driver trg.

With personnel spread to the four winds, the only element of continuity holding everything together has been **WO2 Bruce**. He has kept things ticking over nicely for the newly appointed Sqn OC, **Maj Nick Range**. Having fully exercised 257 Sqn in BATUS, he is sure to have plenty of fun in the New Year, playing with his new train set!

Looking forward, the Regt will begin to return to normal early next year, with the reformation of 206 Sqn in January and 202 Sqn in March. It will then be crucial to hit the ground running as we embark on a busy 2004, packed full of activity, trg and Bowmanisation. It will also be a period of much-needed consolidation and focus, following a turbulent OP TELIC-dominated 2003. Here's to a happy New Year!

20th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj SJP Spiers**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) ACE Burge**

The Sqn has now taken over the reins at Basrah Palace, on OP TELIC 3. Life is hectic, but tasks are being taken in to our stride as we pass the one-month point of our tour. The troops are glad to be on the ground doing the job they have trained for. The comms tps have been renamed Tigris and Euphrates, giving a bit of local flavour. The articles that follow offer a snapshot of the life here at the sharp end of the Corps.

A LIFE LESS THAN ORDINARY

Six months of doing the same job day in day out, is always going to get tedious, as the soldiers of 200 Sig Sqn were finding two months into OP TELIC 3. So when a battle group op needed an extra two multiples of personnel at short notice one night in December, there were plenty of volunteers. Initially, there were very few details about the op, but two multiple comds, **SSgt Daz Kidd** and **SSgt Alfie Alford** were selected and they quickly gathered 11 other men each. **2Lt Rob Foster** was also involved, liasing with the 1 RRW BG. Ably assisted by **Sgt Mickey Piper** and **Sgt Giff Giffen**, they set about getting hold of as much kit and equipt as we would need for the op. After lunch, 6 Minimis and 2 GPMGs had appeared, along with smoke grenades, para-illum flares and mini flares. Each soldier was issued a PRR and a load of extra cylumes. After preparing our kit, we jumped into 4 Landrovers and the 24 of us arrived at Shaibah Log Base at around 18.00hrs. There was a lot of activity there, so we quickly found ourselves a tent and some food and waited to be briefed. The BG orders went on for some time, and **SSgts Kidd** and **Alford** were dragged off to receive their orders. By the time they had been fully briefed, they had only 20 minutes to brief us on the op, all using aerial photographs. We would provide two outer cordons, while the company that we were attached to would carry out a search and lift op. No sooner had the last word been said than, at 01.00hrs, we were in our vehs, heading toward the objective in a massive convoy.

The Coy Comd stopped us short of the objective, we dimmed the veh lights then moved in. Suddenly, we all de-bussed and were swarming all over a factory complex. Using skills that we learned in Tin City back in Sennelager, we moved into our cordons, linking in with each other and teams from RRW. Although it was pitch black, there was enough ambient light to make out the factory buildings and a few houses. A pack of dogs started barking and

LCpl Clarke and Cpl Crutchley getting ready for combat

moved very close to my team, which made it a little difficult to concentrate on the job in hand! Around us we could hear the multiples from RRW moving in and out of the buildings, but it was surprisingly quiet and there was no gunfire at all - something I had not expected. After a couple of hours, the search multiples withdrew to their vehs, and then we pulled our cordons out, departing back to Basrah Palace. We got back at around 05.00hrs, ready to tell our tales of heroism to the rest of the Sqn.

Although our part in the operation might not seem much to those who do this work all the time, to us it was a real change, a chance to do something different and a chance to see what happens at the sharp end of the Bde.

CHRISTMAS 2003

Two months into the tour and life was settling down nicely. And then along came Christmas and changed everything. This week we have had the whole festive lot; carol services, Santa hats, gunfire (tea laced with rum, not bullets), Christmas dinner and the biggest food fight you have ever seen.

Both missing their family Christmas, Maj Simon Spiers and Nell McAndrew from CSE commiserate together

The Christmas period proper started on 23 December, when a carol service was held upstairs in Bde HQ. The Master Chef provided a few jugs of mulled wine to lubricate our throats and a few mince pies for energy. A BBC film crew turned up to record the event and videoed **Capt Hannah Stoy** singing an amazing solo introduction to *Once in Royal David's City*. Unfortunately, the cameras stayed on long enough to catch **Cpl Mark Langley**, **WO1 (RSM) Taff Burdge** and **Maj Simon Spiers** bravely singing solo verses to *We Three Kings*. Maybe they hadn't drunk enough mulled wine.

On Christmas Eve a short midnight service was held by **Padre David Kingston**, again with mulled wine to raise our spirits. That service was ended with a quick burst of *Happy Birthday* for **Cpl Stu Storey**, who shares a birthday with Jesus.

Christmas Day started at 06.30hrs when the Offrs, WOs and SNCOs woke up the rest of the sqn with more 'gunfire'. Needless to say, this kind gesture was not well received by everyone, especially so early in the day. After a slow morning of opening presents and relaxing, the Sqn moved to the cookhouse for a traditional Christmas lunch, served by the Offrs and SNCOs. The RSM briefed the 300 or so soldiers (mostly wearing Santa hats) on the standard of behaviour that he required and then the food was served. Shortly after the main course of turkey and veg was served, a few sprouts, potatoes and stuffing balls began to fly around the room. Within minutes the meal had descended into a hail of food, all captured by the BBC film crew and shown on the news, live! The news reporter even caught a mince pie in the side of the head. After lunch, the Sqn had a relaxing afternoon playing potted sports while the seniors and (some) officers did their jobs for them.

If you have to spend Christmas away from home, this isn't a bad way to spend it.

CHRISTMAS DAY IN BASRAH - *by Sig Riley*

Instead of opening my presents at 08.50hrs on Christmas morning, I was sprinting towards the cookhouse with my Santa's hat pigtails sailing behind me. I prayed it was a joke, or rather a strange dream, when **Sgt Mickey Piper** woke me up to tell me I was on the news in ten minutes. Alas, I found myself in the kitchen of Basrah Palace cookhouse, live on the BBC News at 06.00hrs GMT. I can only hope everyone in the UK was safely tucked up in bed dreaming of Santa as I was making an idiot of myself on national TV. After my dazzling performance, I shuffled back over the bridge to my room in the palace, which I share with 11 other girls.

There was plenty of Christmas spirit when I returned to find **Sig Brea Lane** and **LCpl Katy Griffith** laden with gifts and Christmas goodies, which they had gathered from under our festive tree. We opened all our presents from home and from 'Secret Santa', and looked forward to the day ahead, as all of the seniors had taken over our jobs for the day. **YofS Winstanley** found himself wearing a headset once again! After we had stuffed ourselves with as much shortbread and mince pies as possible, we donned a variety of Christmas headgear and nimbly dodged the leftover and unwanted cups of 'gunfire' from earlier that morning (which most had failed to get up for). Then we headed down to the cookhouse again for our much-anticipated Christmas lunch.

The cookhouse was packed and morale was high as the HQ 20 Bde Offrs and SNCOs, looking extremely seasonal in their tinsel and hats, served our lovely tomato soup. Those of us who had experienced a Christmas meal in the Army before, knew that it was too much to ask for the meal to go without a hitch, and tried to warn our new arrivals from various TA units that it may not be exactly civilised. **Pte Debbie Large** laughed this off and continued to eat her Brussels sprouts, only to screech in disbelief as mashed potato found its way onto the side of her head. This

Hungry soldiers queue for Christmas Dinner

battle progressed into all out war, however, when **Sig Grant Malcolm** decided that enough was enough and launched his plate into his enemy's lap. At this point, nobody was safe, and a barrage of veg flew from one side of the room to the other. People cheered and screamed as blow after blow of mince pie rained down from the heavens. The BBC cameraman and presenter, for whom we were told to 'be good', cowered in a corner trying to protect their precious equipment.

And so we left, weary from our efforts (and all the eating) into the warm sunshine of Iraq on Christmas day. I think the most disappointing thing about the whole day was that I looked like I had been shot, I had so much cranberry sauce on my back (but there was none to be seen on my turkey! Never mind) With so many of us missing home, a lot of effort was made to make the day as enjoyable as possible and I'm sure many will agree it was one to remember. So thanks very much and Merry Christmas!

TECHS ON PATROL – *By Cpl Storey*

'**Cpl Storey**, it's your turn to go on patrol today.' With these words I was sent off to the patrol cell at Basrah Palace to find out what I was destined to do today. I was filled with excitement but also trepidation as to what lay ahead.

After our security briefing and orders, we went off to the jetty, where we loaded up and awaited our transport. A Norwegian boat crew turned up with a small speedboat, and soon I was cutting through the Shatt al Arab, zipping along with the spray hitting my face. It was exhilarating as the thrill boosted the adrenalin already surging through my veins. After scything through various waterways, we came to a halt and it was disembarkation time. We jumped from the boat and got into defensive positions. It was quite eerie to think that after various trg scenarios we had practised back in camp, this was it. Here the enemy were not your mates - they were real, and could kill you!

We adopted a 'soft posture' stance, which meant we did not wear helmets. This gives a less menacing appearance to the locals, but also means you have to keep your wits about you at all times. And I was tail end Charlie in my fire-team! We patrolled through small shanty towns of wattle and daub huts, gleaning intelligence from the locals, who appeared friendly. It was like going back 300 years in time; families lived with their livestock, no power, and no clean water, some with not even a roof over their heads. But they seemed happy with their lot. In the times of Saddam, they were not allowed to live in the fertile land across the river. Compared with that, no electricity is something you can live with.

After an hour of patrolling, we came across an armed Iraqi. We got down into defensive positions and sent a 2-man team to check him out. I was relieved when we found he was just hunting ducks with a homemade rifle. Further along, we came to the MSR from Iran to Iraq, an area where drug and gun smuggling is prevalent. Being still Ramadan, it was quiet. Despite all that has happened in this country, the marshland had tranquillity about it. It was like a nature reserve, with Kingfishers flitting around, various wading birds, birds of prey and some form of water buffalo grazing in the waters.

After two really quick hours, the patrol was nearly over, and my pockets were now empty after giving sweets to the local children. The Norwegians picked us up, and it was back to the war-ravaged place of the 21st Century. It was my first patrol but certainly not my last.

MY FIRST MONTH IN IRAQ – *by Sig Christie*

I was filled with a mixture of excitement and apprehension prior to my flight to Iraq, mostly apprehension though. During the flight, all the lights were turned off for the landing in Basrah, creating a feeling similar to that of when you move into a harbour area at night. The heat hit us straight away. It was night, but it was still in the high thirties - for a Scotsman this is highly unnatural. We were transported to Shaibah Log Base, where I would spend almost a month working at the regulating HQ driving the LO for 19 Mech Bde. Conditions in Shaibah were not exactly luxury, but considering how long the camp has been there they have made a good job of improving it.

Within a week, temperatures started to drop, and at night the hot weather sleeping bag was soon not enough to keep you warm. A D and V outbreak upset Sqn plans for the move to Basrah Palace, but the hitch was only temporary and the show was back on the road soon enough.

When driving in Iraq you never know what the road is going to throw at you next, a donkey, an abandoned tank, or any number of strange items that seem to end up blocking the road. Working with me were **Sigs Raku-Evans** and **Drew Huxter** (who seemed to suffer from a new ailment almost daily). When I finally arrived at the Palace, everyone was already into their routine, so there was no time to waste and I was put to work immediately. My first job was working a thirteen-hour night shift in the HQ, where my main task is manning the COMMCEN. I also have other tasks, which include patrolling. Let's hope that proves to be an interesting experience. My first impressions of Iraq are that a lot needs to be done still, and I hope to see a lot of it done before I leave in April.

Cpl Sandra Storey remembers that she hasn't taken her seasick pills

A DAY WITH THE QRH - *by Cpl Lane*

I was initially deployed up to the Shatt Al Arab Hotel, north Basrah, to work as liaison between the QRH and 200 Sig Sqn. The idea was that I would be useful for the installation of the new Synergy and INET Comms systems.

That was 2 weeks ago! Since then, I have been working closely with the RSWO QRH, working as his 'right-hand man' for all sorts of comms related problems – from setting up network printers to re-building laptops, to TacSAT lessons and working out a call sign matrix.

My average day starts at 07.45hrs and usually doesn't finish until 22.00hrs. Once the QRH found out there was a comms guru on site, my in-tray trebled! But I have to say that I am loving the experience. It is great to see comms from a non-Signals perspective. Not that this means I am neglecting my other duties. I have been out regularly on comms recces, patrols, and I also do armed escort duties. The days are long, but very rewarding.

I feel very lucky to have been given this opportunity, and would recommend this to anyone. My personal thanks to the YofS for releasing me from the Sqn to do this, and thanks also to my new friends at QRH for letting me see how they do things their way.

19th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj GW Wilson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) SA Gorton**

ON THE PALACE IN THE SAND - *2Lt Chatman*

It has been a unique deployment for 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) to a volatile and hostile Basrah, during some arduous climatic conditions. The Sqn has provided an enlarged Bde HQ with an AO that stretches over 300km (the equivalent distance from the Humber Bridge in Hull to Tower Bridge in London) and this has made for some very interesting comms planning. To list just some of the comms packages that we have been responsible for: CNR and Ptarmigan are the best known of ten. TacSat, Vsat, GSM mobile phones, Sat phones of various disguises, TALON, DAGGER, are all new strings to the Sqn's bow as it has quickly adapted to its diverse role.

An overview of comms in the desert

Even Ptarmigan hasn't been used in its usual guise, with the birth of the PERRV (no that's not a typing error) it stands for Ptarmigan Enhanced Radio Relay Vehicle. In short it is a standard box body that has been refitted so that it provides the services of SAS/MC and radio relay in one. It is the first time that it has been used, and its crew should be proud of all their achievements in maintaining the critical comms link.

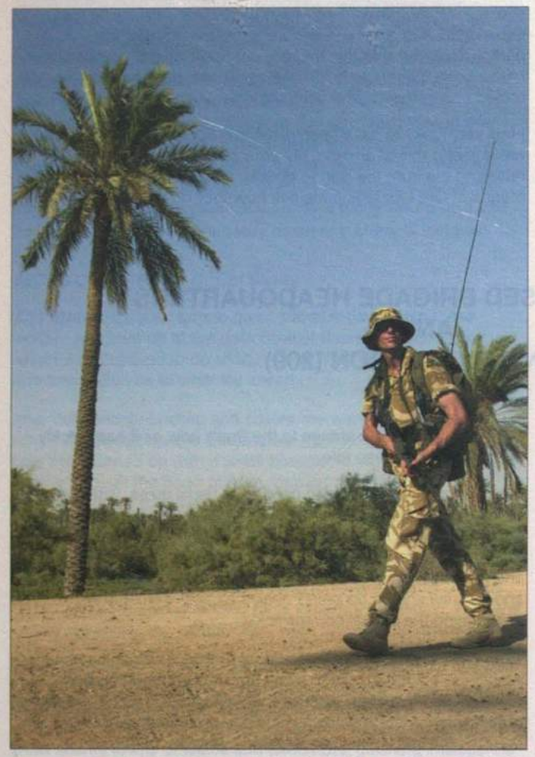
Then there has been the Operational Strategic Comms Architecture (OSCA), which some may have encountered on previous deployments, such as the Balkans. It is a static, secure trunk system that provides a voice and data capability all the way down to BG level. This has required a number of the Sqn to undergo specific trg in its operation, management and the provision of satellite links.

The latest arrival to the party is project SYNERGY, a commercial infrastructure that will provide the AO with permanent secure voice and data on varying levels of precedence down to coy level. This is completely new to the Sqn, and has taken some getting used to. Miles of cable have been laid, and a patch plan so complicated it could send you cross-eyed, are two of the many tasks that have had to be completed.

'Soldiers first and tradesmen second' is a cry from all DS at every basic trg establishment, and this has been particularly true for the Sqn during OP TELIC II. Daily foot, boat and veh patrols have required every member of the Sqn to sharpen their infantry skills in order to accomplish the additional tasks that we have acquired.

Cpl Cater on water patrol

With hearts and minds as the focus, it is very sobering to see the conditions that the local population endure, and heart warming to meet the excitable younger members of society. Indeed the Sqn has even taken on the task of teaching the Basrah River Patrol the fundamentals of weapon handling and marksmanship.



A foot patrol radio op

Throughout this article there are a number of references to 'the Squadron', but this is no ordinary Sqn that has deployed to Allsopp Lines. Back in Catterick, 209 Sig Sqn is roughly 130 personnel strong; currently, it is bolstered by TA personnel to over 240. It has been a seamless integration and it is a credit to everybody that the operational effectiveness and capability has been unaffected by the influx of personnel with varying degrees of experience and trg.

OSCAR'S BAR - *by Sgt Billiard*

After moving to Allsopp Lines, and settling into downtown Basrah Palace, it soon became apparent that there was nothing resembling a chill-out area for all to use.

Cpl Eddy Grant thought up a plan to develop a disused area of land into a small patio area for recreation. The hierarchy approved the plans and OSCA Tp had won the contract! Under the lead of **Sgt Bill Billiard**, the small area was cleared of foliage and levelled. PT became a morning and evening ritual of lifting and moving paving slabs (by the 100's) from one side of the palace grounds to our new chill out-area, much to the enjoyment of all involved, especially **Sgt John Giddens**!

The slabs were laid, and all was looking good until **SSgt Paul Beattie** decided that the small task should now become a major project. PT increased, and 1,275 slabs later, the now bronzed and muscular men of OSCA Tp sat back to enjoy the grand opening of the patio bar, barbecue and projector screened area. With the garden furniture bought, lighting installed, cooler boxes in, a sign mounted and a 2-can rule in place, all of the Sqn had a great evening. Oscar's bar was well and truly open - but for how long?

Oscar's Bar Opening night

CHARITY WORK - *by SSgt Sullivan*

Not content with just providing state of the art comms, quality life support for thousands, building our own bar and endless patrol and escort tasks, the Sqn decided to dedicate itself to helping others. With all of the force protection measures in place, it can sometimes be easy to forget why we are here and the importance of hearts and minds. Three major projects have been undertaken and many more have been supported in varying ways.

During the reign of Saddam Hussein, the British War Cemetery in Basrah was desecrated and the gravestones of our fallen servicemen from both World Wars were destroyed or discarded. Many of them were extensively damaged, although some survived, bearing only the scars of erosion from decades of fierce temperatures. Under the scorching sun, members of the Sqn spent a day recovering headstones, memorials and tablets. Due to the loc of the cemetery, a full force protection team had to be used to secure the area and keep the local population at bay. The plan is that when the political situation has calmed down, the cemetery will be restored to its former glory. With tireless assets from Spt Tp ferrying to and from all day, HQ Tp controlling the locals and members of the Bde Staff chipping in, the rewarding objective was complete. Special mention goes to **Capt Lumley** for his sterling work with the press, **Cpl Watson** for his JCB work (don't mention the flat tire though) and **Sig Stone** for her interaction with the local children.

LCpl Carvell doing her bit to win hearts and minds

MONEY FOR OLD MONEY

The TA has brought many hidden talents with them, and **Cpl Brannigan** is such an example. In the UK he is a self-employed coin dealer, and this turned out to be a useful profession in the Gulf. When he discovered that there were one hundred and twenty tonnes of now worthless and obsolete Iraqi coins in storage, he devised a plan to sell them to a UK coin dealer and then return the profits to the local community. A simple plan, I hear you cry, but, as we well know, no plan survives contact with the enemy. After finding tpt the two full ISO containers from central Basrah to Kuwait, all 2,500 very heavy bags of coins had to be manhandled in scorching daytime temperatures. Even when the transport reached the Kuwaiti border, there were still more hurdles to cross - and the toughest had been saved till last. For obvious reasons, the Kuwaiti authorities were dubious about moving Iraqi money out of their country for profit, but with some fast-talking from the British Defence Attaché, the waters were smoothed. Finally a cheque for $5,010 (£3,000) arrived, which will be split between the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and local Basrah charities.

Over 700 mattresses have also been donated by the Sqn to the local population of Basrah. They have been distributed by the Basrah Province Interim Advisory Council Humanitarian Aid Committee, headed by **Sheik Ra'ad Gubashi**. They will be passed on the orphanages around the city.

Bad money is put to good use

THE US 5 CORPS BAND VISITS BASRAH PALACE
– by Sig McArthur

One day during the month of September, a rumour spread around the Bde that a band would be playing that evening. Chairs started to be arranged in great numbers on the sun-scorched front lawn of Bde HQ, and during the late afternoon, the band started to set up for their performance. The instruments sat in the fading sunlight, waiting for their owners to pick them up and start playing. The chairs filled up rather slowly, and it seemed as though all the hard work and effort put into the event was going to be wasted.

But after sunset, people started emerging like creatures of the darkness, getting themselves ready to party. The band started with a lively piece of classical jazz, which people slowly began to accept. The style of the first half included some **Sinatra** greats amongst a mostly jazz, classical and salsa-style collection. People were now laid back and relaxed in their chairs. The band had won the Bde!

The second half started with a few lively disco anthems, which gave most people the feeling to get up and dance. After a few modern rock and rap songs, the crowd was opening up and enjoying themselves. Continuing with *Eminem*, *AC-DC* and *Linkin Park*, the band were giving it their all. With some more great performances and crowd participation in the dance contest, the night was nearing an end. Towards the end of the show, Frisbees were thrown to the crowd causing quite a stir amongst the already excitable audience! These blue plastic discs were being fought over as though they were made from solid gold, or at least **Sig Courtney-Wyllie** thought so as he rose from his seat to snatch one from the sky.

The band played for over three hours, and still managed an encore for the now adoring crowd. After all the initial cynicism, the evening was hailed as a great success amongst the ranks. All those who attended would welcome the American band back anytime.

THE CSE SHOW – *by Sig Cooper*

With an air of excitement very much like the Circus coming to town, the CSE show brought its very own magic and anticipation - although I am sure it was the dancers that caused most of the stir. Their selected venue for the performance was Shaibah Log Base, normally known for being dusty, and only worth visiting if you have the ten dollars to go to *Pizza Hut*. The comedian put in a solid performance, with a blend of playground humour and various impressions. The ventriloquist was full of squaddie-level jokes and his talent ensured that his target audience was reached. **Lucy Silva** and *T40* impressed with their take of modern hits, and the dancers did not disappoint the eager crowd. In summary, everybody had an outstanding night and left buzzing with praise. People will do anything to break up their normal routine.

LCpl Cater meets Lucy Silva, the girl of his dreams

HQ OSCA TROOP - *by LCpl Whitelaw*

OSCA Tp have had a recent management re-shuffle. The Tp Comd, **Lt Taylor**, is supported by **SSgt Beattie, Sgt Brotherstone, Sgt Bland** and **Sgt Evans** (who is now in Bosnia). **Cpl Quinn** remains Tp Cpl. We currently have 5 out-dets, with the remainder regularly conducting re-sups and FRT support to allow the dets to continue to provide an outstanding service. The Tp is 50% TA, all of whom have provided essential support, be it Techs, Inst Techs or RS Ops.

OSCA Tp has undertaken a multitude of tasks in the last few months. OSCAR's Bar is nearly complete, with a new high-tech fencing system which can actually stop wind, thus keeping the bar area nice and warm for when it gets cold! Cementing in a new set of steps and constructing a pair of large wooden swords (replica of the ones on the gates of Baghdad) to hang over the door, has shown the diversity of OSCA Tp. With the aid of 38 Engr Regt, our DVD film nights have been enhanced with a huge screen at the back of the bar.

1 KINGS REGIMENT DETACHMENT – *by Cpl Lyon*

Having returned from ops with 1 Para, to the Palace from Al Amarah, **Sig McArthur** and I, **Cpl Lyon** were tasked to 1 Bn Kings Regt, located at the Shatt Al Arab Hotel, Basrah. Our task is to carry out troubleshooting on various comms equipments, including TacSat and SCRA(T) facilities. We are currently carrying out shift duties with 30 Sig Regt and maintaining a 501 link to the rest of the Bde and other units in theatre.

The facilities at the hotel are very good. We have full working ablutions, Internet and phone access, Sky TV, Gym, Shop and a big morale boosting swimming pool. The mail and other re-sup

OSCA Tp ready to take on the world

requirements are brought to us on a weekly basis by the Tp re-sup team headed up by **Sgt Bland**. We are now looking forward to getting back to Catterick for some well-deserved rain. On that note, it's farewell from the poolside…

1 QUEENS LIGHT REGIMENT DETACHMENT – *by LCpl Aktash*

1 QLR BG is situated in the old Ba'ath Party HQ in Basrah. I knew it had been bombed during the air campaign during the war, but its not until you get inside the camp that you realise the damage that has been done, and the accuracy. All the key buildings have been destroyed, and some still have unexploded bombs inside. If you stand on the roof of the main building and look down, there is an almost perfect circular hole on every floor were a JDAM blasted through to the bottom.

1 QLR are tasked with the job of conducting security and stabilisation ops to set the conditions for Iraq to become a stable, self-governing state. So, as you can imagine, there is a lot of work involved, and the Ops room gets very busy. Working with QLR, we have acquired a good knowledge of the local situation and the various tribes.

DANISH BATTALION DETACHMENT – *by Cpl Holroyd*

'Bacon and blonds,' they said. We arrived at Camp Eden (named for its close proximity to the original Garden of Eden) on 20 June 03, to be greeted by sand, tents and some very happy members of 7 Armd Bde. The original team consisted of myself, **Cpl John Quinn**, **Sig John Canning** and **Sig Stu Ions**. After a rapid four-hour handover, we were left to our own devices supplying three satellite links back to Bde HQ (via UK!). The accn and the TOC (Tactical Operations Centre) tents were identical and quite spacious, with picturesque views of the sand. The bonus was the air-conditioning, which was spot on - when it worked! Our diet has changed dramatically, breakfast is cheese and bread, lunch is cold meat and bread, and for dinner, a variety of meats, new potatoes - and occasionally some more fresh bread.

After two months, we have created a very good relationship with the Danes. I think this is mainly due to **Cpl John Quinn's** DVD collection. Come to think of it, since he returned to the Palace with his DVDs, no one has spoken to us!

The Danes have been working very hard, and have turned the camp from a bare featureless tent city into probably one of the best camps around. Everyone is now living in Corimec huts with pine beds, and on the end of each row we have good washing/shower facilities and porcelain toilets - which have become an attraction for visitors from the Sqn. Also, we now have a proper cookhouse - without sand! We have had a few crew changes; **LCpl Daz McDermott**, **Sig Joe Fraser**, **Sig Jim Davidson** and **Sig Ian Courtney-Wyllie** have all worked at Camp Eden.

And what of the 'bacon and blonds?' I have had raw bacon three times, if that counts. As for the other, that would be telling!

40 REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY DETACHMENT
– *by Cpl Anderson*

Over the last month and a half, the Det has been busy with the integration of 2LI into 40 Regt BG's Strategic Comms Infrastructure. This has consisted of laying four PATRON lines, one X-NET terminal and a remote PTARMIGAN subset. We have also been busy advising them on the equipments' capabilities. This has been achieved by briefing the RSWO and the Ops Offr, and having crew members on standby to aid them during their first few weeks of using the equipment.

Over the last few weeks, we have had the arrival of Project SYNERGY. The full impact of this has not yet been felt, but we are now beginning to see conference calls removed from PTARMIGAN to Coalition Blue.

The Det has had many visits from Sqn HQ, the most memorable being by the OC Sqn and **WO2 (FofS) Riglar**, who were impressed by our fly collection (My crew assures me there were no flies before they arrived!). Shortly after the visit, we installed fly nets to the doors and windows.

The crew has seen a change in personalities, with the departure of **Cpl Chris Hunter** and **Sig Weggie Holdsworth**, and the arrival of **LCpl John Godwin** and **Sig Adam Crispin**. We have all been on a well-earned R and R break, and can now see the light at the end of the tunnel. **Cpl Kelly** and **Sig Kennedy** are passing the time by getting massive in the gym with the aid of large amounts of Creatine.

Sig Crispin is spending most of his time texting, and can do a modest forty words a minute. If only **Cpl Kelly** and **Sig Kennedy** could achieve the same muscle definition as **Sig Crispin's** thumb there would be no need for Creatine. Overall, the Det has had a busy but enjoyable time, and is now looking forward to the re-deployment back to Catterick.

1 KINGS OWN SCOTTISH BORDERERS DETACHMENT
– *by Cpl McMullen*

We arrived at the end of June, to take over OSCA Node 90 from 2 Sig Regt with a mixed bunch of TA and Regular soldiers. On arriving in Al Amarah, a very dusty and swelteringly hot place, we were shown our sleeping area, a derelict building with its own air conditioning - but no roof! This lasted for about 3 weeks, until **LCpl Danny Watson** befriended the natives (1KOSB) and we then moved to the palatial splendour of the TDA. We now have en-suite toilets and showers, and things are much improved.

With the dust and tremendous temperatures, the satellite comms were struggling, but Det Comd, **Cpl Mac McMullen** and Tech, **LCpl Greg Cairns** would not be defeated. After extensive fault-finding, we found one of the problems - we had rodents on the Det. A mouse, who seemed to enjoy the taste of fibre optic cabling, was living it up amongst the equipment, and **LCpl Steve Williams,** the Inst Tech, had to fix it in between shifts. As the comms improved, the workload decreased and, under the watchful eye of the Det's resident PTI, **Sig Si Rankin**, the lads undertook some PT in the gym, with **Cpl Fleming** and **Sig Willy Wilson** setting the pace.

OSCA Node 90 are now preparing for the withdrawal of OSCA from theatre, and returning to the freezing temperatures of Catterick Garrison.

RETURN TO CATTERICK

Since arriving back in Gaza Bks, the tempo has swung between furious work in the garages and stores and taking some well deserved leave. The Sqn has also received some very good news in the form of honours and awards for its achievements during OP TELIC 2. A Bde Comd's Commendation was awarded to 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) for all the demanding and unique challenges that the Sqn dealt with. This award is even more impressive considering that we are the only unit in the Bde to be formally recognised with such an honour.

A number of individuals were also recognised. GOC's Commendations were awarded to **Cpl McCutcheon**, **Cpl Lister** and **Cpl Fletcher**. Bde Comd's Commendations were awarded to **WO2 (RQMS) Hatton**, **SSgt Sullivan**, **Sgt Bramwell**, **Cpl McMillen** and **Cpl Turner**. Congratulations!

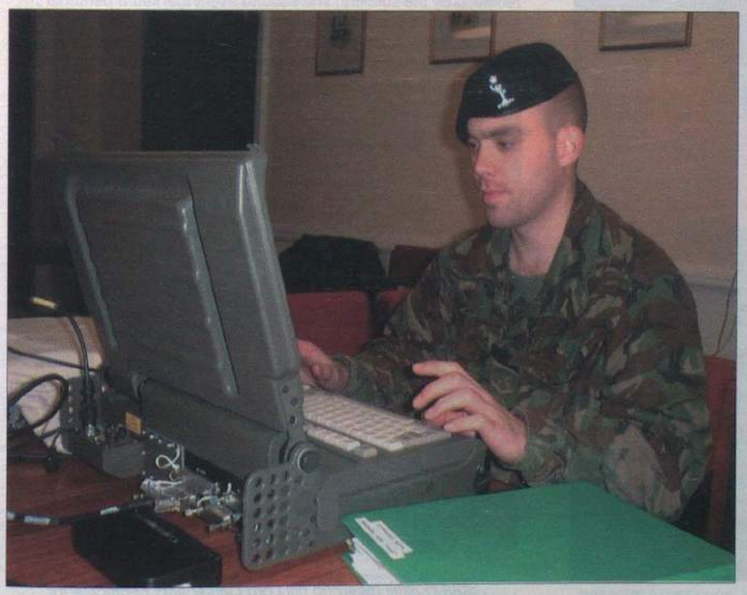
ARMY

31st (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col SG Hutchinson MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Paterson**

It has been another hectic couple of months for the Regt. First the CO's TESTEX was the first deployment in an op role for the majority of the Regt for at least a year, and considerably longer for many. It followed the general scenario of a major disaster in London with the Regt deploying to replace the Comcens and static phone networks at HQ LONDIST and the surrounding regional Bde HQs that had been knocked out in the incident.

With the 2IC, **Maj Brian Sowerby**, OpsO, **Capt Liz Cahill** and YofS **WO2 (YofS) Dave Monger** driving the comms from RHQ in Longmoor, the CO, TM, Adjt and FofS spent the weekend clocking up the miles around London dispensing advice and pearls of wisdom. A special mention must go to **WO2 (FofS) Brett Palmer** who, despite getting less than 2 hrs sleep over the entire ex, still said that he got more sleep than he would have had at home with the new baby. He asked us not to tell his wife.



LCpl Hulin playing minesweeper

Less than 5 weeks later, the Bde FTX rolled around: this was the big TESTEX for the Regt for the year. Luckily enough the locs we had to deploy to, matched almost exactly those from the CO's TESTEX. Spooky. This time the presence of the Bde Comd and Staff next door kept most of the Ivory tower in RHQ in their best MS mode. However, with typical timing, on the one time that the Bde Comd visited, the CO, 2IC, TM and OpsO were all out, leaving the poor old Adjt, **Capt Ian Rodger** to brief him. Luckily, **Ian** was able to fall back on a number of key phrases he had overheard the YofS use earlier, and with a tremendous bluff, managed not to drop himself or any one else in it. Overall the ex was a success for the Regt (which just shows that time spent in rehearsal is seldom wasted!) and by Sunday Dinner, everyone was home safe for some well earned tea and medals. The only long face in the whole Regt was Aussie **Maj James Gagen**, who had the misfortune to have to watch his team loose the World Cup in the company of 150 very loud Englishmen in Chelsea Bks.

The final big weekend of the year was the Duchess of Gloucester (or DOG) Cup. This involved 5 Sqn teams competing over 5 stands in the morning, and then going head to head in the TM's Torment in the afternoon. The five stands were cunningly disguised so that the TA would not guess what the task was. Target shooting was a Golf range, in which OC HQ Sqn, **Maj Steve Hudson** showed that old WOs never loose their swing, scoring the equivalent of a hole in one. Moving target shooting was a Clay Pigeon range but only after **SSgt Sven Gronn** had convinced the Camp Comdt that just because it was too misty to see more than 30m, it didn't mean that they had to close the range. The orienteering was cunningly hidden by calling it a map-reading stand.

Well done, OpsO! The Obstacle course taxed **SSgt Jace Quilter's** patience and **Sgt Si Butler's** imagination. Basically, it involved a lot of messing around in the woods with medicine balls, without anyone really understanding what was going on. Finally **SSgt Brooksbank** dug into his dim and distant past with an EOD team in NI, and had the teams crawling around looking for IEDs under a stolen land rover.

The culmination of the weekend was the TM's torment. The scenario involved each team running to an HLS to pick up a gun barrel (5 of the heaviest logs that the Army could find) carrying it to the lake, building a raft and transporting the barrel to the other side to place it on a waiting gun limber. A special prize for effort must go to HQ Sqn, who, despite getting to the logs third, still picked the largest one, probably because the felt it was a proper challenge otherwise. The booby prize must go to 56 Sig Sqn, who despite getting to their rafts first, were a little let down when it collapsed less than 5m out into the lake. The winners were a heavily reinforced 41(PLK) Sig Sqn, who utilised the Regt 2IC's aerodynamic design to power themselves across the lake, winning first the TM's Torment, and also scraping first place in the Cup by one point. Then, with the competition over, it was time to relax with a few drinks and some Karaoke, in which special thanks must go to **Cpl Widdison** for nominating the CO and Adjt for a special rendition of *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*.

On a more serious note, congratulations are in order for **WO2 (FofS) Palmer**, who received a QCVS in the OP TELIC Honours List for his work with 2 Sig Regt. Very well done!

Maj Street hands over to Maj Lamb

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Lamb**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Cooper**

The Sqn has enjoyed a quiet but focused third quarter, adjusting to the recent changes in its comd structure. These have seen **Maj Anthony Lamb** take over comd from the departed **Maj Sarah Street**. The new Sqn OC has hit the ground running, with a number of new and innovative initiatives aimed at extending our flexibility, and improving our record with recruiting. Major highlights included the dining out event for **Maj Sarah Street** at the Eastbourne TAC, where the Sqn was fortunate to receive a barometer as her leaving gift.

The Mayor with the 56 Sig Sqn soldiers who deployed on OP TELIC

Additionally, this period has seen the Sqn receive the honour of being recognised on two occasions by the local community. The first event was a civic reception, hosted by the Mayor of Eastbourne, the **Hon Cllr Olive Woodhall**, to thank those soldiers deployed from 56 Sig Sqn during OP TELIC. The invitation was open to both the veterans and their spouses, and was warmly received by the soldiers. The second event marked a personal milestone for **SSgt Steven Howell**, who was presented with the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate For Meritorious Service by the Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex **Mrs KP Stewart-Roberts OBE**.

SSgt Howell receiving his Lord Lieutenants certificate for meritorious service

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belated farewell presentation to **Capt Jack Jennings**, our former Adjt. The Mess also extended a warm welcome to newly-commissioned **2Lt Alan Lunn** who, not surprisingly, acted as Mr Vice. The food was splendid and the Band of the West Midland Regt provided music.

Elsewhere in the Regt, most Sqns threw themselves into the Christmas spirit by holding similar functions. HQ and 89 Sqn held their Christmas bash on Friday 5 December, and by all accounts, had very successful evenings. As usual, 89 Sqn adopted a special theme for the evening, and this year it was the *Arabian Nights* complete with effigy of **Saddam Hussain**. Now we know were he is! Food was plentiful but the belly dancers were in short supply. Special thanks however are extended to that Sultan of Swing **SSgt** 'Mustapha Barby' **Charlie Walker** and his team for making it all happen. The Sgts' Mess function meanwhile followed on 6 December, with a few sore heads from the previous evening. Happy New Year!!

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col PN Willmott TD**
RSM	**W01 (RSM) MA Giles**

Despite the belief that the Regt workload would quieten down between Annual Camp and Christmas, it's been business as normal as we have welcomed back those who had been mobilised, and put a great deal of effort into for the Lanyard Trophy and Cambrian Patrol. The results achieved in both these competitions shows the strength and determination of the soldiers in the Regt; and they have certainly kept the flag flying whilst so many others are away on ops. Add to this the JNCO and SNCO Cadre courses, RSIT and ECI prep and the usual festive season celebrations, and there is not a Sqn sat idle. With the impending re-role of the Regt, 2004 should not be any different.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Pete Minshall**
Acting SSM	**WO2 Graham Carroll**

HQ Sqn extends a warm welcome to the new RQMS, **WO2 Den Tranham**, who should ease the burden on **Capt (QM) Les Scott**. We congratulate **LCpl Kim Mann** for passing her RSCC and **Sgt Mike Egunjobi** for passing his RSSSC. Let's hope the enthusiasm **Mike** appears to have caught at Blandford lasts into the New Year!

44 (CINQUE PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Bob Davis**
Acting SSM	**SSgt John Davis**

It's been a fairly busy year. OP TELIC saw a number of key personnel deployed to do their bit. We have had an Annual Camp, which saw our troops transformed into battle hardened killers of all things concrete and village-shaped, and last but not least, we had the first CCRF deployment, which again involved a number of troops from the Sqn.

We now look forward to the return home of all our deployed personnel. Acting SSM, **SSgt John Davis** has returned and has been appointed him PMC of the Mess. **Sgt Lee Bland**, **Sgt Dave Monk** and **LCpl Stuart Robinson** are also back from OP TELIC, and **Sig Lee Jones** has returned from 98 Sqn in Bosnia. It's nice to see them all safely back. The Sqn will benefit from the experience they have gained on ops. And a special mention should be made of their wives and families of the guys deployed, who have had to cope and endure without them. We also wish all the very best to **Sig Guy Hurst**, who after numerous attempts, finally deployed on OP TELIC. Our thoughts are with you and your family at this time.

SSgt John Davis doing his bit out on OP TELIC providing 'top cover'

45 (ESSEX) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Mark MacKenzie-Bell**
Acting SSM	**SSgt Pickett**

45 Sqn happily welcomes back **Sgt Tex Bennett** from OP TELIC and congratulates him on gaining a GOC's Commendation. Well done. Also returning safely are **Cpl Lee Farrow**, **LCpl Ali Aktash**, **LCpl Lorna Stuart**, **LCpl Kev Urand** and **Sig Rob Irvine**. Our thoughts are with **Capt Andy Sturt**, who is still deployed and we eagerly await his safe return. The same wishes are extended to **Cpl Woolly Woolard** and **LCpl John Hazelton**, who both deploy in the New Year.

54 (EAST ANGLIA) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Phil Taylor**
Acting SSM	**SSgt Osbourne**

A Regtl team was entered into both the Cambrian Patrol and Lanyard Trophy. The trg was based at Cambridge TAC, and the following accounts reflects on what proved to be a very successful effort by those involved.

CAMBRIAN PATROL 2003 - *by Sig Dave Poole*

The Cambrian Patrol team started trg back in September under the guidance of Team Manager, **SSgt Gaz Sinclair**. With no previous experience, we were taken to Brecon for a week to carry out a series of mil skills trg with a lot of weight on our backs.

There were various stands to complete, and by the end of the week we had clocked up 46 miles. With the Patrol still a month away, the team began to realise just how hard it was going to be, and all the weekends leading up to the Competition were spent at STANTA, improving our recognition skills, first aid and NBC.

So on a very wet Thursday night the team met at Cambridge TAC for a kit check (yet again). Once the PSIs were happy, we boarded the bus en-route to the RV point just outside Wales and then moved to the start point. We were now on our own ready to put the trg to use.

On Sunday morning the team emerged from the FIBUA village in Brecon, and after a thorough de-brief, were met by the smiling faces of **SSgt Sinclair** and **Sgt Taff Lean**. We had done it! Eight started and eight finished - and we had two females in the team, which was unique. At the prize-giving we would have settled for the Certificate of Achievement, but we were overjoyed when '36 Sig Regiment, Bronze Award' was called out. The team were ecstatic. We were the only Royal Signals Volunteers team in the whole event, and we walked away with a Bronze Award in our first year of entering.

The Team were: **Lt Ross Anderson** (Patrol Comd), **Cpl Gerry Carr** (Patrol 2IC)' **LCpl Nikki Flemming**, **LCpl Gary Gentry**, **Sig Anna Crowther**, **Sig Gav Burnage** and **Sig Dave Poole**. The Team Manager was **SSgt Gaz Sinclair** and Admin, **Sgt Taff Lean** and **LCpl Matty Brocklebank**

THE LANYARD TROPHY 2003 - *by Capt Jason Wragg*

It's a strange enough feeling to be walking in the dark, but to start walking in the dark, carry on walking through the day, and finish walking in the dark is something few people will have experienced. The Lanyard Trophy ran (or rather walked very slowly) this year across Dartmoor. On a very cold dark morning at Oakhampton Camp the team awoke to embark on 'a morning stroll like no other'. After having our Bergens weighed by the organisers and meeting the other teams on the start-line, we set off across Dartmoor to the theme tune from *Last of the Mohicans*. Stopping only a few times for a hot drink and pasty, the team walked continuously for nearly twenty-three hours carrying 40lbs of kit. We trudged across the bleak countryside, rarely seeing another soul. Starting with a team of nine, and finishing with eight, due to the Team Capt twisting his knee, we endured the elements, injuries, and some rather bad jokes to complete the competition. Although most team members vowed never to indulge in such a foolish past-time again, I am confident that next year's team will be as successful as this year's in achieving the Runners-up Prize (hopefully under better circumstances). A big well done to the whole team. I look forward to seeing you all there next year.

ARMY

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col RG Mather**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) MC Fisher**

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj PH Fowler-Smith**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) JR Krikorian**

EXERCISE REYNARDS CHALLENGE

After a successful Annual Camp, 96 Sqn arrived at the Regtl Military Skills Competition with a positive approach. Unfortunately a number of the stalwarts of the previous year's all-conquering team were conquering Basrah, so the remainder of the Sqn would have to dig deep if they were to retain any of last year's silverware haul. The competition consisted of a Patrol Competition, March and Shoot competition, Orienteering and Assault Course.

The Patrol Competition was an arduous affair, with a pistol shoot, command task and driving skills amongst its activities. This proved to be rather tough, and our inexperienced yet determined team just failed to break the tape. Undismayed, they set about the March and Shoot with all the vigour and enthusiasm of a winning team. Under **Maj Paul Fowler-Smith** and **Capt Simon Jenner** the team made the second fastest time of the 4-mile route and produced an unbeatable shoot, one not to be surpassed - the trophy was ours yet again!

The Orienteering was a bridge too far, and **WO2 Joe Krikorian** will be contesting the very ambiguous rules and results for as long as he can remember.

The weekend concluded with the Assault Course, and all teams seemed to be motivated by this last chance to steal a bit of pride or consolation. Unfortunately, for 96 Sqn, it was only consolation. But there were no tears; the achievements of the Sqn were not reflected in the results on this occasion! We had had a most enjoyable weekend.

96 SIG SQN (V) LEAD THE WAY ON REMEMBRANCE PARADE

In their No 2 Dress, 96 Sig Sqn (V) stood out from the crowd again on this year's City of Coventry Remembrance Parade, the only unit to make this effort. On the Saturday, it was full inspection by the SSM, followed by frenzied ironing and putting the final touches to highly polished boots and medals.

The Parade marched off proudly, watched and applauded by the largest group of spectators to date. The very poignant service reminded us all of those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom today, and also of the continuing campaigns around the globe, where our soldiers continue to serve and give their lives. **Sig Lawrence Jones** stood out from the crowd in the Standard Bearers' contingent, bearing the Standard for the Coventry Branch of the RSA.

Maj Paul Fowler-Smith leads 96 Sig Sqn (V) on Remembrance Sunday March

The march off salute was taken by The Lord Mayor of the City of Coventry, **Cllr Sucha Bains**. The Sqn later retired to the Sqn Club with friends, family and some old comrades to share a very welcome and excellent curry lunch, provided by our Chefs, **Sgt Gary Wildsmith**, **LCpl Stu Adams** (just back from OP TELIC 2) and **LCpl Colin Davenport**.

TELIC TALES

LCpl Dave Montague was mobilised for OP TELIC 3 with the QRH, and was promptly promoted to Cpl for the tour. Congratulations **Monty**. We look forward to hearing your stories!

Cpl Judy Dunn, an employee of Lloyds TSB Bank was mobilised on OP TELIC 2 in June 2003. Here she tells how her banking skills and experience were put to use, resulting in a very successful worthwhile operational tour:

In May I was sitting in a lecture when I was given the news: 'You've been mobilised, you're off to Iraq.' This was the start of my compulsory mobilisation on OP TELIC 2. After a few weeks of disbelief, panic and trying to organise my life, job, home and cat, I began the stressful experience of the mobilisation process through Chilwell; on to Grantham for ITD trg; and finally to Catterick ready to deploy with 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

After an extremely long journey, we arrived at Camp Eagle, Kuwait for a 3-day acclimatisation package. It is difficult to describe how lethargic you feel in 60-degree heat. Your energy is totally drained while you lie there sweating, unable to move. The effort of drinking huge quantities of water and keeping a look out for ferocious camel spiders seems too much. The only high spot was when the portaloos blew over – fortunately no one was inside. Eventually we headed off to our new home, Basrah Palace.

I was assigned to the veh maint team in HQ Tp. I realised that this would be a challenge, when on looking round the camp, I couldn't see any 110 Landrovers or NCRS dets - only 436's. The next day, there was an incident resulting in the death of a number of military in a nearby loc, so I was assigned to help guard the camp. The guard duty was 72 hours - 2 hrs on, 2 hrs off. With no aircon and in full body armour, webbing and helmet, the heat was incredible and there was no chance of sleep. Fortunately, there was only the one incident of shooting towards my tower, but it brought home a sense of reality.

I then returned to veh maint for a couple of weeks, moving vehs from the holding area at Shaibah to Basrah, where we stripped out and refitted them for deployment. Then it was on to working with the sappers, filling sandbags to strengthen the Palace perimeter security. This is an art form in itself. To achieve the perfect sandbag, the measurements must be exact; and after a vast number of days' practice, I feel that I have now earned an NVQ in sandbag studies. Other duties at the time included escorting the locally employed civilians (LECs) around camp, helping UNICEF drivers obtain fresh water for their tankers for distribution in surrounding areas, assisting setting up the Sqn shop and producing articles for the Sqn newsletter.

I was then assigned to Bde HQ, manning the helpdesk and front reception area. This was in conjunction with G6 comms tasks, where I became familiar with new comms systems and ensured sufficient toilet roll levels in the portaloos.

At Bde HQ, I was introduced to **Maj Andrew Alderson**, who had been assigned the task of rebuilding the financial infrastructure of Southern Iraq. After an initial interview and presentation of the future plans at a G5 conference, I became part of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) Banking and Finance Team.

Initially my job involved making salary payments to all the State Owned Enterprise employees of Basrah. This was a challenge, as the banking and clearing structure had been destroyed, along with any computers or computerised records. Everything was now operating as a cash economy. None of the banks were operating as banks or carrying out any financial transactions. The Treasury Directorate, who authorise and instigate all financial payments, had disappeared into the woodwork; the workers of Basrah had not received their salaries for quite some time, and this was resulting in public order demonstrations and general unrest.

Acting in accordance with a temporary wage structure issued by CPA Baghdad, we instigated a payment plan, with the companies producing an employee payroll, which we would then authorise. It was established that the Central Bank would act as a payment point, releasing funds to the company representatives. Because all bank vaults had been destroyed, it became a daily routine to meet the Central Bank Manager and the Supreme Auditor to authorise payments, and then to accompany them to the Bank in the centre of Basrah with sufficient US dollars from the supply held at the Palace.

There were times when the payments became interesting. With the volatile mood in Basrah, we were experiencing traffic jams, and were very aware that the state of unrest would increase should salary payments be delayed. So we searched for an alternative method of cash transfer. The answer lay with the Shatt al Arab, the waterway that runs alongside Basrah Palace. After a recce with the Norwegian sappers and their Zodiac boats, delivery by water became feasible. When I needed to meet the Port workers' salary requests, I was able to load up the CBS boats with around $US1m and Iraqi dinars in boxes and black bin liners, for transport up river and onward transmission by 1 KRR's Warriors direct to the Ports loc.

On one of my money transfers up river, as we approached the Pontoon Bridge there was a crowd of people, including a number of Iraqi policemen trying to catch our attention. With my limited Arabic, I was able to establish that they had concerns about a boat upstream. So we loaded the policemen onto our boat and set off in hot pursuit. It transpired that the boat in question did not have the correct permit and was deemed to be smuggling. So after much arm waving and shouting, it was turned around, and the policemen returned to the bridge, happy and grateful for our assistance.

Another of the high points was the regular trip to Baghdad to collect money. The long day of travelling by Hercules was relieved by the view of thirty million US dollars and billions of Iraqi dinars loaded in the back of a Chinook as we flew into the Palace grounds at sunset.

Gradually I was able to gradually catch up with the salary payrolls, and by September, they were in line with the current month. The introduction of the Treasury Directorate in August and the establishment of a structured payroll system has helped to streamline the payment process, but the change from payment in $US to the new Iraqi Dinar in October proved a challenge - especially as this was at the start of Ramadan.

The finance team was responsible for the introduction of the new Iraqi Dinar. With the security implications involved, this project involved a great deal of work by staff in both the CPA and Bde, to meet demand for currency notes, rebuilding of the banks, and running information campaigns.

We are now looking forward to improving the financial economy further, with the introduction of operating budgets, the re-establishment of bank accounts, a bank clearing system, and the completion of the currency exchange programme. Staff training and computerisation will add to the continuation of rebuilding the banks and financial institutes. There is still a great deal of development required in Iraq, but I am glad to have had the opportunity to contribute to OP TELIC in this way, and I hope for a prosperous and peaceful future.

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col AH Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Stillie**

5 (QUEENS OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Rich Belbin**
SSM **WO2 Hall**

UNVEILING OF A BLUE PLAQUE

His Grace the 11th Duke of Marlborough unveiled a Blue Plaque on what was the site of the Star Inn in Corn Market Street Oxford, to commemorate the meeting held in 1794 to form the Oxfordshire Yeomanry, following the Government's appeal for troops to maintain peace on the mainland. This was a memorable moment for the Duke, as **Lord Francis** raised the first troop in Woodstock, the 5th Duke Commanded the Regt in 1857 and his grandfather commanded the Regt from 1910 to 1914. **Winston Churchill** was commissioned into the QOOH, and he commanded the Henley Sqn from 1905 to 1913, and was Regtl Hon Col until his death in 1965. HM Lord Lieutenant for Oxfordshire, The Lord Mayor of Oxford and members both past and present together with their families attended the ceremony. During the unveiling ceremony the Duke met **LCpl Jonathan Godwin**, who had just that week returned from OP TELIC 2.

LORD LIEUTENANT'S CERTIFICATE

The Lord Lieutenant for Oxfordshire, **Hugo Brunner**, presented **Sgt Gordie Shields** with the Lord Lieutenants Certificate at a ceremony in County Hall, Oxford on Monday 10 November 2003.

OPERATION TELIC

We welcome home **LCpl Jonathan Godwin** from service in the Gulf with 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. Good to see you back safe and sound. **Cpl Claire Goodwin** departed for the Gulf for service with 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt on 27 October 2003 and **Capt Dominic May**, spouse of our Sqn 2IC, **Jane May**, departed for service with 1 LI on 24 November 2003. We wish you both good luck during your tour and look forward to your safe return.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Ruth Empson**
SSM **WO2 Phil Martin**

The Sqn continues to rise to the challenges of trg. Post Annual Camp, we provided a large contribution to the 39 Sig Regt Trade Camp at Swynnerton. We congratulate **Cpl Richard Vise** not only for his recent promotion, but for attaining best student on his Class 2 Course. Well done too to **Sig Sara Baldwin** for achieving best student on her Class 3 (RSOP) Course. Others who are now traded following the course include **LCpl Sean Smith** and **Sig Fay Taggart** attaining Class 2, and **Sigs Rob Charlton** and **James Green** on their Class 3. Well done to all.

Aside from Trade Camp, the Sqn has concluded its ITD catch-up weekend, and just recently the newly-traded soldiers had a good opportunity to put their new skills to good use on HORSESHOE 4, the Bde FTX at the end of November.

We were happy to welcome the Hon Col, **Cdre Pemberton**, to our Drill Night on 5 November. After receiving a short brief from OC,

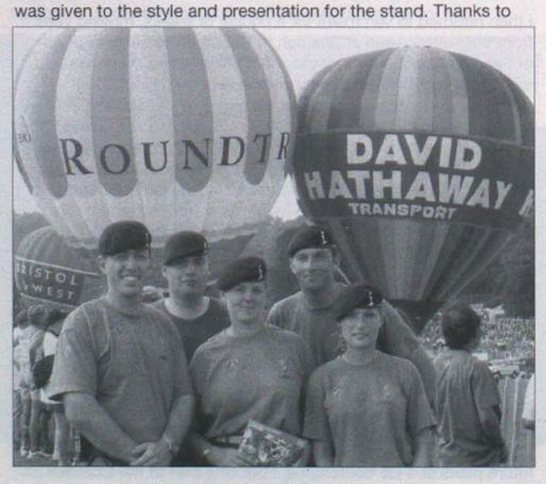
Cdre Pemberton congratulates Sgt Richard Sharp

Maj Ruth Empson, the Hon Col, by the 2IC was able to visit the Tuesday evening trg to see for himself the work that has already started for the reloc of our garages at Horfield. We were also delighted that the Hon Col was on hand to present **Sgt Richard Sharp** with his VRSM. Congratulations; we look forward to the presentation of your bar!

BRISTOL BALLOON FIESTA

Earlier on in the year the TAC's major recruiting event was at the International Balloon Fiesta, held at Ashton Court, Bristol. This year marked the 25th Anniversary of the Fiesta and maximum publicity was anticipated. **WO2 Jane Tuck**, OC Horfield Recruiting had made some enquiries earlier in the year and had received an enthusiastic response from the event organisers, who looked forward to having a TA Recruiting Stand in their displays.

Due to the high profile nature of the event, much consideration was given to the style and presentation for the stand. Thanks to



Recruiting at the Balloon Fiesta

the negotiating skills of **WO1 (RSM) Jim Stillie**, 21 Sig Regt (AS) kindly agreed to loan us their Royal Signals recruiting caravan, which we then adapted slightly to take on a TA theme. The display was to last for the full four days of the event and all had to be in place by the Wednesday evening. This task fell to a team from 57 Sqn, comprising **SSgt Dave Langridge**, **SSgt Nick Marsh** and **Sgt Dave Jones**, ably directed by **Sig Chris Howells**.

The stand was manned throughout the Thursday and Friday by both Regular and TA soldiers, with the weekend being covered by a combined team from HQ and 57 Sqns, led by **WO2 Jane Smith**. The weather held good, with hot sunny conditions throughout, drawing large crowds for the event. Members of the team circulated, distributing leaflets and chatting to the public. Contact details of some 25 genuinely interested candidates were taken and a number subsequently have since been attested into the Regt.

All in all this was a successful event, thanks to the dedication and enthusiasm of the personnel manning the stand and remaining cheerful throughout the long and tiring four days - despite the debilitating heat! Special thanks are also due to **Capt John Cullen** and **WO1 (RSM) Jim Stillie** for their help in planning the event, and to the OCs of both 57 and HQ Sqns for their support. And finally, our thanks to 21 Sig Regt (AS) for the loan of their caravan.

71st (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col HJ Robertson TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) SPJ White**

RHQ and permanent staff have continued to be busy since our return from Annual Camp in the Czech Republic. Immediately on our return we were active in OP LONDON SOLDIER, a PAN Army recruiting event, held this year in Chelsea Bks. This was a successful event, and we have already processed recruits from this on to recruit trg.

EXERCISE HORSESHOE 4 AND OPERATION RESPONDER.

EX HORSESHOE 4 was 2 (NC) Sig Bde's main FTX for 2004 and OP RESPONDER was the LONDIST ex aimed to exercise the CCRF. The aim of EX HORSESHOE 4 was to combine a nationwide COMMEX with support to selected Regional Bdes to integrate with SDR NC Pillars 1, 2 and 3.

The Regt's AOR was SE England and we deployed the following comms assets:
5 NCRS stations, provided by 68, 70 and 265 Sig Sqns; 3 CST dets, provided by 68, 70 and 265 Sig Sqns; 3 RRB and 2 FFR dets, provided by 60 and 94 Sig Sqns; and
2 SRV providing SAINT VHF comms, provided by 68 Sig Sqn.

HQ Sqn & LAD also provided an A Ech in support for the duration of the ex.
Even with the Rugby World Cup Final to contend with over the weekend, a total of 124 personnel deployed on the ex.

We welcome **Capt Steve Short**, who takes over as Adjt from **Capt Al Garrett**, who leaves us on promotion with his wife **Holly**. We wish them all the very best for the future. **SSgt Anderson** and his wife **Caroline** have also arrived from a spell with the RA. Welcome to you both.

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Michael Wood**
SSM **W02 (SSM) Jim Swain**

The period following annual camp is always busy. Apart from the regular work there has been time for recruiting with regular RRTT on OP ESSEX SOLDIER and for a major charity event, the annual Chelmsford Jailbreak. In addition, there has been an important promotion at 881 Tp with **Cpl C Foakes** being promoted to **Sgt C Foakes** by her father **Col S Foakes**, Hon Col, 36 Sig Regt; the award of the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate to **WO2 (SSM) Jim Swain** and a Valedictory letter from the Adjt Gen to **Sgt JA Taylor** (Retd).

Col Foakes promotes his daughter to Sgt Foakes

25th ANNUAL CHELMSFORD EABC JAILBREAK

The main charity event of the year for the Sqn is the Annual Jailbreak. What follows are the reports from the teams selected from the Troops. The basic premise of the event is simply get as far as you can by land sea or air (legally!) without paying for your ticket. The event raised in excess of £1500 for charity (split 50/50 between the Essex Association of Boys Clubs and Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital).

881 TROOP – *by Sig John Kempster*

No money, No plans and a whole lot of luck was all we had with us for this years Jail Break. The race: 15 hrs to get as far from Chelmsford Prison as possible. 2 rules: keep within the law and don't use your own money - simple!

08.45hrs - 15 mins to go before the escape commences and we still don't know what we were going to do or where we are going to go. After a quick discussion, we thought we would hot foot it to an airport and see what we could do, taking the risk on loosing time if we were unsuccessful.

09.00hrs - The Race was on! Stanstead Airport here we come. We arrive at the airport 30 mins later attempt to get a flight anywhere from anyone, and after half an hour of sweet-talking we are the proud owners of 3 return tickets to Portugal!

11.30hrs - All strapped in for take off. Portugal here we come. After about 30 mins into the flight there is a message from the captain. We are on board and raising money for charity. The stewardess then usher us up and down the aisle, sick bag in hand collecting donations from our captive audience!

14.30hrs - We land at Faro airport in the blistering heat and congratulate ourselves on making the right decision. Portugal over France any day! We leave the airport and talk to the locals to establish the best way to go on our next leg. Ten minutes later we're in the back of a crazed cab driver's car, wondering if we will get to our destination alive? Were heading to the most easterly part of the country, Albufeira.

15.00hrs - We arrive! Glad to be in one piece, we get to the beach stand on the shoreline, knowing we can go no further.

Having had our paper work signed and stamped by the local police and looking at our watches we realise it is only 15.45hrs. We cannot get any further and we know we cannot get a flight back until tomorrow night, so we set about trying to recruit the local tourist population into the Essex Yeomanry until late into the night!

882 TROOP – *by OCdt Rawden Leigh*

On Saturday 4 October, a team of escapees from 882 Tp make a break for freedom from Chelmsford Prison. Armed with nothing more than a sense of adventure, **OCdt Leigh**, **Sig Denton** and **Sig White**, dressed as military prisoners down to and including a ball and chain, swiftly moved out of the prison confines and onwards to freedom.

There was a catch, however. On no account was money to be used to pay for any aspect of the escape - only sponsored methods of transport were allowed. Luckily, Hoverspeed was on hand to provide free return tickets to France, so once again the British Army found itself on the shores of Calais when it was least expected.

The venture was in aid of the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital and we were delighted to have been able to help support this most worthwhile cause. Next year the aim will be to escape from the confines of Europe!

265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Penny Wood**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Stephen Shelley**

HISTORICAL TOUR

In August, assisted by **Bill Daley**, an old comrade from the Kent Yeomanry Artillery, and members of the Offrs and SNCOs Mess of 265 (KCLY) Sig Sqn undertook an historical tour. The tour was centred on Maidstone where **Bill** and a number of his colleagues were mobilised in September 1939.

Bill had joined the Kent Yeomanry Artillery at Ashford TAC in May 1939. The same evening he was attested, given his first issue of uniform and pronounced fit for service. In the months leading up to September 1939, he attended a two-week camp and two range

The winning team reach Faro in Portugal

weekends where firing was often prevented by fog and low cloud. Soon after they were marched to Maidstone Station from where they were transported to Southampton for immediate transit to France.

Bill formed part of 385 (Duke of Connaught's Own Yeomanry) Battery, which fought a gallant defence against the Germans at St Valery on the Normandy Coast in 1939.

Bill and his colleagues faced this with one initial issue of uniform, a greatcoat and two blankets. His total service prior to being sent abroad amounted to somewhat under a month. How different it is today!

68 (INNS OF COURT AND CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Jonathan Manley**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Clifton Springer**

GOLDEN DAY IN THE CITY STREETS

In November, the Inns of Court and City Yeomanry were proud to provide a mounted det for the Lord Mayor's Procession. For the first time a female officer, **Capt Jane Dodd**, led the det, followed by twelve very able officers and soldiers all mounted on very smartly turned out blacks (so called because of their colour!)

The day involved a 05.00hrs start and a surreptitious gaze up at the dark sky, praying for fine weather, or at least not rain too much. Our prayers were answered. **Sgt Alvin Lewis**, who learnt to ride with the TA and has ridden in the Lord Mayor's Procession no less than 12 times, orchestrated our timely arrival at the Household Cavalry barracks near Hyde Park. As we mounted and admired the splendour of the sight around us, we knew it was going to be a good day. **LCpl Suzy Vere-Hodge**, the Sqn's resident riding instructor, was positively beaming. Virtually all the Household Cavalry horses were out that morning and a large Swiss contingent dressed in many and various colourful costumes had decided to join in. The plumed headdress and shinning body armour of the Household Cavalry looked as you would expect – incredibly smart. It has to be said that we looked pretty marvellous too – and certainly felt it as we took off from the barracks at 08.30hrs to our start point in the City of London. The sight of over one hundred horses and riders marching down the Strand is enough, we discovered, to make anyone stop, stare, take pictures and even cheer. We hadn't even started yet.
Military horses generally enjoy marching with military bands, but noisy floats, noisy crowds and a whole host of other distractions are often quite a different matter at first.

However, the blacks soon settled into the procession, which meandered around the City's streets to the cheers of an adoring crowd. Publicity-wise, this is a big day, as the event is shown on national television. In addition, **Sig Karen Woodhouse** gets top marks for her full-page feature in the Daily Express detailing her experiences of Sqn life and the procession in particular.

After a day that passed in a whirl, despite starting so early, the riders returned to Lincoln's Inn to change and wind down – only to realise that a quick jog down to the Embankment was required in order not to miss the Lord Mayor's celebratory fireworks. A sparkling end to a sparkling day!!

HANDOVER

WO2 Terry Gardner handed over the mantle of SSM to **WO2 Clifton Springer** on Remembrance Sunday. Whilst it is always sad to see a Sergeant Major leave, the Sqn looks forward to seeing their old SSM again at the Sqn Annual Dinner in the New Year.

Sig Karen Woodhouse ready to parade

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

OC **Maj Debs Simcox**
SSM **(WO2) Gapped**

Since our last contribution to *The WIRE*, we have welcomed a new OC, **Maj Simcox**, and farewelled **Lt Col Billingham**, who now resides at SHAPE. We wish him and his expanding family all the best. We also farewell our long-serving SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Scott**, leaving the TA, with no replacement found yet. Our congratulations to **Sgt MacGillivray**, now **Sgt Osmond**, who disappeared to Scotland to get married recently.

Ops continue as always, as do exs, but the Sqn is also hosting the new potential SC operators on their SC Course. Their skills have been exercised on EX STRIKING LYNX, as described below.

EXERCISE STRIKING LYNX - *by Sgt Syd Cleworth*

The Puma touched down on the HLS exactly on time. With a thumbs-up from the crew, the first stick emplaned using both doors. On board, the Loadmaster handed a headset to the stick comd, who then confirmed with the navigator the drop-off loc. As the heli low-levelled towards Yardley Chase Trg Area, the rain pounded against the windscreen. 'This thing's leaking like a sieve,' observed the pilot. 'Well, you know what they say: If it's not raining.....'

EX STRIKING LYNX is the mil trg phase of the Special Communications (SC) Course. Set over three days, its aim is to practise situational awareness and low-level leadership in a tactical environment. The ex focuses on the Orders process and offensive actions.

Carrying full CEMO, the eight students of the current SC Course moved by air with Ex Conducting Officer (ECO) **Sgt Syd Cleworth** and assistants **Sgt Nick Hill** and **Cpl Dave Marshall** to the ex area to conduct various helicopter drills, including swarming. As the heli departed, the rain stopped and the clouds lifted. The troops occupied a harbour and prepared for an afternoon of sec attacks.

Cpls Chris Elliston and **Al Macmillan** assisted in building bunker positions before acting as enemy troops. Control of the attacks was greatly improved with the use of PRRs, and gentle encouragement from the ECO ensured the assaulting pair always crawled from the flank to the bunker before posting a practice grenade.

After a night nav ex, the morning brought ideal conditions for a CFT. Upon successful completion the troops were given 30 mins battle prep before being launched into an advance to contact. The remainder of the day was spent practising contact drills and ambushes, before a detailed lesson in the Orders process taught by **Sgt Hill**.

The SC course in the field for Ex Striking Lynx

Following a set of Orders, a night ambush was conducted. Recce patrols, assisted with CWS and night goggles, collected from the final enemy positions enough info to plan a deliberate attack. The final morning was cold, but without a cloud in the sky. The enemy troops had carefully constructed their final stand positions, with **Cpl Marshall** particularly proud of the bunker he had managed to assemble. The attack took over an hour to complete, but with ammunition running low, the grenadier reached the final bunker before posting his grenade and fighting through.

There was the usual collective sigh of relief when ENDEX was called, but everyone appeared to have enjoyed the experience. And, with clear skies for the final 48 hrs, it proved you can train without rain after all!

EXERCISE WARRIOR LYNX

The Sqn came together for a FIBUA ex that encompassed TA, Regular and recent recruits. Under the adage that suffering together promotes bonding, the Sqn deployed to STANTA on Friday morning for a weekend of fun and games. What followed was a quick reminder of inf and OBUA tactics, with plenty of opportunity for people to disgrace themselves. The first on the pedestal was **Cpl Purdie**, who managed to throw a trg grenade all of 1fi ft from the prone position. Ambushes, patrols and nav all went well, and the weekend culminated in an impressive final dawn assault. Despite having the tac burden of patrolling across open fields with ladders, and the absence of the Universal Soldier, **Sgt Tacklebury Clarkson**, the assault was a huge success. Victory was celebrated with a massive fry up from **Sgt Lumsden-Gordon**, and a brass collecting competition.

SERVICE WITH SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS

Anyone wishing to join the Sqn should complete Annex C to SOinC(A)'s PD206. The Sqn recruits for the following trades: Rad Sys Op (LCpl-Sgt); Tele Tech Rad/Sys (Cpl-Sgt);Tech Sup Spec (Cpl); R Sigs Dvr (LCpl); R Sigs Elec (LCpl-Cpl).

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

4th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Maj Addley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Watson**

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Richardson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Cox**

Since September the Sqn has been extremely busy preparing for the trg year, which began in November 03. First of all there was MERCURY RAT 1 and CAST, on Sennelager Trg Area. The art of camouflage was paramount - even the skips and portaloos were cammed up. All members of the Sqn worked hard combating the weather, especially the rain. This resulted in a huge amount of sandbags, in a vain attempt to keep the HQ afloat.

In November we took part in a smaller Sqn-level ex- (MERCURY RAT 2) on Achmer (a small local trg area). During this we concentrated on low-level tactics such as Air Defence, NBC and defence of a comms site. During the NBC phase, **Sig Norton** was congratulated for his courageous attempt to rescue **Sigs Rhodes** and **Dennis**, who were acting as casualties of nerve agent poisoning. We also had to contend with a live enemy, who infiltrated the HQ, destroying Comms Ops with an IED (Comms have never worked so well). We did, however, manage to capture a prisoner, **Cpl Skeene**, who found himself in the clutches of **Sgt Savage** and **Sig Cooper**. They had obviously learned a lot in the previous lectures on LOAC and prisoner handling, although whether they chose to apply it was debateable. **Sig Bosher** was particularly heroic. During the attack, she took cover near a gene and got carbon monoxide poisoning, unable to do anything for the whole attack. We are all looking forward to the new year, with an ex in Canada and a deployment to Iraq.

Finally congratulations to **Sigs Goff**, **Bosher**, **White** and **Richard**, who have all been selected for promotion to LCpl.

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Limbrey**
T SSgt **SSgt Lawn**

The Sqn has had a busy time recently with the Bde SAAM, EX MERCURY RAT 2 and running an armd veh driving course. Well done to **Lt Limbrey**, **Sig Bow**, and **Sig Stroud**, who participated in the Bde SAAM, with **Lt Limbrey's** team coming 4th fastest in the marching side of the competition (there were 44 teams involved).

A few weeks ago we deployed on EX MERCURY RAT 2. The deployment was pretty uneventful, except for **Cpl Dibbert's** veh not even making it to the trg area. It broke down in a lay by 16 kms short, and the REME commenced to tow him to the trg area. They had only a few metres to go, when the towing bones snapped, causing even more damage to **Cpl Dibbert's** veh. The ex consisted of lessons, walk-throughs and mock attacks, NBC strikes etc. **Sig Jo Evans** set fire to her kero heater and nearly burned the HQ to the ground. At the end of the ex, we were given the opportunity to do some off-road driving, which resulted in surprisingly few vehicle casualties.

Congratulations to **Sigs Anderson**, **Lyon**, **Virtue** and **Halley**, whom have come off the LCpls board. Beers are on **LCpls Lyon** and **Virtue**, who have since been promoted. Farewell to **Sig Stevenson**, who has just departed for 2 Sig Regt; and to **Sig Nic Urwin**, who departs for 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. *Notes by LCpl Robertson*

7th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj Chris Ford**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Martin Walsh**

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Aileen Grant**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Steve Walton**

Since our return from OP TELIC, the Unit has enjoyed a great deal of leave along with the never-ending other tasks. The first three weeks back involved moving offices and some sport, with some much-appreciated late starts and early finishes. This was all a great relief after a long, hard and hot five months in the Gulf. The mad rush of picking up armd and wheeled vehs from the port, unpacking ISO containers and the ever-popular CES checks filled the remainder of time until, at long last, we went on much-needed leave.

After leave, an AT package of two one-week blocks in the Hartz Mountains was organised by **Sgt Andy Morris**. The activities on offer were mountain biking, rock climbing, canoeing, hill walking and a day's R and R. Everybody seemed to enjoy all the activities except, Predators Pass, which will go down in 7 Bde folklore! It was then back to the garages again to prepare for first line and RSIT. Unfortunately this was interrupted by another 2 weeks leave. Typical!

The really hard work after leave began with RSIT taking priority, but as always, various other taskings cropping up such as JOTES, CIVPOP and the Corps Badminton Champs. This slowly stripped away any manpower left, but we survived.

Congratulations to **LCpl Claire Ashdown**, on her promotion to Cpl; to **Cpl Spick Lane** and **Kerry**, on the birth of their son **Jack**; to **Cpl Jim O'Mahony**, on his promotion to Sgt and subsequent posting to Blandford as AS Op Class 1 Instructor; and to **Cpl Stu Codack**, on passing his 1 Sqn selection. Lastly goodbye to **Sgt Si Link**, his wife **Tanya** and their son **Sam**, who are posted to OPTAG back in UK.

BRAVO TROOP – *by Cpl Applegarth*

Tp Comd **Lt Simon Lord**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Giddens**

Since the return from OP TELIC, it has been another hectic period for Bravo Tp. After our well-deserved summer leave, we were straight back into the garages, working hard to get all the veh ready for EX RATS REMINDER, a Sqn-level ex, aimed at testing comms eqpt and introducing the Sqn's capabilities to the new Bde Staff. Everything went according to plan, and the Staff seemed to be more than pleased with our efforts.

Then it was back to camp to prepare for JOTES and RSIT, along with numerous CES checks. Everyone mucked in, and the Tp managed to create a small city of tents, providing five radio dets for the Signals stand of the JOTES. Surprisingly, the Signals officers who came through achieved top marks! At the same time, the rest of the Tp were getting all the dets prepped for RSIT, which again, went very well.

We farewell **SSgt Aidy Sims**, and welcome **SSgt Gweedo Giddens**. Congratulations to **LCpls Honeywill** and **Preston**, who have both been selected for promotion to Cpl; and good luck to **Lt Lord** and **Sig O'Connor**, who are away on special courses.

SUPPORT TROOP – *by LCpl Johnson*

Tp Comd **Capt John Fradley** (QM)
Tp SSgt **SSgt Yendell**

Support Tp eventually made it back from OP TELIC at the beginning of July. Then over the next three weeks, we organised the retrieval of the unit's vehs from the port of Emden. Once this was completed, we were ready to jump headfirst in to our well-deserved summer leave. We are now coming to an end of the High Readiness year, which the lads are most pleased about. They are looking forward to the Other Tasks year, but as usual it never seems to stop for the Red Rats! For instance, on 13 October, we began EX RATS REMINDER; and at the beginning of November we organised and hosted the Junior Officer Trg Education Scheme for the whole of Germany and some UK-based offrs.

We congratulate and farewell **Cpl Steve Warrren**, who is going to 35 Engr Regt as the MT and Recovery Sgt. A warm welcome goes to **WO2 (RQMS) Andy Maylett** and his family, who have joined us from 1 (UK) Armd Div in Herford; to **Cpl George Mamattah**, **Cfn Greer**, **Cfn Morton** and **LCpl Andy Sorrell** and his family. The QM, **Capt John Fradley** and his family were posted to Blandford at the end of December. We wish you, **Helen** and the girls all the best for the future.

207 ON CIVPOP – *by Cpl Harris*

207 Sqn's week of CIVPOP took place in November at Lydd on the south coast. We'd teamed up with 1RRF and 2RTR to provide 'Rype Village' with its scumbag hooligan inhabitants. Everyone was happy with a week back in England but, with some disappointment, we learnt that kicking, punching, spitting and throwing furniture was forbidden. 'Just give 'em some verbal,' said the DS.

The ex force we were pitted against was the Irish Guards for their NI trg, so the rubbish Irish accent I'd being practising was utterly transparent, and met with resounding mockery. We went through a 24-hr period for each of the three companies that came to the range. This included a night and day of robberies, shootings, bombings and general aggravation, all culminating in a minor riot. The first time we did this, they asked for ten people and all sixty of us turned up to chase eight terrified guardsmen.

When the second load of Guards turned up, everyone was feeling a little bit cockier and putting one hundred percent into their new roles, with plenty of expletives and drive-by shouting going on. The DS weren't amused and soon put a stop to our fun.

The third company we received got it easy. Our girls and boys were sulking a bit, because of being told they had to be nicer to the soldiers! All in all, it was a great week, enjoyed by all with plenty of war stories going round the garages and the bar.

A big thanks to **Sgt Williamson**, and a special mention to **Sig Zoë Cairney**, for looking like butter wouldn't melt in her mouth, then turning out to be the worst she-devil hooligan of the lot.

SCREAM NIGHT – *by Sgt Clark*

The Sqn assembled in the bar for a night of pain infliction on many of the senior ranks who had signed up to this event at a Regtl dinner two weeks before. The thought of getting bodies waxed sounded like fun, but in the cold reality of that Monday night, there were a few anxious faces - even the RSM was looking a little dubious. The main aim of the evening was to raise as much money as possible for Meningitis in Children and Cancer Research charities. The event had been made a little more poignant, since one of our civilian support staff, **Mr Jack Cook**, had recently died of cancer. **Jack** had always been at the centre of many a charity event in the Hohne area, and hopefully we did him proud.

Sqn members dug deep into their pockets that night and produced a brilliant result. The OC led from the front by getting his bikini line done, bringing many a tear to the eye – his included! **Sig Lord** successfully outbid **Cpl Wood** to tear a waxing strip off the RSM (who manfully did not scream like a little girl). A special thank you has to go to **Capt Wettenhall** whose contribution was not only to get his toes waxed, but he also donated this hair to fill the 700 pillows that we will be sending out to Iraqi elephants.

The next morning there were many SNCOs with hair of some type missing. **SSgt Lockie** and I were banned from meeting the Brigadier, there being only one eyebrow between us. As a result of all this fun and games, we raised in excess of €2,200, most of which came from Alpha Tp, who had bid a whopping €1350 for **SSgt Walton** to have his moustache removed! His wife, **Dani**, had quite a shock, as for 13 yrs, she had never him without it. So thanks to all Sqn members who helped, and a big thanks to **SSgt Yendell** for doing the **David Dickinson** impression and hosting the event.

ROYAL SIGNALS BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS 2003 - *by Cpl Byrne*

I hadn't been at the Sqn for long, when I was given the opportunity of taking the Sqn Badminton team to UK for a week. The Competition was held at Azimghur Barracks, Colerne, home of 21 Sig Regt (AS). Only five units had been entered: 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207); 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204); 2 Sig Regt; the hosts, 21 Sig Regt (AS) and the previous winners, 11 Sig Regt. **SSgt Steve Pengally** and **Sgt Ginty McTurk**, who had recently left the Sqn for Blandford, ran the Competition.

The first event to take place was the Men's Team Unit Doubles, which we lost to 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204). Then it was the girls' turn, and **Sig Fletcher** appeared in almost every female final, and in the Mixed Doubles Final, collecting quite a bit of silverware. It was the girls who kept the Sqn flag flying. The lads couldn't keep up with them, as the Gurkhas had other ideas. Still, the whole team had a good time representing the Sqn and is looking to do exactly the same when we compete in the BA(G) Inter Unit Badminton Championship in Gütersloh in January 2004.

The Sqn's results were:

Ladies Unit Doubles	
Sig Fletcher/Sig Ronay	Winners
Cpl Cornfield/Sig Kain	Runners-Up
Ladies Open Doubles	
Sig Fletcher/Sig Ronay	Runners-Up
Ladies Singles	
Sig Fletcher	Runner-Up
Mixed Doubles	
Sig Fletcher/Cpl Byrne	Runners-Up

1st MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC **Maj P Drew**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PA Buckley**

EXERCISE FIRST PEIPER 2 – THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

EX FIRST PEIPER 2 was a 1 Mech Bde Battlefield Tour to the Ardennes, scene of the last major German offensive during WW2. We left by coach left early on the Monday morning proceeding via the Channel Tunnel and arriving at our hotels in the early evening.

The following day was spent travelling the route taken by Kampfgruppe Peiper, 1st SS Panzer Division, who made the furthest advances into the Ardennes before being thwarted at the last moment by a blown bridge. The afternoon involved a museum visit before returning back to the hotels for dinner and a chance to sample the local hospitality.

The third day we visited the sites of the battles for St Vith, the Twin Villages and Parker's Crossroads, where a heroic last stand took place by an American platoon, made up of stragglers from various American units supported by two Sherman tanks. They succeeded in halting the 5th Panzer advance for nearly three days.

The next day concentrated on the visit to Bastogne and then on to the Mardasson Memorial, erected to commemorate the 80,000 Allied Servicemen who were killed, wounded or missing during this offensive. After a visit to the museum and more photo opportunities, we boarded the coaches for the drive back to the hotels for a group dinner. The OC, **Maj Pete Drew**, spent most of the evening trying to educate the **YofS** and SSgt **Twizzle** on fine wines and cuisine, but it was too big a task even for the OC, as both preferred steak and chips and a pint. The evening was rounded off with more local hospitality before returning to the hotels once more.

Maj Drew, WO2 YofS Watts, SSgt Twizzle, Lt Yarrell and Sgt Watts

Throughout the tour we listened to individual accounts, narrated by the tour guide, of examples of great military blunders and successes; individual acts of extreme bravery; the courage of groups of individuals who held up advancing Panzer divisions long enough to allow their formations to withdraw and paying the extreme sacrifice in doing so; and the resounding will to win in the most extreme of climates with little food, ammunition and clothing. It seemed only fitting that the last day was spent with a visit to Hotton Cemetery for us to pay our respects and for the Padre to perform a short service of remembrance. The visit to this cemetery was a humbling experience with a few tears shed. It was a fitting culmination to the week. Lest we forget.

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

OC **Maj Paul Smith**
RSM **WO1 Weaver**

It has been another busy period for the Sqn with exs at home and abroad, alongside the normal in-barrack life. Some key personalities have changed in this period, and so we say welcome to **Capt Jim Duncan**, the new MTO, **SSgt Dave Nickerson**, who comes as the Chief Clerk and **Sgt Andy Bedward**, who returns to take over the Crypto Cell. Our farewells go to **SSgt Frank Stapleton**, who moves to Germany on promotion, and **Sgt Baz Eglinton**, who moves to civvy street after completing 22 yrs. Good luck in your future careers.

EXERCISE CANYON TIGER - *by LCpl Rob Moore*

After 5 weeks leave and our annual airborne signals weekend in Caythorpe, 10 members of C Tp deployed to the Grand Canyon for AT. We deployed on 1 September, flying out to Phoenix, Arizona. On landing in Phoenix, we got our hire cars and drove north to the Canyon.

After a couple of days acclimatising and route recces, we set of on our first trip down into the Canyon down the Hermit's Trail towards Hermit creek. The trail was one of the hardest the canyon had to offer and it stood up to its name. After 5 hrs of hard tabbing, we finally reached the campsite, on a small tributary off the Colorado River. This supplied us with well-needed drinking water and rock pools for bathing.

After an early night, we set off at 04.00hrs to miss most of the midday heat. The trail was littered with scorpions and **SSgt Rob McAdam** had a Mexican stand-off with a rattlesnake on the trail. After we bombarded it with rocks, it decided to bug out - and we did the same, at a great rate of knots! It took us about 4 hrs to climb back out to the rim off the Canyon.

Our next exped into the Canyon involved walking down to Phantom Ranch via the South Kaibab Trail. This trail was a lot easier going than the previous one. It was used by mule riders, which supplied the Phantom Ranch campsite. After around 4 hrs, we reached the campsite, where a well-deserved beer was had by all.

Maroon machine and Union Jack unleashed in the USA

Our early start was delayed, because we had lost **Sig Scott De-Gernier**. After finding him and peeling him away from his new Dutch girlfriend, we set off up the Bright Angel Trail back up to the rim. After quite an emotional 4fi hrs of trekking (which the rangers advise allowing 10hrs to complete), we administered and set ourselves up for the following day's trip to Las Vegas.

The following morning we set off for Vegas, arriving late afternoon, ready for a night's gambling, and general partying in the 24hr city. Our next port of call was Los Angeles, and after a long drive, we finally arrived in Hollywood. Whilst **SSgt Phil Shawcross** was shouting abuse at **SSgt Mo Morris**, we noticed **Ben Affleck**, in a convertible, laughing at his Mancunian vocabulary! We headed into Universal Studios for a few hours of fun. The next day flew out of LA Airport, and returned back to Colchester.

LANYARD TROPHY 03-THE TROPHY COMES HOME
- by Cpl Jim Kemp

On the morning of the 20 October 03, ten chosen men awoke and made their way to the start line with only one aim: to win back the Lanyard Trophy and return it to its rightful home, 216 Sig Sqn. The goes chosen ten were: **Capt Dagless**, **SSgt Newman**, **Cpl Dunn**, **Cpl Kemp**, **Cpl Lancaster**, **Cpl Mulcahy**, **Cpl Springett**, **LCpl Haswell**, **LCpl Muller**, **Sig Wild**. With the weather good and the route selection well rehearsed, combined with a rigorous trg programme and self-belief, losing was not going to be an option!

The start was fast and furious, and the pace was set for any team mad enough to keep up. This rapid pace was not to go unpunished, resulting in one team member being dropped off at CP2. With the weather still dark, the leg from CP2 to CP3 would be testing, but well-rehearsed drills proved invaluable, and before long, a nine-strong team met up with the admin party for a well deserved snack.

Daylight was now upon us and the team remained strong for the next three checkpoints. **Cpl Pete Mulcahy** entertained us at CP5, with his unintended swim in the river, but the wind-chill soon took effect on his wet clothes, and we had to drop him off at CP6, thus leaving us with eight. Those remaining then knew what was expected of them, and kept focused on the job ahead. It was becoming lonely at the front, but whilst going from CP7 to CP 8, we met 21 Sig Regt (AS), our nearest competitors, en route for CP7. Naturally no acknowledgement was made - our focus was on what was ahead, not what was chasing us. Before CP8 we were to cross paths with other teams, and the call of 'Go on the Airborne!' from ex-Sqn members, inspired the lads and injected a little pace.

With Cps 8, 9 and 10 soon conquered, it was time to dig in and attack the longest leg of the course, CPs 10 to 11. The one bonus was that, with the hard work to build the lead having been done early on, we had only to maintain the gap. Before long, the admin team and the support veh were in sight and the comments from all parties gave added encouragement.

After a change of teeshirts and a few last words of encouragement from the admin party, Sqn OC and RSM, it was up to Yes Tor, CP12 - the last before the finish. Naturally, the sight of the finish line brought us a boost, and before we knew it, we were making our way to the end. 400 yards from the finish, the eight remaining donned the maroon beret, formed up in extended line and crossed the finish line - undoubtedly a proud moment for all!

The team on the finish line with OC and RSM.

EXERCISE WESTERN VORTEX – *by Sig Wood*

EX WESTERN VORTEX was run in Canada by 14 Sqn RAF, from Lossiemouth. A Tornado bomber sqn, their planes were extensively used during OP TELIC. I was told that I was to operate the 346 ground-to-air manpack radio, talking to the jets to give them the frequencies and callsigns they would need to contact an FAC for an attack run. But the role I actually took on was a LTMO (laser target marker operator) aiming at enemy targets and lazing them whilst the bombers commenced their attack runs.

I met up with **Flt Lt Wiseman** from 616 TACP, and we drove to RAF Brize Norton for a stop over in the Gateway Hotel for an early morning flight. The flight left BZN, going via Lossiemouth to collect members of 14 Sqn, and then on to Goose Bay, Labrador, Canada. By now I had met the other members of our 4-man team for the ex: **Cpl of Horse Jules Forsdick** from the Life Guards and another RAF Regt Flt Lt who I only knew as **Adam**.

During the first week, the Tornados were being prepped for flying, so we didn't have anything to do. **Jules** and I got a car and set of to explore the local town, ironically named Happy Valley. On Sunday morning we were lifted by heli to the range area at Lima Hill, which consisted of an array of targets, based on what would be at an airfield (MIGs, BRDM's, Bunkers and HAS).

We lived in a log cabin at the bottom of the hill and would make our way up each morning, part of the way on quad bikes and then the rest of the way on foot. We would then set up at the top with me on the laser designator and **Jules**, **Sam** and **Adam** on their 346's. The jets would then come in, and with a talk onto the targets and some superb laser targeting, we managed to destroy some of the enemy. We did this twice every day and again at night. During the time off, we kept ourselves amused by playing cards, and **Sam** and I soon had a quad bike time trial on the go.

During this first week I learned the ropes of FAC and LTMO, and after a short return to camp for the weekend, I was rearing to get back to the range to do some more.
During the second week the weather was bad, so we didn't get as many controls as everyone had hoped for. But the highlight of the final day on the range was seeing a PLGM (PAVEWAY) being dropped by one of the Tornados.

The weather again closed in and we were left in the cabin for the weekend - much to our dismay, as we missed one of 14 Sqn's parties and the England vs France Rugby match. We managed to entertain ourselves enough to stave off cabin fever, and when the weather finally cleared (Monday afternoon), we were lifted out by a Canadian SAR heli and returned to Goose Bay. We then chilled out for the remaining couple of days before our flight back to UK. I enjoyed my time with 14 Sqn, and hopefully I will get another opportunity like this one. It was a great experience.

EXERCISE ALPHAS SHOUT – *by Sig Lamswood*

EX ALPHAS SHOUT was an opportunity for the old and new members of Alpha Tp to learn a variety of new skills on the set-up procedures of both Light Tac and Step-Up HQs. It was also an intro by **Sgt Watson** to some basic inf skills. The ex took place over two days on Crowborough trg area, starting with drills to familiarise all members of the Tp with how airborne components of the Sqn would move from a DZ to the set-up of Light Tac HQ, allowing Bde Staff Offrs initial comms on the ground. This was done in stages until everybody was confident with the procedures and we could then run through the whole process in real time. The ex then moved into night routine, coming under a series of attacks, countered with some spirited defence from **Sig Smith** and **LCpl McMillan**.

The following morning saw us going through the theory and practical conduct of de-contact drills, ranging from one man to sec level. This was the more physically demanding part of the ex, de-contacting out of open ground before fighting through woodland carrying full kit. The final part of the ex was the setting up of Step-Up HQ, which some of the Tp had worked in on OP TELIC, but for many was completely new. Before tearing down for the journey home, there was just time for **LCpl Campbell** to give us an impromptu GPMG lesson. Overall, a successful ex, with a lot of experience shared and many new skills learned.

EXERCISE AFRICAN SHIELD

On 10 November, ten lucky members of the Sqn departed Colchester to take part in EX AFRICAN SHIELD, a Joint Coalition CAST ex, working with the South African Defence Force. After a

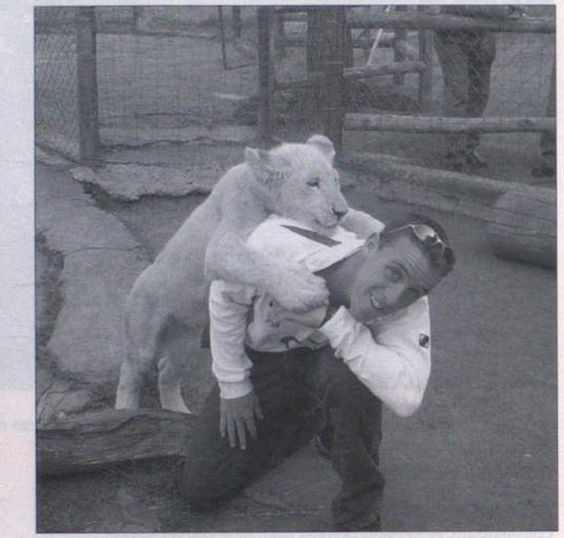
short stay in Manchester and Senegal, courtesy of RAF equipt failure, we finally touched down at Waterkoof Airbase just outside Pretoria. The weather was warm and there was obvious potential for a good Christmas tan during the weeks ahead.

The CAST ex was priority, and we soon found ourselves in a hardworking routine supporting the Bde staff. The exercise was to last two weeks, the first week being the planning stage and the second being the execution phase. There was a tactical stand-down for the Rugby (well done, England). The ex scenario was based on a Sierra Leone situation with 16 AA Bde being the Land Component Comd formation for a Non-Combatant Evacuation / Peace Support Operation on a fictional country off the South African coast. This involved a maritime element, and a lot of important lessons were learned. Overall, the ex was a huge success and was celebrated with a *braii* (BBQ) and a few sociable beers.

The third stage was the R and R stage and the aim was to do as much as possible, starting with a battlefield tour to Rourkes Drift. The guide who led the tour was excellent, giving us various accounts of the battle and leaving the final conclusion for us to decide. What we do agree on though, is that there were 'Zulus, Sir, thousands of them!'

The Sqn visit Rourkes Drift – notice the dress for this demanding ex

The next tourist attraction was the famous Sun City, an entertainment venue with an amazing water park, casinos and a popular venue for world golf tournaments - not to mention the scenery that offered some outstanding photo opportunities. We couldn't leave without seeing some of the local wildlife, so we opted to visit a national safari park and a lion sanctuary which was exciting. After a whole afternoon trying to spot a big cat (even using **Sig Miller** as bait) it became apparent that we were not going to see any, so we opted to see some cubs and some good photos.



Cpl Kemp being mauled by a vicious lion cub.

With the return flight looming, there was just time for some Christmas shopping at a nearby market. That concluded our tour of South Africa, and there's no place like home, even though **Sig Miller** and **LCpl Desilva** wanted to stay.

THE SQUADRON IN 2004

So what is in store for 216 Sqn in the New Year? Firstly it is straight in to the Bde ex programme as the Bde aims to meet the in-service date for the Apache heli. This will be through both CAST and field exs. There is the continued support to the units from the Bde deployed or deploying on OP TELIC, providing specialist rear link dets to battlegroups. And with 2004 being the 60th anniversary of D-Day and Market Garden, there will be a series of commemorative events culminating in a large-scale Sqn deployment to Holland for a battlefield tour.

12th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC Sqn **Maj Chris Paterson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Ken Marsh**

We have now commenced our Trg Year but are still involved in the extensive prep phase necessary to progress through BOWMAN Conversion. Quick wits and flexibility have been the order of the day, as the Bde adjusts to difficulties inherent in the introduction of such a complex comms system. Delays in the delivery of our converted installations, and setbacks in the provision of trg, have necessitated an early move for the Sqn. We are now fully operational in its new home in Bulford. The year will bring with it the challenges and rewards of proving BOWMAN in the field and ensuring that we are on course to achieve Collective Performance Level 5 in BATUS in May/June 05.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Zoe White**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Rob Fogg**

A quick recce of the new garages/offices has left many members of the Tp aspiring to be QM's Department one day. Rumours that the BPFA is to be conducted in the QM's office have been strongly denied! Despite this all agree that the new working and living accn is a vast improvement. A relatively slow run up to the Christmas break was the calm before the storm that the Op Cell is set to unleash in the New Year. All members of the Tp will certainly be making the most of the last leave before being fully BOWMANised!

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Christian Barker**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Simon Donnelly**

Bravo Tp has been kept busy over the last few months with BOWMAN courses and the move to Bulford. Progress has also continued on driver courses under **Cpl Armitage**, despite the best efforts of **Sigs Proctor** and **Fox**.

November wouldn't have been complete without the OC's Challenge Competition, which was won by Bravo Tp. The team consisted of **LCpls Nicholl** and **Burfield**, **Sigs Lewis**, **Morris**, **Bowen**, **Elgumaty** and **Treagust**. A big well done to the SHQ team who took an alternate route up Flagstaff.

Congratulations to **Sig Lewis**, who passed his PTI course (finally); to **Cpl Armitage**, for passing his Det Comd course; and to **Sgt Witham**, for passing Sgts course.

BOWMAN TRAINING *- by Sigs Barlett and Pardoe*

We recently completed our Pirbright-based BOWMAN Conversion trg. The Basic Signaller course lasted for 9 days, but we then spent a further 3 days learning to apply this knowledge in the Staff environment on the Staff User course. Before we started, we weren't quite sure what to expect in terms of how hard the course was going to be or how we were going to be trained. The trg was conducted using computers with graphics to represent the new equipt. Using the new BOWMAN radios on a computer screen and experimenting with the different functions, proved to be simple and effective. But it didn't rain in the classroom and we had no opportunity to bog a veh in! Luckily our course included members of the BOWMAN Trials Team. This proved useful, as they had already used the equipt and could explain to us how each item has been fitted into the different wagons and gave us a better appreciation of the practical use of the new applications. They were also able to explain the areas where mods have been made, and how it would affect the overall performance of the equipt. We were also taught about ComBAT, a new system for the Staff users in which maps with various data overlays can be securely passed around the battlefield, with Orders, SITREPS and other vital info.

The courses were not as hard as we expected, and they are constantly changing to adapt to the needs of the different units that require trg. Now we need to get our hands on the kit to start getting practical experience about how it works in the field. We will have plenty of opportunity for this in the New Year as the Bde's Trg Year gets into full stream. The likely capability improvements in the BOWMAN era cannot be understated, and will have a huge impact on the way our HQ will operate in the future.

OC'S CHALLENGE *- by Sig Bleach*

On 28 November, the Sqn held its first OC's Challenge, organised by Alpha Tp. The competition was based upon the old P Company Ten-miler. Alpha Tp managed to field a respectable 14 soldiers, Support Tp dragged people out from everywhere to create a formidable sized team with 33 runners and Bravo Tp clearly misread the instructions and sent a seven members. The rules were simple: an average weight of 25lbs to be shared between the team to their tactical advantage; no dead weight; dropping any team members over the route would cost a five minute time penalty; and any sneaky shortcuts would mean disqualification for the team. In accordance with these rules, the fastest team would be the winning team.

At 10-min intervals, the teams raced over the start line on Pegasus Bridge. Support Tp took about ten minutes to clear the start line with their battalion-sized group. But the odds were not in their favour – partly due to the REME element being tired at the start line from all their whinging about how unfair the rules were – but they raced off, chasing the heels of Alpha Tp. The markers around the course reported in to the ex admin cell (cunningly disguised as a six foot table outside the gym), as each team passed. The final times for each group were as follows: Support Tp 1 hr 39 mins, Bravo Tp 1 hr 43 mins and Alpha Tp 1 hr 46 mins. However, to their dismay, the OC was forced to disqualify Support Tp for unintentionally 'adapting' their route. This left Bravo Tp, the winners of the inaugural OC's Challenge, to plan the next event in Bulford. The Kiwi beckons...

VEHICLE PREPARATION FOR BOWMANISATION
- by Sig Bodle

As we all know, CLANSMAN radios in the British Army, and indeed the other Services, are being replaced by BOWMAN Radios. The BOWMAN equipt has been purchased from General Dynamics UK and is based on the system in use by the Canadian Army, though it has been substantially re-developed and represents a significant advance on what the Canadians are currently fielding. It is a huge project that will have tremendous impact on the way the British Army operates in the future. 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) was chosen to be the first to convert to BOWMAN.

The Unit was given conversion dates, working around an extended Trg Year to allow for unfamiliarity with equipt. A REME Conversion Team inspected the Sqn vehicles (A and B fleets) and following their inspection, they issued the PPSS documents detailing necessary work to be completed prior to installing BOWMAN equipt. The Unit then started preparing the vehs, removing all CLANSMAN kit and other kit which will no longer be required. The vehs were also inspected for the various mods that are needed for BOWMAN conversion.

The vehs were then transported to DSDC Ashchurch, where the armd veh drivers and comds will be based for a number of weeks to help the Conversion Team. Other Sqn members are undergoing BOWMAN trg delivered Westland contractors and military instructors at Pirbright. The trg is entirely simulator-based, so the pupils have not as yet had hands-on experience with real equipt. This will have to wait until the return of the converted vehs. At this stage trg will move from individual to collective trg, under the direction of BOWTAT (BOWMAN Training Advisory Team).

The Conversion process has experienced a few problems. Firstly the tear-out of the armd vehs was laborious, requiring detailed knowledge of the internal cabling. Often mistakes were made, with wrong cables being extracted, only to be re-installed later. (Top tip - don't throw any cables away!) And, if you are in a hurry and want to strip out a veh in a rush, there are only a certain number of people that fit in a 436 at one time - especially when trying to unscrew something whilst upside down in an oilspill. Happily Landrovers aren't too bad!

The Sqn is now awaiting the return of the converted vehs to see BOWMAN in place and ready to go. There is a long way to go yet, but the introduction of BOWMAN is certainly an exciting prospect – though saying goodbye to CLANSMAN has brought tears of one sort or another to many people's eyes.

101st LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj TJ Allen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) KRJ SMITH**

The SHQ element of 261 Sig Sqn is settling back into barrack life after a hectic 6-month tour of Iraq. **Maj Tim Allen**, **Capt Sofia Hargreaves**, **WO1 (RSM) Kev Smith**, **SSgt Micky Harman**, **SSgt Lee Clarke** and **Sgt Daz Mordecai** had a wonderful Christmas lunch with the Aldershot Branch of the RSA and would like to thank them for their kindness.

The frantic race to unload the ISO containers

SUPPORT TROOP

OC **Lt John Keith**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Micky Harman**

PREPARING FOR THE RETURN OF THE SQUADRON - *by LCpl Dave Kean*

Whilst the Sqn were deployed on OP TELIC 2, there were 6 of us on rear details and one of the tasks we were given was to move the Sqn garages. This was not necessarily a hard task in itself, just a very time-consuming task with few people. We were fortunate that 110 Sqn RLC helped us out and provided us with some soldiers who were waiting to be posted. They worked really hard and got their teeth stuck in to the job and the garages were moved quicker than we could have expected.

Then it was back to the mammoth task of providing transport for the Sqn and Bde personnel returning from theatre for various reasons. This proved to be interesting with only one car and up to 4 details a day. **Sig Roge Moore** spent more time at Brize Norton than in his own bed. During the rear party we said a fond farewell to **Cpl Baker**, who left for 71 (Yeomanry) Sig Regt.

The vehs arrived on the ship from Iraq, which, instead of docking in Marchwood, turned up in Tees Port, causing a few small problems. As the ISO containers arrived, we only had two hours to unload them all.

The Sqn is now fully back and the turn around from Ops to bks has now begun in earnest. We are looking forward to our repatriation/Christmas function at the Hilton Hotel in Bracknell and the late start that the **Maj Tim Allen** has granted us.
As for every unit in the Corps, next year will be a challenging one as the Sqn becomes BOWMANISED and the ex season starts once again.

102nd LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj Justin Hodges**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) RC Douglas**

It has been an extremely busy period for the Sqn. We have spent much of our time either preparing for, or deploying on one ex after another. All the hard work finally came to fruition with a successful deployment on EX FORGED HALBERD, when the Sqn achieved provisional FOC status. No doubt there are many more months of hard work ahead, with the JFLOGC HQ looming in the not too distant future

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Marc Bentley**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Chico Towers**

FSG - *by Sig Swann*

On EX FORGED HALBERD we initially deployed onto a loc within camp. However, all was to change before long, when the FSG element deployed 400km away to Altern Grabow trg area. After an arduous 8-hr journey, we arrived at an old abandoned Soviet camp, which was to be our home for the next week or so. With 5 days to set up the HQ, we set to work immediately. Eventually, after using the world's supply of hessian, black nasty and zip ties we managed to transform the former Soviet dormitory into something that could have gone onto the housing market. During our time up there, we managed to find some of the local shopping centres or rather, the disused quartermaster's dept, from which many bargains were to be found. Despite a few slip-ups, everything ran smoothly. Once the Staff had left, we packed up and rejoined the rest of the Sqn at Haltern. Good fun was had by all.

RSG - *by Sig Potter*

With November came the Bde ex that we had been gearing up for for some time. Finally, the prep was over, and we were off. RSG HQ deployed down to Sennelager, where initially we were to take part in EX ARRCADE FUSION. Once this was completed the ex rolled into EX FORGED HALBERD. After spending about five days building the HQ, it was good to see it actually being used by the Staff. When all the Staff moved up to FSG, we made the move up to Haltern trg area and set up there. The conditions proved to be adverse, and before long a quagmire had developed. However, we cracked on and eventually ENDEX was upon us. With that, came an address from the Bde Comd to congratulate us on our efforts in turning a Sqn that previously existed only on paper into one that can deploy anywhere in the world.

ISM/ TECH TROOP

Recently the Tp has been involved with EXs MERCURY HALBERD 2 and TUNGSTEN HALBERD at Sennelager. Along with the rest of the Sqn, the Tp had barely a week to turn the equipt around before deploying for a three-week ex, EX MERCURY HALBERD 3. A week after MERCURY HALBERD 3, the Sqn were deployed for a third time on EX FORGED HALBERD. ISM Tp were deployed to the four corners of Germany with **SSgt Craig Dudley** (ATacCS Network Mgr) co-located with the Main HQ LAN Mgrs, **Cpl Lee Gobie** and **LCpl Dom Spiers**. Main was first deployed to Sennelager before spending a most enjoyable week at Haltern trg area, where it rained for the duration of the deployment.

ISM Tp, Forward HQ with LAN Mgr, **Sgt Paton**, were deployed to the far side of Gütersloh Flüghafen for the first week and then re-deployed to Alterngrabow, near Berlin. The ISM Tp veh soon found itself a straggler on the A2 as an oil leak on one of the wheel hubs prevented further progress from the Rastplatz. This meant that **Sgt Paton** and **Cfn Popplewell** had to endure an hour or so of hot coffee, chips and currywurst, whilst waiting for recovery. However, **Cfn Popplewell** seemed to receive enlightenment from the above mentioned, came up with a solution, and the ISM wagon was soon able to continue its journey to join the rest of Forward HQ.

Alterngrabow was once a camp for the Russian Army during the Cold War, and this meant some souvenir collecting. Russian grey coats, hats, badges, red stars with hammers and sickles were all on the souvenir list. **Cpls Jenks Jenkins**, **Rob Bromwich**, **LCpl Greg Ward** and **Sig Daz Hocking** extend their thanks to **Sgt James Paton** for taking them in from the cold and allowing them in his ISM Tp veh.

280th (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Russell Edwards**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dixon**

For the majority of this year, the Sqn has been supporting at least three concurrent op deployments. The year has also seen an Article IV deployment to Turkey's border with Iraq and exs in Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands. This month's notes take the form of an update on the Sqn's diverse and frequent op commitments with NATO.

SUPPORT TO OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

In June of this year, SHAPE was requested to provide reach-back comms for the Polish Div HQ deploying into Iraq as part of the newly formed Multi-National Div (Centre South). As one of the key providers of deployable CIS capability with NATO, the Sqn was tasked to carry out this role.

The task was to provide robust CIS support to a large multinational HQ, providing secure data in the form of CRONOS and insecure voice access to the NATO IVSN. The team was assembled in a short period of time and consisted of 1 Offr and 8 ORs from the Sqn with 5 Italians, 3 Poles and an American in support. Comms testing took place throughout July, where we proved the Transportable Satellite Ground Terminal and CIS architecture at Maastricht in the Netherlands. National OPTAG trg was carried out, including field-firing and anti-ambush drills.

The deployment itself was a contrast to a usual UK deployment, with the vehs flying by Antonov and the crew in a 30-seat Dornier jet. On arrival at Kuwait International Airport, we joined a US/Polish convoy for the 2-day drive to Camp Babylon about 80 km south of Baghdad. The trip was long but uneventful, and everyone arrived in good order.

Once comms were in, we settled down to providing support to the HQ. The Polish Staff and troops are of a very high standard and were good to work with. One of the challenges of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn is deploying on ops with forces that have different procedures from our own and for whom English is often not their first language.

Operating equipt designed for the temperate regions of Europe in the desert heat of over 60° C, provides its own challenges, and resulted in some quite ingenious improvised sunshades for the box bodies. With things going well, we settled down to the first 4-month instalment of a projected 2-year deployment, with the first crew due to rotate in early December.

SUPPORT TO OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

Since the fall of the Taliban regime, the International Stabilisation and Assistance Force (ISAF) have worked to provide security and reconstruction in Afghanistan. The ISAF mission has been taken on by a number of nations in the past, and is now held by a composite NATO HQ drawn from AFNORTH.

On 11 July 03, the advance party for the takeover and set up of ISAF IV left Maastricht. The NATO contingent consisted of a vast array of personnel from various member countries, all brought together under the ACCAP Bn, one of the other CIS Units in AFNORTH. Unfortunately, the ACCAP Bn was unable to manage a task of this scale on their own, so they requested assistance from 280 Sqn. This included the OC, **Maj Edwards**, and a team of Inst Techs to lay the fibre around the new HQ building.

There was a race to get comms in and working. The combination of the hot, dusty environment and tight deadlines added up to an exhausting daily routine. Difficulties with supplies, with all equipt having to be flown in from Europe, resulted in some on-the-spot improvisation, but the effort paid off and the HQ was ready on time.

The Sqn still has a presence in Afghanistan, operating and maintaining the NATO HF equipt providing an emergency rear link in the event of the satellite ground terminals failing. This presence will be reinforced in January, when an additional team deploys to operate and maintain short-range line-of-sight equipt and TETRA

The Iraq det about to leave Elmpt

commercial radio systems. The Sqn det may increase still further as the NATO mission expands with Afghanistan.

SUPPORT TO OPERATIONS IN THE BALKANS

The British Army first entered the former republic of Yugoslavia as part of the United Nations Force to deliver humanitarian aid during the Bosnian conflict. In mid July 1996, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn prepared for their tour of the Balkans with HQ LANDCENT. Plans for deployment by the Sqn became a reality on 24 July 1996. It took a total of 11 air moves and two train moves of both personnel and equipment.

Banja Luka, located in the north west of Bosnia was to be home to the soldiers of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn and has remained so for seven years. Once in theatre, it was the Sqn's responsibility to provide comms to the HQ in Sarajevo and other Multi-National Divs such as Mostar and Tuzla. Other locs later included the Croatian capital of Zagreb and Split.

The site at Banja Luka, otherwise known as Banja Luka Metal Factory, was previously allocated the title of MND (SW) until the start of 2003, when it was scaled down to a bde level and given the title of MNB (NW). There are three main nations serving in the Bde: Dutch, Canadians and the British.

On the initial deployment of 280 to Bosnia, the following equipment was needed in order for the Sqn to play an effective role and have compatibility with the other MNBs.

IDNX (Integrated Digital Network Exchange)

This is a single intelligent comms platform capable of high rate data transfer, and when first introduced, represented the best comms equipment available. This in turn offers the Staff an unrivalled capability for timely and accurate passage of info.

VTC (Video Tele Conferencing)

The VTC system's primary role is to improve the passage of info between the Comd and his subordinates, using high rate digital video technology. The VTC has set extremely high standards for comd and control methods of comms.

CRONOS (Crisis Over Open Network Operating System)

This is the NATO secret WAN that provides secure email throughout NATO and also provides local secure file service. This system is used in conjunction with the IDNX Trunk Comms System, and allows secure data to transfer globally. Throughout theatre it is passed securely over the IDNX system.

Over the last few years, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn have deployed a five-man team every four months, consisting of one Sgt and four JNCOs. At present the five-man team have two key roles during their time in theatre, giving them the title of 'The O and M Team' (Operations and Maintenance). The first is administering and maintaining the CRONOS Network and user accounts, and the second is the provision and operation of VTC for the Comd and other Offrs fortunate enough to be granted the use of the facility by Comd MNB (NW).

The management of VTC and CRONOS has recently hands, as contractors have been encouraged to take over the operation and maintenance of these systems. The hand over take over was completed at the end December 2003 with the O and M Team currently in Bosnia being relieved of their duties shortly afterwards

DEFENCE COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY (GERMANY)

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

OC/S02 Strat Dev **Maj AL Hayden**

OPERATIONS – MESSAGING - *by Sig Janet Uluivuya*

After an extremely hectic period during OP TELIC, even for those involved in the provision of static comms, the summer has brought about many changes to the infrastructure of formal messaging in BFG. **Cpl Teresa Brown** has called it a day after serving 13 years, hanging up her green kit. Departures have also included **Cpl Scotty Wilson** and **LCpl Claire Mathias**. ATFC Arborfield will now have the pleasure of **Cpl Wilson's** company. **LCpl Claire Mathias** is now enjoying the delights of York, along with **Sgt Karl Woodray**, who has now finished a 5yr sentence with Commcen Osnabruck. Good luck to you all with your future employments. All upcountry COMCENS in BFG have recently undergone refurbishing with brand new IKEA pattern furniture - which must be an indicator that the Army is about to leave! DCSA(G) Messaging (COMCENS) welcomed the following over recent months: **LCpl Gaz James**, **LCpl Gaz Watson** and **SSgt Paul Gartside**, from 280 Sig Sqn; **LCpl Steve Thornley**, from 7 Sig Regt; **LCpl Scotty Hawkes** and **Sig Mel Walker**, from 3(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt; and **LCpl John Hill**, from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. **LCpl Steve Thornley** has taken the plunge and married **Karen**. Congratulations to you both and best wishes for the future

DCSA(G) Messaging now moves forward, with the prospect of civilian counterparts soon to arrive. Messaging is now under the comd of the RAF and the COMCENS have **WO Mike Dykes** RAF overseeing us all. The blue goes nicely with the green, but he doesn't like being called Yeoman! With the integration of civil engineers from Gütersloh with the Military techs of the Maint Sec, even more civvies are on the horizon.

ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT HUMAN RESOURCES

Adjt **Capt CJ Udell**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) G Steel**

We say a fond farewell to **Sgt Taff O'Connor**, our trg SNCO/Admin Sgt, who has recently left on posting to RSS as a phase 2 trade instructor. Best wishes from all Agency personnel to yourself, **Louise** and **James**.

FAREWELL DINNER - *by WO2(SSM) Steel*

Prior to their recent departures from DCSA(G), a Dinner Night was held in RSU WOs' and Sgts' Mess to say a final farewell to the following personnel on posting: **Capt Scotty Steven**, who leaves JHQ bound for HQ AIRNORTH in the rank of Acting Maj; **Sgt Tony Ramsay**, who departs to HQ 1 Sig Bde; and **Sgt Taff O'Connor**, who departs to Blandford.

The three departees with their leaving presents

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (DIGBY)

CO **Gp Capt J C Rigby** RAF
COS **Lt Col S Sharman**

OPERATIONAL CO-ORDINATION SQUADRON

OC **Maj Dave Stapleton**
2IC **Capt Lucy Brereton Martin**

The Sqn has enjoyed a very busy time over the past few months, from deploying personnel on OP TELIC, to bolstering the SRRC, to the continued trg support to the operational sqns. Operational Trg Section (OTS) welcomes **CT Hepburn**, who arrives to take over from **CT Souter**, who now enjoys an easier life in MOD.

On the due date, we held a Halloween fancy dress party and coupled it with a few hello/goodbyes. All manner of weird and wonderful costumes were hired or made, including **CT Hepburn** in a furry black pussy suit, **Sgt Willumsen** as a 6ft 3in Panda/Badger, **SSgt (Supvr R) Marrs** as a tiny Rupert the Bear, and **Maj Dave Stapleton** in his home made Zombie suit. **Capt Brereton-Martin** made an outstanding Little Devil and scariest of all was **Capt Nige Humphries**, who turned up in his normal everyday clothes - not a pretty sight. All in all the night was a big hit and plans are afoot to get the next one underway.

2 SQUADRON

OC **Sqn Ldr Neil Lamont** RAF
2IC **Capt Lindsey Roberts** Int Corps

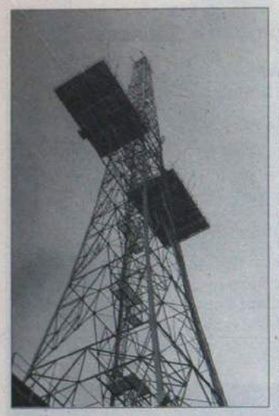
This month has been a slow month for 2 Sqn, with only one new member, **LCpl Dave Brown** who has recently transferred from 1 Sqn.

November saw the annual fundraiser for Children in Need. This year we had a number of themes, such as non-uniform to work day, name the bear, car wash, and cake and candy sold by two naughty schoolgirls. The sum total raised was an impressive £847.48. We thank all who took part and all who donated so generously.

4 SQUADRON AND QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

OC	**Maj Mark Brookes**
QM	**Maj George Burrows**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) Smith**

EXERCISE ICARUS BLIND PEW II – *by Cpl A Paisley*



The Stenogot Tower – 365 ft high

On the arrival of the new QM, **Maj George Burrows**, plans were put in motion to introduce him to the characters of LSG and members of 4 Sqn as a whole. This took the form of a Navex conducted in the Lincolnshire Wolds.

We set off in a mini bus on a brisk, cold October morning to find some hills and features in the Lincolnshire area - which is no easy task! After about 30 minutes on the road, **WO2(RQMS) Smith** had all personnel don their blindfolds to conduct a little map reading ex at the drop-off point. Since most had taken a sneaky peak out of the window, there seemed to be no problems in locating the drop-off point. We

The QM's Dept looking nervous, 250 ft up

were then given various map reading tasks to ensure we were all familiar with spotting features on the ground and on the map. We then moved on to the next loc, where we were met by **Sgts Martyn Clayton** and **Mark Hartley** from RAF Digby's Antenna Erector School. They allowed us to ascend the 360ft Stenigot Tower, which gave sweeping views of the Lincolnshire countryside. At the 200ft platform, we could see WW2 bomb craters, a fitting reminder of the age of the structure and the fact that the Lutfwaffe had tried and failed to blow up the tower. At that moment, **Sgt Hartley** received a 'Lightning Risk 2 Warning', which resulted in the quickest descent imaginable!
It was now time to start the nav phase of the day. Unusually, the met office got it nearly right, and although we saw no lightning, we did experience a refreshing hailstorm that tended to lower morale. After waiting out the storm with a few light refreshments, various members of the Tp did their bit of path-finding, meandering along the Viking Way to our final destination. Thankfully the sun came out later in the afternoon.

Overall, we all had an enjoyable day, giving the new Boss an opportunity to meet members of LSG and put faces to names.

EXERCISE KINGFISHER GREEN – *by LCpl Andy Lonsdale*

This 4-day ex was to introduce new personnel to offshore sailing. 12 members of JSSU (D) took part, including **Cpl Mason**, **LCpl O'Halloran**, **LAC Wilkinson**, **Cpl Pollycott** and a small contingent of RAF policemen.

After a long drive to Gosport the day before, the first day was an early start to check over the boats and visit Asda to stock up for the next 3 days. We divided into two crews of six and set off. The first day (quite choppy) was a chance to teach the novices the basic drills of raising sails, pulling ropes and all that good stuff, which was a lot more interesting than it sounds.

With calmer weather, the second day was more relaxed. This gave us a chance to practise 'man overboard' drills, although we weren't allowed to throw anyone in for real - much to **LAC Wilkinson's** delight.

The final day of sailing certainly tested the skills we had learnt over the past two days, with the winds reaching gale force and the waves giving us regular salt-water mouthwashes. The skipper said it to be the worst weather he'd experienced in the Solent, so it was good to be part of a very challenging sail. The crew pulled together and everybody played their part in bringing the boat back in one piece. We were up early next day to hand over the boats and do a runner back to Digby before the next crew found anything wrong with them. This ex has taught me many new skills that will come in handy if I choose to sail again. I would recommend to anybody interested to get themselves on a similar sailing exped if given the opportunity.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS)

CO	**Lt Col IG Standen**
SSM	**WO1 (RSM) MR Neighbour**

AYIOS NIKOLAOS F TE

Not since *The Italian Job* (be it the original or the recent re-make) has a Mini featured so prominently in an event, and not a lot of people know that. The Fête at Ayios Nikolaos, held on Saturday 4 October, culminated in the drawing of a raffle to decide the lucky winner of the fabulous Mini One. To add drama to the proceedings, the British Racing Green car was driven into the centre of the main arena, its boot laden with the 457 tickets that had been sold for £20 each. Ten-year-old **Brooke Osborne** walked up to the boot of the car and rummaged for a few seconds before holding the winning ticket aloft. The luckiest person in the ESBA that day was **Maj Danny Bryan** APTC from CJSATC in Dhekelia, whose name was announced by **Jane Ashurst** of the BFBS *On the Road* team.

The Fête attracted over 1,600 visitors, who arrived throughout the afternoon to enjoy a splendid day of fun activities and a bit of shopping at the numerous stalls. The programme featured a musical performance by the Band of the Light Division and a parachute display team landed in the arena. A Samurai and Ju-jitsu display produced sensational performances from **SSgt Mick Thompson** APTC and the world Kickboxing Champion himself, **Sgt Paul Fowler** RAF. The Samurai Sword display presented by the two martial arts experts was particularly impressive, as they swung around a Chinese broad sword and the Japanese *Woo Shu* sword.

The little ones were well catered for too, with bumping cars on offer and pony rides provided by Famagusta Saddle Club. Ladies also had an opportunity to browse around cosmetic and flower stalls and Matty's Gem Art offered stunning and unusual pieces of jewellery.
The event organiser, **WO2 (SSM) Neil Jennings** thanked all members of the committee who had helped him and he also

Junior members of Ay Nik Martial Arts Club demonstrating some of their moves

extended his thanks to the many donors of raffle prizes. The Mini raffle alone had raised £1,600 for local charities. The afternoon was rounded off with a very wet *It's a Knockout* with water-based tasks. The hit of the day turned out to be the 'Soapy Slide,' simply a sheet of plastic and soapy water - evidently an addictive activity! Teams in the competition consisted of mainly Youth Club members and their leaders. One such Youth Leader, **Cpl Alan Holmes** RAF, may regret taking part as he managed to smack his nose and face quite severely, leaving him looking like a failed boxer. But he did manage to register the furthest distance on the Soapy Slide. The aptly named *Sliders*, aged 8-10, were the eventual winners and the CO did the honours in presenting medals and a trophy to the dripping wet Champs.

NIKSTOCK 2003

As the afternoon fête drew to a close, the scene was transformed into an evening concert venue for *Nikstock 2003*. 500 people returned after dark to join in the party atmosphere and enjoy the performances on the bill. Some brought chairs and small tents. Children gleefully entertained themselves with the many 'glow-lights' on sale and it appeared at one point as if hundreds of the multi-coloured glowing sticks were flying through the air. Hosting the event for the third time, **Ged Deedigan** and **Mick Thorpe** from *Head Up Entertainment* were also back again. **Terry Brice** opened the show with *Take it Easy*, as everyone was beginning to just that. He also sang some other great favourites, including **Van Morrison's** *Brown Eyed Girl*.

We then saw some home-grown talent, including **Melanie Holmes** who, in her first stage appearance, showed the full extent of her singing talent, especially with her opening number, *Torn*. Married to **Cpl Alan Holmes** RAF, **Melanie** said she had performed before but not to an audience of this size. Total mayhem soon followed with the appearance of *Sponge Bob Square Pants*, a sponge character from the Children's Television show of the same name. **Sponge Bob**, who lives in a pineapple under the sea, is currently appearing on BFBS TV. The arrival of the 'square panted one' created a near riot amongst the under-tens and clearly thrilled the screaming children as they mobbed him.

Other acts on the night included the band, *D'lirious*, **Nick Felgate** and **Dino Martini** who all managed to drag the crowd to their feet for some dancing. The *Search for a Star* competition featured five contestants, and was won by **Cpl Neil Smith** RAF, who sang the Wet Wet Wet hit, *Love is All Around*. This won **Neil** a cruise for two, courtesy of Salamis Tours. Nikstock organiser, **FltSgt Taff Thomas** said he was pleased with the entire evening.

2 SQUADRON

OC	**LtCdr DL Jones** RN
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Jennings**

We welcome **Cpl Lee Elliott** and his family, **SAC Colin Reid**, **LCpl Murv Wride** and **Sig Gavin Quinlan**. Good luck to **Sgt Tony Tye** who is off to 14 Sig Regt on promotion. Goodbye to **Cpl Stu Yates** and family to 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt, and to **Kelly Cover**, the TMS clerk who has also been posted.

Well done to **Sgt Eddie Stojanovic** and **Sgt Matt Williams** who have picked up their third stripe, and to **Cpls Linc Sims**, **Dave Walsh**, **Chris Ritchie**, **Karl Mercer** and **Alan Stabler** for their well-deserved seconds.

3 SQUADRON

OC	**Maj D Sacree**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) L Balmforth**

Belated farewells to SSM, **WO1 (RSM) Rick Thorne**. Welcome to the new OC, **Maj Dave Sacree**, who arrived some time ago, and to the new SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Barney Balmforth** and his broken foot - living proof that football should be a spectator sport once you've passed 30.

Despite other pressures, support for the Unit community has flourished through the enthusiasm and commitment of Sqn personnel and their families. One of these successful initiatives has been the monthly Sqn Happy Hours. The brainchild of the OC, these are designed to bring together the Sqn and their families socially for fun and frolics.

The Sqn charity project is now firmly in our wake. **Cpl Hill** RAF Regt, headed up the project to rebuild the front garden and patio area of a local school. The Sqn threw all available personnel at it, including the OC and SSM. In *Ground Force* meets *Auf*

4 Squadron Dhekelia Dash Team

Wiedersein Pet style, we attacked the task like worker ants. It is even alleged, that the Provo Sgt, **Sgt Johnston** had been prised from the Guardroom (like a hermit crab from it's shell) and was seen putting in some hours. Despite all the graft put in by the Sqn, the completion deadline had to be moved back slightly (proving that you cant rush quality) but a good job was done by all.

The OC's desire for Sqn physical supremacy paid off recently during the CO's Sports Day, confirming that all those early morning runs had not been in vain. The first event was the CO's Fun Run, and despite the Royal Navy questioning the legalities

SSgt 'Elvis' Sheard

and the Royal Air Force consulting QRs, it still went ahead. All personnel were to take part in this 5.8km cross-country event. 3 Sqn mopped up on this event and followed in this vein for the rest of the day, taking silverware and points for the cross-country, golf, hockey and volleyball as well as points for being runner up in a number of other events. The overall result was a landslide victory for the Sqn and yes, even more silverware.

4 SQUADRON

OC	**Maj RJ Parkinson**
SSM	**SSgt BA Sheard**

4 Sqn are a newly established Joint Service Sqn, and have been up and running since March 2003. We incorporate all the Logistical and Support elements here in Ayios Nikolaos. Against a backdrop of what seems months of endless good weather, the Sqn has being working hard trying to establish itself and its reputation as the doers around camp.

Our sporting prowess has also been ever-present in the last 6 months, with trophies coming in thick and fast:-

Cross-Country Runners-up 2003
Badminton Champions 2003
Tennis Singles and Doubles Winners 2003
Ayios Nikolaos Tug-O-War Champions
Unit Swimming Gala Runners-up
Unit Water Polo Winners 2003.

DHEKELIA DASH

The Dhekelia Dash is a Charity Fun Run that attracted 42 teams of 15 members. Runners were required to complete a one-mile Cross-Country circuit in the fastest possible time. 4 Sqn felt that they didn't stand much of a chance against some of the larger Units based in Cyprus, so they concentrated on fancy dress.

Batman (**OC Sqn**) launched the team. Other runners included Robin Hood (**Sgt Mick Waller**), The Hulk (**SSgt Dave Leask**), Super Store Man (**SSgt Chris Hood**), Radiation Man (**LCpl Ollie Oliver**), Batman 2 (**WO2 Aide Peel**), The Hulk 2 (**LCpl Mac McLeod**), Robin (**SAC Tommo Thomson**), Elvis (**SSgt Bri Sheard**), Mr T (**SAC Ollie Peltier**), Hong Kong Phooey (**WO2 Jase Goldsworthy**), Action Man (**SAC Dave Parker**), Robin (**Cpl Dave Bradley**), Scooby Doo (**Lt Harry Harrington**), and yet another Batman (AKA **Cpl 'Tony' Knight**).

When all the runners were in, prize giving got underway, with CBF, **Maj Gen Pearson** awarding prizes to first and second place in each category. Needless to say, 4 Sqn walked away with the best fancy dress hands down!

4 SQUADRON GO PARACHUTING

The OC sought more challenges for the good of the Sqn, and the RQMS suggested parachuting. 10 and 12 November saw ten members of 4 Sqn journeying to Dhekelia for a one-day parachuting course. The intrepid crew of misfits, led by **Lt Harrington**, shrugged off the risks, and proceeded to the Joint Service Parachute Centre.

After 6 hrs' arduous ground trg, we were ready for our first Sqn jump. **LCpl McLeod's** eyes were getting bigger and bigger as the aircraft was heard starting up. Some faces were now starting to look anxious as it dawned upon us that we were all about to chuck ourselves out of a perfectly serviceable aircraft. The aircraft climbed and climbed. 'Excellent view,' was one of many comments from **Sgt Mick Waller** as he pushed and braced himself against the opposite end to the open doorway. Needless to say there were some weird and wonderful exits, all immortalised on video - especially **SSgt Tom Spalding**, who got top prize for impersonating somebody climbing back into the plane.

Everyone landed safely - some slightly heavier than others. Top Marks to **LCpl Mac McLeod**, who, being on the wrong channel, missed all the warnings over the chest-strap radio to turn left, and proceeded to head for the Motorway (Driver by trade - need we say any more). All in all, an enjoyable day was had by all. Bring us more!

CYPRUS COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

OC	**Maj Matt Hanson**
USM	**WO2 Dave Smith**

As we have come to accept, the pace of life within CCU rolls on unabated. Recently the Unit has been involved in organising an AT exped to South Africa, the annual CCU trg camp, a visit by the SOinC(A), the Better Halves Pre-Christmas bazaar, the CCU Walkdown, and a myriad of other events.

On the work front, CCU are continuing to carve the way in creating the future structure of Permanent Joint Operating Bases (which includes the Falklands and Gibraltar) and are pleased to announce that we have now achieved sign-off of a major consultancy project that will assist us in our transition towards Service mgt, which will improve the way we do our business and protect the future of CCU. We can also confirm that that CCU will not come under command of DCSA, although the Unit will be forging closer relationships with the Agency as it comes on island in 2005.

2003 proved to be a highly successful year for CCU due to the hard work, enthusiasm and dedication from all personnel in the Unit. 2004 promises to be equally challenging and fulfilling, as the Unit evolves further and cements its role as the main provider for CIS in Cyprus.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK – *by Sig Stu Clark*

In October, a group of fourteen personnel from the Unit completed a two-week trekking exped, EX APHRODITE PROTEA, to South Africa. This was the first joint exped held by the Unit since the amalgamation of 259 Sig Sqn and 12 Sig Unit, RAF in September 2002.

The group was made up of 7 Army and 7 RAF personnel from Episkopi, Akrotiri and Dhekelia, including all ranks and various different levels of mountain experience and fitness.

With **Lt Fiona Watson** heading up the exped, she was joined by **SSgt Elvis Hemstead**, as the chief map-reader and **Sgt Tony Woolford**, as the mountain leading guru.

The main aim of the expedition was to complete the Giant's Cup Trail, a sixty km trek through the demanding, but stunning, Drakensburg region in the SW of the country. This region contains some of the most spectacular scenery in South Africa, which made the arduous route a little more enjoyable and a little less painful!

As well as the trek, there was a good selection of other activities. We did an excellent day of battlefield tours to the Anglo-Zulu battles of Rorke's Drift and Isandlwana. It was a humbling and extremely memorable experience with **Sig Ozzy Osborne** learning a little about his Welsh forbears! There was also a two-day adventure to the Umfolozoi-Hluhwe Game Reserve for a spot of safari for all budding David Belamys in the group. We saw lots of game - rhinos, elephants and monkeys. Unfortunately **LCpl Carl Orme** scared away all of the big cats with his non-stop filming. We finished the exped with two days' well-earned rest at the Penwarn Country Lodge, where **SSgt Elvis Hemstead** found an unexpected visitor in his bed!

The Rorke's Drift pose

SSgt Hemstead and friend

CCU ANNUAL TRAINING CAMP 2003

Now into its second year, CCU held their annual trg camp during the first two weeks of November. One of the most unique fighting forces ever assembled, paraded on the square at dawn on 2 November, fresh faced and unaware of the demons that lay ahead of them. The Army contingent was full of trepidation despite the announced deviation from previously named Battlecamp years, while the RAF personnel, many of whom were willing volunteers, also started to get a bit nervous. Much banter was thrown between the two Services as to what awaited us all - nightmare predictions of various sized blisters on the soft RAF feet and the Army's legendary ability to achieve all in a soft diplomatic voice.

Our senior range staff, **SSgts Paul Jordan** and **De De Watts**, had put together the range package and were in charge of the first week. They were given 50 troops, three 4-tonners, 1 hangar and enough ammo to invade a small European country, but the only thing they didn't have was time. Just one week to train these people in the age-old art of battle. At the start of the week they couldn't even fight sleep, but after six days they would be turned into lean, mean fighting machines, capable of painting the battle field red, without the aid of **Laurence Llewellyn Bowen**!

The bible says that Sunday is God's day, and on this day of rest, He must have sat back and laughed heartily as the fighting secs of CCU had to pairs fire and manoeuvre down a concrete runway. The DS wanted blood, sweat and tears - and they got all three in the first 10 minutes, though not necessarily as they had intended. The blood and sweat came from troops, but the tears came from the DS, as they realised what they had let themselves in for.

The first week was to be a progressive range package, starting with an APWT on the Monday and working up all the way to a fire team advance to contact on the Friday. Although the SA80 was the main weapon in use for the week, the troops were introduced to and fired various other weapon systems, including the LAW 94, the 9mm pistol, L109A1 grenade and the GPMG in both light and SF role, along with an introduction to military explosives.

The APWT was the first hurdle to overcome, with only those who passed being permitted to continue with the package. Most did, though there were some close calls, with some taking the test four times before passing. Top score of the day went to **Cpl Robson** with **Cpl Brooks** RAF just behind. This was particularly impressive, being completely new to the RAF element, the majority of whom had never fired on anything larger than a 25m range.

Late nights were common occurrence throughout the week, as numerous lessons were required on all aspects of small sec battle drills, including the weapons and tactics involved. The highlight of Day 2 was equally split between the live firing of the 94mm LAW Outdoor Trainer and field firing on the Individual Battle Skills Range. All came off this range battle scared and bruised, these being felt only later in the evening once the adrenaline levels had subsided. Day 3 began with 20 lucky individuals having the opportunity to throw a live L109A1 HE Grenade - a very rare chance for Royal Signals personnel and most certainly unprecedented for those in tech trades in RAF. These were probably the longest heart stopping moments for the DS, particularly those in the throwing pits, as some of the troops seemed determined not to follow the proper drills. More explosions were to come in the afternoon, when 62 Cyp Sp Sqn, RE put on an explosives stand, with everyone given the opportunity to make and detonate a charge.

The battle-seasoned troops impress ACOS(Ops)

Day 4 saw an increase in intensity with a pistol shoot and further pairs live firing, culminating in a sec defence scenario with the use of the deadly GPMG. This weapon was a great favourite of those who were lucky enough to fire the beast. A still shaking **Sig Buckler** could only say, 'That was awesome!' Nothing more would be talked about until the next morning. The week's trg culminated with a fire team Advance to Contact (or, for the RAF, 'find the enemy and attack until you run out of ammo.' The dedicated instruction and organisation of all staff involved, made this a truly enjoyable and a once-in-a-lifetime experience, allowing both Royal Signals and the RAF personnel to feel a huge amount of unexpected commonality. The degree of effort inserted was exemplified by **SAC Lambert**, who passed out with the sheer effort (or should that be real enjoyment?)

For the second week of trg camp, the focus and tempo of the ex changed as we entered the AT phase. The aim was to develop the leadership skills of individuals, while promoting unit cohesiveness. To this end, a wide range of pursuits was available, from parachuting to diving, abseiling to windsurfing.

The activities were based in a number of locs around the island, Episkopi for the water sports package and Troodos for walking, climbing, abseiling and mountain biking. Unfortunately, the weather was against us from the start with fog and snow descending upon the slopes of the Troodos range, and high winds hitting the coast of Episkopi. Towards the end of the second day, the weather improved and AT could begin in earnest!

In Troodos, participants completed a 140ft abseil into the Troodhitissa Valley. **Sig Pardoe** said, 'The experience pushed most people out of their comfort zone, especially the forward abseiling. It instilled lots of confidence in yourself. It's amazing, the huge smile a person has when they've just been scared out of their skin. Forward abseiling – running the rock – awesome!'

The water sports package was a similar success, with personnel having the opportunity to learn to windsurf, water ski, sail and kayak. In Dhekelia, ten had the opportunity to learn to parachute. **Sig Laura Roberts** has been bitten by the parachute bug and has already returned to CJSATC to complete further jumps. She claims, 'It's brilliant - a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I can't wait to do the longer course and do it again.'

Overall, everyone had an enjoyable time and learned many new skills. In a joint Service Unit spread over several sites, this package was extremely important in the fostering of a cohesive Unit identity. Indeed, the AT package built upon the esprit de corps that emerged during the military phase of the trg camp.

SPORT

ORIENTEERING - *by Maj TC Crosby*

INTER-CORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Inter-Corps Championships is the Premier event of the season at this level and all Corps level training is geared towards it. The 2003 event took place on the intricate terrain of Pembrey Sands near Llanelli, Wales over the period 15/16 November 03.

A good 4th place overall was attained by the Senior Men, which included an excellent 2nd place on the Day event. More talent is emerging, which bodes well for the future.
Team: **Maj Nick Bateson**, **Maj Terry Crosby**, **Cpl Jamie Ranson**, **Capt Tom Jeffires** and **Sig Tom Burke**.

It was not so good for the ladies. Their inexperience was there to see, both at Night and Day events. Two disqualifications capped a bad weekend but once again, there is talent emerging. Team: **Maj Sarah Streete**, **Lt Sarah Clifford**, **SSgt Paula Matheson**, **Sig Stef Bogart**.

The Development team did more than hold their own, and were 5th in a competitive field. There was plenty of speed on offer from the novices, but a shame that it wasn't in the right direction! Team: **Maj Duncan Parkinson**, **SSgt Colin Holcombe**, **Sgt Andy Dobson**, **LCpl Si Brown**.

There were some excellent (and disappointing) performances from the Under 25's. **LCpl Andy Price** has improved dramatically this year and showed that he can also produce results at Night (7th on the Short course, and was in front of the Ladies Night Champion). He sadly missed a control during the day, leaving **Sig Ben Rankin** to steal in to take the Army U25 Runner-Up prize. He will surely be kicking himself when he realises that he was leading all the way until 3 controls from home, when a 2 min error effectively cost him the title!

INTER SERVICES MATCH

Cpl Jamie Ranson, **LCpl Andy Price**, **Sig Ben Rankin** and **Sig Tom Burke** were all selected to represent either Army or TA in the annual Match. **Maj Nick Bateson** was also selected as a reserve, and would have been in the team on merit had he not been too old!

ROYAL SIGNALS VERSUS RAF MATCH

The senior teams get back together on 28 March to take on the RAF in a challenge match.

CORPS TRAINING CAMP 2004

The organisation of this year's trg camp is already well under way, and bases itself on the biggest O event in the world – the Swedish O-Ringen (18 – 23 July). Selection for places is almost complete, so if you have yet to register, contact the Corps Team Manager, **Maj Terry Crosby** on 94382 5801.

SKIING

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 7, 15 NOVEMBER-13 DECEMBER 2003 – *by Capt Michele Worden*

This year's Royal Signals Wintersports Camp again took place in Kaprun in Austria, which saw over 175 personnel from 24 units both Regular and TA from across the Corps trg and competing in both Alpine Skiing and Snowboarding.

The Alpine element began in earnest on 15 November, and saw individuals receiving intensive race trg on the Kitzsteinhorn Glacier (3,000m), which, with temperatures before wind chill averaging -15° C, proved to be a suitably challenging environment. All the Alpine Ski instructors were again provided from around the Corps, and thanks go to the CI, **SSgt Andy Dawson**, 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, for the co-ordination and running of the instructional phase, and for being responsible for the success of the Alpine Race week. COs are also thanked for releasing their ski instructors during an extremely busy period. Without such support, the Corps Camp would not be able to provide such excellent tuition for such large numbers.

The Snowboarders arrived on 29 November, and were again instructed by the Dutch Company, *Ripstar* for their first week. Thanks to *Just Add Water* for their continued support to the Snowboarders for equipt hire. The Snowboarders race week included Individual Giant Slalom, Slalom and Dual Slalom races, in addition to the ever-popular King of the Hill. Overall results saw **LCpl Yarnold**, 7 Sig Regt, being crowned the overall Corps Snowboarding Champion, with 7 Sig Regt also winning the Team title. **Cpl Grounds**, 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, won both the King of the Hill and the Dual Slalom races, whilst **SSgt Cindy Mellor**, 37 Sig Regt, was announced as the overall Female winner.

During the final race week, we were extremely fortunate that the Corps President of Snow Sports, **Brig T Inshaw**, was able to visit the camp on the last day of racing and present the prizes. Thanks also to **Capt Ian Large**, Captain of the Army team and **Sgt Scorgie**, for agreeing to Fall Alpha several of the Alpine events. During the final race week, the skiers competed in both Team and Individual Giant Slalom and Slalom races. The Brigadier closed the Alpine Individual Slalom course, which he found was fairly technical - but once he had found his second ski, was able to complete the course! On the same day, he also managed to view the snowboarding stars taking part in the Dual Slalom event. During the prize giving ceremony, held at the Grand Hotel in Zell am See, the Brigadier presented the Alpine Corps Champion award to **Sgt Robbo Robertson**, Sig Regt, which was quite an achievement, as he also won the Veteran award for 2003. The

The RSS Team are presented with their Combination Team trophy by Brig T Inshaw, pictured here with Capt Bee Bryan, SSgt Neil Pollitt, Sgt Scouse Lloyd and Capt Adam Corkery

Maj Paul Ford pictured with his Krampus mask. Paul is the one on the right

overall Combination team winners were from RSS, with **Capt Bee Bryan** as their Team Captain; and they are to be congratulated for the success. **Lt Hannah Frost** from 2 Sig Regt was the overall Female Champion. Congratulations also to 32 Sig Regt, who won the TA Cup; and to **LCpl Glynn Knight** of 7 Sig Regt, who beat off the competition to take the fiercely-contested Junior prize. Congratulations must also go to **Sig Frodo Hill** from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, who won the Novice prize whilst taking a break from filming.

Final thanks must go to all those who contributed to the success of this years' Camp. All the Alpine instructors, especially **SSgt Andy Dawson** deserve a special mention for giving up their time so enthusiastically. **SSgt Frank McGuinness** from 30 Sig Regt, did an excellent job ensuring the discipline was second to none. Thanks also to **Sgt Sammi Samuel** from SHAPE, who had the unenviable task of producing the seed lists and results every day from the warmth of his hut at the bottom of the race piste. Thanks too, to **Maj (Retd) Paul Ford**, Secretary of the Army Winter Sports Association, who once again was the Technical Delegate during race week and provided the Camp with his invaluable experience and advice. During the Prize giving ceremony, he was honoured for his 30 years of being involved in Corps skiing by being presented with a Krampus mask from the Corps Camp - and for once was found to be completely speechless. Thanks to **Capt Steve Knight** 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, who stepped in at the last minute to run the snowboarding element of the Camp, ably assisted by **Capt Ed Swift** from 11 Sig Regt and **SSgt Cindy Mellor**, who was in charge of Timings and Statistics. Sponsors of the Camp included Karrimor SF; Communication Specialists, who provided the radios; Marconi and WL Gore, who provided prizes. Team Captains are also thanked for putting the effort in to bring teams to the Camp, and to the individual racers who again made the Camp a roaring success. Final thanks go to HQ Th Tps for releasing me, **Capt Michele Worden** to organise and run the Camp. I promise to do some proper work now - until next year!

For all those interested in taking part in the Camp next year the initial Warning Order will be arriving in units in May 2004. Alternatively contact **Capt Michele Worden** on 94321

SQUASH

ROYAL SIGNALS TRIUMPH AT INTER-CORPS SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2003

The Inter Corps Squash Championships were held at the Army Squash Centre, Aldershot over the period 17 – 19 November 03. The Royal Signals team was selected on performances at the previous week's Corps Championships and despite the loss of two key players, **Capt Steve Bason** (media commitments) and **SSgt Dave Gallagher** (stubbed toe) they performed above all expectations and triumphed in a close contest to win the Division Two competition.

Outstanding individual performances were too many to name, however considerable depth at the No 5 seed provided the foundation for victory at each game. Important, often overwhelming victories were secured here by **WO1 Mark Findon**, **Capt Adrian Woodley** and **SSgt Dhir Pun**. **Capt Yambahadur Rana** and **Capt Nirmal Battachan** provided Gurkha flair in the middle order, and repeatedly triumphed over younger opponents. **Capt Ollie Gardner** was a banker at No 4, and despite an injury limiting him to one game per day, he took his three games with relative ease. **WO2 Ian Piears** at No 2, played probably his best squash for many years. He played all five games, losing only once but crucially defeated his AAC opponent in the deciding match of the league. **Capt Dean Richardson** also played all five matches, and despite losing to the AAC No 1, he was untroubled in the other four games.

It was a remarkable triumph, made all the more enjoyable for those who witnessed the disappointment displayed by a disbelieving AAC side. The result argues well for promotion to Division 1 next year, where a fit and full strength side should be strong enough to complete competitively. COs are thanked for releasing their players. The Corps team, however, needs younger players to come through and fill gaps and must be encouraged to enter the Royal Signals Championships.

Royal Signals Playing Order:

No 1	**Capt Dean Richardson**
No 2	**WO2 Ian Piears**
No 3	**Capt Nirmal Battachan**
No 4	**Capt Ollie Gardner**
No 5	**Capt Yambahadur Rana**
No 6	**WO1 Mark Findon**
No 7	**Capt Adrian Woodley**
No 8	**SSgt Dhir Pun**

Results

VsRLC 'B'	Won 5 – 0
VsRAC	Won 4 – 1
VsREME 'B'	Won 5 – 0
VsRE 'B'	Won 4 – 1
VsAAC	Won 3 – 2

Points

R Sigs	109 pts	(gain promotion to Division 1)
AAC	107 pts	
RLC 'B'	74 pts	
RAC	60 pts	
RE 'B'	54 pts	
REME 'B'	43 pts	

ROYAL SIGNALS STRONGLY REPRESENTED AT THE CYPRUS INTER-SERVICE SQUASH MATCH

- by SSgt Johan Barrington

The penultimate round of the Cyprus Inter Service Sports Competition 2003 saw the Army host the Squash Challenge at the Dhekelia Garrison courts on Monday 10 November. In a five-man team event Royal Signals were represented by **Capts Steve Bason** and **Dean Richardson** both of CCU. Each player was pitted against the corresponding seed over the best of five games. Two confident teams keenly contested the match, with the result going down to the final game.

The RAF arrived confident after a long journey from Akrotiri. The first game saw **Maj Phil Whitehead**, 1 RHF, defeat **Cpl Viv Richards** with a powerful display of aggressive squash to give the Army a head start, only for **SAC Richie Elliot** to level the overall score for the RAF with a good result against **SSgt Neil Beattie**, APTC. The battle of old foes at number 1 saw **Cpl John Spanton** use his racquet fairly this time, and won a closely-contested game against **Capt Dean Richardson**, Royal Signals. **SSgt John Mayhew**, REME, played to expectation and secured a vital 3 – 0 win against **WO Martin Biddle**. And so it was left to the old campaigner himself, **Capt Steve Bason**, Royal Signals at the deciding No 2 seed rubber to play for glory. He duly obliged with a convincing victory against the RAF captain, **Sgt Wayne Edwards**.

A final score of 3 – 2 to Army maintained the Army dominance at this year's Inter Service events and they now lead RAF by 6 events to 2. The COS, **Air Cdre Corney** kindly presented the squash trophy to the Army captain **Capt Dean Richardson** and congratulated both teams on a competitively contested match.

Results:

Army	RAF	Score
Capt Dean Richardson R Sigs	**Cpl John Spanton**	1 – 3
Capt Steve Bason R Sigs	**Sgt Wayne Edwards**	3 – 0
Maj Phil Whitehead 1 RHF	**Cpl Viv Richards**	3 – 0
SSgt John Mayhew REME	**WO Martin Biddle**	3 – 0
SSgt Neil Beattie APTC	**SAC Richie Elliot**	1 – 3

The COS, Air Cdre Corney presenting the Inter Service Squash trophy to the Army captain, Capt Dean Richardson

TENNIS

ROYAL SIGNALS STRONGLY REPRESENTED AT CYPRUS INTER-SERVICE TENNIS MATCH

The Corps were strongly represented at the annual Cyprus Inter Service Tennis Match held at RAF Akrotiri on 29 October. The match format saw each Service field three doubles pairings playing in a round robin format. The Royal Signals component were **Capt Dean Richardson**, **SSgt (FofS) Setch Setchfield** and **Cpl Nick Jones**, all of CCU. Each rubber was two short sets (with tie-breaks at 6-6) with a point for a win and half for a draw.

Weather conditions were perfect for the event, and each rubber was highly competitive yet played in a very good spirit. The match was very close, with Army edging the first and second rounds, and although RAF won the third round, it was not sufficient to make up lost ground. The final result was five points to Army and four to RAF. Commander WSBA Gp, **Cdr Randle** kindly presented the trophy to the winning captain, **SSgt Mal Hall**, APTC.

Representing Army were:

Capt Dean Richardson, Royal Signals; **Cpl Nick Jones**, Royal Signals;
SSgt (FofS) Setch Setchfield, Royal Signals; **Sgt Morris**, Int Corps;
WO1 Mark Davidson, APTC and **SSgt Mal Hall**, APTC.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: MajGen A H Boyle CB

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Soldier Recruiting Panel **Brig NF Wood**
Officer Recruiting Panel **Brig SGM Gordon**
Unit-based Branches Panel **Brig N Moss**
Advertising Panel **Brig CA Brown**

General Secretary & Treasurer: Col A F Carter MBE
Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C P Conlon
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr P J Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

BRANCH NEWS

Bill Naismith, Secretary of the Tayside and Fife Branch, has a new contact Tel No: 01382-645519. The Gurkha Signals Association and the Essex Yeomanry Association are now both officially affiliated to the RSA. A warm welcome is extended to their members. Contact for these associations are Secretary, Gurkha Signals Assn: **Col GC Verdon OBE**, 11a Castle Sq, Benson, Oxon OX10 6SD; Essex Yeomanry Assn: **Maj SP Palmer** TD, 21 Pheasant Close, Winnersh, Wokingham, Berks RG41 5LS. (Remember that rank must not be used on the outer envelope when writing to these or any other officers – unless the address is a military one).

It is always sad to hear of the death of members, particularly when it is one who has selflessly given many years loyal and hard working service to the Association. Such a member was dear **Frank Robinson** (Lincoln Branch) who passed away in November. **Frank** was a lovely man and it was a joy to see him at the Blandford Reunions.

RSA WEBSITE

The RSA Website received 4,238 hits in September. Don't forget that members may use the 'Lost Contact' page of our website to search for old pals.

2004 ANNUAL REUNION

The 2004 Annual Reunion will be held at Blandford over the weekend 26/27 June. All members and their families are welcome. Contact Assn HQ for full details.

2004 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

All members are eligible and welcome to attend the AGM, to be held at the Victory Services Club, London on Saturday 27 March. It starts at 10.30hrs and should end at around 13.00hrs with a buffet lunch.

MEMBERS' POSTINGS

Thank you to all those members who have supplied details of their postings whilst serving with the Corps. If you haven't yet sent yours in, may I invite you to do so while you can still remember them. A quick note or e-mail will suffice. The main purpose of these postings is assist in the locating of former friends. But the records proved useful recently when a question was posed about an event in the history of a particular (defunct) unit. I was able to obtain the names of all those who were in the unit at that time and the General Secretary was then able to ask the individuals for their recollections of the event.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following recently enrolled Life Members:

Rank/Name	*Service*	*Branch*
Sig Rob Betts	1989-98	
Sig Peter Vernon	1991-96	
Sgt Steve Bawn	1986-95	Middx Yeomanry Assn
Cpl Dan Scott-Benson	1987-98	
LCpl Reg Sterne	1947-49	Berwick
Sgt Brian Kirkup	1979-01	
Sgt Kenneth Mitchell	1976-93	
Sgt Neil Bristow	1961-72	
SSgt Peter O'Brien	1980-03	
Cpl Peter Norton	1950-55	
Dvr Donald Dodd	1952-54	
Cpl Keith Gilbert	1987-01	
Sig Steve Jennings	1972-77	
Cpl Brian Taylor	1960-69	
Sig Terry Bartlett	1952-66	Beverley Ex Boys Assn
Cpl Andrew Miller	1989-00	
Sig James Grady	1985-88	
Sgt Tony Smith	1984-96	
SSgt Paul Williams	1970-95	
Maj Ben Britton	1965-03	
Lt Col Barry Keegan	1982-03	
Maj Stuart Boyne	1993-03	
Capt Brian Johnson	1992-03	
Lt Col Peter Whitehead	1964-03	
Maj Keith Mannings	1990-03	
Maj Ron Kirkwood	1966-03	
Capt Jerry Hughes	1979-03	
Maj Andrew Saddington	1986-03	
Maj John Mayson MBE	1972-03	
Maj Nick Walker	1984-03	
Capt Roy Chalmers	1991-03	
Lt Col David Palmer	1967-03	
Capt Miles Booker	1994-03	
Capt Paul Wilson BEM	1971-03	
Capt Grant Peden	1994-03	
Maj Don Holmes	1964-03	
Capt Bill Simpson	1979-03	
Capt Darren Cooper	1992-03	
Capt Samantha Harrild	1994-03	
Maj John Floyd MBE	1964-03	
Maj John Charnock	1984-04	
Maj David Drinkall	1987-03	
LCpl Niki Wayne	1989-91	
Sig Mark Fisher	1988-92	
Sgt Ian Stuart	1984-date	Leeds
Sgt Mally Metcalfe	1969-80	Leeds
Sgt Dave Smith	1969-80	Leeds
LCpl Bob Macey	1940-46	AFSR Assn
Cpl Alan Willis	1960-69	Malta/Libya Comd Assn
Pte Margaret Shrives	1960-61	Malta/Libya Comd Assn
Pte Pauline Goodall	1964-66	Malta/Libya Comd Assn
Cpl John White	1954-56	Cambridge
Sgt Brian Wilkinson	1964-88	
LCpl Frank Mansfield	1950-52	Peterborough
SSgt Keith Phillips	1963-87	
Cpl Michael Poland	1974-92	
Sig Mark Reynolds	1990-96	
Dvr Pete Green	1946-48	AFSR Assn
Sig Ron Bailey	1943-47	AFSR Assn
Sig Derek Lee	1959-61	
Sig Ronald Hodgson	1950-55	Bradford
Cpl Frank Walker	1951-52	
Cpl Laurence Ware	1943-47	Eastbourne
Sig Ronald Hoggarth	1956-59	Leeds
Cpl Arthur Wood	1955-69	Rotherham
Sig Dennis Dobson	1960-63	Rotherham
Sgt Ian Maughan	1977-91	
LCpl Richard Hornby	1971-85	
LCpl Mark Deans	1996-02	
Dvr Roy S Smith	1949-54	
Cpl Ivan Hunt	1956-58	AFSR Assn
WO1 Roger Iredale	1964-03	
SSgt Les Carbutt	1943-47	AFSR Assn
Sig Bob Wharton	1942-46	
Lt Col Drew Robertson	1963-03	
Sig Len Kinealy	1962-66	Manchester
Cpl Brian Rawlinson	1952-54	
WO2 Terry Owens	1961-89	
Cpl Graham Moore	1979-86	
Sig Vic Potter	1940-45	AFSR Assn
Capt Tony Jewell	1969-92	
SSgt Peter Dunk	1961-89	East Kent
SSgt Paul Cooper	1975-94	
Pte Angus MacRitchie	1945-48	Exmouth
LCpl David Armstrong	1949-54	
Sig Alan Frost	1939-46	56 Div Sigs OCA
Cpl Dave Wyldes	1972-89	
Sig Eddie McDermott	1952-55	
Sgt Terry Bain	1963-85	
Cpl James Henry	1962-78	
LCpl Albert Ayres	1951-53	Cotswolds
Sig Tony Dyoss	1955-57	
Sig Andrew Woodhead	1992-96	
Sgt Alistair Smith	1974-91	Liverpool
Sig Michael Barritt	1972-75	
Cpl Eddie Neill	1963-71	
Sig Joe Deakin	1948-50	Sheffield
Sig Ted Hibbitt	1955-70	Sheffield
Sgt Gail Leach	1972-91	Sheffield
Cpl Francis Barton	1969-71	Malta/Libya Comd Assn
Capt Nigel Fanning	1980-03	
Maj Nick Massey	1991-03	
SSgt Grant Cochran	1991-date	
WO2 Steve Davis	1981-04	
LCpl Ferguson Milne	1985-96	
Sig Dave Cooper	1990-95	
Cpl Rob Lyon	1992-01	
Cpl Bart Storey	1975-03	
WO2 Frank Flaherty	1980-04	
Sig Neal Palmer	1984-88	
Pte Doreen Smith	1948-50	York
Sig Jo Reid	1992-date	
LCpl Glen Bennett	1980-90	

DONATIONS

£50.00 from the Exmouth Branch in memory of Maj Wilfred Hill TD.
£140.00 from the Reading Branch
£133.08 collected at the memorial service for Capt James Robert Lowe Acton
£275.00 in lieu of flowers for the late Peter Thornber.
£20.00 from the East London Branch in memory of Maj Wilf Hill.
£20.00 from Barry Greenwood in memory of Maj Wilf Hill.
£144.73 being cash donations in memory of Maj Wilf Hill.
£50.00 from 19 Sig Regt Assn in memory of Jack Courtney
£10.00 from George Brew in memory of Jack Courtney
£5.00 from David Angwin
£450.00 from the Cornwall Branch

£ 10.00 from the Certa Cito Lodge
£50.00 from Lt Col (Retd) R D Laing in memory of Maj (Retd) Ernie Summers MBE
£75.00 from Lt Col Ray and Claire Tricker, in memory of Peter Thornber
£40.00 from Lt Col (Retd) D J Grocott
£15.00 from Rev Peter Riley
£50.00 from the Salisbury Branch
£60.00 from David and Kate Hopkins
£ 10.00 from Mr L H Ladbrooke
£100.00 from the Indian Signals Association of Gt Britain.
£30.00 from Joan Greenstreet
£50.00 from the Poole Branch
£40.00 from David Armstrong
£ 100.00 from Tom Magowan
£30.00 from the Preston & Blackburn Branch
£178.00 from the 42 Signal Regiment Officers' Club
£40.00 from the Exmouth Branch
£250.00 from the East Kent Branch
£122.23 from 238 Signal Squadron
£25.00 from Graham Cox
£35.00 from Mrs E M Way
£20.00 from George Brew in memory of Fred Fordyce
£50.00 from 19 Sig Regt Assn in memory of Fred Fordyce
£10.00 from 3 Div Sigs Reunion Club, in memory of Capt T E Williams
£25.00 from Glossop & District Royal Signals OCA
£25.00 from Mrs M L Britt
£10.00 from Michael Barritt

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Jane Knight**

Our Autumn Lunch at the Army Golf Club was the usual light hearted occasion. **Tony** and **Anita Whydell** were our guests and we were happy to welcome members of the WRAC Assn who have become Associate Members since the recent demise of their own Aldershot Branch.

We were delighted to have **Lt Col Carl Conlon** and **Maj Bernard Redshaw** as our guests at our Christmas Lunch at St Omer Bks. We thought it was time they sampled the repast of the rest of the British Army, and what better place than at the home of Army Catering. They each were invited to say a few, albeit interesting, words all that time permitted on this occasion. The venue being a working training establishment, time was limited.

At the end of the luncheon we were happy to witness the presentation of Honour Membership to **Lt Col Neville Lyons**, who for some years past has been our outstanding Newsletter Editor and Quizmaster. We congratulate him. We could not speak too highly of the Christmas menu at St Omer and the high standard of service we received from the students. This was not surprising, as we were served by no less than the Supervisors Course, men who all would return to their own regts fully trained to run their respective messes. They will do them proud.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Ken Brown**
Secretary **Mr Phil West**

After the break in activity during August the Branch held a very successful lunch at a pub just outside Worthing. This event was attended by sixteen members and all agreed that the venue was ideal for this informal occasion.

October was the month for the meeting devoted to fund-raising to continue our Branch sponsorship of a Gurkha pensioner. The annual cost of sponsorship has doubled in recent years, but there was a determination to meet this requirement. We were fortunate that **Maj Peter Ridlington** (Royal Signals and Brigade of Gurkhas) was able to attend and speak of the work of the Gurkha Welfare Trust. An excellent curry meal was arranged by **Brian** and **Carole Vardy**, and a raffle rounded off the evening so that we were able to hand over a cheque to cover sponsorship for another year.

Brig Colin Brown, Chairman, Ken Brown and Maj (Retd) Bernard Redshaw

During this month a few members travelled to Eastbourne to join in with the 25th anniversary of the Eastbourne Branch. We were given a very warm welcome and enjoyed the evening's celebrations and we hope to welcome Eastbourne Branch to one of our events next year.

Our Annual Dinner was held in November and attended by nearly 70 members, guests and members of 884 Sig Tp. Once again the Courtland Hotel in Hove was the venue, providing a good meal and comfortable surroundings. The event was presided over by **Brig Colin Brown** with his wife **Heather** and our guest for this occasion was **Maj (Retd) Bernard Redshaw**, who gave an interesting account of his work as Editor of *The WIRE*. The Branch Chairman, **Ken Brown** responded to a request from our President and delivered the following extempore poem after the meal, confirming his position as poet laureate of the Corps.

The duty I like best,
Is to welcome every guest.
And all of them will have to take their turns.
When conversation has stopped rippling
I will copy Rudyard Kipling -
Or maybe it might well be Rabbie Burns.

I wasn't going to speak tonight
'Till our President said, 'Right!'
And you must admit that, when shove comes to push,
That I would be discontent
To upset a President -
Unless, perhaps, it was George W Bush!

So without more ado,
I'll proceed to welcome you
In the best tradition of Brighton RSA.
You have come, on pleasure bent,
From Winchester, Reading, Kent,
And other places, oh so far away!

From Active Service hails
From the 1st Princess Of Wals,
Lance-Corporal Philip Boxall - home again!
And from the TA we adore
There comes Troop Eight Eight Four -
Sergeant Stuart Ridgewell and his Merry Men!

I can't mention every name -
Not even Ladies, that's a shame;
And so I close now with our glad refrain -
'It has been a joy to meet you -
To salute you, and to greet you;
And to hope that we shall see you here again!'

The Branch was represented in the Remembrance Parade at Brighton on Sunday 9 November. The Branch Standard was carried by **Brian Vardy** and a wreath laid by **Gordon Holloway**. After the parade, 884 Tp extended hospitality to those attending. Our thoughts are with **Kay Mellor** (884 Tp and Branch Member) who is in hospital after being hit by a car that mounted the pavement. **Kay** was seriously injured and we wish her a speedy and full recovery.

The Branch retains a fairly stable membership and is always delighted to extend a warm welcome and a varied programme to any new members in its rather large catchment area.

CHESTERFIELD BRANCH

Chairman **Mr K Silcock**
Secretary **Mr D Croot**

At our December meeting, President **Doug Naylor** presented Chairman, **Ken Silcock** with his 50 year Badge and Certificate. For many years **Ken** was our Standard Bearer only recently, due to illness, handing the task over to **George May**. **Ken** has been a loyal and dedicated member of the Branch and still plays a very active part in running the Branch affairs.

Also at our December meeting we enjoyed a Christmas buffet, prepared by the ladies of the Branch. Afterwards, we had a quiz, a raffle and a game of bingo, which helped to contribute to the Branch funds. It certainly brought a smile to the face of our Treasurer, **Gerald Spencer**.

The Branch goes on from strength to strength. Over the past six months, we have recruited three new life members and some seven associate members. In the New Year we are looking forward to many more social events, starting with our Annual Dinner in January. We are also planning a five-day break in Bournemouth in June taking in the Annual Reunion at Blandford.

50 Years at the top Badge and Certificate awarded to Chairman Ken Silcock

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs J Berrett**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

September's weekend away in Paris was so successful that the Baguette crumbs had hardly been brushed away before a similar invasion of another European Capital was being discussed for the next year. However, it was decided that we needed to draw breath in October, so our venue for the month was the Boughton Golf Club, where a talk by one **Betty Rents**, a lady whose sea going adventures in Tall Ships started some years ago at the age of 56, kept the assembled audience in turn captivated and/or highly amused by her stories of life on the high seas. This, together with a delicious lunch, ensured another successful day.

Remembrance Day witnessed 25 Members of the Branch formed up, before marching off with other contingents to the Cathedral. **Maj Gen John Badcock**, the Branch Secretary, who normally heads up these occasions resplendent in bowler-hat, honours, decorations and furled umbrella, was this year to be seen overseeing the forming-up proceedings whilst sitting astride a rather smart motorised buggy. **Gen John** had recently undergone an operation to replace a hip, so was understandably reluctant to take liberties with his new one by taking 30-inch paces. However, this little handicap did not deter him, as he continued along the route of march, this time accompanied by **Mr Norman Davidson**, member and neighbour, in an umbrella carrying capacity until they reached the Cathedral. **Norman** had seemingly been very successful during his Service days in avoiding church parades, but on this occasion, under the watchful eyes of the still bowler-hatted, honoured and decorated but this time mounted General, he was trapped within the ancient walls as the heavy doors closed, thus being spiritually cleansed of guilt for his National Service misdemeanours. Following the service, the parade moved off through the City with the Branch contingent earning a special burst of applause from the hundreds of onlookers (no doubt encouraged by the Branch Support Group of wives and friends) before treating the dignitaries on the dais to a blistering 'Eyes Right'. Lunch at the Chaucer Hotel and another successful raffle by the DE Rose PLC organisation, completed a great day.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Perer Foakes is still hospitalised, although he has now been moved nearer to his home in Faversham, meaning that **Peggy** did not have such a long distance to travel on her daily visits. We wish them both well.

Gordon Alexander is still unwell although well cared for by his wife, **Jenny**, and we send them our best wishes.

Ted Drake is our highly efficient and dryly humorous Hon Treasurer. He has now also accepted the heavy mantle of Branch Information Manager, being responsible for the presentation of Branch matters on the Corps Website.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) P Burton**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) JB Greenwood**

We have continued our policy of having occasional guest speakers, and at our October meeting, we had a talk by one of our Members, **Doug Rands**, who described life in the many lighthouses he had served in.

On November around a dozen or more of our members set off to the Queens Theatre in Hornchurch to a SSAFA fund raising evening with the Royal Artillery Band. They performed a programme of both traditional and modern tunes, which got everybody's feet tapping and singing along at the appropriate times.

The following day, being Remembrance Sunday, we were all up early to attend and participate in the Parade and Service held at the Ilford War Memorial with Chairman, **Maj Paul Burton**, laying the wreath on behalf the Branch. Afterwards our members were invited by **WO1(RSM) MA Giles** of 36 Sig Regt (V) to the Sgts'

Mess at the Ilford TAC, where we had a few drinks and a curry lunch as we reminisced about past times and comrades. Former officers and local dignitaries were also invited back to the Officers' Mess and similarly entertained.

The Social Committee, **Ted Head**, **Linda Cooper**, **Anita** and **Neill Keen** organised one of our main events of the year, an Italian Supper Dance held on 15 November, where well over a hundred members and guests enjoyed, not only a very good meal, but most of us were up on the dance floor at some point during the evening.

Compliments to the catering staff, managed by **Shirley Anderson** and to the Disco DJ's, who kept the music going at a lively pace all the time - and of course, to the Social Committee for organising another splendid event. The evening finished in the traditional manner with Standard Bearer, **Roy Bilby** carrying out the Last Post, The Queen and finally the Corps March off.

Our November meeting, being the last for the year, was more of a social event, with refreshments being supplied by **Frances Greenwood** and **Iris Burton** to whom we offer our thanks.

On 7 December, in conjunction with the local REME Assn, we went to the REME Museum at Arborfield. With a meal organised in the Sgts Mess, this proved to be a very good day out, and hopefully we will have more joint events in the near future.

Reviewing other coming events, our Annual Dinner Dance is arranged for 13 March 2004, with guest of honour expected to be the SOinC(A), **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC**. We are also continuing with the successful guest speaker spot during the next year with the Mayor of Redbridge, **Cllr Mrs Vanessa Cole**, appearing in January.

Following Internet web space being made available on the HQ RSA site, announced earlier this year at AGM, we have joined the Branches already on that site, and with the help of **Andy Soward**, have got our pages displayed at
http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/eastlondon/index.htm

Before we had the space allocated to us on the above site, we have been using member **Brian Streetly's** web space to advertise our Branch to the world. We would like to take this opportunity to thank **Brian** for all the time and effort he put into this on our behalf.

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. We are aiming to be inclusive, and would welcome, as Associate Members, serving or ex-servicemen and women from other Regts and Corps. Our meetings are held in the Sgts Mess of 36 (E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford, at 8pm on the fourth Tuesday of each month except December.

EXMOUTH BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Goodman**
Secretary **Mrs O Irving**

ANNUAL DINNER AND DANCE

The evening of Friday 28 November saw the Exmouth Branch usher in the start of the Christmas party season at The Royal Beacon Hotel in Exmouth. The traditional Christmas fare was followed by dancing to the superb sounds of *High Society*, one of the better dance bands, led by **Dave Harding**.

Guests of honour were: President elect of the Exmouth Branch, **Maj Gen Ian Sprackling** and wife, **Annie** and Chairman of the RSA, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle** and his wife, **Anne**. They were hosted by members of the Branch Committee.

A great evening of dining and dancing was had by all members and their guests, and by the many friends of the Branch who attended this annual function.

Maj Gen Tony Boyle, Annie Sprackling, Anne Boyle, Maj Gen Ian Sprackling

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J McMillan**
Secretary **Miss I Muir**

Branch Members attended a games and quiz night, arranged by the RASC/RCT Glasgow Assn, at the Cameronian Club. They were entertained with songs from an RCT member on his electric guitar. The quiz had a number of heads scratching to recall names, to answer a number of the questions posed. A very nice buffet was provided and the evening was voted a great success.

On Remembrance Sunday, twenty-seven Members paraded, with **Bill McNamara** as Standard Bearer, at George Square, Glasgow. **Hugh Duff**, a Branch Founder Member, laid the Branch wreath at the Cenotaph. The Members then marched past the saluting base with the other Assns, the salute being taken by the Lord Lieutenant. Members **Ian Wood** and **Michael Moulder** were escorts to **Bill** parading the Branch Standard. The Members then boarded the coach to return to Jardine Street, where, with a contingent of the 32 Sig Regt and an Army Cadet Tp, they formed up to march into the TAC. Awaiting the contingent was a welcome lunch of curries or cold buffet, provided by Master Chef **WO2 John Wren** and his staff. The Branch Members thank the Regt's personnel for their hospitality on the day.

The Annual Dinner Dance was held on the 29 November, with over eighty Members and guests attending. The Loyal Toast and Toast to the Princess Royal were given by Branch Member **Tom Connor**. The company entered the dining area to the sound of the bagpipes played by **Bill Cleezy** and **Jock McKay**, who also entertained the company with a number of tunes after the meal. The Branch President **Lt Col Alastair Petrie TD JP** offered the pipers the traditional tot of whisky in a quaich.

Lt Col Petrie then thanked the Members for their support, and the Committee Members, for the arrangement of functions over the last year. He also thanked the OC, and personnel of 32 Scottish Sig Regt (V), for their help and use of their facilities by the Branch. The Branch President then had the WO2 **John Wren**, and Chefs, **Cpl Carruthers** and **LCpl McCormack**, together with the waiters, brought into the hall to thank them for their excellent efforts and to receive the applause of the company.

The Branch President then asked the CO of 32 Sig Regt, **Lt Col EM Blyth TD**, to say a few words about the Corps of today. **Col Blyth** spoke of the commitments the Corps had in the various parts of the world, and the part being played by several members of 32 Sig Regt in those units overseas. He also thanked the Branch Members for the invitation to the function, and offered any help required by the Branch in the future. **Col Blyth** then proposed a toast to the Royal Corps of Signals personnel, especially those presently serving overseas. **SSM Norma Sproul** of 32 Sig Regt proposed the toast to the RSA Glasgow Branch. After the dinner, the hall was cleared for the dancing to an excellent band. Later a raffle was held. It was voted an excellent evening and the Committee are to be congratulated on their efforts.

James Prentice and friends

MANCHESTER BRANCH

Chairman **Mr RPM Taylor**
Secretary **Mr H Ferguson**

The social life of the Branch this year, apart from the annual visit to the RSA Weekend at Blandford, has been centred on the Herforder Section of the Branch.
They managed to squeeze in visits to Scarborough, Dunoon and their year culminated in a trip to 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt at Herford in October. During this visit, **Terry** and **Muriel Hearldon** visited the European Parliament at Strasbourg and met Nobel Peace Prize winner and the only European to receive the Martin Luther King award.

During the November meeting Chairman **Ron Taylor** led the Branch in extending condolences to **Mrs Ida Harvey** on the death of her sister **Marjorie**.

The Branch managed to muster 20 members for the Remembrance Parade at Manchester's St Peter's Square this year, the best turnout for a long time.

Our next function will be the Christmas Dinner Dance on the 6 December back again this year at the Trafford Hall Hotel.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Secretary **WO2 I Wolfe**

It is good to be able to start the Northern Ireland Branch notes this month with a word of congratulation to our Branch Secretary, **Ian Wolfe** who has been promoted WO2 in 40 (U) Sig Regt (V). His promotion is indeed well-deserved. At the risk of causing **Ian** some embarrassment, it is worth mentioning that he took on the mantle of Branch Secretary in 1991 (that's 12 years ago) and has served the Branch faithfully over that long period. While I am at it, I might as well also embarrass his wife, **Debbie** who, also in 1991, became Assistant Secretary until 2000, when she accepted the post of Treasurer, which post she still holds. The Branch, and indeed the RSA as a whole, are deeply indebted to them both for the valuable service they have given over the years. I just wonder if any other Branch can equal this man and wife service. I should also mention that **Ian** and **Debbie** spent their recent wedding anniversary in London, where they attended the RBL Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall.

Still on the subject of remembrance, the Branch was involved in the usual activities during the November period, starting with the RBL Festival of Remembrance on 1 November in our new Waterfront Hall in Belfast. Several Branch Members attended. Then on Monday 3 November at Belfast City Hall, Branch Vice Chairman **Tim Reilly** and **Jim Vance** along with Councillors and representatives of the various armed and other Services laid Royal Signals crosses on behalf of the Branch. At Palace Bks in Holywood, Co. Down, **Lt Col CN Lightfoot** (National Vice Chairman), attended a Remembrance Service under the auspices of 15 Sig Regt. On the Sunday, Members of the Branch joined the 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) Parade to the local Church, with **Jim Vance** as Standard Bearer, the wreath being on behalf of the Branch by **Jim Reilly**. After the parade, Members were invited by **Lt Col RJ Kelly TD** and **WO1 (RSM) TA Henry**, to 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) for refreshments.

After a short October meeting, Chairman **John Brown** introduced **Lt Col RJ Kelly TD**, outgoing CO of 40 (U) Sig Regt (V), who gave a talk on the modern Corps, covering all aspects of Royal Signals today, and indeed for the future. **Lt Col Kelly** then introduced his successor **Lt Col SD Hodges**, who gave a resumé of his career to date. While giving a warm welcome to **LtCol Hodges**, the Branch would thank **Lt Col Kelly** for his help during his tenure, and wish him well for the future. Some very acceptable refreshments were produced afterwards by **Ian** and **Debbie**.

Christmas crept up on us quite quickly, and **John McAreavey**, our Branch Welfare Member, once again arranged for Christmas visits to our incapacitated Members and Widows. We hope all had a very good Christmas, and would like to wish all friends of the NI Branch, including those in other Branches, all at RSA HQ, particularly *The WIRE* Editor and Staff and of course, our good friend **Peter Cuckow**, a very prosperous and happy New Year for 2004.

A welcome awaits any serving or ex-Signaller at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the third Wednesday of each month. Why not check out our website for what's on.

POOLE BRANCH

Chairman **Lt Col (Retd) Jess Weir**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Bob Peake**

We are pleased to report that our monthly meetings go from strength to strength and we welcome three new Members: **Keith Andrews**, **John Reynolds** and **Peter Thomas**. Together with their wives they have become regular supporters of our meetings and social events. Ten of our Members also act as Museum Volunteers, covering weekend duties at the Corps museum in Blandford Camp.

Our Branch Quiz nights have become very popular and we even have an offshoot team participating in the RBL Broadstone Club monthly quiz event. Our main social events continue to be an annual lunch at the Elstead Hotel in Bournemouth and a Christmas Dinner in our HQ at the RBL Club in Broadstone. We also enjoy attending events organised by both Bournemouth and Dorset Branches.

The Christmas Dinner was again a very successful evening, with just under 50 sitting down to a traditional meal and our main guests were **Lt Col Carl Conlon** from RHQ and his wife **Jan**. After the meal, **Maj Gen Alan Yeoman** presented **Jimmy Logan** with his 50 year badge and **Pat Evans**, our President's wife gave **Eve** a lovely bouquet of flowers.

Jimmy and Eve Logan

Jimmy founded our Branch back in 1978 and **Eve**, his ever supportive wife, was Secretary/Treasurer until 1983. We are indebted to them both, for it was their determination and enthusiasm in those early years that has seen the Branch develop into its present healthy state.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Chairman **Sid Smith**
Secretary **Tony Dear**

NEWS OF MEMBERS

The following loyal Members of the Branch are unfortunately suffering from ill health and cannot make the monthly meetings. However, they are still kept in touch with Branch activities through visits by the Chairman and Secretary and through the Branch newsletter: **Arthur Baker**, **Bob Squibb**, **Vic Sergeant**, **Richard Percy**, **Jumbo** and **Cis Chapman**, **John** and **Margaret Daw**, **Fred** and **Nancy Griffiths**. **Fred Griffiths** is now 93 and received what only can be described as a compliment, when the RBL approached him and asked if he would be a poppy seller last November.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Once more our Branch was represented at the Remembrance Day Parade and service, this year, at Winchester Cathedral. It was a dull November day as we paraded in Colebrook Street ready to march the short distance through part of the city to the Cathedral. Five Members of the Branch joined with veterans of other associations and with our Standard Bearer, **Bryan Littlecott**, leading with other Standards, we set off in perfect step to the stirring music of the military band. At the Cathedral we were joined by wives and families for the service. If anything differed from previous years, it was the missing public. So very few watched the parade, although numbers did increase at the War Memorial after the Service.

The preliminaries and the Service followed the pattern of previous years, but was no less impressive and moving, especially the Sermon given by **Gen Sir Garry Johnson**. The Service over, the congregation moved outside to the War Memorial for the Act of Remembrance. Our Secretary, **Tony Dear**, laid the wreath of poppies on behalf of the Branch.

After the ceremonies, we adjourned to the *Rockingham Arms in Canada* to join up with other Members of the Branch, making nineteen in all. In spite of the fact that the weather had turned miserable, it did not dampen the spirit of the event. A really excellent lunch was provided and suitable quantities of various beverages quaffed. **Norman Davies**, the Newsletter Editor, staggered around (too many brandies and anyway, **Sid Smith** was driving) taking pictures with his throwaway camera. He boasted that any idiot could take wonderful snaps with this piece of technical wonder. Wrong! With abject apologies he reported that 90% never came out!

Claire Littlecott, Norman Davies and Beryl Hull (A Welsh Leek between English Roses)

Tony Hull and Sid Smith

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE, SOUTHAMPTON GUILDHALL

There was a fairly low attendance at this year's Festival. The Guildhall was only about half full in spite of **Tony Dear** and **Claire Littlecott's** attempts to get advertising on TVS and BBC South. The Mayor of Southampton and various civic dignitaries were guests, as were quite a few Standard Bearers, mainly from the British Legion) and of course, our Branch Standard), about 14 in all. Southampton Branch Members were: **Tony** and **Ruth Dear**, **Claire** and **Bryan Littlecott** and **Doris Bevington** (**Claire's** Mum). The Hampshire Police Band and the Romsey Male Voice Choir provided a variety of music from Classic to Swing and old Wartime Songs, which the audience sang with some gusto. The Army versions of the words were not used! A short Service ended with the Last Post, Reveille, The Exhortation and the Kohima Epitaph, during which poppy leaves fluttered down from above.

SOUTHAMPTON AND DISTRICT BRANCH 20th REUNION IN 1966

In response to the RSA Chairman's request for Branch Histories, our Secretary, **Tony Dear** and Newsletter Editor, **Norman Davies** are currently producing the history of Southampton Branch. It would appear that initial get together of 43 Div Sigs (from which the current Southampton Branch was born), took place in Southampton in 1946. Nothing further seems to have been recorded until the newspaper clipping about a reunion in 1966 quotes: *'Iddy-Iddy-Umpty was certainly the order of the day, when over 100 Members of the Southampton and District Branch of the Royal Signals Association attended their 20th annual reunion dinner at the Blighmont TA Centre, Millbrook, Southampton. Among those who travelled from as far afield as Devon, Lancashire, Essex and Worcester, was a strong contingent of 43 Div Signals officers and **Brig A J Woodrow MBE**, Commanding Officer of Signal Training Brigade, Catterick. Also present were **Brig Pat Hobson DSO**, General Secretary of the Association, who was guest of honour, and their President, **Maj JA Taylor TD**. Branch Chairman, **Col JH Collins**, welcomed the guests and announced that the number attending this year was the largest since the first reunion in 1946. In proposing the toast of 'The Association', **Brig Woodrow**, thanked the Branch for inviting him and spoke of the esprit de corps, which existed in Branches throughout the world. Replying, **Brig PM Hobson MBE**, General Secretary of the Association, gave a brief report on the national activities through the year, pointing out that almost 75 per cent of serving Corps Members voluntarily contributed one day's pay towards Association funds.'*

Note: With the above article there was a newspaper photograph, which sadly cannot be reproduced. It showed the following Members of Southampton Branch: **Maj JA Taylor TD**, **Maj WC Loveless TD**, **Col JH Collins** and **Brig AJ Woodrow MBE**. 'Iddy-IddyUmpty,' well known to all oldtime signalmen, was the expression used for Morse Code sent by flags. It was supposed to express in words, the sound the flag made as the man who waved it spelled out the letters in the wind

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The Branch Annual Christmas Lunch took place at the Archers Road Social Club, Southampton on Tuesday, 2 December. Thirty eight Members' families and guests sat down to a traditional Christmas lunch. Seated at the top table were our President, **Brig Johnny Clinch**; Chairman, **Sid Smith**; Secretary, **Tony Dear**; and Treasurer, Claire **Littlecott**. Prior to the lunch, Grace was said by **Chris Cluett**, who has undertaken this act at every Christmas Lunch and Annual Dinner for as far back as we can remember. As usual, everyone brought a raffle prize, so everyone went home with one. Our President thanked the Chairman and the Committee for overseeing another successful year, and for organising another most enjoyable Christmas Lunch with convivial company. He then wished all of us best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a successful New Year. All the Members responded in like vein.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

Maj Ron Miller and many members of our Branch attended the Thanksgiving Service in November for the late **Col Donald Alexander Bowe Crawford CBE ERD TD**, who served in the Corps from 1949 to 1981 and in recent years, commanded 31 Sig Regt. **Harry Ruff**, our Standard Bearer, participated in, the ceremony, at which there was a large gathering of Corps and Association members. Our thoughts are with **Jean** and her family at this sad time.

BIRGELEN VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Fred Searle**
Secretary **Cyril (Taff) Harding**

At the third AGM of the Association, it was unanimously agreed that we would sponsor a disadvantaged child from the Wassenberg/Effeld area in Germany. This was by way of tribute to the people of the area for their friendship and support to 13 Sig Regt (Radio) from 19551994.

With the help of the Burgermeister, **Herr M Erdweg**, and the local community, 8 yr-old **Raphael** was nominated. **Raphael** suffers from Cystic Fibrosis (CF) a genetic disease, that causes the body to produce an abnormally thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs and leads to life-threatening lung infections. The disease also affects the pancreas, blocking certain digestive enzymes. **Raphael** has been fed artificially since the age of 9 months, and requires 24 hr supervision. His mother has two other children to support.

It is the Association's hope that we will be able to maintain some support to him now and for the foreseeable future. So far, we have managed to send **Raphael** some essential bedding and clothing requested by his mother.

If anyone who has served with the Regiment would like to make a donation to this cause, they are asked to contact: Secretary, Birgelen Veterans Association,114 Park Close, Abergavenny, Mons, NP7 5SU

The Birgelen Veterans Association 4th Annual Reunion and AGM will take place at the Trecarn Hotel, Babbacombe, Torquay on 1, 2, and 3 October 2004. Members should book via the website http://www.birgelenvets.org or phone 01873856021.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

Secretary **Mr Tony Hull**
Chairman **Mr Mick Teague**

We are continuing in our drive to increase our membership and welcome new members, **Bill Naismith,** who lives in Dundee and **Mike Bradford** from Newton Abbot. We also have our youngest ever member, **Jake William Gray,** who was born on 12 September 2003 and has been sponsored by his proud grandfather, **Bill Gray**. As you can see by this photograph, he is already learning how to salute!
Congratulations are due to one of our members, **Jack Quigg**,

New member, Jake William Gray returns a salute.

who won first prize in the Beverley in Bloom competition in the summer of 2003. After serving 12 years in the Corps, **Jack** became a coal merchant in Beverley. He eventually retired a year ago, took up gardening and has since become much in demand as a gardener. **Jack** entered his garden in the competition for the first time in 2003 and walked off with the first prize.

On 19 April 2004, there will be approximately 20 members of BEBA visiting Guernsey to meet up with several old comrades who live there. We will be travelling by ferry from Poole and taking our own cars with us. The special deal that we had with the travel agents has now closed, but if anyone else is interested then please contact **Tony Hull.**

Our 6th Reunion this year will take place on 11 September 2004 at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Willerby, near Hull. This will be the second time we have used this particular hotel, which proved a very popular venue two years ago. As it is only 6 miles from Beverley, it does give our members a chance to visit their old stomping ground. If anyone wishes to book early, please contact **Tony Hull** on 01202-770261.

254 SQUADRON OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mr GT Severs**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) W Weir**

Like last year, the 14th Reunion began on Thursday 16 October, when sixty 254's sat down to dinner in the Mickleover Court Hotel at Derby. They were joined by another seventy-four on the Friday, when an informal dinner was held for all new arrivals to meet and get reacquainted.

Saturday saw two coach loads of 254 OBAs head for the Chatsworth Estate via the Denby Pottery Visitors Centre, where the ladies took great advantage in buying a few items. The remainder stayed behind to watch the World Cup Rugby.

Before the formal dinner, the 1943 intakes to celebrated their sixty years by hosting a champagne reception. 145 sat down for the dinner. After an excellent repast, Life President, **George Severs** welcomed all to Derby, singling out **Bob Shaw** from Australia, **Tony** and **Evi Taylor** from Germany, **Jimmy** and **Maggie Blake** from the Isle of Wight and **Nat** and **Moyra Preece** from Stonehaven. He also thanked the widows, who each year join in the Reunion; the Cadre members; and the wheelchair ladies. Then a special thank you to **Carla Williams** whose husband, **Colin** had died six weeks previously, and who had sent from the USA a parcel of embossed note pads for each member present. **Carla** had also sent a cheque for Association funds. **George** also thanked **Val Forster** and **Claire Brown** who ran the raffle and **Brian Fisher** who keeps up to date and publishes our nominal roll.

At this point he called upon **Peter McNaughton** to propose the toast in memory of our roll of honour. But **Peter** had a surprise for **George**. A citation had been accepted by the RSA to grant him Honour Membership, so **George** awarded his Badge and Certificate by **Geoff Oakley**, who also presented **Margaret Severs** with a bouquet. **Peter McNaughton** then brought the roll of honour up to date by reading out the names of those who had passed on during the year: **Jack Allison**, **Chris Gentry**, **Mike Gilyeat**, **Geoff Pickering**, **Colin Williams** and **Nigel Ribchester**. Two wives were also remembered: **Joan Mousely** (Sam) and **Malies Talbot** (Johnny). We do remember them.

The evening then continued as usual with Dancing to the *Del Poulton Band* who had an unexpected guest singer, **Josephine Baker**, internationally renowned jazz singer, who was attending the Reunion with **Geoff Baker**. Midnight arrive all too soon and eventually all drifted off to bed.

Sunday dawned bright and clear and after breakfast, all departed, excepted 40 who stayed on until the Monday. It looks more and more as though it is turning into a four-night reunion.

SEEKING SPONSORSHIP THE CHELSEA MARATHON MAN

On 18 April 2004 former **WO2 Jim McGovern**, an In-Pensioner in the Royal Hospital Chelsea, will take part in the London Marathon wearing his distinctive scarlet tunic. **Jim** served in the Corps for 22 yrs, 15 of which were with 216 Sig Sqn, and his last posting was as RQMS in 21 Sig Regt (AS). On leaving the Army, **Jim** joined 39 Sig Regt (V) as a NRPS RQMS, where he stayed for 10 yrs. He became an In-Pensioner in January 2001.
Jim trains regularly, clocking up 16 miles at a time, and he particularly enjoys the route from Chelsea to Richmond. He is taking part in the Marathon on behalf of the Royal British Legion, and he would be grateful for any sponsorship. If you would like to make a donation to speed him on his way please make cheques payable to The Royal British Legion, and send them to **Matt Taylor**, 48 Pall Mall, London, SW1Y 5JY.

The Chelsea Marathon Man, Jim McGovern

AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENTS' ASSOCIATION

Membership of the Air Formation Signal Regiments' Association is open to all who served in any Air Formation Signal Unit or CAFSO Branch. The next Reunion is Saturday, 8 May 2004, at Stokeon Trent. The Dedication service will be at the National Memorial Arboretum the following day.

For more details, contact **Chris Collier**, 32, Mason Crescent, Penn, Wolverhampton WV4 4DU.

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

BOB AND SUE ABBOT

Des Goodman is trying to contact friends **Bob** and **Sue Abbot**, who served with him in Lippstadt. **Des** was there with the RA from 1985-1987. He I thinks that they were 22 Sig Regt and that they came from Ireland. If anybody knows their whereabouts, **Des** would be greatly appreciated it if they could contact him. His contact details are:

Des Goodman BEM
53 Newton Terrace
Christ Church
Barbados
Tel: +246 4284165
Email: gto@caribsurf.com

GEORGE HOLDEN BEM

An extremely talented runner during his career, **George Holden** joined Royal Signals in July 1960 as a Driver Electrician. During his service, he was a renowned cross country and marathon runner. His personal achievements included winning the last of the Morrison Cup Cross Country Championships in 1967 and being the first British runner to win the North German Marathon Championships. After winning the Army Cross Country Team Championships three times in succession with 21 Sig Regt, he was posted to 1 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, where he trained a young team of runners, taking them on to win the Army Championships, again three times in a row in 1980, 1981 and 1982. He retired from the Army in 1982.

Due to long term illness with a brain tumour, **George** is unable to get out of the house much. To keep himself occupied, he has embarked on recording his life and times in the Corps. He would love to hear from old comrades who served or ran with him during his career, especially **Ben Evans**, who originated from Birkenhead and served with **George** during training at 26 Sig Regt, Catterick in 1960. **George** can be contacted by telephone: 01325 256086 or by email: sathleen.holden@ntlworld.co.uk

STEVE DALE

Alex (Lex) Leitch wishes to contact **Steve Dale**, ex PSI, 39 (CoL) Sig Regt, so that can answer his Christmas Cards and congratulate him on not being the Weakest Link (TV November). **Lex** lost his address and telephone number during a hectic spring clean by his good lady.

Anyone who can help, please contact **Lex** at:
4 Highbridge Cottages
Highbridge lane
East Chiltington
Nr Lewes
BN7 3QY

AL HYLAND

Lee Tomlinson is seeking the present whereabouts of **Al Hyland**. They served in 1 Div Sig Regt 1989-93 and 15 Sig Regt 1994-96. Anyone who can help is asked to contact Lee at leetomlinson@europe.com

HARRY MARSDEN

Michael Taylor is seeking the whereabouts or any information on the former **Pte Harry Marsden** from Changi in 1942-43 for story in local paper his time on the Burma Railway. Anyone who can help asked to call **Michael** on 01533 606611.

ROBBO ROBINSON

Alan (Robbo) Robinson would like to hear from anyone who remembers him from Malaya Dist Sig Regt 1947-49: **Monny Monickendam**, **Les Barratt**, **Jock Wyms** etc. I spent most of my time with 2/6th Gurkha Rifles. Please contact **Robbo** on 01206 549 617.

PADDY IRWIN

Michael (Paddy) Irwin would like to hear from anyone who served with him in 30 Sig Regt 1996-2001. Please call him on 07763 149778.

YOUNG OFFICERS AT CATTERICK, 1951-53

From: **Lt PD Persson**
Long Meadow
Dark Lane
Chearsley
Aylesbury
HP18 0DA
E-mail: PaulPersson@xalt.co.uk

As it is 50 years since I completed my National Service at 4 Trg Regt, Catterick as a Subaltern, training potential officers under **LtCol Worrall**, **Maj Rapsey** and **Capt Potter**, I should be very interested to hear from fellow officers and others who were there between 1951-53. Names like **2Lts Dennis**, **Turner**, **Weller** and **Ramwell** and **NCOs Swabey** and **Cuffley** come to mind.

My subsequent TA service was with Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment.

Yours .....

CORRESPONDENCE

ANOTHER MYSTERY JIMMY

From: **Maj RS Bresloff MSM**
3 The Pastures
Penyffordd
Chester
CH4 0HQ
Tel: 01244 549116
E-mail: stephen@bresloff.fslife.co.uk

Dear Sir

I wonder if anyone has an answer to why, on the roof of a very large house known as the 'Mansion at Avery Hill' in the grounds of the University of Greenwich, Eltham, London SE, there stands 'Jimmy' approximately 15' high.

In 1890 the house belonged to a **Col North**. was he an officer of the RE Telegraph Bn?

I would be very grateful if an answer could be given please.

Yours.....

JIMMY STATUE IN BUTCHART GARDENS

From: **Stan Smith**
40975 Gorge Rd.
W Victoria, BC
V9A 7A9, Canada.
Email: stanandjoyce@shaw.ca

Dear Sir,

Re Douglas N Robinson's letter in the October *WIRE*, a lead statue of Mercury was placed by the tennis courts during the

conversion of the worked out Butchart gravel pits into the now famous gardens near Victoria, British Columbia. Weather damaged it, and when the courts were converted to an Italian garden, it was replaced by the present bronze statue by **Mrs Butchart**, who purchased it from the *Galleria d'Arte Palazzo Strozzo* in Florence, in 1927.

Its position, facing into the wind, is sympathetic with the tale of Hermes (Mercury) standing on the wind from the mouth of Aeolus The adjacent fountain was purchased in the Brompton Road, London. The patched up original lead statue is now in Seattle USA. During WW1 **Robert Butchart** built wooden boats used in the war.

Yours Sincerely.....

208 SIG SQN IN TERENDAK CAMP

From: **Pam McDonald** (was **Rollings** then)
15 Binn Road
Marsden
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire
HD7 6HF

Dear Sir

Through your publication I am hoping to be able to find anyone who served with 208 Sig Sqn, attached to 28 COMWEL Bde, Terendak Camp, Malacca, Malaysia in the sixties.

Several Aussies have been found, but we are thin on the ground with regard to Brits. I have a web page devoted to 208 Sig Sqn, which has been up, and running for about 3 months. The URL is: http://www.marsden.me.uk

If you know anyone who served with 208 Sig Sqn, please tell them about this web page.

Yours....

BELATED THANKS

From: **Chris Edkins**
1 Maes Cottage Estate
Rhayader
Powys
LD6 5PP

In 1964, I was in the Dorset Constabulary, and living in the Beat House at Spetisbury. I had left the Army in 1953, having joined the Hampshire Regiment (under age) in 1941, and transferred to Royal Signals, arriving in Catterick early 1943. One of the duties I had at Spetisbury was A/Sgt in Blandford - generally nights! I was on this duty one early spring weekday night, when Dorchester Control called, reporting a suspicious car on a layby in Stourpaine. I duly attended the scene to find an old large dark-coloured saloon car on the layby. It contained a neat and tidy young married couple and four small children. Enquiries revealed they lived in the Midlands. The children had never seen the sea, but had been promised a visit to the legendary Sandbanks. They had little income, but a friend had lent them a car, and they had just sufficient money for petrol for a round trip and some basic treats. Then horror, the car had broken down. It was quite cold, so with the Town Patrolman, we ferried them all to the old Police Station and opened the Enquiry Office. We made them a drink, and gave them our sandwiches.

It was quite like a Giles cartoon for some minutes, as the awe evaporated and the children started to explore a REAL police station. What to do? At that time and under those circumstances, WVS Social Services and the like were out. I then discovered in conversation that the husband had been in the Corps for National Service plus some extra months. Wonderful! Here was that magic link between those who have served and those who were just settling in at Blandford Camp! I rang the Camp and nattered to the Orderly Offr and Orderly Sgt. Within twenty minutes a minibus rolled up and took the family away, and after some real food, they were tucked up head-to-tail in a spare hut.

Morning saw them well fed, and there had been a whip round. A minibus took them off to Sandbanks with some money for treats in hand, and they were duly collected after a very happy day. Yes, and on return to the Camp, there was more food, and willing hands had repaired the car.

I never rang the Camp to thank 'Jimmy's Samaritans,' nor did I officially record the event, since ignorance by the Khaki or Blue 'Brass' ensured that the bliss remained intact!

So if anyone reading this edition of *The WIRE* was involved, 'Thank You. Definitely Certa Cito.'

Yours.....

NAME-TAGS

From: **Mr T Davey**
23 Rattigan Drive
Park Hall
Weston Coyney
Stoke on Trent
ST3 5RH

Dear Sir

After two years researching my Grandfather's WW1 military history, I managed to locate his name-tags. Thinking back to my Royal Signals service from 1961-67, it struck me that at no time had I seen anyone wearing tags – not even during the Borneo conflict – although I have a faint recollection of seeing some with my documents just prior to demob.

Can anyone shed light on relevant regulations covering the issue or wearing of these tags?

Yours....

Name-tags or 'dog- tags' are issued when a soldier, posted on active service, arrives in theatre. They are withdrawn before the soldier returns to UK - Editor

CHARLIE HART CELEBRATES

From: **RH Maxfield**
Ridgeway Farmhouse
Ridgeway Lane
Lymington
Hants
SO41 8AA
Tel: 01590 675333

Dear Sir

On reading 'Charlie Hart celebrates,' I have a small comment to make! If he sailed to Celle in Germany in 1943, he must have been a POW. Certainly in 1944, 11th Air Formation Sig Bn was well established on the Adriatic Coast of Italy with Coys and Secs spread from Bari to Foggia, building the dreaded 10-Pin Bell Telegraph route to Pescara - a dawn to dusk commitment 7 days a week for several months.

I do believe that the 11th Air Formation (now Regt) title was transferred to Germany during the rundown of forces in Italy after VE Day, perhaps Celle?

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

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL, HYDE PARK CORNER – *by Ron Larby*

On 11 November 2003, **HM The Queen** attended the Dedication Ceremony of the Australian War Memorial, Hyde Park Corner, London commemorating the 102,000 Australian dead of WW1 and WW2.

Also present amongst the official guests were the **HRH The Duke of Edinburgh**, the Prime Ministers of Australia and Great Britain, Australian War Veterans and British Veterans represented by the Chelsea Pensioners.

A Guards' band provided the music, and the Honour Guard was the tri-service Australian Federation Guard. It was possible for the general public to obtain passes for the grassy bank outside the official guest enclosure, where one had a limited view of the proceedings, but could quite clearly follow them via a giant TV screen and sound system.

After the Dedication and official wreath laying, the general public were then allowed down to view the Memorial and lay personal wreaths.

I found the Memorial somewhat reminiscent of the Vietnam Wall in Washington in its general shape and location. The Memorial itself is constructed of inter-locking slabs of grey/green Australian granite. The upper tiers contain, in random order, the names of the towns and villages (or should that be settlements) of Australia, from whence came the Servicemen and women who served in the two World Wars. Superimposed on these, were the names of the major engagements in which Australian Forces took part, e.g. Gallipoli, El Alamein, New Guinea, etc.

I did manage to have a short conversation with a RSM of the Royal Australian Signals who was with the Federation Guard, who informed me they were based in Canberra.

For those wishing to visit it, the Australian War Memorial is adjacent to the Royal Artillery Memorial, and the nearest Underground station is Hyde Park Corner.

A ROYAL APPOINTMENT

– by Ron Larby

To end what has been a busy year for Korean War Veterans, **HRH Prince Charles** hosted a reception at St James' Palace on the evening of 17 October 03 to commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the ceasefire of the Korean War.

Invitations were sent out to the National Officers and Appointments of the British Korean Veterans Association (BKVA) and to two members from each branch of BKVA. I was fortunate enough to be asked to represent the Herts and District Branch.

On arrival at the Palace we were separated into groups by Service, Regt or Corps and I found myself in the Royal Signals group along with **Don Prescott**, **Brian Burt**, **Mike Ward** and **Roger Phelps**, where we were supplied with drinks and canapés whilst waiting for the Prince.

Escorted by **Gen Sir Anthony Farrer Hockley** and **MajGen Birtwistle** (ex-Adjt, 1 COMWEL Div Sig Regt), **His Royal Highness** made his way round the room, shaking hands with each Veteran and engaging them in conversation.

Mike Ward, Ron Larby, Brian Burt and HRH Prince Charles

On arrival at the Royal Signals group, and after we had introduced ourselves, the Prince enquired as to what wireless sets we had used and any problems regarding RT and WT, to which we all replied, 'OK by day, awful by night!'

He then asked me individually if I was National Service, when I replied in the affirmative, he queried 'Did you ask to go into the Signals or did it just happen that way?'

As I had put down the Royal Signals as my preferred choice, I told him and gave the reasons why. This led to a general discussion on modern day technology, from which I gathered the Prince was not too enamoured with computers.

Prince Charles then moved on to other groups, one of which, an infantry group. It included **Gen Sir Peter De La Billiere**, who had been a subaltern in the Durham Light Infantry during their tour of duty in Korean.

After completing his circuit of the room, the Prince, the Korean Ambassador and **Gen Sir Anthony Farrer Hockley**, gave short speeches, all of which were well received by the Veterans.

As **Prince Charles** departed, a call was given 'Three Cheers for the Prince,' which as roundly given. The assembly then began breaking up. All the BKVA members present agreed that it had been a most enjoyable evening and it had been a pleasure to meet the Prince in such an informal manner.

ANOTHER VIEW OF CORONATION DAY

– by Maj Gen Alan Yeoman

I too, begin my story on the day the King died. On the morning of 6 February 1952, I was illegally listening to the radio in the Prefects room at school (the radio was only legal out of lesson hours) when I heard the announcement **King George VI** had died. The others in the room quickly decided that, as I was leaving at the end of the term to join the Army, I should go to tell the Headmaster the news. I remember knocking on his door and saying something like 'You know, Sir, we were having trouble with the radio in the Prefects Room.... Well as I was trying to fix it, I heard the King had died and I thought you would like to know.'

By the time Coronation Day came round on 2 June 1953, I was in my Intermediate Term at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. I was awakened by a loudspeaker announcement saying, 'Good morning Gentlemen, it is twenty minutes past two. Everest has been climbed.'

So started the most fascinating day of my life. I got up, dressed in scruff order, went to the dining room where, like all the cadets, I could have a cup of tea and a biscuit. After that I got dressed in my Blues, boarded a bus and was driven to Camberley Railway Station. There we all got on a special train that took us from Camberley direct to Vauxhall Station where we disembarked, formed up in our Company squads, then marched across Vauxhall Bridge to Milbank Barracks. Here we were given a good healthy breakfast, but again only one cup of tea.

We fell in again and marched the half mile or so to Parliament Square, where we took post at 08.00hrs to stand there for the next eight hours - except for a short spell at lunchtime for a comfort break. This allowed for every fifth man to march off to the toilets in the Underground Station followed by 'Haversack Rations' for lunch.

Sandhurst Cadets lined the route outside Westminster Abbey, so we had a grandstand view of all those coming and going in the processions. I personally guarded a drain in Parliament Square outside what is now the Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre. To this day, my children still refer my spot as 'Dad's drain.'

There are particular memories of those eight hours that really stick in my mind:

With drums beating and bayonets fixed. RMAS rehearses for the big event

The Queen. She looked magnificent, but a little more elaxed coming away from the Abbey;

The Police. Every now and then a constable would stand back-to-back behind you and tell you to lean back on him for a rest. They also would say 'Blow you nose,' and in the palm of your gloved hand there would be a sweet that someone in the crowd had given you and the police helped you get;

The constant buzz of the crowd throughout the day, and a crescendo when the Queen passed by;

The loudspeaker announcement, 'The Queen is crowned,' that signalled the start of the rain. We had no rain gear so just got wet! Officer Cadets wore Blues that had white-blancoed gorget patches at the neck, as well as white-blancoed belts, bayonet frogs and rifle slings. You can imagine how every time we carried out a rifle movement we spread white blanco all over our Blues!

Queen Salote of Tonga. A huge woman, she wore little and seemed not to notice the rain in her open carriage. After the Queen, she was the star.

Academy Sergeant Major Jack Lord. He was every cadet's friend. That day he never stopped going around talking to everyone, praising them as well as giving you words of encouragement. I remember at one stage he asked me when the first 1st XV game was next season!

At 16.10 hrs we marched off Parliament Square. 500 Officer Cadets had marched on to the square in the morning and 500 marched off in the afternoon.

Then back to Milbank for a good, albeit, wet meal. Back across the bridge and onto the train for the return trip to Camberley. I well remember how we all began to steam as we dried out! I am also sure that most of the 500 cadets did not see much on the trip back.

Now to the sting in the tail that none of us knew about. Someone had decided that the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst would exercise its rights of the Freedom of the Town of Camberley, by marching through it from the Station to Old College Square, with drums beating and bayonets fixed - a distance of about 2 miles.

The Colours were marched off the parade and we were eventually dismissed just after 20.30hrs.

Quite a day, but had I been 3 inches shorter I would not have had this tale to tell. The 500 cadets were made up of the Senior Intake and the taller half of the Intermediate Intake, of which I was one!

LAST POST

Appleton - Cpl AEJ Appleton	Served 1945/52	Died 22/09/03
Archer - Capt GR Archer	Served 1942/46	Died 06/08/00
Baker - Col RG Baker	Served 1934/59	Died ??/09/02
Bardell - Col EJ Bardell	Served 1939/75	Died 12/07/03
Booker - Capt FH Booker	Served WW2	Died 24/09/03
Boxall - RK Boxall	Served ??	Died 03/11/03
Boyd - LCpl JRM Boyd	Served 1951/53	Died 09/12/03
Broom - Cpl PJ Broom	Served 1941/46	Died ??/03/03
Carn - Maj EA Carn	Served 1926/65	Died 25/03/03
Cliff - LCpl J Cliff	Served 194/51	Died 19/03/03
Copeland - Sig H Copeland	Served 1939/49	Died 22/11/03
Courtney - AWJ Courtney	Served 1942/46	Died 30/10/03
Crawford - Col DAB Crawford	Served 1949/81	Died 13/11/03
Dickson - Lt Col DA Dickson	Served ??	Died 17/06/03
Edwards - L Edwards	Served ??	Died 23/11/03
Ferguson - SSgt AG Ferguson	Served 1969/99	Died ??/12/03
Griffin - Dvr CE Griffin	Served 1937/46	Died 18/10/03
Harber - Sgt RM Harber	Served 1961/85	Died 04/12/03
Harwood - Maj C Harwood	Served 1952/79	Died 24/12/03
Hayward - Sgt T Hayward	Served 1943/53	Died ??/10/03
Hothersall - WO2 MP Hothersall	Served 1959/81	Died ??/11/03
Jolinson - W Jolinson	Served ??	Died 11/11/03
Kew - Sig A Kew	Served 1951/57	Died 05/12/03
Leech - Sig RE Leech	Served 1946/48	Died 26/12/03
Leyland - Sgt HJ Leyland	Served 1972/81	Died 16/10/03
Miller - Sig C Miller	Served 1956/59	Died 05/12/03
Moffatt - Maj AH Moffatt	Served ??	Died 13/10/03
Moorcroft - Cpl BT Moorcroft	Served 1945/48	Died 09/06/03
Moralee - Cpl G Moralee	Served 1945/48	Died 09/12/03
Ottley - Maj CK Ottley	Served 1947/70	Died 10/01/04
Robertson - Cpl DJN Robertson	Served 19??/69	Died 03/07/00
Robinson - Sig FRJ Robinson	Served 1938/46	Died 19/11/03
Sadd - Sgt AN Sadd	Served 1935/46	Died 19/03/02
Savage - Sig RAN Savage	Served 1966/72	Died ??/01/04
Selby - Cpl R Selby	Served 1952/66	Died 10/09/03
Sheridan - Sgt D Sheridan	Served 1957/79	Died 17/01/04
Summers - Maj E Summers	Served 1946/70	Died 04/11/03
Sutcliffe - Capt JC Sutcliffe	Served 1943/49	Died 06/01/04
Tattersall - Sig JF Tattersall	Served 1947/49	Died 13/03/03
Tulloch - Col JMS Tulloch	Served 1931/63	Died 29/10/03
Twine - WO2 PC Twine	Served 1939/46	Died 08/04/01
Warwick - RA Warwick	Served 1940/46	Died 18/11/02
Wilson - Lt Col HS Wilson	Served 1955/87	Died 24/03/03
Wood - Maj D Wood	Served 1952/89	Died 01/11/03

OBITUARIES

BOYD - LCpl James Rae McDonald Boyd died on 9 December 2003, in the Victoria Infirmary Glasgow.

Jim was born on 4 May 1930, was called up on 4 October 1951, and served in the Corps until 4 October 1953. He served as an Operator Switchboard in UK and Middle East Land Forces. **Jim** joined the RSA on 20 January 1953, and was an active member of the Glasgow Branch until 1993, when he suffered his first illness. He was then in and out of hospital until being hospitalised in 1999. In civilian life, **Jim** was a maintenance engineer, employed in the electricity industry and British Telecom.

The funeral service was conducted by the **Rev Iain Morrison BD**, at the Cooperative Funeral Parlour, Glasgow, and the committal service was at the Linn Crematorium. Branch Member, **Andy McAthur** paraded the Branch Standard, with **Ian Wood** and **Eric McWaters** as escorts. Several members represented the Branch. The coffin was draped in the Royal Signals Colours with a Glengarry placed on top. Branch Members formed a guard of honour.

Among the mourners was **Jimmy's** wife, **Betty**, friends, residents and staff of the Victoria Infirmary, **Trish** the AC Unit Coordinator and **Rosie** his carer. **Alexis Bradshaw** organised the cooperation between the undertakers and the Branch Committee, so that **Jim's** wishes could be carried out as far as possible. The Glasgow Branch members express their sincere condolences to **Rosie** and all those who knew this very quiet and private man.

CARN - Maj EA Carn (Ted) died on 25 March 2003, aged 91.

Ted Carn was attested as a boy soldier at Chichester on 30 April 1926. At the age of 18 yrs, he joined 1 Div Sig Regt, qualifying as Class 1 Op Sigs in 1930. He started his overseas service with 1 Indian Div Sig Regt in India in 1933, and saw active service on the North West Frontier and in Waziristan between 1936 and 1937. Returning to England in 1938, he rejoined 1 Div Sig Regt and embarked with them to France in September 1939. While on ops in Belgium and France he was promoted to A/Sgt, then A/CQMS before returning to UK from the Dunkirk evacuation in June 1940. Having been confirmed as CQMS in July 1940 and WO2 in December 1941, he was posted to 49 Div Sig Regt as their RQMS in December 1942. He served with this Unit as RSM in France, Belgium and Germany until August 1945.

He was commission as 2Lt (QM) in the British Army of the Rhine in August 1945. He was Mention in Despatches in April 1946 and became QM of 5 Div Sig Regt. In December 1946 he became Adjt. He returned to the UK in April 1948 to become QM, School of Signals. He left in 1952 to join 1 COMWEL Div Sig Regt in Korea, as their QM. He next served in Egypt with the 2 ASSU for two years, and on returning to UK in 1955 was QM of 43 (Essex) Sig Regt (TA). He was promoted to Major (QM) in June 1960 on posting to 18 Sig Regt in Singapore. He served there until May 1963, and returned to UK to join 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt until March 1965, when he retired from the Active List. He remained on the RARO List with 63 Sig Regt until his full retirement in November 1965.

At **Ted's** request, his medals were donated to the Corps Museum, and what an imposing array they are: Indian General Service Medal, 19391945 Star, France and Germany Star, Defence Medal, 19391945 War Medal with MID, Korea War Medal, UN Korea War Medal, 1953 Coronation Medal, and the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Ted was a true gentle man (yes that is spelled correctly) kind, considerate, ready to help whenever the occasion arose, and always with a ready smile and with a genuine sense of humour. He was meticulous in all his duties, and had real concern for his staff. He and his wife, **Joan**, were a devoted couple, and she shared with him many interests (for example they were regular churchgoers) as well as undertaking many other tasks herself, such as the Thrift Shop and SSAFA. Sadly, she survived him by only a few short weeks.

Their sorrow will be somewhat eased by the knowledge that everyone who met **Ted** and **Joan** had the greatest respect for them, and felt the better for having known this very special pair.

ROBINSON - Sig Frank Robinson died on 19 November 03 at the Lincolnshire County Hospital.

Frank Robinson was born in London 13 July 1930. His parents died whilst he was still very young, and he was brought up by his Aunt.

Frank was with the Royal East Kents (Buffs) Supplementary Reserves from September 1937 to January 1938, and enlisted in the Regular Army in Royal Signals on 10 January 1938. He did his basic training at Catterick, after which he returned to Canterbury to train as a DR in 5 Div Sig Regt. He was then posted to the 1 Inf Div Sig Regt, Mons Bks, Aldershot

He embarked for France and Belgium in September 1939, where he faced much hardship, seeing many of his fellow soldiers fall in battle. Cut off by the enemy forces, they formed small groups to make their way across country to eventual evacuation from Dunkirk in June 1940.

1 Div regrouped in 1943 and embarked for North Africa, where once more **Frank** saw comrades falling in battle. He always considered himself to be fortunate to get though this period in his life in one piece - but get through it, he did.

In February 1943 he took part in the invasion of Italy, moving from the Anzio Beachhead, to Florence and Monte Grande. From February 1945 to March 1946, he served in Palestine and Egypt, and in March 1946, was posted to UK and demobbed. He was awarded 194345 Star, North Africa Star, Italy Star, Defence and Victory Medals, GSM Palestine Medal and the 194548 Commemorative Dunkirk Medal.

Frank gave much, serving his country from 1938-1946, at a time when many thousands of young men gave their lives. On his return home, he spent a lot of time to ensure that his friends were not forgotten.

After the War, **Frank** made his home in Lincolnshire and lived with his wife, **Rhoda**, daughter, **Annette** and son, **Peter**. There are four grandchildren. **Frank** had to nurse **Rhoda** through many years of illness before she died. A God fearing man, he was always ready with a helping hand for those who needed it.

He was Branch Secretary from August 1982 to February 2000 - 18 years' loyal service. He was also Secretary to the Lincolnshire Dunkirk Veterans Assn and helped the RBL each year with the Annual Lincolnshire Poppy Appeal, setting up and manning a stall in the Waterside Shopping Mall. **Frank** always had a smile for everyone, and was proud to display his medals to pay homage to those fallen comrades left behind on distant battlefields. A familiar figure in Lincoln, he was known fondly as 'The Little Soldier '- but in stature only. **Frank** organised many trips to Catterick, and later to Blandford for the Royal Signals Reunions. He was a Founder member of the Lincoln Branch, and we will be ever grateful to him for his efforts. He was holder of the 50-year Badge and Honorary Member Award, of which he was justifiably proud. He will be greatly missed not only by ourselves, but also by the RBL and the Dunkirk Veterans Assn, for whom he organised their Annual Trips to France and Belgium. God bless **Frank**. We will remember him.

HILL - Maj Wilfred Hill TD (Wilf) died on 14 October 2003.

Wilf was born on 10 December, 1919 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. His father had served in 5 Royal Irish Lancers and the Machine Gun Corps, and was disabled by a gas attack whilst serving on the Western Front. Life was difficult for his family, but **Wilf** did well in grammar school. He passed the Civil Service entrance exam and joined HM Customs and Excise at Harwich. Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, the port of Harwich was closed to civilian traffic, and he was transferred to Newport, Monmouthshire. On 2 April 1940, he joined a Welsh unit of the Corps. Following several postings, he was selected for OCTU, commissioned 2Lt in October 1943 and Lt in April 1944. A posting with 3 Coy, 5 AA Gp (M) Sig Unit took him to Eltofts Hall in Yorkshire, where he met **Doreen Durose**, an ATS officer who was visiting one of her dets. **Wilf** and **Doreen** became engaged just prior to his being moved to a secure transit camp in preparation for OP OVERLORD.

Wilf landed in Normandy on DDay + 3, and served in France and Germany. Initially his unit was camped in a Calvados apple orchard near Caen, where he was called upon to slaughter a bull, to provide the unit and the farmer's family with fresh meat. This event was commemorated in fine style in later years, when **Wilf** took his family back to the farm in the 1960's. The farmer's son, who had been a child during the war, immediately recognised **Wilf**, and treated the family to a sumptuous feast. In another incident, **Wilf** was involved in a motorcycle accident brought on by fatigue (he fell asleep and woke up in the back of a lorry with the motorbike). This resulted in a knee injury that troubled him most of his life.

It is believed that **Wilf** was the first British officer to enter Belsen Concentration Camp, where he was sent by his OC to observe and report back. What he witnessed there would also trouble him in later years. **Wilf** and **Doreen** were married on 7 July 1945 at Oystermouth, Glamorganshire. Shortly afterwards, he boarded a troop ship bound for the Far East via Suez. However, following VJ Day, he was put ashore at Cairo and flown to Tripoli, where he remained until returning home for demob in December 1946. He then returned to HM Customs and Excise at Harwich.

With no TA Sigs unit in the vicinity, **Wilf** joined an RA TA regt in Harwich until March 1951. Following a transfer by Customs and Excise to Canary Wharf, he was reunited with the Corps, when he joined 2/20 (East Anglia) Sig Regt at Wanstead. He was promoted Capt in July 1955. In 1957 **Wilf** became a Life Member of the RSA. Also in 1957 his Unit became part of 1 (Essex) Sig Regt, which became 45 (Essex) Sig Regt in 1959. In April 1960 he was promoted Maj, and appointed 2IC. On 30 March 1967, the day before he was due to attain the rank of Lt Col and take comd of the Regt, **Wilf** received a tersely worded letter from HQ Eastern Comd informing him that he would leave the Active List at the end of that month. This was a time of re-organisation, when 36 (Eastern) Sig Regt TAVR was formed, and a regular CO brought in. Thus he ended his formal career in the Corps with a TD and two bars, although he continued to serve as honorary Mess Secretary for several years, and attended annual camps at his own expense.

In 1971, the advent of VAT resulted in a transfer by Customs and Excise to Taunton, whereupon **Wilf** and **Doreen** relocated from to Culmstock, Devon, and continued to live there, following **Wilf's** retirement. In 1990 they moved to Uffculme, and **Wilf** became secretary of Culmstock Village Hall, while **Doreen** became a long-time supporter of Culmstock Cricket Club. Both became active members of the Exmouth RSA Branch, and the Uffculme RBL Branch.

Wilf is survived by **Doreen**, his wife of 58 years, his brother **George**, son **Roderic**, daughter **Gillian**, grandchildren **Jason**, **Tanya**, **Richard** and **Robert** and greatgrandchildren, **Jordan** and **Saffron**. He will be remembered by his family and many friends as a kind and gentle man who always put service before self.

TULLOCH - Col JMS Tulloch OBE (John) died at Kilve, Somerset on 29 October 2003.

John Marsden Stamford Tulloch was born on 28 November 1911 and was the son of **Brig Gen JAS Tulloch CB CMG**. He was educated at Reading School, where his 440 yd hurdles record was only beaten only 10 years ago. He attended RMA Woolwich and was commissioned into the Corps as a 2Lt in 1931.

After completing various Signals courses, he was posted to 1 Div Sig Regt (1933-36). He was then posted as a Lt to 1 (Indian) Div Sig Regt, based at Rawalpindi (1936-37). He was promoted Capt and posted to 1 (Indian) Inf Bde Sig Sqn in Warazistan (1937-40), and took part in several operations in the North West Frontier. It was during his tour in the Indian sub-continent that he fell in love with the country, the people and their soldiers. He was fluent in Urdu. He became an outstanding horseman, who played polo, was Master of Foxhounds, and competed in hunter trials and point-to-points.

He returned to the UK in 1940 to train for the eventual assault of mainland Europe. He became Adjt of 6/5/6/8 Corps Sig Regt. He was promoted Maj (1940) and completed short tours with 20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn and 10 Armd Bde Sig Sqn. He was then posted as OC 6 Armd Bde Sig Sqn (1940-41) and then 79 Armd Bde Sig Sqn (1941-42). In 1942 he was promoted Lt Col and appointed DCSO HQ NORCO (1942-43), becoming CSO shortly afterwards. He then commanded 8 Corps Sig Regt (1943-45) until he suffered horrendous burns just prior to the Rhine crossings and was medevaced to the RAF Burns Hospital at Pontyprid.

Edwin Cook of Colchester, his driver throughout the war, recalls, '**Col John** had arrived ahead of me. I found him walking around on the beach with his malacca cane giving orders and organising things as if nothing abnormal was going on around him. 'Cook,' he says 'where the hell have you been?' I says, 'Bogged in an uncleared minefield. What's it like here Sir?' 'The Germans are making a nuisance of themselves with a bit of bother and noise.' He was always totally unperturbed under fire, was **Col John**.'

Always innovative during his advance from Normandy to the Rhine, **John** commandeered French carthorses to lay cables from the Beaches to the Rhine. When motorised transport got bogged down in the Low Countries, **Tulloch's** horses ploughed on. On several occasions they were recorded as the lead element! He also modified Jeeps to travel on railway lines to lay cables, and one occasion he met a German recce party on the line. They both agreed a mutual withdrawal! He adapted abandoned German Army pie carts as mobile kitchens for his Regt, always looking for ways to improve the lot of his soldiers.

In 1944 he was the awarded the OBE, for which his citation reads, '.... throughout the operations of 8 Corps since landing, he has continued to command his Unit with unabated efficiency and enthusiasm. The excellent comms of the Corps have been due in large measure to his leadership and personal ability ..... His constant presence in the forward areas, on reconnaissance or whilst supervising the work of line sections; his cheerful and unperturbed bearing under shell and mortar fire have been an inspiration to those under his command.' He was also awarded the *Chevalier de L'Ordre de Leopold II* with clasp and the *Croix de Guerre* with clasp 'for courage and bravery during the liberation of Belgium.'

Never a man to be faced down when he believed he was right, he stubbornly pursued and achieved the award of Military Medals for two of his signalmen, having been told by a very senior officer that 'signalmen are not in the arena to receive bravery awards.' This attitude incensed him.

After the War he was posted back to India, where he was handed a multi-ethnic regt that had recently mutinied, with the order, '**Tulloch**, sort it! **Tulloch** did. He commanded 3 (Indian) Sig Trg Bn (1946) and then 2 (Indian) Sig Trg Regt at Jubbalpore (1946-47). During the Partition, he moved 500 unarmed PEME soldiers (only 30 were allowed to be armed) and their families, including 2 British families (one, his own) by train to the new state of Pakistan. It was an incredible 4-day journey, in intense heat, with limited water and food, through areas of rioting and massacres and several very close shaves. At one stage, he had to force the Indian train driver at pistol point to carry on when chased by a large group of blood-crazed horsemen. On another occasion the train passed through a station where a massacre had just occurred and the bodies were still there. Standing around were the perpetrators who jeered and shouted insults. He moved down the train telling his soldiers that if any man made any comment or action he would personally shoot them. The situation was taut. He completed the train journey without loss of life to those under his command - a feat for which he was justly proud of.

Tulloch then commanded 9 (Pakistan) Div Sig Regt and set up the Pakistan Sig Corps School (1947-50), initiating the Tulloch Medal for the best Signal Corps Officer Cadet on commissioning. In 1961 the Pakistan Government invited him back as an official guest for their Golden Jubilee.

He was posted to Germany to command 6 Armd Div Sig Regt (1951-54), and returned to the UK as CI Wireless Wing, RAC Centre (1954-57). He was promoted Col (1957) and appointed CSO 17 Gurkha Div and Commonwealth Land Forces Malaya (1957-59). He returned to UK to command 8 Sig Regt (1959-61), then the largest Regt (1,500 men) in the British Army. His final appointment was CSO 3 Div and Strategic Reserve (1961-64). He retired to New Zealand, where he developed a commercial citrus orchard (1964-72). He finally returned to the UK to settle in Somerset, where he was involved with the Civil Defence, the local and Parish Councils and the Church.

John was a quiet gentleman of great kindness and fairness, who loved the countryside and had a great love for animals. He was a man of extraordinary integrity, and he served his country with great distinction. He was stubborn yet innovative, with an impish sense of humour and a hatred of petty state bureaucracy. He maintained the highest of standards, and by doing so, gained the respect of some very hard and tough men throughout the world. He would always say, 'You command the Regt, but serve your men. Horses, men and finally yourself.' He always thought of others before himself, often to his own detriment.

He is survived by his wife, **Mary**, sons, **John**, **David** and **Richard** and daughter, **Anne**.

CRAWFORD Col DAB Crawford CBE ERD TD died on 13 November 2003.

Donald Alexander Bowe Crawford was born in Edinburgh on 10 July 1930 and was educated at various schools in England and Scotland. As a youth, he was commended for saving a young child from drowning in a flooded river. Like most men of his generation, **Donald** was called up for military service at the age of 18 years and was posted to the Royal Corps of Signals, then based in Catterick. This was to be the start of a lifetime involvement with the Corps, which he served for 55 years with considerable distinction in a variety of capacities.

One of the lasting memories of his recruit trg, he sometimes recalled with amazement, was that very few of his fellow recruits could afford to own watches and many had never worn pyjamas! He was commissioned as a 2Lt in 1949 and served with 4 Trg Regt until 1951. He was then posted to the Royal Signals Army Emergency Reserve, based initially at Blacon Camp Chester and latterly at Blandford. As a result of the amalgamation of the TA and AER in 1967, he joined 31 Sig Regt TAVR, and after becoming 2IC was appointed CO in 1971. He was the first volunteer CO in the Corps following the reorganisation. His period in command was followed by promotion to Col and postings as Dep Gp Comd of 11 Sig Gp and Dep CSO UKLF. He served on the Corps Finance Committee for 3 years in the 1970's.

For his outstanding service to the Corps he was appointed CBE in 1977 and retired in 1981. He had earlier been awarded the Emergency Reserve Decoration and the Territorial Decoration.

Donald was the driving force in founding 31 Sig Regt Assn and subsequently developing it into the present day successful organisation of over 130 members. He was its first Chairman serving in that capacity for 29 years and on retiring in 2001, was elected President. For his ontribution to the organisation, he received Honour Membership of the RSA that year. He was also a member of the Reading est London and 56 Div Branches and the Middlesex Yeomanry and Princess Louise's Kensington Regimental Assns.

In civilian life he was about to depart for a job in Argentina with a meat company in 1951, when he was offered employment with ICI. He served that company loyally for the next 40 years, initially in the Explosives Division in Ayrshire, then Manchester and then London, coordinating the company packaging requirements. Hislast post was in senior management as Packages Advisor. His work required him to travel extensively throughout this country and in Europe, Hong Kong, Ghana and Nigeria. Despite this, he continued with a heavy involvement of activities with the Corps outside his business time. After retirement in 1991 he continued to act as advisor to some of the organisations with whom he had a longterm relationship, including the British Standards Institution. He was also the UK representative on the UN Committee in Geneva governing the transportation of dangerous goods.

Donald handled many difficult tasks both in his civilian and military careers in a relaxed and friendly manner and with a sense of humour. He was very well liked and respected by his colleagues and friends and will be long remembered as an enthusiastic and proud supporter of the Corps. He died peacefully in East Surrey Hospital aged 73 years. The Service of Thanksgiving and cremation took place on 25 November and was attended by a large gathering of **Donald's** family and friends. Our heartfelt sympathies are very much with his widow, **Jean** and family at this sad time.

SUMMERS - Maj E Summers MBE (Ernie) died on 4 November 2003 aged 78.

Ernest Summers joined 16 Independent Para Sig Sqn in 1948, when they were formed from 2 Para Bde. He joined as a Cpl and remained with them until 1958, rising to the rank of WO2 (SSM).

On leaving BAOR in 1950 for Aldershot, he was promoted to Sgt in 1951 and sailed to Cyprus on the aircraft carrier, *HMS Triumph*, to prepare to deal with the Persian Oil Crisis when their PM attempted to nationalise their oil industry. This situation was resolved diplomatically, and the Sqn moved to the Suez Canal Zone where, in due course, he was promoted to SSgt before the Bde returned to Aldershot in 1954.

In 1955 he was promoted to WO2 (SSM) and in 1956 he took part in the illfated OP MUSKETEER, the Suez Canal invasion. He then returned to Aldershot, where unfortunately, he contracted Hodgkin's disease and was given only months to live. **Ernie** refused to accept this verdict, and carried on normally. Despite his medical condition, he was selected in 1958 to be SSM of a newly formed OTU at the School of Signals, Catterick, training National Service Offrs.

When that was completed, he was posted to Kenya. On returning to UK, he was promoted to RSM of Princess Louisa's Kensington Regt TA and was then selected to be RSM of the Signal Wing at RMA Sandhurst, where he was awarded the MBE. Sadly, he then lost his wife, **Audrey**, in a tragic accident.

On commissioning, he was posted to the 11 Sig Regt, Catterick as the Para Recruiting Offr. He was refused a regular Commission (presumably on medical grounds) so he transferred to the RAPC, serving as Paymaster with the Ghurkhas, in Belize and BAOR, before finally going to Worthy Down to rewrite pay regulations.

On retiring, **Ernie** took up the post of Paymaster of the TA Assn for the south of England. No matter what happened to him, he always took it in his stride and excelled at it. Nothing deterred him.

He leaves his second wife **Bette**, her sons, **Barry** and **Mark**, and his own children, **Ernest** and **Susan**.

ADVERTISEMENTS

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM BLANDFORD

MUSEUM VACANCY – ATTENDANT

After over 10 years in post David Walker is due to retire in May 2004. This is a Civil Service appointment and will be advertised in the normal way in the near future. We will be looking for an enthusiastic person preferably with military experience. The responsibilities of this interesting and varied post include:

- General maintenance of the Museum.
- Conducting guided tours.
- Care of the collection.
- Liaison with visitors and local military personnel.

If you would like further details please contact Colonel (Retd) Cliff Walters on Blandford Mil 2267.

Remembrance Sunday 9 November 2003

Troops from 11 Sig Regt march on to Hawke Square

A field gun marks the beginning of 2 minutes' silence

Blandford Garrison Comd, Col MJM Dyer, lays the first wreath

Maj JC Boisvert assists Mrs Pam Gitterman lay a wreath on the Canadian Memorial

Lt Col Buzz Powell gives an address at the American Memorial

Pipe Maj Mick Elder plays a dirge to mark the end of the Ceremony

THE wire

April 2004

The Royal Corps of Signals

LOOK AT ARMY LIFE - THE ROYAL SIGNALS MOBILE PRESENTATION TEAM - *by Capt Oliie Ford*

Since taking over as OC of the Mobile Presentation Team it has been my responsibility to organise and run the 'Look at Army Life' courses at Blandford. This course is designed to provide an insight into how we work and play and is conducted four times a year during the autumn and winter months.

The students live on camp and take part in a wide variety of training activities designed to stretch them mentally and physically, whilst providing an element of fun and an opportunity to work in a team environment. An element of competition is also included, and the students complete a Basic Fitness Test run towards the end of the week to give them an indication of the level of fitness they would require as a recruit. The last course also saw the Royal Corps of Signals Band getting involved, providing quite possibly their most exclusive concert ever, to an audience of 34.

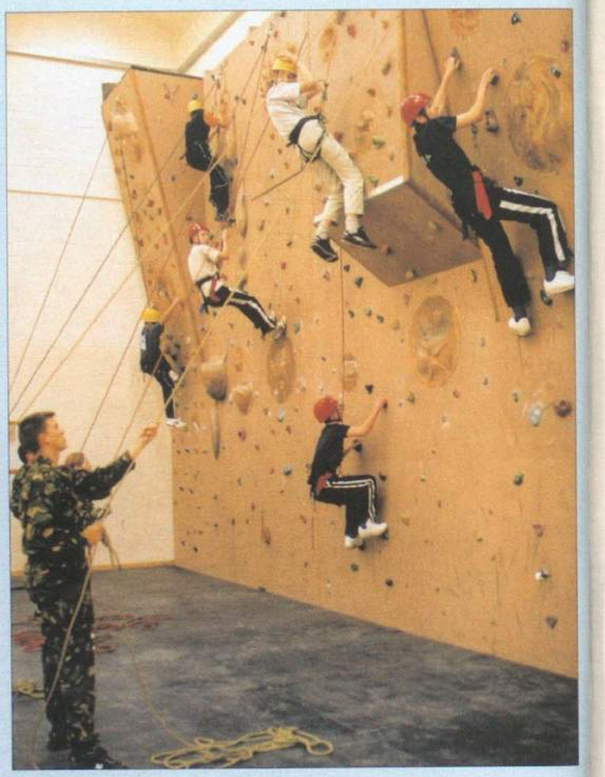
Drill – a challenge for RSM 11 Sig Regt

The first day is spent predominantly on administration and the issue of a variety of clothing and equipment. However, no time is wasted, and the first morning in camp sees reveille at 06.00hrs followed by breakfast, a course photograph and then drill on Hawke Square with the RSM of 11 Signal Regiment. Throughout the rest of the week, the students are exposed to a variety of different aspects of life as a Signaller and learn military and survival skills, basic electronics and electronic warfare, communications systems and some rock climbing skills at the purpose built wall on camp.

At the end of the week most of the students and all of the DS show some signs of fatigue, but this is part of the challenge and feedback is very positive. The opportunity for young people between the ages of 15 and 17yrs to experience things we take for granted should not be underestimated, and most leave with a huge sense of satisfaction, and more importantly the knowledge that the Army is not full of super-humans.

'Which way to Quick-Fit?' Another one of those complicated Command Tasks

'Can you hear me, Mum?' Trying out some basic comms training



Sometimes it drives them up the wall - the indoor climbing wall

At the end of one course, and with the last student on the train, it is then straight back to camp for a quick wash-up before packing the vehicles for the next assignment. This involved meeting more than 5,000 school children between the age of 13 and 16yrs.

The Bournemouth Skills Fair provided them with an opportunity to meet with industry but more importantly, us! We laid on a variety of activities to attract them to our stand and although not a recruitment event, it gave them a chance to chat to us and find out a little about the Corps and the Army in general.

Since my arrival, I have seen the Team operating across the country from the classrooms of Cornwall to the School fields of Norfolk. Their role is to communicate effectively and spread the word of the Corps. Enthusing young people to find out more and hopefully become the Signallers of the future.

The Mobile Presentation Team consists of eight hand-picked members who thrive on the opportunity to act independently and take pride in this very important task. If you feel you have what it takes to be part of the team then call 94371 2098 or 2130.

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The Wire

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FRONT COVER

The Royal School of Signals Team did well in both the 2004 Corps and Divisional Ski Championships. Here they are fresh from their success in the Divisional Championships.

BACK COVER

Sunrise at Piddlehinton Camp. Future Foremen under training are not always confined indoors at Blandford Camp. Here FofS Course 73 experiences the joys of Dorset country living in EX SEARCHING GLANCE.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

ANOTHER TA SQUADRON READIES ITSELF FOR THE BALKANS

97 (Balkans) Sig Sqn is well into its final trg before deploying to the Balkans in May this year. Drawn from 6 TA Regts and 3 Sqns, 97 Sig Sqn was formed in January, and had 3 trg weekends to bond as a unit before entering RTMC Chilwell in March. In theatre, they will become Multi-National Task Force Signal Unit (MNTFSU). Read 97 Sig Sqn's report on page 149. The current (Regular) Balkans Sig Sqn, from whom 97 Sqn will take over, has their report on page 140.

SUCCESS FOR ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS SKI TEAM

The RSS Ski Team competed this year in both the Corps and Divisional Ski Championships and achieved a major success. Their A Team became the 2004 Nordic Ski Champions in the Corps event. See their report in the Sport section on page 170.

BOWMAN MOVES AHEAD

After the BOWMAN Trials Team work over that last two years, 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn are now moving ahead with their re-equipping programme. Having just made the move from Aldershot to Bulford, the Sqn is fully involved with veh re-fits and trg to become the first BOWMAN Bde at High Readiness in 2005. Read more about this in 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn's report on page 162.

THE RAILWAY CONNECTION

You may well be wondering what Royal Signals have in common with railways. Well, railways have always needed good comms systems, mainly by line in the past, but now with an IT emphasis. And signallers from Blandford have had a long association with the nearby Swanage Railway, one of the few remaining steam systems still operating in UK. Many an EX TOPHAM HATT has involved signallers of all trades keeping the Corps in the public eye by working on all manner of cabling projects on the system. To mark the 20th Anniversary of the project this year, the TOPHAM HATT 'regulars' have given us a resumé of their activities on page 109.

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EDITORIAL

My visit to the newly-formed 97 Sig Sqn at their third trg weekend in Longmoor Camp in February made me even more conscious of the ever-increasing role of the TA in the Corps' operational commitments abroad. Following the ground-breaking steps of the previous 97 Sig Sqn and then 98 Sig Sqn, this small unit will carry forward the key role the TA have established in the Balkans, working alongside Regular forces from UK, Canada and The Netherlands. On OP TELIC, numerous TA 'augmentees' have been, and still are playing key roles, bringing a wealth of valuable outside experience and know-how. And so it will continue. As 35 Sig Regt (V) say in their contribution on page 147, 'It is generally accepted that most TA soldiers will now complete an operational tour during their service, and very little now separates them from their Regular counterparts, with whom they now serve in all theatres.' The previous image of the TA as 'hobby soldiers' has now gone, and joining the TA is now viewed by both the units and the recruits as making a very serious commitment.

After many years of waiting and uncertainty, and much criticism of the MOD by the media, BOWMAN is at last a reality. As reported in the last issue of *The WIRE*, the BOWMAN Trials Team have done the business, trg is now running at full speed, vehs are being re-fitted, and the first unit, 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228), are well on their way to become 'the first deployable BOWMAN Bde at High Readiness in 2005.' There is no doubt that a lot of people have done a lot of hard work (and in the face of much adversity) to bring this all about. And there is still a lot more work to be done. Sure, there are likely to be teething troubles (there always are when you are at the leading edge of technology), but when you compare BOWMAN with what we have had for many years, the only option now is forwards. And finding solutions, no matter how difficult things get, is what the Corps is all about.

Yet another challenge is now here for whichever units are willing to take it up. The Lanyard Trophy will be held in the Brecon Beacons from 28 June – 2 July 04. Normally held in May, it was delayed until October last year as a result of operational commitments. To have held it in May again this year would have been too soon to allow sufficient time for trg. The stories that have come from units participating over the last two years have captured my attention, so I have started tracking the 11 Sig Regt contingent in their preparations for the event. I shall be in the Brecons to see them perform, so I look forward to seeing all the other participating units.

It is good to see the continuing liaison between RSA Branches and Serving units. In the Branch reports from Aldershot, Belfast, East London, Glasgow and Huddersfield, to name but a few, we read of combined events and sharing of facilities that all serve to keep these two sections of the Corps family in touch with each other. As well as maintaining this important bond, there are other benefits. The briefings by returnees from OP TELIC and other theatres have given the 'old and bold' a far greater insight into the Corps' activities and the conditions endured in these areas than anything yet provided by the regular media.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS GAMES CLUB – HOW YOUR MONEY IS SPENT

- by Maj (Retd) R Rumford, Secretary Royal Signals Games Club

Yes, if you subscribe to Corps funds via the One Days Pay Scheme, it is some of your money - some £69K each year - that supports the various Royal Signals sports teams. So where does the money go and how do you get any benefit? Valid questions, which I hope, are answered here.

The Secretaries of the Corps sports and activities listed below receive an annual grant from the Games Club to run their sports. The activities and the minor sports get a relatively small grant but others, such as Cricket, Football, Golf, Rugby, Hockey, Shooting and Snow Sports get much larger grants as they are more expensive to run and normally have larger numbers participating. Most of the money is spent on equipment, sports strips and prizes as well as entry fees to competitions, including Inter-Corps and Army Championships. Some items of equipment such as canoes can be very expensive (over £750 each), whilst others, such as cricket, rugby, hockey and tennis balls, are very much cheaper. For some sports, individuals buy their own equipment, for example: golfers buy their own clubs and, in most team sports, footwear is a personal choice.

The 200+ who attend the Corps Alpine or Nordic Ski camps and the Corps Snow Sport Championships in November/December each year, will appreciate the subsidy that is given to run these expensive but popular sports. A good number of the skiers go on to represent their units at the LAND and, if successful, the Army Championships. Over 200 competitors attend the annual CORPSAAM and a significant number participate at athletics events, such as the annual Morrison Cup competition held at Blandford. No doubt many readers will have participated in one or more of the activities listed below or may hope to do so in the future.

Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Canoeing, Cricket,
Cross Country, Coarse Fishing, Fencing,
Football (Men's and Ladies), Golf, Hockey (Men's and Ladies),
Netball, Orienteering, Rugby League,
Rugby Union (Men's and Ladies), Shooting,
Snow Sports (Alpine/Nordic/Snowboarding),
Squash, Swimming, Water Polo,
Tennis, Tug of War (Men's and Ladies),
Pimpernal Beagles (based at Blandford),
Morrison Cup Athletics Meeting, Free Fall Parachuting.

In addition to the Sports and activities listed above, an annual grant is made to 1 Sig Bde to assist with Corps sport in Germany. One relatively little known fact is that a Reserve Fund is held by the Chairman of the Games Club. This Reserve Fund is primarily to support those Royal Signals sportsmen and sportswomen (who subscribe to Corps funds) who are selected for Army, Combined Services or National teams. Grants of up to £150 are given per junior rank and less for SNCOs and officers. These grants do not just cover the popular sports in the list above but some of the more unusual sports, such as Biathle, Duathlon and Triathlon. A recent example has been the grant made to **Cpl Dean**, who was selected to run for Great Britain in the World Duathlon Championships in Switzerland last August. Another

example was the grants made to **Sigs Harvey**, **Young**, **Jones** and **Phillipo**, who were selected for the British U21 Biathle team. They took part in the World Championships in Monaco in September 2003. Biathle involves running, sea swimming and running. It is not for the faint hearted, as the sea can be cold!

So if you are selected to represent the Army, Combined Services or a National team, apply to the Chairman of the Games Club c/o HQ 11 Sig Bde for a grant. Note however, that the Games Club does not give grants for adventure training activities, nor generally to those mad enough to do marathons on the other side of the world! Moral support? Maybe!

In addition to the annual grants given to sports and activities, there is a sizeable grant given to support an overseas tour by one of the major sports each year. Football, Hockey, Cricket and Rugby take turns in going on overseas tours. This year, it is Rugby Union's turn to go on a tour and their destination is Canada. A report on this tour will appear elsewhere in *The WIRE*. Two years ago, the cricket team went to South Africa.

Exceptions to the normal tours are made from time to time. Last year, small grants were given to the Corps Athletics team to go to Cyprus and the Corps Water Polo team to go to the USA. These tours, apart from boosting team morale, gave our teams additional experience that will pay off in the results at future Inter-Corps and Army Competitions. Lastly, I should add that in all cases a personal contribution, usually 1/3 of the total cost is borne by the individuals selected for these tours.

The Sports Secretaries are always on the lookout for new talent so contact them if you feel you should be considered for the Corps team. Contact details are:

Sport	Secretary	Number	Unit
Athletics	**Maj G Benson**	94371 2752	11 Sig Regt
X Country	**Capt S Scott**	94371 2615	RSS Comd Trg Wg
Badminton	**SSgt Pengally**	94359 5677	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Basketball	**Capt N Smikle**	94423 2305	30 Sig Regt
Canoeing	**Capt S Gunson**	94344 5111	DGDD Upavon
Cricket	**SSgt A D Smith**	94371 226	Radio Systems Gp RSS
Fencing	**Maj R Anderton-Brown**	RMCS Shrivenham	
Football (M)	**WO2 (RSM) Bell**	94424 8170	BUOTC
Football (F)	**Capt L Robson**	94371 2281	11 Sig Regt
Fishing (Coarse)	**Capt C Kidd**	94385 5264	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Golf	**Maj D Deegan**	94554 8027	93 Sig Sqn (V)
Hockey (M)	**Maj K Roach**	94382 7237	DCSA
Hockey (F)	**Capt A Parkinson**	94631 4345	238 Sig Sqn
Netball	**Sgt Hawtree**	94371 2418	11 Sig Regt
Orienteering	**Maj T Crosby**	94382 5801	DCSA Corsham
Rugby Union	**Maj T Hall**	94331 3188	OC 243 Sig Sqn
Rugby League	**Capt P Connor**	94321 2688	SO3 IS HQ 3 (UK) Div
Shooting	**Capt G Reith**	94566 5036	32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V)
Squash	**Capt S Bason**	9360 33098	CCU BFPO 53
Skiing	**Maj H Jenkins**	94561 5276	APC MS (B)
Swimming	**Maj T Langford**	94382 5839	HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde
Tennis	**Capt O Gardner**	95261 7174	HQ Sp Hel Force
Tug of War	**WO1 (RSM) Manktelow**	94748 5444	7 Sig Regt
Free Fall Para	**SSgt Ewart**	94385 5292	21 Sig Regt (AS)

THE FORMATION OF THE DEFENCE COLLEGE OF CIS (DCCIS)

Many will be aware that the MOD has been working to achieve savings through the creation of defence-wide trg establishments. This study has been known as the Defence Training Review (DTR).

The Royal School of Signals has been involved as one of the components of the review into the delivery of CIS trg and the creation of a Defence College of CIS (DCCIS).

This Defence College will form with effect from the 1 April 04 and therefore RSS will become part of this Defence College from that date. The DCCIS will comprise a Headquarters located in Blandford and other CIS schools as indicated, including RSS.

DCCIS ORGANISATION WEF 1 APRIL 04

DCCIS will be located in Harrogate building on the RSS campus, and will be commanded by **Brig John Terrington**, with a joint staff.

CHANGES AT THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

All will be familiar with the organisation of RSS that has been in place for a number of years. Changes in the trg environment and the prospect of the introduction of new systems, such as BOWMAN and CORMORANT in the near future, has prompted a review of RSS to ensure we are well placed to play a leading role in the delivery of CIS trg at a critical time for the Army. Part of this review process has led to a significant change in the way RSS is organised. The old organisation of Trg Ops and Trg Sp Divs and Trg Gps has been revised.

Old RSS Organisation prior to 1 January 04

This old organisation meant that HQ RSS was too far removed from trg and unable to influence how it was being delivered. The divide between Trg Ops Div and Trg Sp Div made it difficult for RSS to react quickly to changing demands for trg, and 4 Sqn, being part of 11 Sig

Regt, was involved in the delivery of trg that was clearly the responsibility of Trg Ops Div. Even without the advent of DCCIS, it was necessary to address these shortcomings. So the organisation of RSS has been reviewed and now looks like this:

New RSS Organisation after 1 January 04

The new organisation provides greater flexibility to react and accommodate changes in future trg requirements. Although it will take some months to settle down, this new organisation will provide a solid basis from which the necessary changes to meet the demands of the digitised Army can be met. This new organisation involves the creation of three trg divisions within the School: Comd Div, Engr Div and Systems Div. All of these will be led by a R SIGNALS Lt Col, who will be directly responsible for the effective delivery of trg.

Command Division

Comd Div, led by **Lt Col Jim Dryburgh**, includes two groups: Mil Trg Gp, which will deliver all the new Junior and Senior CLM trg; and Comd Trg Div, which will take responsibility for Offr and Supvr courses, including Yeoman, Foreman and Supvr IS - although much of the syllabus for these course will continue to be delivered by the academic staff of the ICT Faculty.

Engineering Division

Engr Div will include IS Gp, which will remain the focus for all IS trg in the School, including the new IS Engr Courses as well as elements of the BOWMAN courses due to be introduced at RSS in 2004. The other gps within the Engr Div are the ICT Faculty, which will continue in the main, to deliver the academic course content across the school and the IS practitioners courses from Info Div at the Defence Academy Shrivenham.

Systems Division

Sys Div, led by **Lt Col Matt Fensom**, will comprise both Radio and Area Sys Gps largely unchanged.

This new organisation will ensure that RSS and the Corps are in the best position to meet the many challenges of the next few years, and enable us to play a leading role in the introduction into service of the new systems, but also to play a wider role in the digitisation of the Army, and indeed across the whole of Defence with the advent of DCCIS.

LIFE AS A PSI IN A UNIVERSITY OFFICER TRAINING CORPS

- By WO2 (SSM) Gilbert, Southampton UOTC

On selection for promotion to WO2 and with my preference posting proforma faxed to MCM Div, I eagerly awaited a posting to a field regiment - preferably in Germany - and my appointment as a SSM. Imagine my surprise when I received a call from MCM Div, 'offering' me a posting to Southampton University Officer Trg Corps as the Royal Signals PSI with the now customary 3 weeks' notice to move.

It was with an open mind that I completed my handover. As the Royal Signals PSI, my responsibilities included the running of a Clansman Signals Store (of which I had no knowledge, being a Relay Op), control of the IT equipment, responsibilities with MT and for supervising the trg of Basic Company.

University Officer Trg Corps (UOTCs) exist to develop university students as future leaders in both the armed forces and industry. This is achieved by using a combination of military and adventure trg (AT) approaches. Officer Cadets (OCdts) are paid for attending – a welcome incentive for most students. There are 19 UOTCs spread around the country, 12 of which have a Royal Signals PSI and 2 a Royal Signals RSM. Some have dedicated troops for particular cap badges; others are generic infantry style units.

Southampton UOTC consists of two companies: Basic, which delivers trg similar to that received by a Phase 1 recruit, and Advanced, which concentrates more on leadership and the estimate process in particular. The hierarchy of the unit comprises a regular CO, RSM and 3 WO2s, one Royal Signals, 1 Infantry (Para) and a Royal Engineers QMSI. Each of the two companies has a TA Maj, CSM and other TA personnel in support. Whilst the regular staff have no problem filling 40 hrs a week at work, the TA staff and OCdts are seen only on Tuesday nights (drill nights) and weekends, when most of the trg is done. The bulk of this trg happens during the autumn, winter and early spring to avoid the students' exam periods. The UOTCs work every other weekend throughout the winter, which can often cause disruption to family life. That said, the bonus is an 8-week period with very little work and much time off once the students break up for summer, and a work pattern that generally falls in line with school holidays.

If variety is the spice of life, then employment in a UOTC as spicy as a shish kebab. In my 18 months I have arranged 2 AT weeks in Bavaria, organised dinner nights, run ranges and exercises, washed vehicles, sifted brass and swept floors. Having no soldiers to do the more menial SAS tasks (Send A Signaller) that make any organisation work, you normally have to do them yourself. For me, another aspect of the job is having not been exposed to working with TA before, I still remain surprised at their ability to deliver the goods - flexibility being very much a key word.

Another advantage of the job is that you are very much left alone to get on with it. Travel is yet another good point. Since my time here, the unit has sent expeditions to Malaysia, Peru, diving in Malta, three skiing expeditions and battlefield tours to Normandy, the US and Berlin. Each expedition needs at least one PSI to attend. You also spend a 2-year tour with very few exercises, no duties and no operational tours. Whilst I have missed the traditional Mess life and have sometimes felt out on a limb, I have enjoyed working in a very small and professional team. The UOTC is also a highly social job with many a party and social event.

One word of warning however, each UOTC is different in its approach to trg, priorities and the job descriptions of its PSIs. Had any other of the Royal Signals PSIs around the country written this, it would read quite differently - not necessarily better or worse, just different. As for the high profile I'm told that goes with the job, I'm not sure. But one thing I am sure of is that if you want a change from Regtl life, employment in a UOTC is a good option. OCdts are bright, keen, relatively sensible and fun to work with.

EXERCISE TOPHAM HATT – THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

The Swanage Railway is situated in Dorset, in an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) known as the Isle of Purbeck (actually a peninsula). There are two main towns, Swanage on the coast and Wareham ten miles away to the north-east. A branch line to Swanage from Wareham was opened in 1884, with one intermediate station serving the village of Corfe Castle.

At the height of the railway operation, the line saw busy periods, especially during World War 2 and during summer holiday periods. Nevertheless British Rail closed it in 1972. The track between Swanage and Furzbruck was lifted immediately and the remaining 3 miles of it was left to cater for goods traffic conveying clays. During the 1970's British Gas discovered oil in the region and a terminal was built at Furzbruck to move the oil out by rail. As further deposits were found, BP took over the operation and subsequently a pipeline was built to Fawley near Southampton and the transport of oil by rail discontinued. At present, a by-product is LPG and this is sent twice a day by rail to Avonmouth.

In recent years, the Railway has been re-laid from the Swanage end, opening to Herston in 1984. Trains now run all the year round to Norden Park and Ride and include many special events. In December alone, up to 13,000 passengers may be carried on the Santa Specials.

Since the closure, many groups have supported the railway project. Today the backbone of the Railway is the Swanage Railway Trust (SRT), which is a registered charity. Members annually elect the governing body, called the Council of Management, and also provide the volunteer work force, which supports all areas of the project. The Swanage Railway Company Limited has a Board of Directors that runs the Railway. The Directors are also volunteers and, although there are shareholders in the Company, a dividend is never paid and profits are ploughed straight back into the project.

The line has catered for holiday makers and railway enthusiasts in the past, but the recent opening of the extension to Norden has opened up a number of new opportunities associated with a Park and Ride car park scheme. This initiative has seen BP, English China Clay, local councils and the Railway come together with a constructive plan to reduce motor traffic levels in the area. By providing a car park adjacent to Norden Station, at the end of the Wareham By-pass, visitors are encouraged to park their cars and travel by train to Corfe and Swanage. The initial construction catered for 120 cars, which by 2001, was increased to 400. Also

Laying cable channelling in 2003

Cpl Dodds and WO1 Roberts sorting out a bit of re-cycled line in 2004

A bit of poled work at Herston Bank in 2003

included are a tourist Information Office, toilets and a children's playground.

The Headquarters of the Swanage Railway Project is located in the centre of Swanage, with the administration being based in the original station buildings. Most of the engineering facilities are based at the Herston Works, 1 mile from the town centre, with track maintenance being based at Norden. The town itself is a popular seaside resort and the population can rise from 9,000 in the winter to over 30,000 in the peak summer months.

The Topham Hatt series of exercises has become an on-going Corps project since its inception back in 1984. The Armed Forces as a whole have supported the Railway project in a number of different areas but the Royal Corps of Signals has made by far the largest contribution. Many different units and hundreds of soldiers have visited the Railway and formed part of the unique relationship.

On average, exercises have been held twice a year. Having identified tasks to be completed, soldiers work closely with staff from the Railway, and are able to use techniques and practices not often used or encountered in the military environment. The work is often labour-intensive, and it enables team leaders to handle a variety of tasks.

Work undertaken by Royal Signals tradesmen has mainly supported the Railway's Telecom Department. In 1984, fifteen soldiers from 30 Sig Regt retrieved 30 miles of redundant cable form the Mid-Hants Railway at Alresford and installed much of it at Swanage during a four-week exercise called EX CYGNET TRAIN. The Telephone Exchange at Corfe Castle was a major installation by signallers from Northern Ireland in 1990. All equipment associated with the exchange was commissioned, together with the underground cable link from Harman's Cross and the local pole route within the station limits.

As time has progressed so has the length of the Railway. In 1993, tradesmen from Germany, Northern Ireland and the mainland helped extend the cable and pole route between Corfe Castle and Norden, a distance of nearly one mile. To give soldiers an element of variety, some have, for example, assisted the Signals Department in the installation of point equipment at Corfe Castle and Harman's Cross. More recently the Halt at Herston has been totally refurbished.

In addition to helping the Railway build the extension, there have been two further important developments over the past few years. In 1993 11 Sig Regt, which had recently moved to Blandford, accepted an invitation to become a Corporate Member of the Swanage Railway Trust. This move formally recognised the link between the Railway project and the Corps as a whole.
The Railway has been pleased to host many visitors from the Corps. A major event was held in June 1999 to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the link between the Royal Signals and the Swanage Railway. Amongst the many visitors was the **Master of Signals**, who was visiting for the third time.

The TOPHAM HATT venture has had such an influence on soldiers who have seen the on-going progress, that many decided to pay £350 and join the ranks of the Railway membership. This led to the second major development that was the formation of the

Pausing for the down train

Mercury Group in 1992. The Group, which is a part of the Swanage Railway Trust, was formed as a result of 18 Junior Soldiers from 11 Sig Regt who joined as Premier Life Members during EX TOPHAM HATT V. They were led by **Maj Scott Youngson**, now OC 2 Sqn.

There have been 53 formal exercises since 19 March 1984, involving 1,054 soldiers, generating some 4,975 man-days of support. A celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the association between the Royal Signals and the Swanage Railway will be celebrated on 19 June 2004. Any serving or past member of the Corps who wishes to obtain further information is asked to contact the Project Office:

Ex Topham Hatt 20 Planning Office
3 (Harrogate) Sqn
11 Sig Regt
Blandford Camp,
Dorset
DT11 8RH

Tel: (Civ) 01258 482416
(Mil) 94371 2416
Mob: 07703 566941
Fax: 01258 482479
Email: (Civ) tree.top@virgin.net
(Mil) 11SR.3SQN.UTP.OC

BOOK REVIEWS

THE ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS *by Cliff Lord and Graham Watson - reviewed by Col (Retd) Cliff Walters*

This book sets out to provide no less than an authoritative and comprehensive history of every Royal Signals unit from the birth of the Corps in 1920 up until recent times. The history of some units is indeed traced back further, to their origins in the Royal Engineers Signal Battalions. No easy task. As the authors point out, one of the attributes of the Royal Corps of Signals has been its ability to adapt, be it in response to present day downsizing, postwar reorganisation, or whatever; so the difficulties inherent in tracing unit formation, re-subordination, disbandment and reformation are obvious.

The book covers regular and reserve Royal Signals units, Royal Engineer Signals, Empire and Commonwealth units, and an interesting selection of specialist and miscellaneous units. The authors have tapped primary sources for their information, drawing heavily on the resources of the Royal Signals Museum, and making full use of internet and website information, as well as personal recollections. Acknowledgements to the latter amount to over 240 individuals, testament to the research and effort devoted to producing this authoritative volume. This is an essential component in the library of every serious Corps historian, and although designed primarily as a reference source, it is very easy to catch oneself reading it almost as a narrative.

Cliff Lord was a cipher operator with the Corps in the 1960s, serving in Germany and Saudi Arabia, and is co-author of numerous books and articles on military history, as well as Honorary Historian for the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals. He is currently a network controller for New Zealand's Southern Cross Cable network. **Dr Graham Watson** is a graduate of Glasgow and Edinburgh universities, and a former history lecturer. In retirement he organises battlefield trips to France, Belgium, Netherlands and Italy, and contributes to various military websites, as well as continuing to act as Regimental Historian to the Royal Monmouthshire Engineers.

The Royal Corps Of Signals, ISBN 1874622078 is published by Helion and Company, and is available from the Royal Signals Museum, Blandford Camp, price £29.95 + p and p.

THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA The Place and the People – *reviewed by Bernard Redshaw*

Many who visit or live in London will have seen the Chelsea Pensioner in his scarlet or navy blue tunic walking down the King's Road. Those who attend or watch on TV the Chelsea Flower Show will at least have caught a glimpse of the Royal Hospital itself. But relatively few will know much about the history of the institution, its residents, or how it operates today. *The Royal Hospital Chelsea – The Place and the People* by Dan Cruickshank is a remarkable account that not only enlightens us on these three issues, but also brings us many little-known facts about them.

The Royal Hospital was instigated by **Charles II** in 1682 'for the relief of such Land Souldiers as are, or shall be, old, lame, infirme in ye Service of ye Crowne.' It was not a new idea. L'Hôtel des Invalides in Paris had been established earlier by **Louis XIV**, as had a similar establishment near Dublin by the **Duke of Ormonde**. Ideas for the building design and the running and financing of RH Chelsea were drawn from both these establishments.

Required to house '422 military persons' and a staff of 29 to look after them, the design and construction of the building and its grounds was entrusted to **Sir Christopher Wren**, who was already 10 years into the construction of St Paul's Cathedral, not to mention the replacement of 52 London churches destroyed in the Great Fire in 1666. But despite this heavy workload, by February 1692 the first Chelsea Pensioners were being admitted to the new Hospital. Ironically, many of these had suffered their wounds in a major battle in Ireland between two of the Hospital's patrons, **James II** and the Protestant **King William III**, the infamous Battle of the Boyne in 1690. Running costs were funded in part from the Army pensions that the inmates had to surrender (and still do) and in part from 'ye Souldiers' Poundage,' something very like our present One Day's Pay Scheme.

The book continues with the history of the Hospital and the way it was run and funded, of the Pensioners and of the wars they fought in, right up to the present day. Many original documents are reproduced, from plans to records and books of account, giving an added insight to this history. There are also many fascinating vignettes of personalities involved, from Patrons to Architects, from Staff Members to many of the Pensioners themselves. For anyone with an interest in social or military history, in architecture or recent archaeology, this is a good read. And the bulk of the proceeds from the sale of the book will go towards the Royal Hospital itself.

The Royal Hospital Chelsea – The Place and the People, ISBN 1 903942 27 6 is available in hardback, 192 pages at a RRP of £35.00.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS

FEBRUARY 2004

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Brig TG Inshaw	DCI(A)
Col RJ Ellis	HQ London District
Col SJ Kidner	DCSA D Strat & Tech Dev
Lt Col K Bell MBE	DCSA Eng Services/Infosec
Lt Col RP Giles	British Mil Mission-Kuwait
Lt Col SR Sharman	MOD A Block
Lt Col DI Whimpenny	JSSU Digby
Maj RC Cory	HQ 1 MI BDE
Maj AC Sarginson	G6 HQ Land
Maj TP Waites	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Capt IFK Bates	HQ London District
Capt NS Ferris	2 Sig Regt
Capt A Forbes	Sangcom
Capt SC Jeffery	HQ NorIreland
Capt GWA Johnston	40 Sig Regt(V)
Capt CM Jones	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
Capt SEM Laws	HQ Sig Sqn 7 Armd Bde
Capt BL Psaila	Cyprus Comms Unit
Capt DA Whitaker	J4 Estate Branch HQ BFFI
Capt G Woodcock	DEF CIS School
Lt M Barratt	209 Sig Sqn
Lt BT Kelly	GOC Theatre Troop HQ
Lt F Watson	Cyprus Comms Unit

MARCH 2004

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col RJ Evans	RSS
Lt Col JRC Bunce	JHC HQ Land
Lt Col S Croft	SVC Qttqche Warsaw
Lt Col DAH Jones	HQ ARRC
Lt Col TP Rimell	DSTL Info Management
Lt Col RJ Steed MBE	OCE HQ Land (Sudan)
Lt Col AK Trimble	HQ Norireland
A/Lt Col AG Hill	RMCS Courses
Maj RM Jones	RSS
Maj DA Simcox	Y List MCM Div
Maj DTH Wilson	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Maj MA Webb	1 Mech Bde 215 Sig Sqn
Capt MJ Crinnion	16 Sig Regt
Capt RJ Herring	215 Sig Sqn
Capt R Knightly Brown	OCE HQ Land
Capt RA Lane	I & S 241 Sig Sqn
Col SC Lumley	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
Capt CG Milne	7 Sig Regt
Capt JP Nichols	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Capt A Senneck	213 Sig Sqn 39 Inf Bde
Capt RJ Seymour	HQ Brignepal
Capt KJ Simmons	7 Sig Regt
Capt KRJ Smith	H S 11 Sig Regt RSS
Capt DM Stoter	264 Sig Sqn
Capt K Thomson	Y List MCM Div
Lt SR Bennett	ATR Lichfield
Lt JD King	2 Sig Regt

WOS AND SNCOS

FEBRUARY 2004

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
A/WO 1 RD C Bruce	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO 1 RD SK Cook	JSSU (Cyprus)
A/WO 1 AP Watters	DI (SI)
WO 2 ST Brown	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD A Cauldfield	101 Log Bde Hq & Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 RD PD Joyce	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD G McGachy	ATR Litchfield
SSgt D Alderson	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt AV Smith	15 Sig Regt
SSgt AM Watts	600 Sig Tp
A/SSgt SJB Davies	16 Sig Regt
A/SSgt PA Elwood	RHQ AFNORTH
A/SSgt W Scarrott	RSS
Sgt JD Bean	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt S Bretherton	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt GL Brownley	30 Sig Regt
Sgt SW Jones	2 Sig Regt
Sgt DG MacDonald	Comms Trg Wing
Sgt DG Randall	225 Sig Sqn
Sgt JE Scott	DCSA
Sgt RAJ Sizeland	2 Sig Regt
Sgt PE Smith	11 Sig Regt
Sgt EI Stojanoci	252 Sig Sqn
Sgt M Wilcock	ATR Litchfield
A/Sgt GM Lane	ATR Bassingbourn
A/Ssgt SM Hyland	2 Sig Regt

MARCH 2004

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO 1 RD AJ Crawford	101 Log Bde Hq & Sig Sqn
WO 1 PR Curtis	71 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 1 RD JJ Alger	NCISS Latina
A/WO 1 RD CD Lloyd	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO 2 DB Longmuir	Army School of Ammo
A/WO 2 RD J Barsley	The Royal School of Signals
A/WO 2 RD S Fleming	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD C Marlowe	JSSU (Cyprus)
SSgt IR Burton	30 Sig Regt
A/SSgt VM Hawtree	The Royal School of Signals
A/SSgt MD Thompson	ATR Bassingbourn
Sgt KJ Betts	36 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt CJ Deal	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt R Dryden	JSSU Digby
Sgt KR Ingley	280 (UK) Sig Sqn
Sgt MS Jones	7 Sig Regt
Sgt NTG Lean	ATR Litchfield
Sgt PE Oldfield	30 Sig Regt
Sgt DC Pope	30 Sig Regt
Sgt SR Pritchard	1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC)(V)
Sgt C Rutter	39 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt P Scantlebury	16 Sig Regt
Sgt SW Tatlock	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt A Williams	The Royal School of Signals
A/Sgt DC Healy	DEI Info Sys
A/Sgt JA Johnson	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt JAC Pearsall	102 Log Bde Hq & Sig Sqn
A/Sgt ES Rigg	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt P Whenman	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn

RETIREMENTS

FEBRUARY 2004

Name and Rank	*Date*
Col PAR Rouse	02/Mar/04
Maj M Heaney	06/Mar/04
Maj SEG Barnard	19/Mar/04

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

COMD **Col MJM Dyer**

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

OC Maj Guy Benson
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Bob Lawrence**

This period has seen many changes in the Gp, most noticeable being the departure of **WO2 (SSM) Rob Melotte** posted to Civ Div. His replacement, **WO2 (SSM) Bob Lawrence** has recently arrived from ATR Bassingbourne and is already making a significant contribution.

We are eagerly awaiting the arrival of BOWMAN. Things are now starting to happen with the new DS2 building starting to take shape.

The OC, Maj Guy Benson, SSM Bob Lawrence and YofS David Martin-Woodgate oversee the builders. Note the OC is a classic DS pose.

COMMAND SECTION

Sect Comd **Capt Dennis** RM
FofS **WO1 (FofS) P Holland**
YofS **WO2 (YofS) Hutchinson**

Comd Sec have had a number of changes in personnel over this period. We said goodbye to **WO1 (FofS) Conway**, who left to oversee the commercialisation of Afghanistan. We also saw the departure of **WO2 (YofS) White**, who left on promotion to WO1 and assumed the role of RSMI at RMA Sandhurst. Their posts have been quickly filled by two very capable replacements. **WO1 (FofS) Holland** has joined the section from Afghanistan, having been instrumental in the commercialisation of it. And **WO2 (YofS) Hutchinson** joins us from 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207). He had to spend a few gruelling months in ASG, but now happily fills the RSG YofS role.

No matter how many times we teach the same lessons or conduct the same exs, each course turns out to be very different. For example, YofS Cse 57 assisted the Devon and Dorset County armed response unit by staging EX FALSE ALARM whilst conducting their RSG final ex. Due to a slight geographical error, some course members had been mistaken by the Dorset Constabulary Armed Response Team for criminals who robbed a nearby Post Office!

Comd Sec and YofS Cse 57 assist the Dorset Constabulary in Anti-Terrorist Response drills.

RADEX TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Dennis** RM
Tp SSgt **SSgt Batts**

With another year nearly over for Radio Ex Tp and no let up in sight for Comd or Soldier Trg, the powers that be, **SSgt John Batts**, decided that maybe a relaxation period was in order. So on a cold rainy November morning we deployed to Salisbury Plain trg area for a well-earned battle camp and range package. We arrived at about 09.00 hrs and before we had time to ask where the NAAFI was, we were straight onto the ranges split into two groups. One group went to the pistol range to frighten a few figure 11 targets, but as soon as **Cpl Lou Underwood** got onto the range, the range staff were the ones in fear of their lives! Meanwhile the rest of us risked life and limb on the 5.56 range with the likes of **LCpls King** and **Mckechnie**. The final phase was the FIBUA attack which saw **Cpl O'Hanlon's** section break the record for the worlds longest leopard crawl, and this was before we reached the target!

LCpl Kerry Hopkinsons closes with and destroys the enemy

INFORMATION ASSURANCE WING

OC **Maj Ian Parry**
YofS **WO1 (YofS) Pete Goodliffe**

THE YEOMAN OF SIGNALS COURSE

Cast your mind back to 1 June. For most of you that's quite easy; you were either getting ready to deploy to the Gulf, in the Gulf, or just back. Well for 20 SNCOs from around the Corps and one Royal Marine, it was the first day of the Yeoman of Signals course.

The first weeks of the course are a re-trade. Students who are Area Sys Ops have to complete the Rad Sys Op package, and vice versa. **Sgt John Ford**, the Royal Marine on the course, celebrated his birthday during the re-trade. A 'run ashore' into Blandford was arranged, which **John** enjoyed, but the next day was a different story. During a 15-min break, he fell asleep, and woke to the sound of the duty student calling Lympstone to ask for a new Marine as we had broken the one they sent us!

With the re-trade complete, the course enjoyed 2 weeks on leave, but no matter how hard we tried to forget the course **WO1(YofS) Pete Goodliff's** words rang in our ears: 'When you get back from leave, the pace will pick up!' And it did. On the first day of Information Assurance Wing, we were given a list of projects and completion dates. The first was 3 weeks away, so no problem. How wrong we were, the projects were only part of the homework allocation. Each group in the wing had their own homework to give us, and before long, the stress was building. The OC, **Maj Ian Parry** called it 'self-induced pressure.' As if we would give ourselves that much homework!

During the 2 weeks spent with Comd Gp, a number of small subjects was covered, including HQ loc selection, anti-tank weapons, CR writing and map symbols. For **Sgt Sean Avis**, the map symbols were very difficult - it took him 5 attempts to draw a rectangle! **SSgt Trev Austin** had some fun with the CR writing and learned a new phrase: 'Do it nice or do it twice.'

Another 2-week block was allocated to IT: a week each of Office Automation and Project Management. The hottest weather ever recorded in Blandford coincided with our working in the hottest classroom. The instructor, **Mr Robin Lavies**, was determined to keep his jacket on, and credit to him, he did -well for the first 20 minutes at least. Despite the heat, we learned a lot in our time with **Mr Lavies**, things that we have used in the short term and things we will use in the future.

The trg in Information Assurance Wing culminates with EX CENTRE PIECE, an ex where the students are given comd appointments and manage a world-wide comms network. Those students not in comd appointments man COMMCENs and support those in command. For three weeks, we moved from Northwood to the Falkland Islands and back again in the blink of an eye. No matter how good the planning or how many the standby links that were engineered, the DS had a means of bringing comms down.

With Information Assurance completed, it's looking good for all the students. Almost half way, and no failures to date. So it goes to show that the selection process is working and the right people are being selected for the trg. With another 2 weeks leave coming up it leaves just one question: What will the Yeoman say this time to spoil it?

Sgt Cez Wrenn putting the Yeoman to sleep with one of his jokes.

TOUGH GUY 2004

On Sunday 1 Jan 04, thirteen 'volunteers' from RSS competed in this year's winter Tough Guy (TG) competition as part of 11 Sig Regt team. The competition is held twice yearly, summer and winter and has been running for many years. The ethos behind TG is to have fun, raise money and don't take anything too seriously.

Even though she's lost all feelings in her body, Sig Greenwood still manages a smile

This obstacle is known as 'The Ice-cream Headache' – and we soon found out why!

The organiser of this great event is **Mr Mouse**, the newsletter is called *Jelly Legs News* and you even have to sign your own death warrant to say that you are happy to be buried on the Tough Guy farm if you were to die there.

This year's competition attracted over 6,000 competitors from across the country and as far away as Germany. The course itself consists of an arduous 8-mile cross country run, which for good measure, included slaloming up and down the side of a few rather large hills. After the run comes the assault course, which includes huge scramble nets, barbed wire entanglements, running through burning bales of hay, electric shock fences, knee-high mud bogs, and water, lots of water - deep freezing muddy water!

But as they say, its all for fun, and as a team, we completed the event in less than 4 hours - just! On the upside we are hoping to raise £1,400. This money will be split equally between Mr Mouse's farm for unfortunate children and Salisbury hospitals Ace of Hearts appeal. And now comes the real challenge of collecting all the sponsor money off those good enough to make a pledge.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

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

THE GORDONS CUP 2004 - *by Cpl J Marshall*

Twice a year the Gordons Cup competition is held at 11 Sig Regt. It is a competition between 1, 2 and 3 Sqns, and tests the Phase 2 soldiers in their knowledge and ability to perform military tasks as part of a team. Tests include: NBC/First Aid; Fieldcraft; PT (march and shoot, indoor assault course and log race) and Comd Tasks.

The overall positions for Gordons Cup 2004 were:
1st 3 Sqn
2nd 2 Sqn
3rd 1 Sqn

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JC Boisvert** RCSigs
SSM **WO2 (SSM) N Roberts**

THE MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION
- by Cpl Jon Marshall

It was a bleak, cold, dry, but sunny Dorset morning, and the first event of the day was the March and Shoot. Unusually the team that assembled for 1 (Ouston) Sqn consisted entirely of able-bodied volunteers, with nobody having to be jiffed to participate.

Our first lap time of 33 mins, for approximately 2 miles seemed reasonable, until 2 and 3 Sqns managed to lap at around 5 to 6 minutes faster than us. The shooting phase took place in the SAT trainer. This was run as a story shoot with animated targets to kill. We believed that we had done quite well in this section of the competition, until, yet again, 2 and 3 Sqns took great delight in trouncing us once more.

We thought that the team would draw strength from the OC and SSM, **Maj JC Boisvert**, RCSigs, and **WO2 (SSM) N Roberts**, who delighted the competitors by running the route with them, and giving shouts and whoops of encouragement in between their battle for breath.

But it was still a success for 1 (Ouston) Sqn. We finished in a well-deserved Bronze medal position. We look forward to the next time when I am sure we will improve on Bronze.

THE INDOOR ASSAULT COURSE - *by Cpl Jo Quinn*

A challenging course was set up in the gym by the PT staff, consisting of vaulting horses, parallel bars, gate vaults, and tyres, to name a few of the nasty obstacles in store for the ten brave soldiers who were to battle their way through.

An able bodied team headed by their fearless leader, **Sig Pedro**. After their initial brief, they entered the gym, and the look of sheer terror was evident on all their faces as they saw the daunting layout before them. Three laps best effort and a single lap as a complete unit was what they had to endure. **Sig Price-Hafslund** made up for his overly long name by volunteering to go first. But when the day was over, we found that our team had achieved a respectable Bronze medal position.

COMMAND TASKS - *by Cpl Gordon Dunderdale*

After a whole week of training, the eagerly anticipated event arrived, with the team well drilled and oiled in knot-tying and lashing. **Sig Cawley** was team leader for the first task. His aim was to rescue two downed pilots from a tree and an important message decoder from across a large ditch. With a time frame of 25 mins and various ropes and climbing equipt to use, a comd decision was taken to stand around idle for 10 mins. When the team did get going, things came together really well, although **Sig Alty's** impression of Sly Stallone in *Cliffhanger* was not really up to much. With the clock rapidly ticking down, a sense of urgency took over and the team went over the time by just 45 secs.

The second task saw **Sig Jackson** take charge. This time, the aim was to rescue a comrade stuck up a tree in a minefield, with an oil drum to recover from said minefield. The team set to the task with much more enthusiasm. Before long, a makeshift death slide was in place and it was **Sig Gardner's** turn to have a go at sliding down the rope. **Sig Ferguson** and **Sig Malcolm** were given the task of retrieving the oil drum, which they did very well.

The final event saw the team checking several oil drums for the enemy's secret codes with only 5 tyres and 3 planks of wood to get them around the area. The leader for this task was **Sig Woods**. **Sig Byam** came forth with probably the best idea of the whole event. This saw things speed up, and in the end the team from 1 (Ouston) Sqn were the only ones to complete all three of the command tasks. After disappointments in the other events, the Sqn's spirits were lifted when it was announced that they were the winners of the Comd Tasks. We knew we would beat 2 and 3 Sqns at something!

THE LOG RACE - *by Cpl Tony Dawson*

The log race was planned for 15.15hrs, which gave the team time to bond, talk tactics and have a brief by the nominated team Captain, **Sig Roserie**. At 12.00hrs we made our way to the gym to meet our eleventh team member, appropriately christened 'log'! As all the logs were different sizes **Sig Roserie's** orders were short, sharp and to the point: 'Grab the smallest log and run!'

When the going gets tough.....

Time to race had arrived, and with helmets on and cigarettes out, we were off. After a mad 20-metre dash to pick up the logs, we got there first and picked up the smallest one. Our initial plan had gone off without a drama, but where to from here? The other two Sqns were quickly shooting off into the distance, and we couldn't work out why. Then, it dawned on us. Although we had picked up the shortest log, it was actually much heavier than the others were... We tried really, really hard but there was no catching the gazelle-legged 2 and 3 Sqns. Personal pride was at stake now, with the OC and SSM, **Maj JC Boisvert**, and **WO2 (SSM) N Roberts** giving all the encouragement they could. By that point, they were the only ones that could!

We gave our all and pushed hard for the coveted Bronze medal place. As this was the final event, there was much mirth when the prizes were handed out. Then it was off to the bar for a well-deserved orange juice. A very special mention must go to **Sig Smith 811**, of Rhino Troop, for being selected as the overall best performance throughout all of the day's events
Overall an excellent day was had by all, competitors and spectators alike, and we look forward to doing it all again in the summer.

Sig Smith 811 receiving his award from the Commanding Officer, Lt Col A P Hudson MBE for the overall best performance

The results of the day, were as follows:

March and Shoot	3 Sqn
NBC/First Aid	3 Sqn
Fieldcraft	3 Sqn
Indoor Obstacle Course	2 Sqn
Command Tasks	1 Sqn
Log Race	3 Sqn

EXERCISE SCORPIONS NEST

Eight willing Soldiers Awaiting Trade Training (SATTs) from 11 Sig Regt played enemy for 220 Sig Sqn, 21 Sig Regt (AS), in EX SCORPIONS NEST, in Salisbury Plain trg area. It was a peacekeeping style ex and comprised four stands: Law of Armed Conflict; First Aid and Casualty Evacuation; Driving and Survival Techniques.

During the ex, each four-man patrol (brick) would train at a different stand each day. There were four bricks, each brick consisting of a Radio-Relay, a Secondary Access Switch Message Centre and 2 Radio Adapted Tele type dets.
The SATTs from 1 Sqn worked and helped out mainly on the Law of Armed Conflict and the Casevac stands. At the Law of Armed Conflict stand, each brick would spend the day faced with various tasks, including dealing with Refugees and POWs, and dealing

with an angry anti-British mob. They would also come across an illegal VCP and would have to use their negotiating skills to come to an agreement with the rebel troops.

At the casevac stand, the brick received an int report from EXCON that there were civilian casualties at a certain grid reference. When the group arrived, they found that the casualties were numerous. As they started treating them, they came come under fire from enemy troops and had to evacuate the casualties. The last group that went through the stand evacuated their casualties using a RAF Merlin Helicopter.

At night, the bricks went into normal night routine, but were recce'd by EXCON staff and the SATTs. This was followed up by probing attacks to keep the sentries on their toes. On the Thursday night when they were attacked, each brick took an enemy POW who had intelligence for them. This led up to each brick setting up an ambush on the final night.

ENDEX was called at 20.00hrs on Friday night. All the SATTs thoroughly enjoyed the ex, thanks to 21 Sig Regt (AS).

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SSM Youngson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) EC Williams**

2 Sqn welcomes new arrival, **Cpl Jim Bonney**, and not so new arrivals **Cpl Geordie Harrison** and **Cpl Chelsea Reynolds**. We also say goodbye to **Cpl Matt Lee**, who is leaving us as a member of the Sqn cadre, but remaining in the Sqn on his IS Op course.

2 SQUADRON CHALLENGE CUP – *by Sig Gillespie*

The weekend of 12 January, Cpl **Matt Lee** organised a 5 a-side football tournament for the Sqns. Ten teams were entered in to the competition, which consisted of two leagues. The winner and runner up of each league would be entered through into the semi-finals. The competition was split over two weekends, with the semi-finals on the second Sunday.

There were some very eventful games and a good standard of football played by most teams. 2 Sqn Cadre had also entered a team called 'Jumpers for Goalposts'. After a promising start they lost their first game 12 – 0, which was the sign of things to come. They lost all of their games and didn't score any goals. Even the female team managed to score two.

In the semis, 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly' beat '10 Stars', 4-1' and 'Crafty Butchers' beat 'Lucky 13', 3- 1. This left a final of 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly' v 'Crafty Butchers'. It was a game of two halves. The first half was fast moving with end to end action. Both teams came very close to taking the lead, but with some good goal keeping and a little luck, the first half ended 0-0.

The second half was again very fast moving, with more determination than ever. Then the 'Crafty Butchers' began to tire and 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly' took advantage of this, scoring the first goal. 'Crafty Butchers' tried to get one back, but they were again beaten as 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly' scored again. Full time whistle was blown to leave the final score 2 – 0.

A friendly handshake by both teams and a presentation by 2 Sqn OC, **Maj Youngson** saw 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly' the first 2 Sqn Challenge Cup winners.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj M Webb**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) T Ward**

3 (Harrogate) Sqn welcomes **Cpls Morrison** and **Dunnachie**; and congratulate **SSgt Hawtree** on her promotion.

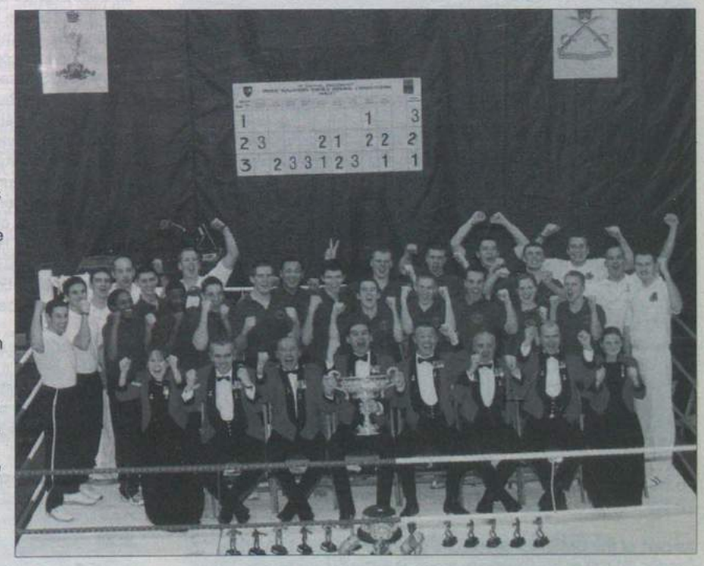
As ever, the Sqn is going from strength to strength. Having won the Harrogate Cup at the end of last year, we have started 2004 by retaining the Gordons Cup. And we have already had canoeists in North Wales at the Army Championships and had a successful sea-fishing trip out of Poole. We have also had the first presentation of the Lightning Tp prize this year, which was presented to **Sig Sudesh**. It was a proud moment for him as the first member of the Queen's Gurkha Signals to receive the prize. Well Done!

HARROGATE CUP BOXING COMPETITION 2003
- by Cpl Worsfold

The Regt organises an annual Harrogate Cup competition, consisting of basketball, volleyball, hockey, rugby, athletics, cricket and boxing. The grand finale to the year's events is the Novice Boxing Competition in December held in the gym and watched by 800 trainees. It consists of Phase 2 trainees both male and female boxing against each other, knowing the whole competition can rest on a bout. The boxing team was selected over a period of 3 months during an arduous build up, where the respective sqn boxing coaches choose soldiers who showed the most enthusiasm, commitment and basic boxing ability.

The bouts commenced and an excellent display of grit, determination and skill was shown by all the boxers, bearing in mind this was the first time these young soldiers had entered a boxing ring and actually fought. The night's events were as exciting as expected, with 3 Sqn striving hard to defend the title. The spectators were just as enthusiastic as the boxers, everyone willing their Sqn to be the winning one. They cheered loudly as the boxers showed why they gave 3 months of trg in their own time.

I personally wish to pass on my thanks to all the boxing squad and all those who assisted me in training the team. The trg obviously worked well and I had a committed team, hence 3 Sqn retaining their title. They were victorious! A sterling effort by all. Thank you.



3 Sqn, Harrogate Cup winners

TROOP COMMANDERS COURSE 057

EXERCISE SMOOTH SKI DRAGON – *by 2Lts Chris Fulthorpe and Ed Jagger*

Exercise Smooth Ski Dragon was a skiing expedition held over 7 – 14 February 2004 around Zell am See in Austria. Organised by **2Lt Berry** and **2Lt Halstead** for Tp Comds Course 057, the aims of the expedition were to give Tp Comds an insight into organising and running an exped and also to gain skiing qualifications. This was the first time in a while that a Tp Comds Course has been skiing on the scheduled AT week.

The Course was divided into three ability groups, a beginners group including our two Kuwaiti officers, **Lt Aldehani** and **Lt Al Ojaill**, who had previously never seen snow before, and two further more advanced groups. During the week, the area had the heaviest snowfall for years, allowing the Course to ski in some demanding conditions. The Course was accommodated at the Juggenclubb, a youth hostel situated at the bottom of the Schmittenhöhe Mountain and conveniently, only 400 yards from the Areitbahn cable-car.

The beginners were led by a local ski instructor called **Peter**. This group, who had never skied before, managed a few of the steeper black-grade slopes by the end of the week. It was a miracle that the whole group flew back in one piece and that no injuries were sustained by taking each other out on to the slopes. Uber-skier **2Lt Fulthorpe** sent the whole group flying in one morning. On Thursday, the group battled it out at a ski-race. **2Lt Panting** edged it by 27 hundreds of a second from **2Lt Ahsan**, Kuwaiti national ski-champ **Lt Al Ojaill** coming in a close third. For the group, the après-ski presentation was quite embarrassing, surrounded by kids of six, most of whom had beaten them.

SSgt Dawson from 3(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt led the intermediate group, but it was a wonder how the group ever got to the top with all their kit in the first place. **Lt Matthews'** boots were three sizes too small, **2Lt Scott** dropped his ski poles from the chair lift and fell off the tee-bar lift and **2Lt Stubbs** couldn't even get through the gate to the lift without falling over.

The advanced group, led by Blandford's **WO2 Driver**, left no inch of the mountain un-skied, although one re-entrant proved carnage for even the best skiers the Course could offer. **2Lt Thompson** lost a fight with a tree and was sent flying. **2Lt Jagger** managed to earn himself a 'Biff of the Day' award by deciding that landing a jump with his head was more practical than his skis. Other notable 'Biffs' included the standard crashing into each other, stupid comments such as **2Lt Kirks'** 'Is there any snow?' and **Lt Aldehani** bailing out of a tee-bar lift into a cow shed full of manure.

Through organising and taking part in the expedition, the Course gained a useful insight into running an exped, including the potential pitfalls in overseas travel. An excellent and challenging week's skiing was had by all, and the Course returned with some useful skiing qualifications, including some of the advanced skiers being recommended for their Instructors' Award.

ARMY

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT LICHFIELD

1 TRAINING SQUADRON

OC	**Maj PC Baker**
SSM	**W02 (CSM) K Marsh PARA**

MATHER TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Jane Squires**
Tp Sgt	**L/Sgt Farrar**

Mather Troop passed off on the 15 January 2004 with 24 recruits. The Best Recruit award for this intake went to **Sig Malcolm** – congratulations. Following 12 weeks of hard graft during this intake, the trg team are now taking a well-earned break.

We welcome a new addition to the team, future paratrooper, **Henry Hudson Proud**. Congratulations to **Cpl Adam Proud** and **Rachel**.

Cpl Jamie Roderick has packed himself off to Blandford to complete his Class 1, and **Capt Squires** is preparing for her move to 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, where she assumes the role of Sqn 2IC.

TOWNSEND TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Higginson**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Fadzilah**

As part of the CMS(R), the recruits use their Standard Learning Credits (SLCs) to pay the lion's share of a Battlefield Tour to either Ypres or the Somme. Townsend Tp however, were asked to trial a Battlefield Tour to Normandy, which turned out to be a highly informative and relevant Tour for Royal Signals recruits, not withstanding a few minor hiccups along the way….

As we were in Normandy for only 2 days, not wanting to miss out on anything, we decided to try and cram it all in. The Tour began with a visit to the Merville Battery (an Airborne Assault and deservedly a Battle Honour for the Parachute Regt) and then moved on to incorporate visits to both SWORD (British) and OMAHA (US) Beaches, then the large American Cemetery (from *Saving Private Ryan*), the Pont du Hoc (the American Ranger Assault) and finished the day off at Pegasus Bridge (of **Cpl Waters MM** Royal Signals fame), before finally returning to the hostel for a hearty meal and a chance to sample the local cider, before getting our overloaded heads down. The next day saw us off to Ranville Cemetery (where lies, among others, **Lt Col Smallman-Tew** of Airborne Signals fame), where we performed a short Service of Remembrance and laid wreaths from both the Corps and the ATR, before starting the trip home. Unfortunately, this went not entirely to plan: we managed to get a double blow out on the way back.

All enjoyed the experience, and learned a great deal in the process. Being a WW2 Tour, it was far more to us in the Corps, with plenty of history on display for he recruits to get a feel for. Overall, it was a superb tour and I would highly recommend it to anyone who has the chance to go.

C SQUADRON – *by Lt Paul Gudonis*

OC	**Maj K A Reynolds**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) A Stronge** RAMC

The last few months have been busy for the Sqn, with a number of regular CMS(R) courses and three TA courses running concurrently. The Sqn has carried out various improvements on areas of the bks infrastructure, and has been instrumental in the creation of a TA course aide-memoir (with a little help from 28 Trg Sqn RE).

We had our first victory in the CO's Inter-Sqn Sports Competition, finishing overall first in the indoor rowing event. Next we aim to win the volleyball and shooting competitions, so that we can claw back some respectability!

At present C Sqn is expecting to start 3 CMS(R)'s in the spring. In the meantime, the permanent staff have an ideal opportunity to get some courses completed. The majority of the courses will be of a military trg nature, but where possible, we will also aim to get members of the trg teams away on AT expeds. Planned expeds are EX NATAL DRAGON, (sub-aqua diving in South Africa), and a climbing exped being planned for November in Spain.

The Sqn has had, and is expecting, a large turn around of staff from all cap badges, RE, Infantry, RAMC and Royal Signals. To mention a few, we welcome **WO2 G McGachy**, posted in from 15 Sig Regt to take over as SSM; **Lt SR Bennett**, posted in from 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213); and **Sgt NTG Lean**, joining us from 36 Sig Regt. We have also had a number of key personnel leave

ATR(L), including the old 2IC, **Capt Steve Lockwood**, posted as golf adviser QM of 37 Sig Regt; **Capt Debbie Coslett**, posted to 15 Sig Regt after a nine-month posting conducting mostly AT; and **Sgt Vernon Critchley**, posted to 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. Finally, soon to leave us for the Y-List is **Capt Karen Thomson**. All the best for the future.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col NP Metcalfe MBE**
RSM	**WO1 D Mitchell**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Major MA Wright-Jones**
SSM	**WO2 AV Gill**

MERCURY CUP MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION

15 January 2004 will be firmly etched on the memories of those HQ Sqn personnel who took part in the Mercury Cup competition of 2004. The competition was hosted by 8 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn at Magilligan Camp. There were five other teams competing, drawn from all the Sig Sqns in Province: 3, 8 and 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn teams plus 225 and 233 Sig Sqns of 15 Sig Regt.

HQ Sqn's team comprised **SSgt Jase Lawer** (Team Capt), **Sgt Rory O'Neil**, **Cpl Billy Merrick**, **LCpl Scotty Cameron**, **LCpl Fay Taylor**, **LCpl Martin Potter**, **Sig Simon Key** and **Sig Louis Newstead**. All team leaders were briefed the night before the competition commenced. The event was over a 6-mile route, with military skill stands which comprised: a point-scoring 100m shoot, a timed falling plate shoot, a combined map reading/clay pigeon shoot, a military knowledge stand, an MT stand (including a tick test), a veh search with a blindfold driving stand, and a first aid stand.

As a result of the draw, HQ Sqn was to start last - was that an omen? We were to start at 10.45hrs, but despite the opportunity for a lie in, it was still an early start, as breakfast was at 06.00hrs, and the all weapons had to be collected from the armoury at 07.00hrs. We arrived at the start point at 10.30hrs to have a detailed equipt check, weigh-in and finally we were off.

The first leg was the longest, being 2 miles, but we made good progress putting in the second fastest time to the first stand. Then it was on to the range, where each team member was allocated a lane, with two members firing LSWs, one a Heckler and Koch 53, and four other members firing SA80 rifles. Despite the cold windy weather, the team did very well, getting the second highest score. The competition had started well!

The tab around to the second stand didn't take long and the team completed the magazine filling and the falling plate shoot to a high standard. All was going well; even the sun had come out, which for anyone who has served in the Emerald Isle, is a rarity. It was then on to the third stand and the team was half way round the course. At Checkpoint 3, the team was split in half, with one group taking a map-reading test and the other completing a clay pigeon shoot. **Sig Key** deserves a special mention for his 100% score. Unfortunately, the map-reading didn't go so well, but **SSgt Lawer** continued to motivate the team, as they set off for stand number four.

Sig Newstead and Sig Key turning live clays into dead clays

Rain was looking like a real possibility, and at the Military Knowledge stand, the team relished the opportunity to move inside a farmhouse, away from the elements and sit down, ease those aching muscles and answer some relatively easy questions.

When the team had finished this stand, they knew that they were still in with a good chance. As they were the last team competing,

A scene from the opening credits of 'Reservoir Dogs'

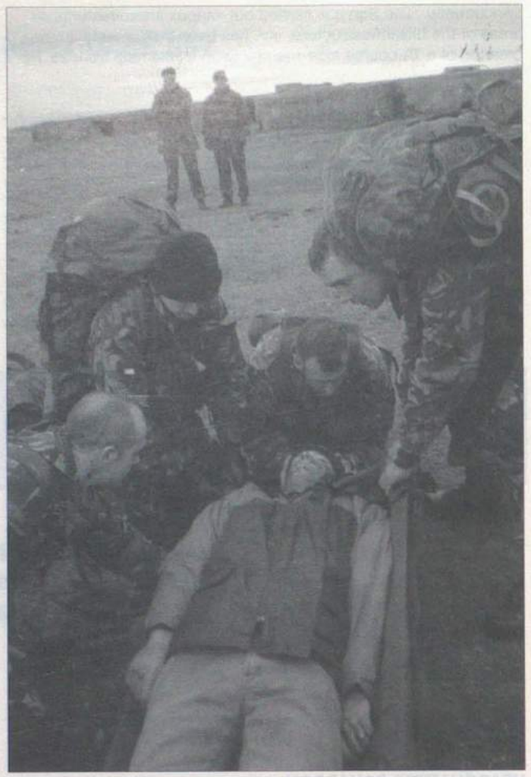
HQ Sqn were fortunate to be able hear the results of the other teams; and unfortunately a familiar name kept cropping up, that of the old adversaries, 233 Sig Sqn, who were also doing well in the competition. HQ Sqn team was hot on their heels, and with that in mind, they set off with the challenge of getting ahead.

The MT stand was split into three tasks. Some were taken away to complete a tick test, while **Cpl Merrick** and **Sgt O'Neil** were tasked to find as many 'foreign objects' as they could on a veh search. **LCpl Cameron** was to guide **SSgt Lawer**, whilst he was blindfolded around a circuit. All the team did very well and were in good spirits, knowing that there was just one more stand to go with a final sprint for the finish.

SSgt Lawer (wearing the goggles) and LCpl Cameron competing in the Blind Drive Challenge

The HQ Sqn team had prepared very well for the first aid stand, and it showed. Each member was tasked to specific duties, everyone knew what they had to do and there was no confusion. **Sgt O'Neil** and **LCpl Cameron** were the team medics, and they both impressed the assessors. The team ended up with the best marks for the stand and now there was a real chance for them to catch 233 Sqn if they finished the leg with a better time.

Before they set off, HQ Sqn knew that the competition was very close. We had surprised ourselves throughout the day and the final run in at the end was no exception. We had put in tremendous effort and impressed all those who watched us in at the finish line. Tired, sore and out of breath, we managed to gather ourselves for a well-deserved pat on the back from the OC, **Maj Wright-Jones**. We were then quickly transported back to the admin area to receive results and take part in the prize giving.



HQ Sqn team giving not so much warmth, but plenty of rest and reassurance

Overall, the winners were 3 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, followed by 233 Sig Sqn. The smallest unit taking part, HQ Sqn came in third place, missing second place only by seconds. But the whole team had given it 110%. Thanks go to all those who assisted in the trg of the team and the excellent organisation of the competition by 8 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SJ McConnell**
SSM	**WO2 Lappin**

THE CORPS WINTER SPORTS CAMP

On Friday 28 November 03, nine members of 15 Sig Regt left Thiepval Bks, Lisburn. With comms established (walkie-talkies), Red Leader and White Knight, (the minibuses) navigated their way to Zell Am See, Austria, where the Royal Signals Winter Sports Camp is held annually.

Training commenced on the Monday and the snowboarding instructors for the week were a Dutch company called Rip Star. The standard of trg was second to none and by the end of the week we had all improved. **Cpl Dorian** was ill with an ear infection for most of this period, but he still managed to pick it up with the little trg he did get from the Rip Star team.

The second week was race week. On the Monday we had the seeding race, all participants hoping to perform well. Over the course of the week, each racer took part in two races each day, including Slalom, Giant Slalom and the Dual Slalom. Lining up at the start, adrenaline was not in short supply. From the word go, riders carved their way down the mountain, giving it everything until the finish. There was, however, plenty of time for **JT Roden** to put his newly purchased board to the test. He masterfully attacked the 'big kickers' (jumps) in the freestyle park, with no mercy.

Overall, the 15 Sig Regt Snowboarding Team performed quite well, all reaching a reasonable standard. Although no prizes were won, it was a fun and enjoyable two weeks.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj G Inglis**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Hogg**

NORTH ANTRIM COAST ADVENTURE TRAINING CENTRE

During the third week in January 10 people from the Sqn went to the North Antrim Coast Adventure Trg Centre, Coleraine for a week's AT. The activities included body boarding, golfing, fly fishing, rock climbing, abseiling, hill walking and of course, a visit to the Bushmills Distillery. Just about everyone participated in every activity, apart from **Sgts Coomber** and **Middleton**, who spent every day battling it out on the golf course.

We arrived on a breezy morning and the week started out with **WO2 Griffiths** taking six of the group on a walk along the Causeway Coast. **Sgts Coomber** and **Middleton** played 18 holes of golf and **Cpl Nash** and **LCpl Hislop** went abseiling and rock climbing on the cliffs at Portrush (which thanks to the quick change of weather, turned out to be a bit scary). When it came to the final day of activities, 5 of the group decided to go fly fishing, and the other 3 went body boarding.

In the afternoon we headed up to the Bushmills Distillery, where we learned that we had two official whiskey tasters in the Sqn, **Sgt Adams** and **Cpl Nash**. They both excelled themselves in whiskey tasting and a jolly time was had by all. It became apparent that this was an excellent place to come and relax whilst on tour in Northern Ireland. But it seemed a shame that the centre was not being used to its full potential, especially in the winter months. It is something that our Sqn will definitely be taking advantage of in future.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON MANAGEMENT LUNCH

On Friday 30 January 2004 all the SNCOs and Offrs of 225 Sig Sqn had a management lunch in the station Sgts' and WOs' Mess to say farewell to **WO2 Longmuir** and **WO2 Rowlands**, who are leaving for pastures new. There were the usual high jinks, including a profiterole. The afternoon/ evening was a most enjoyable one, and highly recommended to any other unit. We look forward to the next one at the end of April.

3rd INFANTRY BRIGADE HEAQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

OC	**Maj T Carmichael**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) D Buckingham**

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt F Loxton**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt K McIntosh**

Cpl Cooper-Shaw, **LCpl Jackson** and **Sig Topping** have now moved to Civvy Street; **Sig Smart** leaves us on promotion to 1 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt; **LCpl Athey** and **Sig Squires** go to 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; and **Cpl Cooke** leaves us for Scotland.

We welcome **2Lt Alex Reid**, recently commissioned from Sandhurst. After attending his forthcoming Tp Comd's course in Blandford, he will assume command of the Tp. Also welcome to **Cpl Dixon** and his wife; **Cpls Teese**, **Garvey** and **Milnes**; **LCpls Street**, **Davies**, and **Milevsky**; and **Sigs Kingan**, **Kendall**, **Cascarina** and **Roberts**.

ARMY WOMEN'S FOOTBALL SIXES FESTIVAL – *by LCpl Morris*

This festival was held at the Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, Grantham, and consisted of 29 teams, divided into four leagues. Because of the lack of women in 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, we struggled to get a team together, so we co-opted **Cpl Harvey** and **LCpl Milborne** from 1 D and D, and **Cpl Finney** and **Sig Yates** from Lisburn. Initially each team played all the other teams in their league. From these results, the top four teams moved to compete for the Cup, and the bottom four teams were entered into the Plate competition.

Having had little time to practise together prior to the competition, and facing tough opposition, our team played well but were competing for the Plate on the second day. The day went well, with all the teams fighting for the top position. Despite winning our last game against 34 Fd Hospital, we unfortunately missed out on goal difference. Next year we will be back and hopefully competing for the Cup.

MERCURY CUP MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION
– by 2Lt A Reid

Early in the year, it was time for the 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn Mercury Cup Team to establish once and for all whether everyone really had kept up their phys over the holidays. Following a week of trg and some last minute testing and adjusting of the Team we headed up to windy Magilligan. The quietly confident team was: **Lt Loxton**, **Sgt Graham**, **Cpl Cooke**, **Cpl Dixon**, **Cpl King**, **LCpl Whittaker**, **Cpl Beerling** and **Sig Kingan**, with **LCpl Wilkinson** in reserve.

There was a lot riding on this contest. The stakes were not only the Mil Skills Trophy but also the Mercury Cup itself – the trophy we had coveted all year. A win for the team in the Mil Skills would secure Mercury Cup victory, but it was going to be a close-run thing between us and 233 Sig Sqn. We were going into this, the last phase of the Mercury Cup on equal points. With this in mind the trg was thorough (thanks to all those who helped out) and by the day of the Competition, with brains and biceps bulging, 203 Sig Sqn was more than ready to take on 233 Sig Sqn.

The event itself was hosted by 8 Bde and comprised six stands: Accuracy Shoot, Falling Plate, Pap reading/Shotgun, Military Knowledge, MT and First Aid. Between each phase there were short tabs ranging from 500 metres to 2 miles.

The team gave their all at every stage, cheered on by the OC and **2Lt Reid**, who ran alongside, albeit not carrying the weight (not even the gesture of a 'helium' Bergen!). After a poor performance on the Map reading/Shotgun phase, the pressure was really on - there was no room for error on any of the remaining stands. At the end of the Competition, **Maj Carmichael** hurriedly made his way into the scores room to do his sums. It was just as well, since he was able to spot an error that initially recorded our Team as having covered a distance of 500 metres in 14 mins, rather than the 1 min 40 secs they actually completed it in!

When the fat lady had finished singing and the dust had settled, 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn had lifted the Mil Skills Trophy – which gave us victory in the Mercury Cup. In the absence of the original Trophy we were awarded a 'not quite plastic' replacement. Comic relief was provided by **Lt Loxton's** drill as she was presented the cup by **Lt Col Metcalfe**. Well done to everyone who contributed through the year to the Sqn's Mercury Cup victory. It was no mean feat and one to be very proud of. Thanks to 8 Bde for running a great event at the end of an awesome year of competition.

EX MERCURY FINN – CORPS SKI CAMP AND CHAMPIONSHIP

After the fantastic time had by all on EX MERCURY FINN 2002, there was never any doubt that we would be returning for more of the action this year! But this time our numbers had doubled – 12 members of the Sqn travelled to Austria to train and compete in the Royal Signals Skiing and Snowboarding Camp. With four snowboarders and eight skiers, and a range of abilities, we were really making the most of the opportunity that the Camp offered us. For the first week our daily commute led us from Club Kitzsteinhorn to some hard trg up on the glacier. The wind was biting but there wasn't a lot of standing around, and the instructors certainly kept us busy preparing us for race week.

Expectations were high for race week. With **Capt Vinnie Gallagher**, **Cpl Ross Quinn** and **Sig Richie Squires** on the first team, and **Lt Fi Loxton** making up numbers, we were hoping for some strong team results. The first competition went better that we could have hoped when the team won first place in the Team Giant Slalom event. Our third place in the Slalom was also an unexpectedly good result. These results together meant that we finished overall in second place in the Corps Skiing Championships. An excellent result and credit to **Vinnie**, **Quinnie** and **Richie** for some fantastic skiing.

We also had some impressive results in the Snowboarding Championships, where **Cpl Stu Robinson** came second overall in a closely fought Novice Category, and **Cpl Kol Ralph** finished second overall in the Individual Competition.

Many thanks to all those involved with organising and running this fantastic event. For a small unit like ours, the opportunity to train and compete to such high standards is invaluable.

SUPPORT TROOP

QM	**Maj J Williams**
RQMS(A)	**WO2 A Buckle**
RQMS(M)	**WO2 T Priestley**

It has been another busy period in Supt Tp. The unit had its biennial LSI in November, which meant that all were busy checking procedures in their Depts. The inspection started a day early for the MT and a clean bill of health was given, with a Satisfactory Plus awarded. The next day saw the POL Account, the Tech Stores, Station Catering Facility and Accn stores, all receiving Satisfactory Plus grades. This has bought extra kudos and reinforced the high esteem in which Supt Tp is held in the Unit.

The Chefs held a Charity Ready Steady Cook in aid of Children In Need. The evening was organised by **Sgt Stevie Wharton**, with a guest appearance by 'Angus McHarriett' AKA **SSgt Del Hamilton**, the RCSNCO. The Celebrity Chefs for the evening were **Cpl Mick Lessels** (Red Tomato) and **Cpl Stevie Leye** (Green Pepper), ably assisted by **Mrs Kate Carmichael** and **Mrs Pauline Buckingham** respectively. It was a close call but the Red Tomato Team just 'pipped' it. The evening was a huge success, with £500 being raised. This includes £70 bid and paid for by the MT, of a picture of Celebrity Chefs.

Finally, a fond farewell to **WO2 (RQMSM) Ivan Wylie**, **Cpl Mark Garrity**, **LCpl Dom Coelho**, **Pte Col Cronie** and **LCpl Shaz McCruden**; and a warm welcome to **WO2 Terry Priestley**, **Cpl Al Harvey** and **LCpl Kenny Hurford**.

39th INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC	**Maj S Evans**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Downie**

The Sqn says a fond farewell to **SSgt Gerald Walker**, who leaves on completion of 22 years' service. The usual function was given to see him off with the style and panache that Gez has shown throughout his years with the Corps. Old friends travelled from far and wide to dine him out. We wish Gerald and Nicola well on their new journey into the unknown as Gerald as starts life as an Independent financial adviser.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Maj S Harvey R Irish**
WOIC	**WO2(RQMS) DM Coates**

The Ops Team wish all the best to **Cpl Barnes** who goes to 264 Sig Sqn, and welcomes **LCpl Bannister**, who steps into his shoes as the Asst ISLO.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt SR Bennett**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt PP Corcoran**

It has been a quiet period for the Operator Sec, who have lost **Cpl Linsey Payton** to 4 CTT as a Sgt; **Cpl Grimes**, who is on his Class 1 course; and **LCpl Prince**, who is on OP TELIC. Recent arrivals are **Cpl Fazackerley**, from 3 UK Div HQ and Sig Regt; **Cpl Russell**, from 14 Sig Regt; **LCpl Hardy**, from 1 UK Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt; and **Sig Blakeley**, from 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

TM Sec has seen the recent arrival of **Cpls Scott Turnbull**, **Jenny Ingram**, **Alan Moffat** and **Ben Golding-Smith**, the latter who has since gone to 21 Sig Regt.

The Sec has done well in recent events, including representing the Bde in the Corps Snowboarding Championships, finishing third. The Wksp also contributed 5 out of 8 people for the Bde Team in the Mercury Cup Mill Skills competition, managing a respectable fifth. In addition the Wksp SNCO, **Sgt Greenlee** was part of the Corps swimming team that came third in the Inter-Corps Championships. We congratulate to **Cpls Gummery**, **Lawless** and **Williamson** their recent promotion, and **Cpl Williams**, who recently asked his girlfriend to marry him.

The Rigging Sec welcomes **LCpl Chris Joughin**, and says goodbye to **Sig Cindy Crawford**, who has gone to 15 Sig Regt.

MERCURY CUP MARCH AND SHOOT

15 January dawned bright and early for the lean, green, fighting machine that was the Bde's March and Shoot Team. Under the experienced and courageous leadership of **SSgt Harry Dunlop**, we departed for Magilligan Ranges to compete in the Province-wide Mercury Cup Mill Skills Competition. The Team consisted of **Sgt Jez Greenlee**, **Cpl Lee Patterson**, **Cpl Rob Lawless**, **Cpl Phil Rawlyk**, **LCpl Steve Padley**, **LCpl Stevie O'Halloran** and **LCpl Sarah McGuinness**.

The first couple of stands were not the team's strongpoint, but the Map Reading and Shotgun Stand gained us a foothold and a bit of a morale boost, thanks to **WO2 Coates** imparting his map reading knowledge and experience.

The next event was the challenging Military Quiz, which actually was not all that challenging if you happen to know the name of our RSM. Next was the MT Stand. The last stand of the day was First Aid, this is where **Cpl Lawless** came into his own having recently completing his First Aid course, although his stretcher skills left a lot to be desired. The final words on the Mercury Cup must go to the OC, **Maj Evans** and the RSM, **WO1 Downie**, for their support throughout the day. The general feeling amongst the Team was that we had all enjoyed ourselves and **SSgt Dunlop** cannot wait for the next competition.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND RUGBY MINOR UNITS CUP

The semi-final of the NI Rugby Minor Units Cup was played between 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and JCU (NI) at Thiepval Barracks on 12 November. As with the majority of 39 Bde's games, the Team was relatively unfamiliar with each other. But it produced a spirited performance, despite being beaten 40 – 8, by the better team on the day. Those players worthy of mention were **Sig Jay Gillard**, who scored all 8 of the Bde's points in the form of an unconverted try and a late drop goal, and **LCpl Gaz Haines**, who was voted Man of the Match - more for his drinking abilities than those on the pitch. Congratulations to all who took part in the game, and to JCU(NI), who went on to win the Competition. Fingers crossed for a better run next season!

39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn are proud of their new strip

8th INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC	**Maj DC Gaul**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) KJ O'Neill**

EXERCISE CANARY GOLD 2004

Early on the evening of 4 January 2004, **LCpl Jackson**, **LCpl Robertson**, **Sig Vaughan** and **Sig Shields** convened for an overnight stay at Gatwick Travel Lodge, prior to the anticipated escape to warmer climes. Following a quick dash the following morning, we fastned our seat belts and were off to the Canary Islands.

Once we had touched down in Arrecife (Capital of Lanzarote), a short taxi ride took us to the Marina to assemble with the other budding sailors joining us on our maiden voyage. Here we were introduced to *Sabre*, a 55ft Nicholson Yacht, which was to be our home for the next two weeks.

Following a cascade of briefs, from daily routine and on board maintenance, to life at sea in general, we got acquainted with *Sabre* and our allocated living space - which, for a crew of twelve, was extremely cosy! Once all preliminaries and admin objectives were completed, the remainder of the day was ours.

LCpl Robertson, Sig Vaughan, Cpl Jackson and Sig Shields. The calm before the storm....

We set sail next morning for another port on Lanzarote. The majority of the day was taken up by tutorials on basic sailing principles, accompanied by various safety procedures, such as man over board drills. It never really occurred to many of us just how much there would be to contend with while sailing. Not only the hands on work, but the sailing terminology when referring to the endless assortments of sails, sheets, lines and halyards. That day also saw the battle against seasickness commence. Many of the crew managed to fight through, until **LCpl Jackson** succumbed and began proceedings. This was duly met with hysterics and taunts from the other lads.

Early that evening saw our arrival, and after some interesting culinary creativity (particularly the incorporation of beef burgers in spag bol) and dinner was served. Being on cooking duty was an experience in itself, not only the limited space that the galley provided, but having to cater for twelve people presented a different challenge altogether - particularly for us singlies.

Night sailing, some tired faces

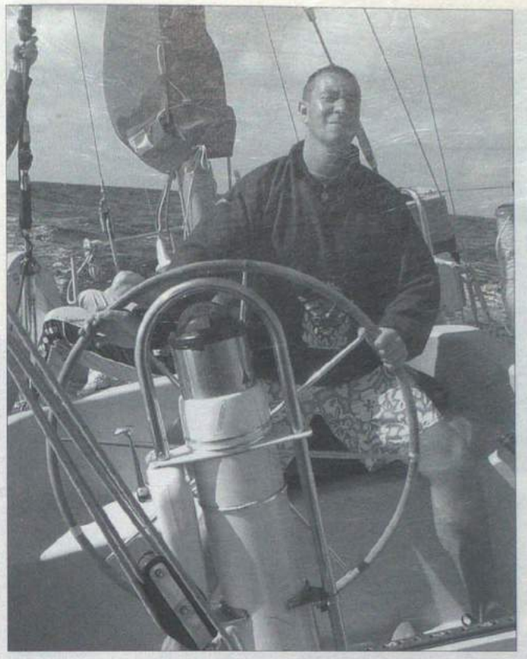
The following few days saw an increasingly confident crew venture on to Fuerta Ventura before embarking upon an overnight sail to Gran Canaria, an extremely enduring encounter for the novice sailors amongst us. Effectively, the crew was divided into five-man teams, (plus skipper and mate) with each team working a four-hour rotational shift. Being woken up at stupid o'clock to be told that the foresail requires changing is quite soul-destroying in itself. However, when the wind and rain are also knocking back your every effort, you're soaked to the bone, and all you want to do is crawl back into the warmth of a doss bag, it really does begin to test one's sense of humour.

Next stop was Tenerife, where an entertaining night lay ahead. Because of the design of the marina, we were unable to moor the yacht alongside. Instead we had to anchor one hundred yards from the shoreline, using the onboard dinghy for trips ashore. After a visit into town, to sample the local culture, we inadvertently missed the last dinghy taxi ride back to *Sabre*. After a complicated exercise using a surf board to collect the dinghy, all were eventually back on board.

The following morning we departed for La Gomera, the final island to visit. With very little wind, we were forced to motor much of the way. At midday, with very calm seas, we stopped off in the middle of the ocean for a swim and lunch. Having just witnessed several dolphins and whales prior to stopping, a few uneasy faces emerged with the idea of swimming in the company of fins and teeth. Nevertheless, nerves were overcome and everybody had a great time. With all back on board en route to La Gomera, the wind suddenly stepped up a few too many gears. Before long, *Sabre* was cutting through the ocean on a forty-five degree angle with waves crashing on the deck. Afterwards, the skipper explained that we had actually entered an acceleration zone (basically created by wind flowing off the land), and had made our arrival in La Gomera, a lot earlier than anticipated.

The next few days sailing were probably the most enjoyable for the majority of the crew, who had been hoping for high winds and equally higher waves from the outset. With speeds approaching eleven knots and *Sabre* getting hit from every angle, deck work suddenly took on a new meaning. The simplest of procedures, such as the ability to stand up or sit in one place, immediately became very challenging; and the work became very physical, with the crew being battered across every inch of the yacht. One of the more memorable of moments was changing the foresail whilst being immersed in the intensifying ocean swell.

The remainder of the journey saw us retrace our tracks back to Lanzarote, via all the islands we had previously visited. The last three days were spent ashore, cleaning *Sabre* and visiting the volcanic landscapes of Lanzarote. The final night arrived, and a full crew meal was booked for us, courtesy of Joint Services. Unfortunately, reality rapidly crept up on us, and we were soon seated and bound for the UK.



A relaxed Cpl Jackson takes the helm

This was certainly an extremely enjoyable and memorable sailing ex that fulfilled every criterion that AT aims to achieve. From gaining the principles of sailing and teamwork to a sense of personal achievement, I would strongly recommend that anybody with an appetite for adventure, irrespective of ability and experience, should try for a place on this ex. Our thanks go to the organisers at Joint Services Sailing Contingent, as well as the skipper and crew of *Sabre*, for providing us with an exhilarating two weeks at sea that will definitely be beneficial to us for future expeds.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt JD Landreth**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Love**

Although the pace of life may have slowed a little, the rate of new arrivals is still as frantic as ever, with nine since the last edition.

Sgt Critchley joins us from ATR Litchfield; **LCpls Ely**, **Heighton**, **Jones**, **Murry** and **Skinner** come fresh from Blandford; and **Sig Smith** has moved from 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

Cpl Daniels has moved across to work with 4 RIR and will be missed on the Operator side of life, as will **Sig Ward**, who has moved on to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. **Sgt Thompson** has also returned to the mainland, and will be promoted to SSgt on starting his new appointment at Bassingbourne. Congratulations and good luck to him, his wife **Simone** and son **Caleb**.

Special mention here also for **Cpl Donaldson,** who was awarded the MBE for excessive back-to-back tours and now resides in the SYSCON/COMCEN with us here in Ballykelly.

MT TROOP

MTWO	**WO2 A Stronach**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt S Williams**

With the move now over, we have settled into our new buildings on the wind-swept Shackleton Bks. We are sad to see **LCpl McLoughlin** leave and move on to pastures greener. **Pte (163) Jones** is moving back to 2 Royal Anglian MT and **Cpl Nick Malocco** is off to serve with 1GS Regt in Germany.

We would also like to thank everyone who took part in EX HIGHLAND DRIVE, held at MTC. It was deemed a great success, and an enjoyable but informative time was had by all.

Training in the skid car on EX HIGHLAND DRIVE

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

ARMY

2nd (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

Comd	**Brig JE Thomas MBE**
COS	**Maj J Rowley**

February saw the Bde Staff back to our old haunts at Corsham with a mini games night. Various children's games discarded since Boxing Day were smuggled out of homes across the country to entertain us. One such toy, a laser-based tin can shooting gallery led to much amusement and kept **Maj Guy Bewsher** engaged for hours. The prize for the best shot, however, went to **Capt Neil Taylor**, who managed to knock down eight cans with five shots.

One lighter note was the temporary posting together of the Fabulous Baker Boys, threatening to rival the comedy antics of the Three Stooges. There used to be a time when if two young officers were dressed the same, the junior one went back to the Mess to get changed. All that has now gone of course, with the advent of C95 pyjamas. But what happens when they are called

Even when he's armed with only a plastic gun, the staff stand well back as the Bde Comd takes aim!

the same name? Imagine the confusion then when **Maj Steve Baker** joined **Capt Peter Baker** and **Maj Mark Baker**. Confused? You should have been the Chief of Staff. Sanity was almost restored when **Maj Mark** got posted to 36 Sig Regt (V) leaving behind **Maj Steve**, who has arrived hot foot from HQ Land. We are still not sure who got the better end of that deal.

We must also take this opportunity to bid a sad farewell to **Maj Wendy Kirby** of CVHQ who is leaving us and immigrating to New Zealand. As our photograph reveals, she is getting ready to look like the hobbits from down under.

Maj Wendy Kirby brings in the cakes for her last day

The Fabulous Baker Boys: Capt Peter Baker, Maj Steve Baker and Maj Mark Baker causing confusion at HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde

AIRWAVE

The Land AIRWAVE Project Team consists of personnel based in Corsham with HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde, in Edinburgh with 2 Div and in Shrewsbury with 5 Div. The Project Team is focused on delivering and supporting operational capability across Land Comd during FY 04/05. Currently, the Team is delivering a number of products, but the ME is Trg and Equipt delivery.

The Project has adopted the cascade approach to trg, whereby the Project Team instruct Advanced Trainers, Advanced Trainers instruct Unit Trainers, and Unit Trainers instruct the end users.

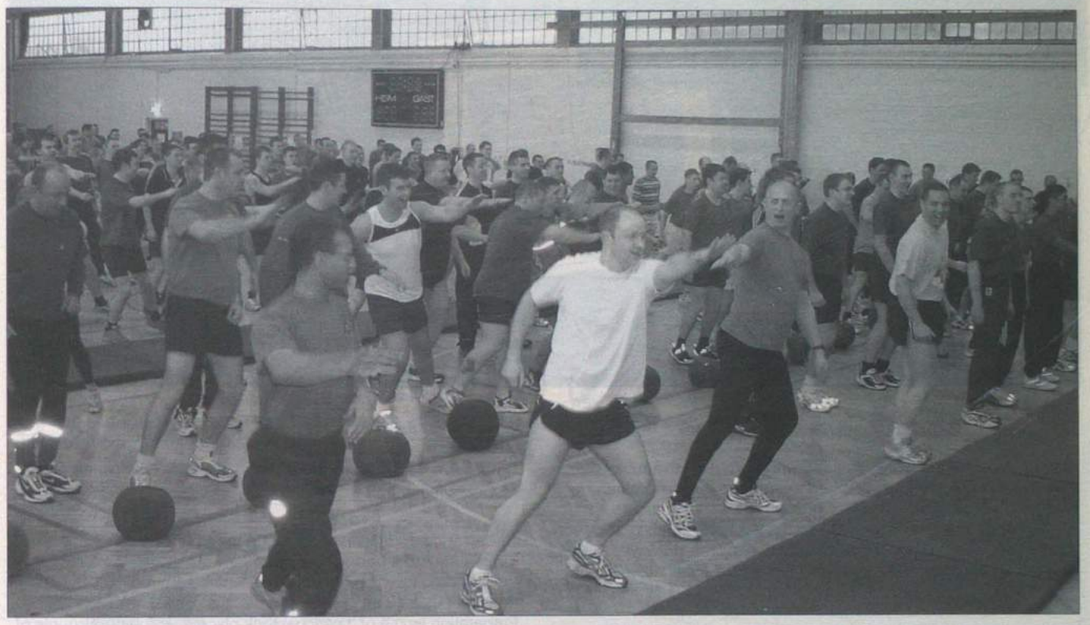
This approach has been extremely successful, with 51 Advanced Trainers having so far been trained (2 (NC) Sig Bde providing 90% of them), and trg cascading to approx 120 Unit Trainers.

The aim of the equipt programme is to deliver over 1,250 terminals during FY 04/05 with maximum effect on 1 April 04. Prior to the capability being declared operational, a Test Plan will be conducted. The Test Plan is currently scheduled for mid March 04.

And finally farewells and welcomes. **Mr Paul Smyth** has moved to HQ 2 Div. The Team wish him well with his new career. Welcome to **Capt Jeff Jephcote**, who has replaced him as the Div ICP Comms Offr in Edinburgh. **Mr Jason Lovell** and **Sgt Kev Hall** have also recently arrived in the Team and are based in Corsham. Welcome to all.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

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



The Adjt, Capt Phil Muir and OC HQ Sqn, Maj Trev Keates lead the Regtl auditions for 'Pop Idol 2004'

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

FAREWELL TO THE RSM

On Friday 30 January 04, the Regt paraded for another round of CO's PT under the iron fist of **WO2 (QMSI) Dave Wells**. The Herford weather had already put paid to the Regtl Cross-Country Competition, so we all squeezed into the gym for a circuit session.

While circuits were taking place, the sneaky boys from 212 Sig Sqn were moving the AFV436 into position outside of the gym to await the arrival of the RSM. On completion of the warm-up, the Regt moved outside to line the route to the Guard Room, whilst the CO held a Comd Group Conference in the gym, conveniently keeping the RSM occupied whilst we prepared his farewell.

It seemed appropriate that the RSM's farewell should involve an element of Armour and Sport, as **WO1 (RSM) Andy Baird** has been, and still is, a very competent Tri-athlete. It was good to see an element of surprise on his face as he mounted the cycle machine on top of the AFV and began his slow journey past the Regt to the front gate of Hammersmith Bks, accompanied by clapping and loud cheering from those lining the route.

On yer bike RSM! WO1(RSM) Andy Baird says farewell to the Sgt after 23 years service in the Army

A farewell gift to WO1(RSM) Andy Baird presented by Sig Wilkins and Sig Bowler on behalf of the Junior Ranks

At the gate, the RSM was presented with a gift from the Junior Ranks of the unit, who had clubbed together to buy an original print from a local artist. This was presented by two members of 201 Sig Sqn. The CO then gave a farewell speech befitting an RSM who is leaving the service after 23 years. The RSM was then whisked away to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess for a final farewell from the SNCOs.

We all send **WO1 (RSM) Andy Baird** and **Dawn** our best wishes and every happiness, not only during the transition to a new lifestyle, but also for the future, wherever it may lead them. Good luck from all ranks of 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, and from all those who have had the pleasure of serving with you in the past.

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Andy Lucas**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Chris Lloyd**

The return after Christmas leave should have brought the usual inter-Sqn competitive spirit on the sports pitches. The football was hyped up, but following a particularly heavy snowfall the night before, even the nifty footwork of 211 Sqn couldn't cope with the conditions. It was the same story two weeks later as the Regt eagerly awaited (well, maybe some more than others) the inter-Sqn Cross-Country event. The sighs of disappointment echoed around Herford when it was revealed that the event would have to be postponed until a later date. However, the substitute Regtl PT session proved to be a surprising success. As **WO1(RSM) Baird's** last taster of life in 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, the entire Regt squashed into the gym for a giant circuits session (congratulations to the PTIs), it provided ample entertainment! **WO1(RSM) Baird** left in style on a 436 mounted exercise bike draped in flags, to the cheers of the whole Regt lining the route. Thank you and good luck from all in 211 Sig Sqn.

EXERCISE CARIBBEAN ENDEAVOUR - *by LCpl Meaney, Sig McGouran and Sig McClone*

Having endured the voyage through the Channel Tunnel and **Timmy Mallett's** posing, the group flew out of London Gatwick the following morning to Lanzarote, where 11 budding 1 Div sea dogs met their lift across the Atlantic, the yacht *Endeavour*. Preparation (some of it serious) took place over the next couple of days before setting sail to Rodney Bay, St Lucia.

The first night on the yacht was a shock to the system, as seasickness and four-hour shift patterns took hold. It took 3 days to get clear of the Canary Islands, and from then on it was just open water. This worried **Sig Wilkinson**, who clearly knew only the Hollywood model, and was convinced that the vessel would soon be overrun by pirates.

Eventually, all memory of Lanzarote was forgotten as the crew settled into a daily routine of sleeping, eating, sunbathing and adapting to life at sea. 18 days were spent feeling like the only people alive. During the first 6 days, the crew saw nothing but the occasional dolphin, flying fish or bird, which caused immense excitement. It went without saying that there was much celebration when land was spotted: the first port of call, St Lucia. The main heartbreak (apart from missing televisions and play stations) was the fact that the Rugby World Cup had been missed.

Anyway, St Lucia proved to be a perfect way to unwind for the crew. Not only did the crew manage to fill their faces with as much fried chicken as they could eat, but the locals were ideal hosts. The few days that followed allowed the group to indulge in various activities, ranging from rainforest tours to sampling the local jungle juice. The fun in the sun soon ended, however, and the crew again boarded to set sail for Antigua. Good time was made, and after only 36 hours, the 400-mile stretch was completed to the final destination. It was here that the boat was to

be turned around, but fortunately, the crew managed to fit in the time for a slap up meal in a 5-star hotel, courtesy of an old friend of **FofS Bob Pace**. This at least allowed the crew time to recuperate before the return crossing.

The last few days were hard work and tiring, but all had had an unforgettable experience. Considering that three quarters of the crew were complete novices, it was a great accomplishment, and everyone got something out of it, if only sunburn! Special thanks go to the Joint Services Sailing Centre at Gosport and the Skipper **Pete** for a once in a lifetime experience.

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Paul Buck**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) John McNeil**

REGIMENTAL NORDIC SKIING TEAM - *by 2Lt Colin Northridge*

With the upheaval caused by OP TELIC subsiding, and life in the Regt returning to normal, the opportunity to take part in the Corps Nordic Skiing Camp and Championships in Norway was made possible. Although the team chosen was assembled late, there was some experience in the form of **Sigs Scotty Owen**, **Zen Pearce**, **Johnny Law** and **2Lt Colin Northridge**, who were veterans of the previous year's camp. The novices were **Cpl Richy Barrett** and **Sig Max Payne**.

With the equipt packed and the bus ready to go, the team of six set off on a cold Monday morning for four weeks' trg in Skei, Norway. The journey was uneventful and the accn was taken over without incident. Once the team had moved in, the remainder of the time was spent preparing the skis for the next day's activities. After rendezvousing with the team captains from 7 Sig Regt, 216 Sig Sqn and 280 Sig Sqn, the trg programme was finalised and began in earnest on the following day.

Sig Zen Pearce in second place at the start of the 4x10km relay

The trg took the form of Classic Skiing, Skating and Range work for the Biathlon, and included cardiovascular shooting. The mornings concentrated on technique and the afternoons on distance. It proved to be both gruelling and relentless, with only one day off a week, and skiing up to 40km a day. Life in the cabin was cramped and towards the end, cabin fever was beginning to set in.

Despite such a busy schedule time was still found to socialise in Lillehammer, with its expensive beer and friendly locals. The team achieved some good individual results in the Championships, although no prizes were won. But we did gain a wealth of experience, which will greatly benefit any future Regtl teams.

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col D Hudson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) S Kelly**

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Simon Meadowcroft BEM**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Bob Lowe**

After a very busy 2003, including time spent on OP TELIC1 and 2 and EX IRON ANVIL in BATUS, 202 Sqn came back from Christmas leave with many new additions. These included **Sgt Geordie Reid**, from JSSU (Cyprus); **LCpl Hannam**, from 14 Sig Regt (EW); **LCpl Dodge**, who has just re-enlisted; and **Sigs Crispin**, **Curtis**, **Donaldson**, **Lundie**, **Phillipson** and **Brown**, from Blandford. Congratulations to **Cpl Dave Horton** and **LCpl Jo Vellacott**, who have recently had new arrivals to their families. And farewell to **LCpl Gav Butler** and **Sig Donna Moore**, who leave for 7 Sig Regt; and to **Cpl Steve Welsh**, who leaves for 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn on promotion to Sgt.

In accordance with the new Regtl structure, we will be handing over the role of Div Main to 206 Sig Sqn in order to take on the new responsibility for an Armd Fwd HQ, a Wheeled Fwd HQ and a Div Rebro Tp.

It is all hands to the pumps at the moment, as we plan for this year's ex period. It will, no doubt prove to be a testing time for all tps as they take on new responsibilities and learn to use our revised train set. The Sqn is also making way for the conversion to BOWMAN, with many people attending trg courses to pave the way for the new equipt. All in all, the Sqn is bracing itself for a testing time, so watch this space!

Finally, a special mention is also to be made of those members of the Sqn who formed the winning team in the Kiwi Trophy last December. Successfully beating the current holders, 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, the team have not only won the Trophy itself, but also honour of holding the next year's event. Well done, lads!

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj RJ Freeman**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) MJR Wakeling**

After a very busy period over Xmas and POTL, it was with a happy heart that the Sqn began to reform and begin to hatch plans for a Sqn Battle Camp in March. The Sqn Ops team quickly formed its coven in the Ops Cell, planning how it would manage its vehs when they finally returned from sunnier climes. **Cpls Mason**,

Thomas and **Pte Sylvester** started the unenviable task of collating a Sqn's worth of paperwork and admin files. Still, better than being in RHQ lads!

The Sqn continues to prepare for EX RAMPANT RHINO in Sennybridge, which will give us the opportunity to train in an environment totally different from that of OP TELIC 2. Wait out for a detailed account of the Sqn's achievements in the next issue. A big farewell to **Capt Hannah Owen**, who has moved to Corsham, and welcome to her replacement, **Capt Chris Holland**, fresh from training the Army Technical Foundation College. Rumour has it he's the reason its closing!

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj NH Range**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M Fitz-Patrick**

We welcome all to the new and refurbished 222 Sig Sqn HQ. From SSM down there have been changes at all levels. **WO2 (SSM) Bruce** leaves on promotion to RSM at 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. **SSgt (YofS) Tulk** has taken another route, hanging up his uniform for the last time. For those who remain, the steady influx of equipt keeps us busy and out of trouble.

Since returning from BATUS, the Gulf and post Christmas leave, the Sqn reformed back to 222 and Oman Tp was reborn with the arrival of a new Tp Comd and SSgt, along with some new faces to fill the missing gaps.

Having been given a fleeting chance to catch our breath, everyone now has a busy 2004 ahead of them. Exs and the introduction of BOWMAN will ensure that 222 Sig Sqn is kept busy, and the AT planned for the latter part of the year should keep morale high.

EVEREST BASE CAMP *- by Cpl Jennings*

I left Iraq in mid November to climb to Everest Base Camp for the Hope and Homes Children's Charity. The expedition lasted 19 days - 4 days travelling, 9 days up to Base Camp and 6 days to get down. The aim of the Charity is to raise money for children suffering from the effects of war, and each trekker agreed to raise a minimum of £2,900.

The exped itself was civilian-based, so I was mixing with a wide range of trekkers, from firemen and teachers, to people who had retired - all accompanied by a large group of porters and guides. The trek itself wasn't what I expected at all. The weather during the day was perfect, the only hardship being the cold during the night, at worst down to -18° C! What joy to hear the civilian trekkers moan about the cold.

At around 4,000m, when I woke during the night to go to the toilet, it felt like I was very drunk. I'd also had a headache for the past 2 days - the first signs of altitude sickness. Luckily, the next day was an altitude acclimatisation day, which I spent trying to shift what felt like the worlds biggest hangover.

The area seemed to be a playground for students, private school boys and officers, but I did get to meet some very interesting characters along the way. One of these was an 86-year old Japanese man called **Qimai Kyossi**, who annoyed me a little when he kept beating the 24 and 26 year olds in our group up the hills.

There was a real sense of achievement once we had reached Base Camp. In all, this was a very enjoyable trek that was put together through a lot of hard work by the people at the Hope and Homes for Children, and my fellow trekkers, who had worked so hard for this worthy cause.

Cpl Jennings nearly on top of the world with her new fan club

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col GR Norton**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Manktelow**

ROYAL SIGNALS SNOWBOARDING CHAMPIONSHIPS
- by LCpl Yarnold REME

7 Sig Regt's Snowboarding Team had been itching to get down to Sell-am-Zell months before the championships even started. **Captain Artherton** imposed a strict regime of circuit-training every lunchtime - the only problem was that it started in September. At least he gave us Fridays off.

The team, consisting of **LCpl Hood, Sig Sturman, Sig Jack Marshall** and myself, departed Elmpt on 29 November, arriving in Sell-am-Zell at about 21.30hrs – just in time to go to *Crazy Dazy's*.

On the Monday we were put into groups according to our ability. Each of the groups had a Dutch snowboarding instructor, and the first week consisted of instruction, working on technique and the principles of snowboarding.

The team competition was on the basis of the best 3 times. With our team reduced to 3, due to injury, no-one could afford to slip up. The racing went particularly well, with the team never dropping out of the top 16. **LCpl Hood** achieved an overall position of thirteenth, while **Sig Sturman** achieved an overall position of eleventh. I became the Royal Signals Snowboarding Champion. The team easily came first overall in the team event.

The whole team thoroughly enjoyed themselves and look forward to next year's championships.

229 (BERLIN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj D Hay** RASigs
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) D Welch**

CHARLOTTENBURG TROOP *- by Sig Butler and Sig Barnaby*

Tp Comd	**Lt AT Limb**
TpSSgt	**SSgt L Johnston**

ADVENTURE TRAINING

After a hectic ex season, the majority of C Tp were lucky enough to be taken away to the Harz Mountains by the Boss for a week's

Relaxing in the Hartz Mountains

Summer Mountain Proficiency trg. We stayed in one of the lodges, which, apart for occasional noisy attack by wild hogs, was very pleasant. During the days, we walked and were taken through practical lessons on the ground, and in the evenings we had short theoretical and practical lessons before enjoying some fantastic meals (cooked by our very own Carribean Chef, **Pte Charlery**). It was an excellent way to wind down after exs and it has inspired many of us to go on to do MLT.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Andy Fallows**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Kev Read**

QUEBEC TROOP - *by Cpl McEwan*

Tp Comd	**Lt Tim Cooper**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Taff Kinsey**

A warm welcome is extended to **SSgt Kinsey**, who has bravely taken on this posting as Quebec Tp Staffy. Hellos also go to **Sig Edwards 671** (here only to cause confusion with **Sig Edwards 897**) who along with **Sig Hoy**, is back from Brunei. We wish a belated goodbye and good luck to **LCpl Sharp** on his posting to York. Further farewells go to **LCpl Pearson**, and greetings to **Sig Scott**, who's leaving us on promotion. Congratulations, also on promotion, to **Cpl McEwan**, **LCpl Legg**, **Cpl Burnell**, **Cpl Veitogavi**, **Cpl Noble**, **Cpl Max Sila** and **Sgt Brown**, who's moved across to 229 Sqn.

RADIO TROOP - *by Cpl Lovell*

Tp Comd	**Lt Mark McNelis**
Tp SSgt	**A/SSgt Bazzard**

The end of the year saw quite a busy period for Radio Tp. First the Station Cadre Course, with **Sig Moon** coming top and earning promotion to LCpl. Also finishing strongly were **Sigs Helen Moss**, **Nick Manning**, **Neil Davies** and **Si Newbold.**

We say goodbye to **Sig Smudge Smith**, off to Civ Div, and hello to **Sig Donna Moore**, from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. **LCpl Craig Rathie** returns to the Tp, as does **LCpl Matty Baxter** from the Falkland Islands. Last but not least, welcome back to **SSgt Gaz Chapman** from OP TELIC 2.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj G Ingram**
SSM	**W02 (SSM) S Littlefield**

TAC TROOP - *by Sig John*

Tp Comd	**Lt L Webster**
SSGT	**SSgt R Atherton**

On our final ex of last year, we deployed to Sennelager for EX ARRCADE FUSION, taking the role of ARRC TAC and then JFLCC REAR – don't worry it confused us too! Despite staying in the same loc for two and a half weeks, it was an enjoyable ex in which we all got to put our practice into action.

We have had two great days out, firstly go-karting, where we spent the day racing around a track thinking we were all Formula 1 drivers! Our second day out we went to the local NATO Air Base shopping and then headed to Snow World for an afternoon of skiing. Good effort **Sig Spooner**, not many people get asked to leave the slope within five minutes!

Congratulations in theTp go to **LCpl Brown** and **LCpl McSharry** for promotion (and she's also expecting her first baby in June). Farewells go to **Cpl Jim Bartlett**, who is leaving after four years to go to 1 (UK) Armd Div and Sig Regt, and to **Sig Terrance Johnstone**, who is escaping from the Army back to civvy street.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt J Wilson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Hulse**

ELMPT STATION CADRE COURSE - *by Sig Rose*

Nearing the end of a cold November, Delta Tp sent three of its personnel, **Sigs Rose**, **Perkinton** and **Singer** to attend the infamous Elmpt Station Cadre Course.

All three were expected to complete the course (or else!). The first day involved a hilly Combat Fitness Test, and a theory test on a wide range of Army subjects, including fieldcraft and map reading. Then came a week of lessons and some *very* physical PT. This helped to bring everyone's fitness and fieldcraft up to scratch for a week-long ex. We prepared for the ex phase with a couple of days trg to blow off some cobwebs, which included a pyrotechnics display and admin in the field lessons.

For the final ex, the course deployed on EX FIRST STEP, where each soldier was tested for their leadership and comd skills on the battlefield. A Chinook lift sparked thoughts of ENDEX, but no one was sure until we noticed the photographer arriving - thank God.

Finally came the Cadre Course Pass Off Parade and end of course Dinner Night. This helped everyone on the course to reflect on how they had done. I would like to pass on my thanks to the Trg Wing for a really enjoyable course.

S TROOP (IN IRAQ)

Tp Comd	**Capt Caroline Woodbridge**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Gaz Chapman**

In July 03 we arrived in Basrah, home to the outgoing 1 (UK) Armd Div and the newly forming Multi National Division (South East). We were kindly met by CO 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt and **Capt Hannah Owen**, our new Sqn 2IC. After lugging our kit out of the chaos that is the arrivals hall, we finally found a space to crash and managed to get some slightly broken sleep. Broken because of the heat - it was boiling!

The next few days were relatively busy making plans to deploy the S Tp personnel to three different locs. We drew body armour, ammo and morphine; we picked up vehs from Umm Quasr; we attended in theatre briefings; and to keep ourselves amused, we played more cards and a bit of Championship Manager!

At last it was time to deploy to our dets. First there was Shaibah, then there was Camp Coyote and last but by no means least there was Baghdad. What a task, especially under the force protection measures. Our thanks to the MT for their support and to 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn for the loan of their DAF.

We did the south bit first, deploying **Cpl Kirby** and **Sgt Voyse** with their dets to BMH Shaibah and Camp Coyote respectively. **Cpl McCaig** looked like a kid in a sweet shop once he'd spied the nurses in the cookhouse. **Sgt Voyse's** det weren't quite so lucky and had literally deployed to the middle of nowhere, a hot and dusty bowl. Sorry lads! **Cpl Steers** was a happy man though - no ED required just yet. Off to Baghdad methinks.

With **Sgt Geoff Overend** and **Sig Cammiss** left to hold the fort in Basrah, it was off to Baghdad for the rest of us. Unfortunately, it took us four days and three hair-raising descents into BIA to get us all in, but we made it. Once the handover was complete, we bid farewell to the outgoing det from 2 Sig Regt Gp and found ourselves firmly at the helm of a relatively unfamiliar beast! Thankyou to **Lt Andy Nicklin** and **SSgt JC Cordery** for all their support during the handover.

BMH SHAIBAH OSCA DETACHMENT

Det Comd **Cpl Daz Kirby**

After sleeping in the airport for a few nights, we departed to Shaibah airfield looking forward to settling into the daily routine of living in the desert. We just happened to arrive during the handover takeover period between 202 and 33 Field Hospitals, so there was a lot of changing around of phones etc.

Here at BMH Shaibah, we do not have the luxuries of beer, swimming pools and Burger Kings, but the occasional trip to Pizza Hut helps to boost morale. All of us were looking forward to a bit of fraternisation with the nurses, but due to our resident computer geek, the nurses are no longer speaking to the OSCA Node. After 33 Fd Hospital had been in theatre for a couple of weeks it was decided that the FAO would be moved closer to the OSCA Node so that we could provide them with phone access. So the OSCA Node's crew was tasked to dig trench one foot deep and twenty metres long, which was less than a pleasant experience in the sweltering conditions. The ground was mainly sandstone!

DUTCH BG OSCA DETACHMENT (WOSCA)

Det Comd **Sgt Steve Voyse**

We arrived at BIA at midnight on 7 July, where we spent two nights before deploying to Kuwait. On 9 July we drove in convoy to Camp Coyote, some 30km from the Iraq/Kuwait border and our new home for the next two weeks. We arrived to a rather unpleasant, windy and sandy place, which was just a taster of things to come. After two weeks in Kuwait, the camp was closed down and we were sent back up to BIA to prepare for redeployment and to be equipped with new IS kit. After a rather intensive turn around, we deployed on 28 July to Al Samawah by road, some six hours west of Basrah in the Al Muthanna Province. The NL BG was just taking over from the US Forces based there, and all in all there were 1,700 people on the base. After the conditions in Kuwait, we thought things couldn't get any worse. On our second day in camp, there were 130 people in the medical centre with D and V and the whole camp was cordoned off. Half way through our first week, the Americans handed over and the conditions gradually began to get better. We are now in yet another new camp, run by the Dutch, similar to our last, only dustier! Always on the go, the det is now preparing to handover the comms bit to a civvy company called SYNERGY, whereupon we are possibly headed for Baghdad to join the rest of the Tp.

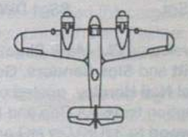
BAGHDAD SIGNAL DETACHMENT

Det Comd	**Capt Caroline Woodbridge**
SSgt	**SSgt Gaz Chapman**

Well it has been all go here in Baghdad since our arrival, and we all can't quite believe how quickly the time has passed. We completed our handover takeover with the 2 Sig Regt det and no sooner had they gone, than things started falling over! Talk about steep learning curve. Bit by bit, the team has worked hard to understand some fairly unfamiliar systems and for now, comms remain quite stable.

We have had much to celebrate over the past eight weeks. **Sig Stu Helin** was the first to celebrate his birthday. We managed to acquire a few cold beers to make the toast. Then there was the inaugural Maude House barbecue, where we christened the *Bag 'n Dad Arms*. Everyone, especially **LCpl Jones**, demonstrated that no matter where you are in the world, the Royal Signals will always lead from the front in the party stakes. **Sig Stu Helin** was triumphant in the diving competition, with **Capt Caroline Woodbridge** stealing a victory in the limbo. Then it was the turn of **Cpl Craig Petch**, to celebrate his 21st birthday and a promotion. Finally, **Cpl Paul Brown** was pleasantly surprised when he was selected for promotion to Sgt off the recent shadow board. Other than the occasional shower of bullets and the odd Yank trying to run us off the road, we are all safe and well and thoroughly enjoying ourselves.

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)



CO	**Lt Col DG Halstead**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) GC Smith**

December saw the Regt say farewell to the outgoing CO, **Lt Col Ivan Hooper**. We wish him well in his new job at the JSCSC Shrivenham. We welcome the new CO, **Lt Col Olly** (not David!) **Halstead**, from JDCC Shrivenham.

Amidst the frivolity of Christmas, members of the Regt serving in Iraq were not forgotten. A visit was conducted by the Welfare Offr **Capt Alec Masson** accompanied by **WO1 (RSM) Graeme Smith** and **WO2 (RQMS) Angus MacPherson**.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SJ Morgan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) A Burdus**

EXERCISE FIRST BEAUFIGHTER - *by LCpl Paynter*

On 12 January 04, we had an early morning start for EX FIRST BEAUFIGHTER. After an all-ranks breakfast, followed by a packet line-up, we deployed to SPTA. Once we reached the loc, **LCpl Scottie Scott** and I were put on stag while the seniors reconnoitred the area. About an hour later the rest of the packets started to arrive. Once everyone was in loc, we were relieved from stag to help cam-up the vehs.

Cpls Danny Miller, **Johnny Graham** and I were allocated the night shift on the ERV (T), which didn't go too badly thanks to repairs keeping us busy.

Tiredness was showing on the second day, as most of us had had little sleep since Sunday night. Mil Skills Lessons were programmed in for the day, so it was a case of the infamous nodding-dog syndrome kicking in as we looked forward to sleeping that night. But after a couple of hours' sleep we were up at 05.00hrs to help MT with a rolling replen.

The week maintained its momentum and went well, with lessons being taught and moves getting slicker. However some difficulties were encountered when it came to the last move, to the revetments on camp. The cam-up was made difficult by a gale force wind that started as we arrived. We persevered, and after we had everything sorted, the SSM finally let us get our heads down. All was well until the early hours, when we were woken by the Sqn OC informing us that the Cookhouse tent had taken flight.

By this time we had all woken up and realised that the wind had gone from gale force to tornado strength.

After what felt like going 9 rounds with Tyson, **Cpl Johnny Graham** and I were detailed to hold a tent down while the remainder of the crew went to help catch the admin tent. At last, ENDEX was called and we all de-cammed. As none of us had any desire to be holding tents down for the weekend, this was done extremely quickly and effectively.

The turn-around stage took several hours, as the queue for the wash-down point was like the Spar cash machine queue on payday. Finally, the end was called and we were knocked off. We stayed for a Tp drink but, because of lack of sleep, one can was enough for many of us. Once back in my room, as soon as my head hit the pillow I was out. Who says exs are getting easier?

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj RJ Lovett**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) DR Taylor**

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt KE Hannaford**
Tp SSgt **SSgt A Wringe**

Over New Year, **Lt Hannaford**, **Cpl McMurray** and **Cpl West** attended the Army Mountaineering Associations meet at the Norwegian Lodge near Aviemore in Scotland. The meet was an excellent way to blow out the cobwebs and walk off the excess Christmas turkey! Over the week it enabled us to practise our winter skills and do a bit of winter climbing, whilst getting in shape for the Regtl Exped at the end of the month to climb the highest peak in South America, Aconcangua (Report to follow in next edition of *The WIRE*.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt PS Wright**
Tp SSgt **SSgt DW Burdus**

We welcome **2Lt Mark Skeet**, **Cpl Wilson-Cochrane**, **LCpl Hewitt** and **Sigs Sanders, Goligher** and **Barker**; and we farewell to **Cpl Neil Hemley**, posted on promotion to 16 AA Bde and **LCpl Paul Heywood** to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt.

GOLF TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt IA Bangurah**
Tp SSgt **SSgt C Hook**

We welcome **Cpl Wikeley** and **Sigs Purvin**, **Beal** and **Dernie**; and farewell **Cpl Lea**, who has gone to ATR Lichfield to train recruits. Congratulations to newly promoted **LCpl Whyte**.

January kicked off with EX SCORPIONS CRAWL, a successful exercise, which helped shed a few of those Christmas pounds. Everybody enjoyed getting the dets out of the hangars and taking them for a bit of cross-country driving across the Plain. **Lt Bangurah** and **SSgt Hook** made sure that the Tp quickly realised than Christmas was over with a very noisy and fast flowing combat stand on the ex.

JULIET TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Yam**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Surje**

The Tp resumed work in January with a Ptarmigan IBCP and the collection of all G1098 equipment from the TA Sqn of the Regt, which then allowed us to deploy on EX BRIGHT KUKRI. On arriving in loc at Fox Covert Wood, SPTA, every det was soon busy. During the ex we were fortunate to be visited by the CO and Comd QG Signals, **Lt Col Vingoe**, and **Maj (QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO**, Gurkha Major QG Signals. A series of presentations were given and all were delighted to see that J Tp had quickly adapted to life in Colerne, and more importantly, that the rapid progress and development of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn was going well.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SO France**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) MA Brown**

The New Year saw the Sqn deployed on EX RED HAND, a Sqn concentration ex conducted at SPTA. Careful reconnaissance and lack of forethought on behalf of Sqn Ops produced the muddiest and most windswept loc on the Trg Area. Seven days later, the Sqn emerged caked in mud at the Tidworth wash down point. Two days later elements of the Sqn deployed to STANTA in support of the SHF HQ on EX EAGLES FLIGHT, a 16 Air Asslt Bde air manoeuvre ex. Co-located with EXCON, 16 Air Asslt Bde and 216 Sig Sqn at Lynford Home Farm, our resup procedures were put to the test. During lulls in the SHF flying programme (and there were plenty of those) the FofS, **SSgt Lyndon Box**, the 2IC, **Capt Tom Day** and **Sgt Yogi Welch** took turns on the Ops scooter to see who would win the title of Sqn Easy Rider and become President of the Colerne Chapter of the Hells Angels!!

The SQMS, **SSgt Mark Taff Morgan**, now back from Iraq, has turned the Sqn stores around, ably assisted by **LCpl Connor** and **Sig Ashcroft** and is now focusing on filling his diary with personal development activities for the remainder of the year. SHQ shortly will be enjoying a period of consolidation in February, with plans for ITD Trg, a patrols competition, and prep for EX RED BEAUFIGHTER in March.

A Pinzgauer being recovered by the 244 Ops Scooter on EX EAGLES FLIGHT

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt CM Hill**
Tp SSgt **Sgt S Cain**

On arrival back at work after the Christmas break, the Tp were back into the thick of things, with **Cpl Vallance** and **Sig Bramfitt** deploying to Norway with 33 (Puma) Sqn RAF on EX COLD LION. They are currently enjoying the luxury of their 5-star hotel and enjoying some first class skiing everyday. Some people have all the luck. Meanwhile back in Colerne, the Tp have a number of people training for the Inter-squadron Boxing, including **Sigs Parish**, **Condon**, **Atkinson** and **Collings**.

We congratulate **Sigs Atkinson** and **Greenhalgh** on being selected for promotion.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt L Fish**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M Pay**

Three members of the troop have recently deployed to Norway on EX SNOW TRAIN: **SSgt Mo Pay**, **Cpl Sustins** and **Cpl Rutherford**.

Members of the Tp continue to support the JHF in Iraq. Due to deploy shortly are **Sgt Daz Margle**, **Cpl Conley**, **LCpl Conley**, **LCpl Powell** and **Sig Harker**. The Tp OC, **Lt Lucy Fish** may be returning shortly, having been recently promoted to Capt by none other than **HRH, The Prince of Wales** on his recent visit to Basrah.

Finally, we welcome new arrivals, **Sig Mansell** and **Sig Reid** who join us from Blandford.

Lt Lucy Fish is promoted by HRH, The Prince of Wales

HOTEL TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt NJ Pryce-Jones**
Tp SSgt **SSgt G Smillie**

The Troop has continued to provide personnel supporting the JHF(I) HQ, which has now established a permanent loc within the comparatively civilised confines of Basrah International Airport.

During our time in theatre, we have witnessed many of the improvements to the HQ, particularly the living accn. Morale certainly took a distinct up turn with the arrival of the new much-improved tented living accn, with the added luxury of air conditioning.

Meanwhile back in Colerne, the Tp has witnessed the departure of some of its more charismatic members. **LCpl Colin Kingshott** has embarked upon an intrepid voyage of discovery as he attempts to negotiate the 264 probation cse. The hangar will certainly be a quieter place with the departure of **LCpl Sarah Howie**, as she heads off to hone her IT skills on the IS Foundation Cse at Blandford. **LCpl Andy Heighton** heads off to 218 Sig Sqn, and **Sig Martin Cull** departs to pursue his cricketing interests with trials for Essex County Cricket Club. We welcome **Cpl Del Spry**, from 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, who, with his enviable haul of qualifications, will be a valuable asset; and some youthful exuberance with the arrival of **Sigs Stuart Adam**, **Michael Beale** and **Gary Warrilow**.

A SECONDMENT TO THE BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY

- by LCpl Heath Greville

After 3 years trying, I was finally allowed to apply for one of the three positions that BAS offer Royal Signals operators. After a lengthy interview at HQ BAS in Cambridge, I was offered a position at Rothera Research Station on Adelaide Island, just off the coast of the Antarctic Peninsula. Prior to heading south, I attended a ten-day briefing conference in Cambridge. This ended with a three-day advanced Fist Aid Course that is slightly more intensive than BFAT. I was surprised at how much I had already learned through Army training. I was then sent on several courses, one the CAA radiotelephony course, which would allow me to talk to the aircraft that BAS operate in Antarctica; and the other on the Maritime Distress Signal Service for the marine side of things. I also spent at week at NERA learning how to operate and repair the INMARSAT B and C systems, as well as the World Phone and several civilian radio systems. Once all the courses were out of the way, I had a few days to get ready before heading to Port Stanley, where I was to work at the local airport to gain experience. This included flight-following in the tower and going out in the Islander aircraft to help load and unload the cargo. I was meant to be in Stanley for only 2 weeks, but with bad weather further south, I ended up spending just over a month there.

I eventually flew south in BAS's Dash 7 aircraft, and the flight was amazing. You could see snow covered mountain peaks and the vast expanse of sea ice. Rothera Research Station is on a small point, with glaciers and mountains surrounding it. The views are spectacular, but the 24-hour daylight took some time getting used to. The first few days here were taken up with trg, firstly the life support system, which included the reverse osmosis plant for water, and then the garbage compactor. This was followed by field trg, which included linked travel and crevasse rescues, and how to drive the ski-doos. We also spent a night out on a glacier, sleeping in pyramid tents and using all the kit that field party deploy with.

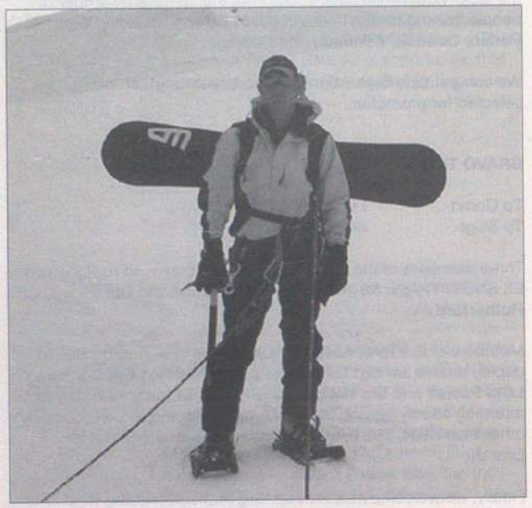
I then started work in the Ops tower, where I can be doing either one of two jobs. Firstly there's the daily field party scheds, where I call up the scientists in the field, to find out if they are safe and well. I also check whether they require any supplies, what they have been doing, and what their future intentions are. I also read the letters and emails that they have been sent and relay their replies, as some of the scientists can be in the field for up to 3 months at a time. The field party scheds start at 08.00hrs and go on until 21.00hrs, depending on how many parties are out in the field. If I'm not doing that, I will be flight-following in the tower. This starts at 07.00 hrs, when we collect all the weather observations from the field parties, so the pilots can decide on where they can and can't fly.

It's not all work whilst here. I've managed to fit in plenty of snowboarding on the local slopes. During the Christmas period, I

Re-fuelling a twin-otter

was lucky enough to get away to Fossil Bluff, an old hut built in 1961. The hut overlooks George VI Sound, which is covered by an ice shelf crossing over to mainland Antarctica. I spent six days there refuelling aircraft and passing weather observations back to Rothera. Before leaving, I also managed to get on a flight to the mainland, to a place called Sky Blu, BAS's blue ice runway at 75 degrees South. It was exactly how you would imagine the Antarctic to look like - miles and miles of a vast expanse of white, with only the odd mountain peak breaking through the snow and ice in the distance. At -20° C, it was very much colder than Rothera.

The wildlife around Rothera is amazing. Now and again we have to herd penguins off the runway or send someone to remove a seal. From time to time, Orcas can be seen around the base, as well as the odd Humpback or Minke Whale. All in all, working with BAS is an amazing experience that I would recommend to anyone.



New Year's Day climb

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col IPF Vingoe**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Hancock**

FAREWELL TO MAJOR RC CORY - *by WO2 Jim Coupland*

On Friday 23 January 04 **Maj Ray Cory** moved on to pastures new, to assume the appointment of DCOS HQ 1 (MI) Bde at Wilton. The week before, all the Sqn's Offrs, WOs and SNCOs gathered for a Management Lunch to reminisce over his exploits and achievements during the previous 3 years. To mark the occasion, his Sqn presented him with an original Nepalese oil painting, which was gratefully received. The reins of Sp Sqn have temporarily been handed to the 2IC/MTO, **Capt Sean Keilty**, until the arrival of **Maj John Duckworth** from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. We wish **Maj Cory**, **Jenny** and family all the best in the future.

EXERCISE ARDUOUS CYGNET

EX ARDUOUS CYGNET took place at Wathgill Camp with the first two weeks conducted in camp and occasional trips up to the trg area. The highlight of the time in Wathgill was **Sig Brown's** early morning PT sessions at 06.00hrs, which were enjoyed by both students and DS alike. The final week was a field ex on Catterick Trg Area, luckily during Catterick's mildest November in living

Maj Cory instructs 2Lt Kerr on his knitting skills

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NEWS FROM THE GULF

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col CJ Thackray**
RSM **WO1(RSM) J Renshaw**

HOME SWEET HOME!

On 31 December 2003, all deploying personnel from 16 Sig Regt paraded outside Hangar 2 on a typically German winter morning. There was an air of expectation as we all stood in our new and rather shiny desert combats as the CO, **Lt Col CJ Thackray** addressed the Regt on our imminent departure for a six-month tour in Iraq. The RAF did not disappoint by giving us a magical mystery tour of Eastern Europe with a 2-hr stop over in Bucharest, just time enough for the CO to give the young subalterns another lesson in bridge.

Maj Stainburn and Lt Lees in Bucharest.

Initial impressions after only a few days were, that we had swapped Javelin Barracks for a slightly warmer version. We are based at Basrah International Airport, and the only new novelty is the working runway. The role of the Regt is to support HQ Multinational Div, using bespoke civilian comms equipt, which is basically a smaller version of our role within the ARRC. And finally, they have even put the gym in the baggage collection hall to really make it feel just like home!

After an excellent handover from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt set about making its mark to announce its arrival in theatre. The shiny new black and red MND(SE) signs appeared in a multitude of locations, head dress is now worn to give it that professional look and circuit training is held twice a day, which is proving popular with all members of the Headquarters, even those under duress.

The Regtl troops are now settled in, with the initial few weeks of intensity calming down into a more regular routine. One of the busiest depts is the MT Sec, which has grown to be a fully integrated multinational team, supporting both the HQ and Div taskings. They are regularly carrying out escort duties of money and fuel convoys and providing force protection for a whole host of tasks. The soldiers are learning the area fast and regularly find themselves in new and challenging situations.

CIS Sqn is working hard getting to grips with all the new but rather tired kit it has been left with. **Sgt Nuttley, Cpl Renshaw** and their team are using the mobile nature of their Dagger dets to ensure they get out and about, although this ex seems to involve finding out which camp has the best welfare facilities. Synergy provides daily challenges for all levels involved. Let's just hope it doesn't rain again!

Talking of rain, the Regt came fully prepared for all manners of challenges except what greeted it after a few days- floods! The January rain came in spits and starts until the tented accn was at saturation point. Then the heavens opened with a huge thunderstorm, dumping thousands of gallons of water onto us in only a few hours. Needless to say, the water had nowhere to go, and a vision of a tented Venice came to light. What's that well known bible story about the man who built his house on sand? Luckily most of the tents survived a complete flooding, it was just pure fate that it was the Offrs' and WOs' tents that were shown a new concept of waterbeds.

The QM's Dept found themselves wadding through ankle to shin deep water at 03.00hrs, attempting to pump the water away with a pump we had 'borrowed' from the RAF camp. Thanks to **LCpl Tetley** and **Pte Elgee** for their midnight vigil, which saved us from floating away. Much disaster management has been carried out, and a foolproof plan is now in place to prevent a recurrence - even though the weather has improved and soon we will be wishing for the rain.

THE BASRAH BURNS SUPPER

On Sunday 25 January 2004, 16 Sig Regt hosted a truly historic Burns Night at Basrah International Airport (BIA). The restaurant

The Candlelit Banquet

dining area was transformed into a candlelit banquet for over 100 guests. The evening began with **Cpl MacDonald**, a Royal Signals Piper leading in the top table from the Officers' and Warrant Officers' Anteroom to put everyone in the mood.

Is that a gavel or a microphone?

The PMC for the night was **WO2 (SSM) Storey**, who kept the evening in order with only one minor slip up towards the end, which could be attributed to his lack of tolerance to the wee dram he was forced to consume during the toasts! As the evening progressed, the entertainment continued with **WO2 (RQMS) Ironside** delivering the Selkirk Grace to bless the supper and **QMSI McColl** reading the Robert Burns poem of *A Man's A Man for A' That*. He presented the poem with true Scottish pride, enough so that no-one could understand a word he said; apart from **Lt Col Hamilton** that is!

The Pipes escorted the Haggis to the honoured guests on the top table and was presented by the **RCWO Mr Griffiths** to **Lt Col AAD Hamilton TD** RLC, who gave a stirring and passionate *Address to a Haggis*.

Cpl 'Chubby Cheeks' MacDonald and Mr Griffiths with his Haggis

Prior to delivering the Toast to the Immortal Memory of Robert Burns, **Lt Col Hamilton** thanked **Mr Griffiths** and the Chefs, who not only prepared the most excellent food but had also managed to fly in the Haggis all the way from Scotland. **Lt Col Hamilton** then highlighted the true historic nature of the evening's events by saying, 'It is probably the first Burns Supper in Basrah International Airport. It is probably the last Burns Supper in Basrah International Airport, due to the HQ's move to the Hotel in the imminent future. It is certainly the best Burns Supper in Basrah International Airport. And it is definitely the most International Burns Suppers I have attended with a multitude of different nationalities in attendance.' Guests were from New Zealand, Australia, The Netherlands, America, Italy, Romania, Norway and Sweden.

Everyone enjoyed the evening immensely and it was deemed a highly welcome break from Operational routine. An Italian Major spoke to **Lt Col Hamilton** the following day to express his enjoyment of the Supper and commented that he had especially 'enjoyed the Shaggie!' The delights of working in a multinational environment.

(UNITED KINGDOM) NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (230)

OC	**Maj DM Sharkey**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) M Angove**

In October 2003, before the whole of 16 Sig Regt had deployed in Iraq, elements of HQ Sqn and 230 Sqn combined to provide comms and life support for HQ (UK) National Support Element in Umm Qasr. After a hectic few weeks settling in, with one security scare after another, we soon reached a steady state. Welcome reinforcements from Germany have helped the Sqn to provide a first rate service to the Comd and his staff.

SIGNAL TROOP – *by LCpl Harker*

The last couple of months have been very busy for 230 Sig Sqn. With the deployment to the Gulf, the majority of personnel have been busy preparing to the usual high standard to ensure a smooth transition into Umm Qasr. The true professionalism of the Sqn soon showed throughout HQ (UK) NSE, who were impressed with the enthusiasm of the various depts, whether it was from the ever helpful QM's to the excellent cuisine prepared by our chefs and chefette. Oh, and the Techs, who are ace. As for the Mechs of H Tp joining 230 Sig Sqn, they have once again proved no one lays them longer, living by their motto 'death or dialtone.'

Even though the temperature change was a bit of a shock a first, the Sqn quickly adapted and overcame. Or was it just that the weather changed for the colder - and wetter?

Maj Dom Sharkey and his Elven warriors prepare to defend Helms Deep against the Orcs

Now well settled in, the various depts have found a plethora of activities to keep themselves occupied. Whether it's volunteering to fill the many thousands of sandbags required, hosting the weekly quiz or arranging 'camel racing' for the NSE, every day brings a new challenge, thanks to **WO1 (RSM) 'Angry' Angove**! With the winter nights drawing in, the softie jackets are now the height of fashion, whether its desert beige one night or jungle green the next, the choice is too much to take! While on the subject of weather, the PT arranged by **Sig Neil Hawkins** at stupid o'clock is about as popular as **Sig Hawkins** is with the RSM.

Of course living in the desert brings a new host of creatures, one being the 'desert mouse'. Thanks to **Cpl Dave Hart**, a full-scale operation (OP SNEAKY SNICKERS) is underway, to trap and kill as many of these pesky rodents as possible, using Snickers Bars as bait. The count so far is: Techcon a mere two confirmed kills, the Ops Offr, **Capt Ross McLeod** at an awe-inspiring seven. The RSPCA are sending a full investigating team...

On a serious note, everyone seems to be enjoying it over here and taking all the hard work and challenges in their stride. It almost seems a shame to move to Shaibah in the New Year.

LIFE SUPPORT TROOP - *by SSgt Pollock*

We arrived in theatre on 20 October 03 to be welcomed by 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (261) with open arms. Our first few days were frantic with the handover programme, which involved the taking over of the camp, the stores (that were all packed away in the defensive walls of ISO containers) and adjusting ourselves to working with a tri-service Bde HQ. Many of the soldiers have worked with HQs, but none like this.

Over the first two weeks many of the Dept found a new niche in their development as soldiers, with their indoctrination into the art of filling as many sandbags as possible in the shortest time. One notable soldier, **Sig Sammy** (now known as 'Sandbags') **Sansom**, was always hard at it, whether by default or just volunteering for the task. Many of the nightly briefings that were held by the QM, always ending him the saying 'Staff, anything else for the troops?' answered by, 'Sandbags.'

The RSM has always kept the Tp busy, especially **Cpl Hayward**, with ordering more and more defensive stores only to be told that not even Basrah Palace is as fortified as this.

We cannot forget to mention our TA brethren who have been here since the beginning, **WO2 Jimmy Morgan**, **Cpl Alex Sutherland**, **LCpl Smudge Smith** and **Pte Ronald Callaghan**. We thank them for all their support over the months that they have had to put up with us.

We say a sad farewell to **Sgt Danny Rouchy**, who leaves us to return back 16 Sig Regt LAD. He couldn't hack the pace in the desert with Signals and needed to get back to 'Slipper City' in Germany. We bid you well at 6 Sup Regt in Gütersloh.

20th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC	**Maj SJP Spiers**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) ACE Burdge**

THE QUARTERMASTERS DEPARTMENT – *By Cpl Valentine*

The backbone of the Sqn has coped incredible well with everything the Bde and theatre has thrown at us. VIP visits from Prince Charles and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland seem like routine tasks, not however, made easier by the transfer of the MT drivers to Tigris Tp.

The MT is now down to 4 lads and lasses with driving details being filtered off to the Tps. **LCpl Ritchie Silcock** is left to take care of POL, and the rest of the crew are left with water deliveries, and a busy servicing schedule to fit around the details. The Gene Bay is on a low after losing **Sgt Ade Haslam** to a back injury. **Sig Wild** has moved to the bright lights of Tigris Tp in part exchange for **Sig White**, who has been taken under the wing of **LCpl Straughn** for her 3-2 upgrade.

The LAD is on cloud nine with the recent promotion of **Cpl Chester**. As the QM and RQMS(A) left for R and R, the cheer from Spt Tp could be heard in Bde HQ. **RQMS Beech** took up the reins of Spt Tp OC, and relished the challenge to get stuck in with weekends off and sports afternoons! I also have the challenge of being the OC's PTI, running the weekly PT, I mean Sports, I mean PT... The Tp looks forward to the second half of the tour and what ever challenges the Bde presents.

OPERATION YORICK – *by Sig Woodhouse and Sig Parker*

On a quiet Saturday in Bde HQ, we were warned off that we might be taking part in an op the next day. Neither of us having taken part in one before, we were a little apprehensive as we did not fully know what to expect.

During the following day we were given a brief on the night's intentions, what we hoped to obtain from it, and a 'to do' list was split up between us. We were tasked with cutting 15 strips of mine tape to be used as tags on potential arrests (its good to know when you're needed), and sometime during the day we were to pick up the tpt for the evening. Great, we thought. Early knock off from work, get the rovers and possibly get some sleep before tonight. How wrong we were. Because of our indispensable work in HQ, we were 'allowed' to finish our full day's work before picking up the Landrovers.

So 19.00hrs came and we collected the tpt, grabbed a bite to eat and headed to the TV room, where we spent the next few hours before receiving our orders from **2Lt Rob Foster**. OP YORICK was to be controlled by 26 Regt RA, with elements of 1 RRW, 1 Royal Scots, Danish Bn, various Iraqi forces and, of course, 200 Sig Sqn. We were at RRW C Coy HQ by 23.00hrs, where the designated female searchers **Sigs Brea Lane** and **Charlotte Riley** were assigned the call signs they would be attached to. At approximately 23.30hrs we headed for our destination, travelling throughout Basrah City, picking up extra packets to our convoy. By the time we reached the edge of the city we were a convoy of close to 60 vehs.

On approach to loc, the convoy split into packets and spread out to their designated search areas. Everything that had gone reasonably smoothly so far, quickly took a tumble, with the majority of vehs in our area becoming stuck in a bottleneck. After a slight pause, we were informed that two of the three buildings to be searched had already been entered and they were about to enter ours! On hearing that, we quickly dismounted and headed for our building, with **Sgts Mickey Piper** and **Johno Johnston** leading the charge and their men following. Once in, the women and children were segregated into a single room, with **Cpl Kay Brough** and **LCpl Sarah Wooton** keeping them company. The three men who were found in our building were segregated,

Sgt Piper's AK47 Find

searched and tagged (using only 3 of our expertly prepared strips of mine tape!) While the men were being seen to, **Cpl Matt Grix** and Coy were searching the remainder of the building. Once the building was under control, **Cpls Andy Porter** and **John Hodson** searched a car parked out front, while the remainder had a look around the surrounding area. Both **Cpl Matt Thomas** and **LCpl Blake Hickey** struck it lucky finding some .50 cal rounds amongst some rubble and a mortar bipod in a building that smelt like a toilet. Inside, **Sgt Mickey Piper** uncovered a stash of some 15 full AK47 magazines, a set of chest webbing full of ammo, and an AK47 to fire it all from.

Once the building was thoroughly searched, the male detainees and finds were taken to the holding area. Arrests were made, and one turned out to be a prominent local character. This wrapped up the night nicely, leaving nothing to remain but the hurried journey home.

IF YOU THINK IRAQ IS HOT, TRY THE BRIGADE KITCHEN
– by Sgt Tiley

After a short stay at Shaibah's Bedouin camp, the chefs of 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200) started work at Basrah Palace. It didn't take long for them to realise that this was probably going to be the hottest kitchen they had ever worked in.

On a daily basis we cater for numbers ranging from 750 – 1,100 troops per meal, although coping with such numbers has never been an issue for Army chefs. Certain conditions have made it a bit more interesting: the heat, the marble floors, marble walls and only two windows giving in minimal natural light. To alleviate some of these problems, a simple extractor system has been built. It's only a series of metal flues, but it works to an extent and is better than nothing at all.

Those who turn up at the dining facility for the first time soon realise that they are probably in the most spectacular dining facility in any operational theatre, with its decorated ceilings, marble floor and spectacular architecture.

Customers are well catered for, with a selection of hot and cold choices every mealtime. Breakfast is a choice of a full English fry-up or cereals and fresh fruit. Lunch is a choice of 2-3 hot dishes along with a full salad bar and a sandwich bar. The evening meal gives the troops a choice of 5-6 main dishes, with a selection of hot and cold desserts, including ice cream and fresh fruit, and a small selection of cheese and biscuits. There are also the occasional BBQs, so it can't be that bad out here, can it?

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

BALKANS SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Tom McCappin**
SSM **WO2 Billy Duggan**

During the past three months, the pace of life certainly hasn't eased off for Balkans Signal Squadron (BSS). SHQ has been furiously planning for the 'morph' of BSS to the nicely-named Multi-National Task Force Signals Unit (MNTFSU), and we will be known as from 20 February 04.

In short, this will see the UK NSC Bosnia and Kosovo Tps merging, forming one Balkans Tp whilst the MNB NW Tp will split in two. This will have Services Tp looking after non-deployable comms, with Systems Tp taking on the Dagger Dets, a new Dutch VHF Section, a small comms team and the SMART Team moving across from UK NSC (B) Tp.

Aside from keeping on top of all our comms systems, the Sqn was tasked with training the new Monitoring Observation Surveillance and Targeting (MOST) Teams, with the comms equipt that they will be responsible for in their 'MOST Houses.' The trg went well, with numerous comments being passed back to the Sqn on the professionalism and quality of trg provided. This was helped no end by **WO2 (FofS) Paul Stevens**, who was on hand to answer any tech questions that proved too difficult for the YofS and his team of instructors. They are forever in his gratitude!

Post morph, the Sqn will remain as busy as ever, with numerous Multi-National Bde exs, focused ops and trg to provide CIS and comms for. What with planning the hand over to the incoming Sqn and preparing for their recce in early February, where does the time go?

Finally we must say good-bye to Sqn Clerk, **LCpl Ally Bates**. He has served us well by collecting our mail and helping with the normal admin problems. Once again, thank you. We also say hello to **Cpl Jo Mundie**. Hopefully 'Mundie mornings' won't be so dull now!

Ze FofS und ze YofS hold Flt Lt Fisher hostage in a recent 'Battle of Britain' night in the WOs and Sgts Mess

UK NSC (BOSNIA) TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Graham Dorrington**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Fisher**

Firstly, we congratulate all those who have just received their well-deserved promotions. What a good way to start off the New Year! **LCpls Teresa Bastiman** and **Rhys Williams** receive their first stripe; **Cpl Pete O'Connor** gets his second; and **Sgt Paul Whenman**, his third.

We also say hello to **LCpl Kirsty McEwan** and **Cpl Jordan O'Neil**, who join the team of trusty techs in Theatre Systems Control Point (TSCP); to **LCpls Kev Orr** and **Anderson**, who will be joining the SMART Team.

Sadly, we say good-bye to **Sgt Paul Whenman**, who is leaving for 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and the desert; to **LCpl Teresa Bastiman**, who returns to her peacetime loc with the Co-operative Bank; and to the entire SMART Team, who will be helping to form the new MNB NW (Systems) Tp.

There is no better time than wintertime to do AT, and here in the Balkans everyone gets the chance to get away to the snow in Slovenia and practise their skiing. Depending on your skills, you can come away from a fantastic week with a qualification in either basic or advanced alpine skiing. It's well worth it!

When we are not out there enjoying ourselves or working, we sometimes like to finish off the day with a good game of 5-aside football, battling between the different depts in the Tp, with TSCP usually coming up tops every time (but the OC scoring the best goals)!

This time of year certainly wasn't very easy, being away from families and loved ones. However, everyone got into the Christmas and New Year spirit and had a fantastic time. Christmas morning started with everyone (juniors) being woken up by the Officers and Seniors to a quick round of gunfire (thanks) - single malt it wasn't! New Years Eve went down well with a local band, *Sebastian* in the aircraft hangar, followed by an excellent DJ set provided by BFBS. Everyone made the most of the increase

Dagger Det on a harvest op

from two to four cans. It was a special occasion, giving all the different depts in the Tp an excuse to get together and have a well-earned good time.

UK NSE (KOSOVO) TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Gordon Stanger**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Andrew Perkins**

NEW YEARS EVE, KOSOVO STYLE

The Tp finished work at 16.30hrs in order to prepare; it takes some of the younger members a long time to get their hair just right. **Sgt Mason** was 'man down' and could not make the parade, but due to the excellent post-treatment care at the Primary Health Care Centre, was soon up and raring to go. The remaining Tp members met up in *Slim Jim's*, where the games commenced, **Cpl McLaren** proving that a whole pack of Jaffa cakes does fit into one mouth. The Tp ventured over to the Black Bear Sgts Mess, which held a 'rank doesn't matter night.' A local Rock Band was playing cover versions of classic rock songs such as Pink Floyd's *Anuzzer blick in der vall* and Polizee's *Engine Man in New York*. The night went on in a jovial fashion and all saw the New Year in with crumbly 'Hello 2004 From Pristina.'

MNB (NW) TP

Tp Comd	**Capt Terry Samms** (CA)
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Gillies Bèrubè** (CA)

With the silly season over and the hangovers from the extra 2 beers at New Year becoming a distant memory, it is time to get on with the second half of the tour. Being a multinational Tp we have bonded to each other's cultures by celebrating at every opportunity - by order of the Troop OC, **Capt Samms** (CA). Transformation is looming and the Tp, along with the rest of the Sqn, has a lot of work to do and a tight time frame in which to achieve it.

The Dagger Team, led by **Sgt Maj David Wensink** (NL), has been maintaining the reputation of the Sqn with their hard work in supporting the various ongoing ops. Congratulations to **Cpl Cindy Georges** (NL) on her recent promotion. The characters of various members of the Tp are now coming to the fore. Thanks go to **MCpl Sherlock** (CA) for pointing out the OR grades on the NATO rank posters. **Cpl Hollister** (CA) keeps morale high with his stand-up comedy routine every Monday. **Cpl Bashir** (UK) informs us of the latest 'got-to-have' personal digital assistant phone thing, etc. and **Sig Walsh** (UK) shows off his original costume designs. If the first half of the tour is any thing to go by, then the second half will fly by!

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col SK MacRostie MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Dick**

VISIT OF THE COLONEL-IN-CHIEF

2 Sig Regt had an auspicious start to 2004 hosting the Colonel-in-Chief, **Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal**. On her arrival, the CO welcomed the Princess back to Imphal, thanking her for the visit in May 2003, when she had been introduced to the families of soldiers serving on OP TELIC. The CO updated her on the changes that are currently underway in preparation for the introduction of CORMORANT. The Colonel-in-Chief then inspected stands from all four Sqns of the Regt which replicated their roles undertaken on OP TELIC. She spoke to the soldiers involved in the displays, expressing great interest in their experiences of both comms and living conditions in the desert.

Cpl Kelly's solution for the weather meets with Royal approval

Sgt Bithell, HQ Sig Sqn, organised CP set, complete with sandbags a plenty, but without the usual blanket of sand on every surface! **Maj Steve Clarke GM QGM** introduced HRH to personalities from HQ Sqn, ensuring that he stuck to his tight time schedule. 219 Sig Sqn, under **Maj Rab Young**, provided the demo of the diverse comms provided by the Sqn on OP TELIC.

The Princess was able to talk live via a VTC suite over a TALON satellite, to the Regt's Det currently serving on OP VERITAS in Tampa, Florida. **Capt Dave Farragher** and his crew there may have had an early start, but we like to keep the Florida contingent involved!

Cpl Thomas receives his Sierra Leone Medal from the Princess

She was then introduced to the CORMORANT trials centre by **Maj Stu Gillespie**, who explained on the new equipt's role and the implications that this will have for the Regt in the near future. **LCpl McCulloch** and **Sigs Jobber**, **Poole** and **Henstock** were eager to demonstrate their newly-gained knowledge on the equipt they are shortly to crew.

A buffet lunch was laid on for **The Princess Royal** and attended by the Offrs and WOs, members of York Garrison and the local RSA Branch. Thanks must go to **SSgt Hashem** and his team for the food provided. Following lunch, HRH kindly agreed to open the Regt's new accn block, TELIC HOUSE. This new Z-type accn boasts individual rooms, each with en-suite bathroom, Internet terminal access point, and is home to 74 JNCOs from the Regt.

The highlight of the afternoon was the opening of the Manilal Building, which houses the new Gurkha Temple. HRH was presented with a spectacular *mala* prior to **Capt Krishna's** introduction on the importance of the Temple to both religious and cultural gatherings. **Maj Ade Clewlow**, introduced HRH to several soldiers of 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, after which she was treated to an extremely impressive cultural display, including a Kukri dance.

The opportunity could not be missed for few medal presentations. Unfortunately the OP FINGAL and OP TELIC medals were not received in time, but eight equally deserved medals were presented to soldiers who had served on ops in Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Bosnia.

The Regt was immensely honoured to have hosted the Colonel-in-Chief, particularly at such a key turning point in the Unit's role and organisation.

CORMORANT

The CORMORANT Systems Field Trial (SFT) is with us once again. Whilst this time the system and the equipt proved to be very impressive, a few glitches necessitated some adjustments that will see the trials process continue well into the New Year. That said, we are confident that the Initial Operating Capability (IOC) targets will be met, which will see this new system available for work very soon.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Stu Gillespie**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Neil Cooper**

After a very successful SFT for CORMORANT, we are very busy getting the Sqn fully trained up on the new kit. The morale of the soldiers is high, and we now eagerly await the equipt coming into service. As with all new toys, we want to play with it!

We say farewell to **LCpl Craddock**, **Sig Cox** and **Sig Lofthouse**, who have moved on to new units. Also to **SSgt Wigmore**, **LCpl Turner**, **Sig Duffin** and **Sig Noble**, who are about to deploy on ops for 6 months. Best wishes to **LCpl Baron**, **LCpl Blackburn** and **Cpl Savage**, off to 16 Sig Regt, 280 Sig Sqn and ATR Lichfield respectively. Farewells and best wishes to **Sgt Dave Pope**, to 30 Sig Regt, and to **LCpls Steve Local** and **Chris Linsley**, who leave the Corps for Civ Div.

We welcome **Sig Harrington** back from his driving course; **LCpl Finlay**, **LCpl Piercy**, **Sig Briscoe**, **Sig Hebditch**, **Sig Ingledew** and **Sig Hopper**, back from ops; and **LCpl Cox** back from his Class 1 course. A big welcome to **Sgts Joey Maguire** and **Jonah Jones**, **Cpl Frankie Langford** and **LCpl Amanda Wright**. Finally, congratulations to **Cpl Simpson** and his wife **Becky** on the arrival of their second child, **Ruby**; and a very warm welcome to **Sig Lynch's** new arrival. The Promotion Board sat recently, so congratulations go to **Sigs Coole**, **Wood**, **Brocken** and **Davis**.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

EAGLE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Plested**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt King**

Soon after the visit by the Colonel-in-Chief, Eagle Tp were preparing the vehs for EX PHOENIX LEAP at Otterburn training

HRH the Princess Royal has just received a garland by Miss Suista Gurung on behalf of the Squadron

area 26 - 29 January - or at least trying to. Eagle Tp's manpower was depleted by six Regtl rugby players who were training intensely for future cup games.

Otterburn was very cold and windy with a fair amount of snow, but we battled on. Road conditions were very bad. The Sqn OC, **Major Rab Young** had on ordeal when his Landrover skidded sideways down a steep hill, with his driver, **Cpl Lee Armitage** hanging on for dear life.

PHOENIX TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Brown**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Tosh**

Recent changes in 219 Sqn structure has meant more people arriving into Phoenix Tp, but with various courses and exs the number on the shop floor is constantly changing.

The last week of January saw the Tp deployed on the Sqn ex, PHOENIX LEAP in Otterburn training Area. This was a good opportunity for some of the new members of the Tp to work and socialise with the rest of the team. It also acted as a shake out for EX CENTAURS BOW, the forthcoming ex that will be the last Ptarmigan ex for the Sqn.

EX PHOENIX LEAP - a chilly shoot

246 GURKHA SIG SQN

OC	**Maj Ade Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Tarabahadur Pun**

From 12-14 January 04, we were engaged on EX CROSS KHUKRI. This was conducted in and out of Barracks and was a combination of mil skills orientated subjects, team building and leadership challenges. Also included in the package was the junior level Combat Estimate and Mission Analysis process. The problem-solving package prepared and conducted by two AEC staff was excellent, mentally challenging but good experience.

As reported above, the visit by **The Princess Royal** was the highlight of the month. We are extremely delighted and privileged to have our Temple opened by her during her visit. She was received and briefed about the Sqn's current and future commitments by our OC, **Maj Ade Clewlow**. The Sqn 2IC, **Capt Krishna** highlighted the significance of the Temple for the Gurkha soldiers and families, and requested her to open formally the Manilal Building. Once inside the temple she met **WO2 (SSM) Tara**, the Pandit (Gurkha religious teacher) and several members of the Sqn. The Sqn cultural team, led by **Sgt Om,** presented Her Royal Highness a short Nepalese cultural dance, which she enjoyed immensely. We are extremely proud and feel honoured and this occasion will be remembered for a long time to come.

EXERCISE NORTHERN HIMALAYAN - *by Sig Rajkumar Gurung*

After the successful Equipment Care Inspections (ECI) in December, Island Tp personnel took part in AT. The ex was held in Kingussie area and comprised of activities covering visits to the historic Fort George and the Highlanders Museum, a battlefield tour of Culloden Moor, orienteering competitions and skiing. Whilst in the north of Scotland we also had the opportunity to host **Brig SMA Lee OBE**, our Colonel of the Regt. It was great being out of barracks and doing something completely different. I wish these opportunities came around more frequently!

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Major SA Clarke GM QGM**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) P Haughton**

QM's Dept say a very fond farewell to **SSgt Stuey Taylor**, who leaves us for a NRPS post at 38 Sig Regt, and to **Cpl Mickey Potter**, who after 22 years, leaves us safe in the knowledge that he will be entertaining the masses somewhere else. TM Tp says goodbye to **Cpl Elaine Ralph**, who has transferred to AGC, and **Sgt Helen McMonagle**, who has joined an Army Careers and Information Office in Reading.

The Gene Bay congratulates **Sig Ash Spotswood** on his recent selection for promotion and wishes him good luck on his posting to 21 Sig Regt.

We welcome **SSgt Sean Hyland**, from CCU to take over as the QM's Dept **SSgt** and Unicom guru. Congratulations to the now **Cpl Simpson** on his well-deserved promotion. Congratulations also to **Cpl Al Young** from TM Tp and his wife **Susan** on the birth of their second child, a healthy baby girl.

EXERCISE KEY LEADER - *by LCpl Broken and Sig Lee*

EX KEY LEADER is the CO's two-week JNCO Cadre, an intense trg and assessment course to test the leadership qualities of the up and coming junior ranks of 2 Sig Regt. The gruesome fortnight began early on the Monday morning with a BPFA. 'Start as you mean to go on,' is the saying, and that's just how some people began, by flying around the mile and half run in less than 8min 30sec. A good leader needs the confidence and knowledge to be able to stand in front of a group of people, to take them for the necessary lessons. So we all had to take a drill squad and prepare and carry out a lesson of our choice. It wasn't the choice of subject that counted, but how your lesson worked and how your instruction was received. Everyone did their best and some outstanding lessons were produced.

Half the course is a week in the field in Sennybridge, but before that we had a refresher night in the field at Strensall, where we revised basics such as cam and concealment. After a night out under the stars we proved that we were ready for Sennybridge and all the weather it could throw at us.

We then went off in a Chinook leapfrogging electricity pylons all the way to Wales. Once in Sennybridge, we continued with the arduous trg in preparation for the final phase of the ex, which was 3 days and nights in the field. Subjects covered ranged from night nav, section battle drills, ambushes and lots of patrolling. By now the potential Jedi Knights were beginning to come to light, with **Sig Brocken** and **Sig Wood** both tailing each other for the Top Student slot.

The final phase saw us all enduring long days and even longer nights, when you were lucky to get two hours sleep. This part of the course was to assess everyone on receiving orders, giving orders and carrying them out while they were fatigued and hungry. The final day brought the final attack (as it does in such exs) against which we had to defend our comms loc. Everyone was full of enthusiasm and so produced the goods required of any junior NCO. It didn't end there though. It was then up to the sections to carry out a stretcher race, a run, and then the assault course. Again, everyone worked extremely hard fighting to get Top Section.

At the end of it all, we returned to York with our heads held high and celebrated all the hard work with a Regtl dinner and then one or two drinks in the bar. **Sig Brocken** won Top Student and is now a LCpl. **Sigs Wood** and **Thewlis** also picked up first stripes for coming second and third. The Gurkhas had their own Top Student, **Sig Bhim** who is now a LCpl. **Sig Lee** picked up Best Improved Student, but he is still a Sig. In everyone's eyes, the two weeks of hard work paid off, and I'm sure they will eventually make the finest junior NCO's of the Corps.

DIVISIONAL ALPINE SKIING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2 Sig Regt ski team had 4 weeks of trg and racing at the Corps Alpine Skiing Championships in Austria before the Div Alpine Skiing Championships. It was hoped that this would put the team in good standing for the Div Championships in Serre Chevalier, France at the beginning of January 04. However, we hadn't counted on the fantastically high standard of the other skiers. The programme started with a seeding GS race and as we were all starting quite high up the seedings, it could only get better – or so we thought. Initially all went well, and every member of the team improved their placing. However, over the next few days, some were definitely doing better than others. **Sig Greg Snape** managed to improve dramatically from the Corps Champs and began to give the others a run for their money. The other three, **Lt Hannah Frost**, **LCpl Chris Abbott** and **LCpl Stu Wyllie**, all had a few tumbles, which didn't help their overall form. **Lt Frost** in particular, managed to fall on not one, but two championship races, and subsequently dropped down the seedings to bring up the rear.

LCpl Chris Abbott racing on the Grand Slalom Course

The weather throughout the 10 days was very variable, and after the first day of perfect sunny skies, we were racing in heavy snow, rain (not fun), severe cold and wind. For anyone who says Alpine skiing is not arduous, try standing around for 6 hours, soaking wet and cold. They should also have a go at Super G, the Super standing for 'Super Sonic', which is the speed you go down the piste. Although not quite as scary as Downhill racing, it was certainly enough to cause serious pain to those who wiped out. All in all, it was a fantastic trg experience for the team, with **Sig Snape** doing especially well, coming 79th out of 128 racers. Although no-one was selected for the Army competition, next year will be different!

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col EM Blyth TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Greenwood**

VISIT OF BRIGADIER JE THOMAS MBE

When the Bde Comd requested to visit HQ Sqn, the opportunity was seized to arrange a presentation for **SSgts McLean** and **Minorczyk**, who had been awarded the LS and GCM. This took place in the Offrs' Mess at Jardine Street, with drinks and refreshments in the Sgts' Mess. The occasion was enjoyed by all, a fitting end to a successful visit for the Bde Comd.

VISIT BY THE MASTER OF SIGNALS

The Regt were honoured to receive the first formal visit from the Master of Signals to a Royal Signals Regt, and were delighted that he accepted an invitation with his wife to the Annual Regtl Burns Supper. The visit went very well, and during a crisp winter's day at Barrybuddon Trg Camp, the majority of the Regt got an opportunity to meet The Master and demonstrate their trg abilities during an ITD training weekend. The Burns Supper was of the quality that would be expected from the Scottish Signal Regiment, and The Master and number of guests enjoyed a long evening, during which the passionate and theatrical talents of the Regt were on full display in honour of Robert Burns.

SSgts Minorczyk and McClean receive their LS and GC from Brig JE Thomas MBE

The Master has a brew and a joke with members of the Regt back from the Ranges

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 7 - *by Capt Dods*

After only four years, participation in the Corps Winter Sports Camp and Championships has become a regular feature on the Regt's Trg Programme. There are two conflicting aims on this ex: the need to field a strong enough team to bring home silverware, and the need to challenge less experienced skiers, pushing them beyond the levels at which they are used to performing. Despite all attempts to persuade more junior members of the Regt to attend, this year's team was fairly top heavy, with one Maj, two Capts, a WO2, a SSgt, a Sgt and only one LCpl. But rank does not necessarily equate to skill, and there was a good mix of abilities, with a strong A Team and a rapidly developing B Team.

As usual, the team split into two groups, those travelling by ferry and arriving earlier for a week's race trg prior to the Championships proper, and those opting to fly out just for Race Week. So it was that on the last weekend in November, the team gathered at 61 Sqn in Edinburgh to be issued with their team *Windstopper* jackets, generously donated by the local Gore Tex factory in Livingston. We are grateful to **Ken Gray** of WL Gore for providing sponsorship not only of the Regt Team but also the Corps camp as a whole. The Regt also benefited from WL Gore's provision of prizes, each member of the A Team coming home with a Gore Tex N2S shirt.

After the fun of the boat trip, and a thirteen hour drive from Belgium to Austria, we arrived in Zell am See and settled into the youth hostel Klub Kitzsteinhorn, hosted by our old friends the **Pecile** family.

After a week of trg, during which the team was dispersed to different instructional groups, everyone re-convened for Race Week. Reinforced by the arrival of two additional members, **Maj Cammy Payn** and **WO2 Tam Davidson**, the two teams were selected and serious competition began. Needing one extra member to bring us up to the required 8 for two teams, we adopted **2Lt Abbi Adey** from 33 Sig Regt (V).

For those who have not raced before, there is an obscure and mystical art practised at race events, known only as 'seeding.' This is quite baffling and often the source of great controversy. Basically, the higher seed number you have, the later in the race you start. No great problem, you may think - until you've seen the ruts carved on a course when 80 people have gone ahead of you. Despite having finished in the high 20s last year, **Maj Payn** and **WO2 Davidson**, were seeded in the 80s because they had arrived too late to take part in the seeding race in Week 1. So a great deal of catching up was needed if there was to be any chance of

Team photo from week 1 – the race trg phase

catching our rivals, 31 Sig Regt (V) and winning the TA trophy. Things got so serious and so competitive that **Capt Davidson** was seen hunched over a spreadsheet working out the permutations and figuring out where we stood in relation to 31 Sig Regt. At the prize-giving, the Chief Instructor **SSgt Andy Dawson** announced that the TA Trophy was one of the most fiercely contested but he probably had no idea just how true this was.

To cut a long story short, we did win the Trophy, and with some surprising results among the individual team performances. Some of the newer skiers, such as **LCpl Andrew** and **Capt Dods**, beat others who were expected to come out ahead of them. At one point, 32 Sig Regt had three racers running consecutively in a race, so close were their times. No other unit had a team that was so closely matched with only hundredths of a second separating individual team members. All round, the results were excellent, with every member of each team greatly improving their times throughout Race Week.

All in all, the ex was very successful for 32 Sig Regt. The team returned with a trophy; we met old friends and new from throughout the Corps, both Regular and TA; and all members of the team improved their skiing and took part in a good deal more physical exercise than is the norm during a working week. If proof were needed that this is no mere skiing holiday, on the Monday after returning from Austria, **Capt Dods** was seen to nod off during a conference call at work!

A huge vote of thanks from all members of Team 32 to **SSgt Jacqui Smith** for organising the trip and making sure we all got there in one piece; to **Maj Huw Jenkins**, **Capt Michele Worden** and **SSgt Andy Dawson** for running such a great camp; and of course to our sponsors, WL Gore and Karrimor SF.

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col CR Owen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) R G Dalton**

WISH YOU WERE HERE

Operations now a prominent feature in the life of every TA unit, and routine mobilisation is now commonplace. It is generally accepted that most TA soldiers will now complete an operational tour during their service, and very little now separates them from their Regular counterparts, with whom they now work in all

A group from 89 Sqn enjoying the day

theatres. Their value and commitment has never been overlooked, as the Regtl reception for recent returnees showed on Saturday, 7 February. The Museum at RAF Cosford provided an excellent location and backdrop to this very special event. The main reception took place with Lincoln Bombers, Spitfires, Tornados and other aircraft providing an exciting backdrop. Over 80 members of the Regt attended, together with families and friends. Children were not forgotten - a variety of fun activities including videos was provided for them. The event attracted a great deal of positive publicity in local media throughout the midlands.

In the driving seat. SSgt Albert Mair and son, Josh

Before the lunch the CO, **Lt Col CR Owen**, welcomed everyone, and then went on to thank all mobilised and deployed soldiers for their special efforts, commitment and dedication. He also thanked families and loved-ones for their support during a difficult and emotional time in their lives. After the lunch, everyone was treated to a tour of the Museum, enjoying some hands-on fun with the many interactive displays, including the aircraft simulators.

Here **SSgt Albert Mair** and his son **Josh** had a terrific time. A number of bright sparks, notably from 89 Sqn, discovered that the RAF photographic booth was printing group photographs on 'Wish you were here' post cards, which really summed up a perfect and unforgettable day.

Staying with the subject of mobilisation, the following is a thought-provoking article submitted by **LCpl Peter Cater**, who recently returned from OP TELIC 2. Unfortunately **Peter** could not make it to the reception. He is presently enjoying himself in South Africa spending his OP TELIC savings!

MISSION IMPROBABLE - *by LCpl Cater*

Life was good. I was skiing down the Kleine Matterhorn in Austria and enjoying the apres-ski in the evenings with other members of

the Regt. This was one of the many fringe benefits of serving with the TA, and it was brilliant! Little did I know that less than a week later, my life would be turned upside down. It was pay back time - the Army was calling in its favours. Every TA soldier knows the commitment they undertake the day they enlist, but over the past years I had though it unlikely that anyone would receive a compulsory call-out. So when it happened to me and several others in my Sqn, it came as a surprise. Three short weeks later, having been thoroughly documented and encouraged by our Sqn AO, **Nicole Payne**, I found myself and six other Sqn members travelling to RTMC Chilwell to begin our OPTAG trg, nervously anticipating 6 months away from family and friends. The air was filled with hope, apprehension and in some cases, a sense of frustration at being removed from our homes and family lives. I began to appreciate and experience the pain that Regular soldiers feel when they are constantly away on ops.

The mobilisation process was quick and efficient, and hundreds of us were processed very rapidly. Once we were deemed fit and healthy enough to cope with our new environment, we went on to the next phase at Grantham, where we spent a week on intensive trg to prepare us for battlefield conditions. A week crammed with ITDs and revision trg, its purpose was to make sure that we were all at the same level. Then it was northwards to Catterick Garrison, the home of 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209), our host unit. By this time, many of us had seen familiar faces from our Regt, which, knowing that we were all in this together, helped to calm nerves.

Then, at the end of a long journey, we found ourselves at Basrah International Airport (BIA). After a short in theatre brief, we were then taken an acclimatisation camp just South of the Kuwaiti border, where for four days our task was to sweat - something that would become the norm for the next five months. We were then bussed to Basrah Palace, our home for the next six months. At first sight by night, the Palace didn't look as impressive as I'd imagined, but as day broke, it soon became clear that old Saddam new how to build a decent house.

My first task was to report to the SQMS so that a job could be found for me. I had assumed that being a Rad Op by trade and being called up as a Rad Op, there might be a job in the Sqn for me that would involve radios. I was quickly corrected, and with a merry band of other reinforcements, we were despatched on our first mission improbable: to infiltrate the long-neglected cookhouse bin area, gather all its contents and make good our escape to the burn-pits to destroy the evidence - all under the cover of brightness. 'That'll show 'em!' I thought.

Still covered in the spoils of war, I reported back to the SQMS, where I found myself suitable for duties in the tech workshop. At this stage, our trade skills were irrelevant, and many other Rad Ops, Drivers, Eds, etc had found themselves eligible for guarding the Palace. They were really grateful for the long hours and the opportunity to get in some sweating practice. But at least both TA and Regulars were treated alike. Then my moment came! Due to an error, either by the Sqn or our parents, two **Caters** were called for patrol duties, a **Cpl Cater** and a **LCpl Cater** (me). This was our chance to do something interesting and really get something out of our mobilisation. Our mission involved of being boated (initially by the Sappers, then latterly by the laid-back Norwegians) across the Shatt-al-Arab Waterway to the peninsula opposite the Palace. We were operating in an un-patrolled and potentially dangerous area, as this had been ground zero for the majority of the eight-year Iran-Iraq war. UXO was a major concern. And so I spent the majority of my tour helping where possible in the tech workshop, patrolling once a day, and being on the permanent QRF for the Palace. The atmosphere in the patrol was good, and far from being just colleagues, I'm proud to say that we were friends.

Then a month short of leaving, I found myself transferred from the tech workshop to Bde HQ for radio stag and admin duties. This brought me back to a lot of old friends and a few that would grow to be close, long-standing mates. I believe I was very lucky throughout my tour: lucky to have carved out a good tour for myself; lucky to be posted to a Sqn with a lot of good guys in it; and lucky in the face of overwhelming adversity, to have people around me who constantly made me laugh and appreciated my limited skills.

Three months since demob, as I write this article, I look back on the times that we had, and the times that I laughed so hard the tears were rolling down my face. Although the months have not blocked the bad times from my memory, time has mellowed them.

I can say that, in those six months, I had experienced the best and worst of Regular life. But in the true military way, when things got tough, we all learned to crack a smile and a joke. Now I wonder if there are any places left on this year's Regtl Skiing expedition!

EX POLAR BEAR The deployment brief

A LEAP INTO THE NEW YEAR

Christmas always provides a welcome break away from the stresses of military life, but this was quickly forgotten as the Regt moved into top gear to begin its New Year trg programme. On a bitterly cold weekend ex in January, 89 Sqn was joined by elements from 48, 58 and 95 Sqns on EX POLAR BEAR. This joint Sqn comms ex, organised by **Capt Tom Jeffries** and newly commissioned **2Lt Alan Lunn**, proved to be a tremendous success in achieving joint Sqn cooperation, and led to the improvement and development of both op and tech skills. It will no doubt be repeated frequently.

The ex took place at Magna Park and Bruntingthorpe Airfield, two areas that were notable for many air ops during WW2, and also where **Sir Frank Whittle** developed the jet engine. For a comms ex, these areas were ideal and allowed the rapid establishment of

Sgt Wendy Muhammad and Lt Paul Rodenhurst, happy to pack up at ENDEX

both RR and Radio links. Coinciding with this weekend, HQ Sqn, under the direction of the MTWO, **WO1 Mick Doherty**, was busy hosting a driver trg and MT weekend at Swynerrton. The following week, with no break in the trg programme, 48 and HQ Sqn hosted a range and ITD weekend at Llansilin, which saw many soldiers finally qualifying for their bounty. During this weekend the Regt bade a sad farewell to **Maj (QM) Gordon Shelley**, when he was dined out by the Sgts Mess. A week later, we had the Cosford Reception and Maint Teams, headed by the MTWO who were roaming the Regt keeping the veh fleet alive, followed by two weeks of trade trg under the watchful eye of **WO2 (YofS) Steve Hillier**.

Pausing neither for breath nor a day off, RHQ hosted the initial visit by the new Comd 143 Bde, **Brig CJ Murray CBE.** He was welcomed by the CO and given the traditional Regtl Ops and Manning brief followed by a tour of RHQ and HQ Sqn, where the Comd chatted to all available personnel. The following day the Comd visited 95 Sqn and presented the VRSM to **Sgt Tony Blakemore**, **Sgt Louise McGibbon**, **Sgt Gary Potts**, **Cpl Richard Jones**, **OCdt Sam Blackburn** and **Sig Stretch Greaves.** This busy start to the year is not set to end, as in the next few weeks the CO's inspection teams will be busy analysing the Regt's operational, trg and admin capabilities. And we are all looking forward to the dreaded Health and Safety inspection at the end of February. C'est la vie!

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to **2Lts Alan Lunn** and **Rachel Stanley** on successfully graduating from RMAS. We now wish them both well on their Tp Comd's Course. And a special thank you to our hard-pressed civilian admin offrs, who give us tremendous support (especially during the recruiting and mobilisation phases) and who brought us through one of our best SPS inspections ever: to **Maggie Atcheson** in RHQ; **Tracey Holdway**, HQ Sqn; **Maggie Hughes**, 48 Sqn; **Lorraine Sweeney**, 58 Sqn; **Nicole Payne**, 89 Sqn and **Terry Deering**, 95 Sqn. Finally another special thank you to the FSA, **Martin Pointon**, for guiding us all through the pay and accounting quagmire.

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97th SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Sarah Streete**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Parker**

THE CHALLENGE

Take 50+ TA soldiers from six different Regts and three independent Sqns from Aberdeen to Eastbourne and from Cardiff to Norwich - and form them into a fully deployable Sig Sqn. Easy? This was the task set for 97 Sig Sqn last Autumn, and since then the personnel have been selected, recruited and three initial trg weekends have been carried out. As they prepare to depart for the RTMC Chilwell on 1 March, they are a positive and enthusiastic body of men and women all looking forward to six months in theatre.

The Comd Team first met in December 03 for a day of briefings and team building. Ops Offr **Capt Chris Kinvig**, 38 Sig Regt (V), is also the Planning Offr and has been heavily involved in the formation of the Sqn.

One team chooses an original way of changing the wheel on a trailer

WEEKEND 1 - RIPON CAMP, 9-11 JANUARY

This was the first time that the OC met her Sqn, and the aim of the trg was to develop teamwork, to enable the Sqn to bond, and to assess the physical fitness of the individuals. The Tp Comds, **Lt Anne Gallagher**, 37 Sig Regt (V) and **2Lt Laura Fernand**, 32 Sig Regt (V), enthusiastically set about preparing a variety of comd tasks for the soldiers, and the teamwork that developed during this phase was exactly as required.

A quiz on the Saturday night ensured that the brain cells in 97 Sig Sqn were tested to the full, and a BPFA on Saturday morning tested the physical fitness of each individual. The less said about the latter the better, although it is fair to say that for many, (in fact all) the only way was up! With female soldiers taking the first three places in the scoring, and the award for the super fit going to **LCpl Fiona Scott** from 2 Sig Sqn, the males had it all to do for the following weekend.

Comd 2 NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas MBE**, was due to fly in to meet the Sqn and participate in the assault course, but with strong winds preventing him flying, it meant that **Lt Col Steve Richardson**, CO 38 Sig Regt (V), had to step into the breach and take his place. He completed the course with ease, but somehow did not get as muddy as the rest of the Sqn!

WEEKEND 2 - SWYNNERTON CAMP, 23-25 JANUARY

This was a chance for the soldiers to show off their shooting skills with an APWT on the range, followed by the dreaded (for some) BPFA. Luckily, our PTI, **Cpl Andy Newson** is no good at measuring distance, and so the 2.4 km was rather short. A lot more green results! Saturday evening gave us the opportunity to mix with all the soldiers who were on the 38 Sig Regt (V) Trade Course that was co-located at Swynnerton. Sunday morning saw the Sqn breaking the ice on the trg area and completing the CFT. Once again, CO 38 Sig Regt (V) took the place of the Bde Comd, who was once more attempting to fly in from Corsham. This time he was more successful and the Sqn was pleased to meet him and hear his address to them.

WEEKEND 3 - LONGMOOR CAMP, 20-22 FEBRUARY

With only 10 days to go before mobilisation and Call Out papers having just been received by those deploying, this was the final weekend, and alongside the trg, various briefings were organised to ensure that everyone was fully prepared for deployment. OC Balkans Sig Sqn, **Maj Tom McCappin** and his SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Duggan** had had their arms twisted and 'agreed' to come over from the Balkans to spend a weekend in the UK in to brief our soldiers. This was a very valuable brief and provided up to date and relevant information. We also had a full brief from the team from RTMC, Chilwell, and **Maj Brian Millson**, who had had three tours in the Balkans, gave us a further pre-deployment brief. We also had the pleasure of hosting **Maj (Retd) Bernard Redshaw**, the Editor of *The WIRE*, and enjoyed hearing about his recent experiences in the Balkans and Iraq.

Frodo is rescued from Shelob's web

As expected, a further BPFA was held, but in true **Cpl Newson** style, the run was once more rather short. This could be a shock when we hit Chilwell! Other activities included an orienteering event across the trg area, with some excellent performances. The winning males on the different courses were **Sgt Stuart Farquharson-Roberts** and **Sig Craig Johnson**; and the winning females were **Lt Anne Gallagher** (despite having said, 'Don't give an officer a map') and **SSgt Lynne Camm**. A veh NAVEX was also carried out in the surrounding area. Each team had to travel between a series of 10 checkpoints and the team with the lowest mileage and most accurate answers to the treasure hunt questions would be the winners. Winning dets were **SSgt Geoff Small's** and **Sgt Paul O'Malley's**.

All smiles and joviality at the Beach Party

In preparation for a summer deployment, a Beach Party was held on the Saturday evening, and attire ranged from the grass skirt to the tropical shirt and flip-flops. Volleyball and Pass the Peanut (don't ask) were just two of the games organised by **SSgt Cindy Meller** and her team.

So, six months later, did we complete the challenge? Yes, we did! On Monday 1 March we have a Sqn of 56 TA Soldiers and Offrs turning up at RTMC Chilwell ready for mobilisation. This will be followed by a Formation Parade in Nottingham on 13 March, and then six weeks Special-to-Arm trg in various locs across the country. We deploy to theatre on 26 April to take up our role as the Multi-National Task Force Signals Unit (MNTFSU) on 1 May 2004.

1st MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUANDRON (215)

OC **Maj PRJ Drew**
RSM **WO1(RSM) AJ Shadwick**

THE KIWI TROPHY

The Kiwi Trophy is an annual grueling 13-mile March and Shoot Competition starting and finishing on Kiwi Hill, Bulford. Traditionally held by 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)) until their disbandment, it was then inherited by 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215).

During the 191418 War, Bulford was the main New Zealand trg camp in England. It was used for both trg and rehab, and in 1918 housed 162 Offrs and 4,167 Soldiers. At the end of the war there was an atmosphere of anticlimax, frustration and impatience as troops were waiting to be repatriated. To prevent an outbreak of trouble, soldiers were given the task of carving the Kiwi into the hillside. It is 128m long with a beak of 46m and 'NZ' in 20m high letters. In 1980 the Kiwi was restored by 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)) and has been maintained annually by them since.

The New Zealand Defence Staff presented the Kiwi Trophy in 1981 and troops compete for it each year. The March and Shoot is an individual best effort event over an undulating course. Individual scores are added together at the end for an inter-troop event. Each individual's final time was the time obtained in the march plus 3 minutes added for each one of

Cpl Reid and Cpl Rowe at the start line

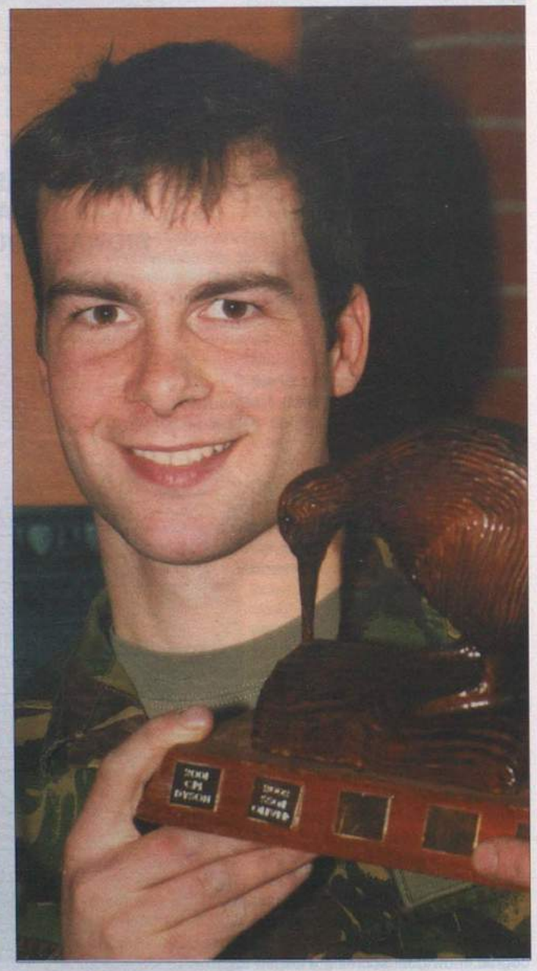
Cpl Sam Sutton coming through the December mist

the 10 shots missed on the range. It was a tough competition with less than 20 out of over 100 starters finishing in a total time of less than 3 hours.

1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215) was delighted to welcome the Acting High Commissioner **Suzanne Blumhardt** and the SOinC(A) to the competition on 9 December 2003. The day started with a short Act of Remembrance at Tidworth Military Cemetery for the New Zealanders who gave their lives in the War and who are buried there. ollowing the service, **Ms Blumhardt** and the

SOinC(A) were taken round various vantage points on the course and the ranges to watch the competition. There were a few pained expressions seen on the faces of those coming up Kiwi Hill to the finish line at the top! It should be pointed out that the competition was a Scale A parade; anyone organising the competition or hosting guests completed the event the previous day!

This year's competition was a close event, with the winner of the men's race **Lt Jim King** (2 hrs 12 mins) narrowly piping **Cpl Jim Masters** (2 hrs 16 mins). **Lt Cat Yarroll** (3 hrs 6 mins) was the winner of the women's race. A guest team from 3(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt (based in Bulford) won the team event.



Lt James King, winner of the Men's event.

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memory. As the title suggested, the ex was an arduous time for the students, with little sleep, thanks to the nocturnal activities of **Cpl Ruby Murray** and **Sig Brown**. However, the platoon soon got their own back by organising a snap ambush. **Sig Brown** may be a PTI, but no one thought even he could run that fast. On arrival back at Bramcote the ex turnaround was completed and everyone paraded in the 501 Club, where the Top Student, **Sig Buphal**, 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn was announced by the OC Trg Wing, **Capt Russ Darlington**. Congratulations also went to **Sig Lock**, 256 Sig Sqn who was Top Field Student and to **Pte Kelly**, Sp Sqn for Best Endeavour.

5 DIVISION CROSS-COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The above event was held on a glorious day in Warminster, on Wednesday 10 December 03, slap in the middle of the 'silly season.' The Regt's aim was to finish in the top 3 teams, in order to qualify for the Army Championships in the New Year. This would be difficult to achieve, due to the extremely high standard of runners in 5 Div. Key opposition were 21 Sig Regt (AS), who were expected to win the event; 11 Sig Regt, who are always able to field a strong team from Blandford; and 29 Regt Cdo RA. Each team member put in an excellent individual performance, allowing 30 Sig Regt to finish as runners-up and qualify for entry into the Army Championships on 11 February. Special mentions go to **Cpl Paul Clancy** (4th) , **Cpl Paul Kemp** (6th), new runner **Lt Dan Wright** (32nd) and **Capt Graham Pardew**, who finished 2nd Veteran. Well done, team and best of luck in the Corps and Army Championships.

EXERCISE TARTAN KHUKURI - *by Sig Ansell*

Despite all that was going on, we still got away for the Sqn's annual shooting camp at Hythe ranges in Dover. The first day included a round robin of 3 parts: rifle APWT, pistol APWA and an advanced fire positions shoot in the SAT. For some of us, this was the first time firing a pistol, and it was an interesting experience. The evening's activities included a theory lesson on tactical river crossings, which we were due to perform on Friday, the final day of the ex. The week was excellent, with action on the Moving Mechanical Target Range (MMTR), the individual battle skills range (IBSR), the SAT and a converted .22 range used by the infantry before deploying to Northern Island. The defence shoot, and pairs fire and manoeuvre street fighting were brilliant, with lessons learnt by all.

Sig Yubaraj laying down a heavy weight of fire on the section defence shoot

This last month has seen some changes in key personnel in the Sqn. We said a fond farewell to the outgoing Ops Offr, **Capt Mark Stoter,** who is posted to 264 Sig Sqn, and extend our warm welcome to his replacement, **Capt John Malcolm** and OC Whisky Tp, **Lt (QGO) Tekbahadur Rai**.

Congratulations to **Capt Mark Stoter** and **WO2 (FofS) Carl Heath,** for being awarded the QCVS for service on OP TELIC; and to **Sig Ansell**, who has been awarded the Joint Theatre Forces Comd's Com

EXERCISE AFRICAN SHIELD 03 - *by SSgt West*

EX AFRICAN SHIELD 03 was a joint UK Armed Forces and South African Defence Force (SADF) ex which took place at Snake Valley AFB on the outskirts of Pretoria, South Africa over the period 13 October - 03 December 03. Soldiers from 256 Sig Sqn and 2 Sig Regt reinforced Yankee Tp, which was tasked with providing the IT infrastructure and the real world comms solutions for the ex. Due to the complexity of and size of the task, the Tp was split into four secs: the Comd Team, Inst Sec, IS/JOCS Sec and the VSC 501 Det. Once in South Africa, we soon got to work on building the ex complex in our secs.

The team from York, made up of Inst Techs and Linemen, deployed for the build phase, and returned to the UK in mid November. Many thanks go to **WO1 Terry Hague**, **Sgts Bes Beswick** and **Mark Lee-Davis**, and their teams, for their excellent work and hours of entertainment.

The 501 Det was also tasked with manning the COMCEN and the all-important Help Desk. The Det was led by **Cpl Sundar Rai**, assisted by ICC Comd, **Cpl Khagendra Pun**. The crew performed very well, dealing with the tech queries from the Staff in their own inimitable style.

The JOCS Team, headed up by **SSgt (ISM) Rich Gathercole**, were tasked with the small job of running out the largest JOCS LAN ever deployed. But many of the tps managed to get away on some well deserved R and R, which included a road trip to Durban and the Indian Ocean, Safaris, and various Battlefield tours. Most of the Tp visited Rorke's Drift and the battle site at Isandlwana. Dodgy **Michael Caine** impressions were enjoyed by all!

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER - *by Sgt Nat Turney*

As usual life in 256 Sig Sqn has been busy, with Sqn members in all manner of interesting and far-flung places. Luckily we were all fully rested during the Christmas period, ensuring that we will be ready for exs in Gibraltar, Belize and Cyprus to name just a few, not forgetting our Sqn military skills ex in Catterick. We also managed to get eight intrepid winter sportsmen and women away to Zell Am Zee, Austria, to take part in the Corps Winter Sports Camp. Ably led by **Lt Irene Gordon** and **Sgt Nat Turney**, the Team arrived at Club Kitstienhorn, slightly worse for wear after the best part of two days cramped in a mini-bus. In true Royal Signals fashion, the team carried out a quick turn around and headed down to *Crazy Daisy's* to catch up with long lost friends from around the Corps.

The following five days were spent in groups learning and improving Snowboarding skills. The majority of the team were novices, so we spent most of the week in various states of falling down and comparing bruises, all of which was done to a very high standard! We learned lots of new skills during the week, including jumps, spins and avoiding irate German skiers at the T-bar start.

In the second week we entered two teams into the Race events. Team A consisted of **Lt Irene Gordon**, **Sgt Nat Turney**, **LCpl Kev Wilson** and **Sig Brian Lock**. Team B consisted of **Cpl Simon Gibney**, **Sig Phil Littlehales**, **Sig Andrew O'Brien** and **Sig Phil Hanes**. Both teams did extremely well, with a special mention for **LCpl Wilson** for coming 4th in the Slalom and Giant Slalom and 3rd in the Dual Slalom. The camp was thoroughly enjoyed by all the team and was a great success. It is hoped that the Regt will enter a team in December to improve on all aspects of the camp.

EXERCISE RAM MUDPACK - *by Sgt Andy Preen*

During November 03, 256 Sig Sqn deployed to Wathgill Camp in Catterick for Exercise RAM MUDPACK, a 2-day driver trg ex on Driffield Cross-country trg area. The famous wet Yorkshire weather that we were promised was surprisingly kind to us, and in no time we hit the hills on the trg area in the Land Rover Wolf.

Individual driving skills being put to the test

Every thing was going to plan until **Cpl Watson** and **Sig Gibson** took a Rover for a swim and sank it up to the doors. Fortunately, help arrived from REME, who were conducting a background activity for us, ironically on self-recovery. The wet weather we were promised then arrived with a vengeance, making driving a little more interesting. **Sig Nukutubu**, although Fijian, can swear in perfect English. For most of the younger lads, this was the first time they had ever done any cross-country driving, so they were like kids with new toys. Commendations for driving excellence go to **Cpl Claridge** and **Sig Harrison**. An excellent ex, and we're looking forward to going back soon.

DEFEATING THE VERITONIAN INFIDELS - *by 258 Sig Sqn*

With **Lt Nathan Streetly** taking the lead, the end of January saw Echo Tp deploy on a tactical comms ex in support of the Spanglian Govt who were at war with the Veritonian Infidels.

As the tactical aspects of trg at 30 Sig Regt are often overlooked at the expense of more demanding strategic comms, the Tp were more than ready to deploy their FFRs to practise some old lessons. After a bit of direction from the DS, and in particular from the Tp's old warhorse, **SSgt Render**, the dets were all soon tactically sited.

With the ex scenario developing, the NBC state was soon raised, and what had been a cheery ex took a bit of a downturn when the call of 'GAS, GAS, GAS' came over the net at just after midnight. Next morning, the DS found several NBC casualties and having people dressed in 4 Romeo led to several confusing and amusing incidents within the dets. Despite these inconveniences, many of the personnel agreed that Swynnerton trg area in January was a far better place to be wearing NBC kit, than it had been in the Gulf 8 months earlier.

Unsurprisingly, the good guys defeated the Veritonian Infidels and Echo Tp was able to return to camp in time for the weekend. The ex had served its purpose, and a motivated and well-formed team was now ready to take on the trials of the currently arriving CORMORANT kit and learning a new set of skills.

31st (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col SG Hutchinson MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) JJ Johnston**

In order to get the blood flowing again straight after Christmas, the Regt deployed to Longmoor on 10-11 January for a weekend concentrating on basic soldiering and comms skills.

The Sigs and junior LCpls had the joys of a cadre course, whilst the other NCOs and WOs had a weekend under the YofS, delving into the more arcane aspects of LANWARD use and A and P. The WOs met the new RSM, **WO1 (RSM) JJ JOHNSTON** and dined out the old one, **WO1 (Ex RSM) JP Paterson**. The Offrs, on the other hand, enjoyed such treats as CR writing and a night orienteering event, culminating in a very nice meal at a local Golf Club.

Since then, the Sqns have all been out on their own, unaided and unsupervised. 94 (BY) Sig Sqn managed to outdo everyone else by arranging for a couple of 432s to enable them to become armd inf for the weekend. It's a shame that one of them got bogged in. They quickly re-rolled to airmobile inf with the help of a passing Gazelle pilot who just happened to be around for the weekend.

Finally, we congratulation to **Capt Mark Windibank** and his wife on the birth of their baby daughter **Victoria Rose**. We wish them all well.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj Lamb**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Cooper**

We welcome our new regular tech PSI, **Cpl Scott Marlow** and say goodbye to his predecessor, **Cpl Jason Light**; and to **Sigs Ashton** and **Titchener**, who are deploying with 97 Sig Sqn (V) on an operational tour to the Balkans.

THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER CUP - *by OCdt Chris Lower*

We arrived at Crowborough on the evening of 5 December and reported to reception, only to discover that we had been selected to provide a fire picket for the first night of the stay. Much to my

unfortunate luck, I drew the short straw and was on the said fire picket duty. All I could think of at this point was how much my team mates must be missing me whilst warm and jolly in the bar with the subsidised alcohol flowing.

The Competition began with an early start, the first event commencing at 07.30hrs. We mustered for roll call, where we were read the team lists and rules of the Competition, before piling into minibuses to be taxied to our first event. In true military fashion, the first event began late, and we were in fact in loc before the DS.

We began with a booby trap event, which entailed each team member locating a booby trap on an FFR and trailer. By the time our designated 45 minutes were over, I think we had had our entire team maimed or killed by one device or another. I concluded that as Signallers, we were not designed for this type of devious warfare.

We collected ourselves, and moved off to our next stand, which was designed to test accuracy. This event consisted of a set of Golf clubs, a water feature and a target drawn roughly out of mine tape. The idea was to chip the golf ball over the water feature and have it come to rest in the centre of the target. This would have been a reasonable challenge, had it not been for the high wind and heavy rain. Balls started flying in all directions, and on more than one occasion a faint shout of 'Fore' could be heard over the howling of the wind as a ball went screaming towards the DS - who incidentally, were standing nowhere near the target area. Out of a possible score of 50, the highest achieved by any member was 10; which I was to find out later at the prize-giving, was the same as the OC's score.

After being ushered away from the clubs, we parted company from the DS, who seemed a little too keen to see us go, and headed towards the orienteering stand. This was the most tactical of the events in which we took part, with the need to prioritise between the number of points each stamp would achieve us and the fitness levels of each member of the team. The event seemed to be our forte, with the eight of us successfully gathering all points available bar two, and was the best score achieved.

Next, we faced a challenge with a very contemporary theme. Our mission was to disable an unexploded chemical warhead from a suspected Al Samoud missile. This sounded easy enough until we were politely informed that we were not allowed to touch the warhead or to allow it to touch the ground. We were, instead, to carry this circular warhead pinned between two poles.

We then had to negotiate a route which was imaginatively constructed by the DS, and did indeed test our ability to work together as a group. The team was delighted when we had clambered down from the final tree and crossed the finish line with only two penalties conceded.

After an extremely difficult morning with a variety of challenging activities, we were told of a great surprise that lay in store for us. We all perked up at the mention of a surprise, naively believing that it might be a gesture such as free drinks in the bar for a job well done. How foolish we were. It turned out to be the CO's Challenge, which incorporated a mid-distance run, a short log run, raft construction, paddling the aforementioned raft across the length of a lake, and another very short run with the log. 56 Sqn was fortunate enough to have quite a lead in the run, which allowed us to complete the log run at a comfortable speed.

The raft construction was another matter entirely, with our whole team participating in the assembly with one of the female members directing the construction. We were a little shocked when we had finished, to find that every other raft had good design qualities such as an A-frame or cross members for support, whilst our attempt looked more like a cardboard box than a seagoing vessel. Nevertheless, we put to sea immediately, but found that more time was spent rescuing crew members who had fallen overboard than actually moving forward. We did not win this event - or do particularly well, to be honest - but a brilliant time was had by all.

At the end, we were also surprised to find that we had finished in second place out of six teams, and this along with the food and drink at the bar consoled us for the rest of the evening.

A good day was ended in the best possible way, with the SSM and senior SSgts all singing *Alice* in the Karaoke!

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

CO	**Lt Col Somerville MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Browitt**

REGIMENTAL SHOOTING CAMP

An old joke tells of the man who, when asked by his friend why he had a glove on one hand and not on the other replied, 'Because the weather forecast said that, while on one hand it might be raining, on the other hand it might be fine.'

Funny, maybe not, but true. Ask the members of 33 Sig Regt who travelled to Wathgill to take part in a shooting weekend in early January.

After avidly following the 5-day forecast leading up to the day that they left Liverpool, **Maj Tony McFarlane** was convinced that this time the met office had got it right. Sadly, **Tony** and fellow **Majs Stan Quayle**, **Bill Wyper** and **Bill Dixon** had forgotten that the weather in the Catterick area pays scant regard to what the met office says it ought to be doing.

Despite the arctic wind that blew all weekend and the compulsorily issued sleet and hail, the weather didn't dampen the ardour of the soldiers who took part in what was a very enjoyable weekend's shooting. In addition to going back to basics, the soldiers had the opportunity to enjoy some one-on-one coaching - something that they don't have the opportunity to do very often. Thanks to the endeavours of Trg Maj, **Maj Chris Laycock**, they also enjoyed the chance to fire the L96 sniper rifle.

The wonderment that accompanies the realisation, when soldiers actually understand why and how they zero their personal weapons is something to behold. With some of them it's almost as if they have just discovered the meaning of life, whilst others still have a way to go.

All in all, a very enjoyable, productive and positive weekend for all, apart, that is, for the weatherman!

55 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj McFarlane**
SSM	**WO2 Stowers**

NORTHWEST TA CUP FINAL

When Liverpool UOTC learned that they would face 33 Sig Regt's 55 Sig Sqn, they must have thought that they were in for an easy

ride. Having brushed aside the Regt's 59 Sqn in a one-sided semi-final, they must have expected the same opposition from the team from the Regt's HQ. They couldn't have been more wrong. Certainly on paper the youngsters from OTC had to be firm favourites, but football isn't played on paper is it?

Aware of the athleticism of the OTC squad, **SSgt Mick Murphy** decided to line up in a 5-4-1 formation, confident that they could contain the opposition in the middle of the field: they had their own strike ability.

With the game 25 minutes old and the score at 0-0, it looked like the plan was working, when a defensive error allowed OTC an opportunity to test the keeper, and **SSgt Paddy Cavanagh** was well beaten with a low-driven shot which nestled in the bottom right corner of his goal. The goal gave OTC a second wind and they pushed forward at every opportunity looking to capitalise; but they hadn't reckoned on the resolve of their worthy opponents. In fact, OTC were lucky not to have gone in at half time 2-1 down, **Sig Mick Carvell** and **Sgt Steve Hayward** both missing opportunities.

The second half saw the referee reach for his notebook for the first time in what was an extremely hard fought but fair game, both teams deserving of praise for the manner in which they played. A mistimed tackle saw **Sgt Steve Dixon** go into the ref's book but the second booking saw OTC's keeper leave the field after upending **Sig Andy Golding,** who was clean through on goal.

55 Sqn battle it out

Despite a one-man advantage, it looked as though the writing was on the wall for the Signals. As full time loomed ever closer, the team from Huyton threw everything that they had at OTC and, despite being caught on the break a couple of times, looked the more likely of the sides to score, and score they did.

A wicked free kick by **Sig Golding** left OTC's replacement keeper clutching fresh-air at the end of his six-yard box, as the ball flew past him and into the net, levelling the scores. And so it was at the end of normal time. 30 minutes of extra time followed, during which either side could have scored, but neither looked like ever doing so. After 120 minutes of gutsy hard fought football, the game was still tied and went to penalties. Even after 5 penalties each the sides were tied and so it was down to the cruellest of finishes, sudden death.

Everybody who watched the game and the players who took part, know who missed spot kicks, but that's not what this game will be remembered for. This was 2 teams who went onto the pitch and gave their all for 2 solid hours of highly entertaining, hard fought football and to name names would detract from some displays that are rightly worthy of praise. The side from 55 Squadron, ably captained by **Sgt Bob Pendelton**, earned the respect of their cup-winning opponents and all who watched the game.

Cpl Dom Seery, recently returned from OP TELIC, gave a sterling display, as did **FofS Gaz Williams, Sgts Andy Symmonds** and **Steve Dixon**, not forgetting **SSgt Paddy Cavanagh** who, as always, gave an excellent account of himself. In a game that was played with such passion and determination it was hard to pick a man-of-the-match but, if there has to be one, the award goes to **Sig Brian O'Connor**, who battled throughout the game and contested every ball. The only thing that covered more of the pitch than **Brian**, was the grass.

80 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Capt Quinn**
SSM	**WO2 Ollson**

After a busy social Christmas period the Sqn has returned to work and is presently preparing for the yearly RSIT inspection and ECI.

The Sqn is also back up to strength after the return of members from deployment to both the Gulf and Bosnia. We welcome back our OP TELIC participants, **SSgt Mike Barton** and **Sgts Caroline Patton, Paul Wilson** and **Carl Dace**. Returning from Bosnia, we welcome **Sgts Jim Bland** and **Tony Booth** and **LCpl Pete Hutchinson.**

Five 80 Sqn members have served for various periods in Banja Luka as part of 98 Sig Sqn, a composite Sqn created from Units within 11 Sig bde. A few reputations were enhanced during the tour, including that of **Pte Dave Jones**, painter and decorator to the SSM. He and **Sig Angela Dowling** liked it so much that they have decided to stay on for another tour!

The Sqn is continuing to follow its trg programme and some members have recently completed a large number of courses. Congratulation in particular go to **Sgt Paul Bermingham** and **LCpl Ruth Cross**, on completion of their RSSSTA and RSJCCTA. Finally, a special mention to **Capt Chris Hopkins** and **SSgt Steve Collister** for their part in the rescue of a hill walker in Snowdonia over the Christmas break.

Sgts Bland and Hutch at BLMF

71st (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col HJ Robertson TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) P Curtis**

265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Michael Mustoe**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Ian Lapidge**

The Sqn finished off a successful year with the Christmas function, held at a local restaurant close to the TA Centre. We took the occasion to say farewell to the RSM, **WO1 Steve White** and his good lady **Sarah**. **Steve** has done a tremendous amount of work promoting the Regt, and it has been through his efforts that the Unit's *WIRE* contributions have been so good, frequently making the colour section. The Sqn wish them both the very best and thank them for their support whilst they were with us.

After a much-earned rest over the Christmas break the Sqn jumped straight back into the routine with a Regt weekend down at Napier Bks, Shorncliffe. This weekend was to bring us up to speed with OP MEDWAY. Again the Sqn SNCO's enjoyed a pleasant evening, with the Mess walking around the deep tunnels and war rooms of Dover Castle, followed by drinks in the Castle. Looking at the average age of HQ Sqn, the evening brought back some fond memories for many of our members. The ORs were allowed to savour the delights of Folkestone town on a Saturday night, which they enjoyed.

The officers held a farewell dining out for the Padre, **Maj John Scott** and the Adjt, **Capt Alan Garrett**, who is posted to SHAPE. **Al** has also done a lot for the Regt during his time with us, and we wish him well in his new job.

With February already here, the Sqn joined the rest of the Regt on Hythe Ranges for a March and Shoot Competition. Not only did we support the Regt with admin staff, we also entered an all-REME team made from our LAD. As usual, the Sqn proved that it's not just age but experience that counts, as our boys came joint first (last year we won it.)

The Saturday night of the event brought another function, with the WOs' and SNCOs' Mess hosting the JNCOs to a Games Night. It was a night to remember, giving an added dimension to the weekend.

68 (INNS OF COURT AND CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Jonathon Manley**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Terry Gardiner**

SIGNALLERS' SWISS SKI SUCCESS - *by Lt Paul Mitcham*

At the end of January, members of the 68 (ICandCY) Sig Sqn travelled with members of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY), to Verbier, Switzerland, to represent 71 (Yeomanry) Sig Regt in the RAC/Inter-Yeomanry Downhill Skiing Championships.

With some 120 serving members of various Yeomanry Regts taking part in EX SNOW FOX IX, competition was understandably tough. However, **Cdt Esn Alexandra Muir**, FANY, retained first position in the Women's Super G for the second year running, and **Sgt Audra Wheeler**, 68 (ICandCY) Sig Sqn, came third in the mixed Beginner's category. The FANY Team came fourth overall, and 68 (IC&CY) Sqn Team came a creditable sixth.

Skiing is widely recognised across the Army as one of the most challenging sports, but it is also a highly valuable form of AT, bringing out important personal qualities in soldiers. As **Lt Paul Mitcham**, a Tp Comd at Whipps Cross, commented, 'There's nothing like standing poised at the top of an icy racing slope to make you overcome your fears and compete for the sake of the team. I guess that's why the Army attaches so much importance to skiing.'

It wasn't all hard work though. The team had plenty of time for après-ski in what is surely recognised as one of the best ski resorts in Europe. Verbier is not the natural choice for beginners, but it offers an amazing variety of slopes (and pubs!) for more advanced skiers and snowboarders.

All ranks were mixed together for four days' instruction before the races. Talent and teamwork are of paramount importance, and fantastic instruction both on and off-piste from the École Suisse de Ski means EX SNOW FOX is also great for meeting others from all walks of life from across the TA.

The Championships are fast becoming an annual and growing event. Next year, SNOW FOX X will run from 28 January to 5 February 2005. And, as ever, we will be there again!

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Michael Wood**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Jim Swain**

Congratulations go to **Sig Ian Went**, who was presented with the EYA (Harlow Branch) Award for the Most Improved Soldier. December saw the return of **Cpl Richard Marsh**, **LCpls Kelly Cloughton**, **Deano Honychurch** and **Kelly Delf** from OP TELIC 2. Although still on leave, they have brought back some excellent photos and some interesting stories, all had good tours learning new and useful skills to bring back to the unit.

January 2004 saw the first visit of the new CO, **Lt Col Hugh Robertson TD**, to the Sqn and Chelmsford TAC, and the start of the 2004 Inter-Tp competition. 882 Troop got off to a flying start, taking an early lead in the first indoor 22 shoot. However, there is a long way to go and we can look forward to an even harder fought competition this year - from both Tps!

WANTED

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NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

4th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Maj Addley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Watson**

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Holly Richardson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Deano Cox**

After some well-earned Christmas leave, the Sqn returned to a new year that promises to be even busier than the last. The first major event of the year was a leadership cadre run by **Lt Simon Limbrey** (now Capt - Congratulations, Sir)

Running at the same time as the cadre course was EX SNOW WARRIOR, a two-week alpine and ski touring ex catering for all abilities. Members of the Tp attending were **LCpl Andy Goff**, **Sig Dogger Bolton**, **Sig Ash Rodway** and **Sig Matt Baker**. By the end of the two weeks, everyone was reasonably proficient (some more than others) and most had seemed to master the basics (t-bars, putting on ski boots and stopping without landing in a heap!)

The Sqn football team have been in action taking part in the BA(G) Minor Units Army Cup. A quarter-final match against arch rivals, 7 Armd Bde saw us win 3-2 after extra time. This set up a home tie against 14 Geographic Sqn RE in the semi-final. With a third-string squad, our players found their real potential by winning 6-0. This has now set up an interesting final against 24 Regt RLC, which will be played at JHQ on 6 February 04. If successful, we go through to the Minor Units semi-final in UK. Good luck lads.

Towards the end of the month, the Tp went to Berlin to celebrate **Cpl Rya Booth** and **LCpl Andy Goff's** birthdays. The trip was very successful and everyone got back safely, although **Sig Barrie** returned a day early, as he couldn't find the hotel.

We welcome **Sig Matt Baker** and **Sig Emma Smith** to the Tp.

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Limbrey**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Lawn**

The Tp has had a fairly busy time since returning from Christmas leave. Several members went to France for a week on the Div Skiing Championships. Despite the rain and a lot of snow, it was an excellent week for all concerned, despite a few falls. **Sig Herbert** went adventure training in Bavaria on EX SNOW WARRIOR. Whilst there, he achieved his basic skiing and touring proficiencies, and is hoping to progress onto his ski instructors qualification. **Sigs Jo Evans** and **Ched Richardson** have just returned from the Canary Islands, where they were taking part in EX CANARY GOLD, a large sailing exped in 2 one-week blocks. It was extremely arduous, but apparently all had a really good time.

Welcome to **Sgt Smith**, who has just joined us from 16 Sig Regt. Farewell to **Cpl Bruce Morrison**, who is off to Blandford as a Tp Welfare Cpl; to **LCpl Karl Walton**, who is off to 14 Sig Regt (EW); and to recently-promoted **Capt Limbrey**, who is to be attached to 1 PWO for their forthcoming tour in Bosnia.

Sig Mc Gowan crosses the 'lava flow' as part of a comd task

LEADERSHIP CADRE COURSE.

11 January saw the start of a one-week leadership cadre course for the Sqn, where 24 eager sigs and newly promoted LCpls demonstrated their leadership abilities during a variety of activities. They were tested physically and mentally, whilst the DS looked on in amazement and in some cases, humour. Four Sections of six soldiers had to complete various command tasks, including map reading, raft-building, Land Rover pulls, stretcher runs, gun runs and field craft.

One of the teams gets going during the raft race

On the map-reading, a few potential pathfinders got lost, and had to tab an extra 2 miles back to safety. The raft-building proved to be a challenge, testing our knots and swimming abilities to the full. This was not helped by the temperature of the water to be crossed. We are sure that the DS broke the ice prior to our going in. In another event, **Sig Bow** showed his cool, pushing the Land Rover for 500 metres while foaming at the mouth. **Sig Dunoon** moaned about everything except shower time with the boys. **Sig Richardson** pulled **Sig McGowan** around the stretcher run and other physical events.

Overall, it was an arduous but enjoyable week, and concluded with an Offrs and Sgts Mess function. This gave the juniors a taste of what they can achieve with the right ambition, motivation and frame of mind.

On our return to camp, the awards took place. **Sig Wood** was awarded Most Improved; **Sig Bow**, Best Endeavour and **Sig White**, Best Commander. The Best Section went to Section 1, which was led by **Cpl Dave Visalia**.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS WINTER SPORTS CHAMPIONSHIPS - EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 7

In November, three skiers and three snowboarders from the Sqn attended the Royal Signals winter sports camp in Sell am See, Austria. After 2 weeks of much-needed trg, we started the racing. By this time we had worked out which poles to go round, so we started to get competitive - especially with each other. All the team skied and boarded well. Congratulations to **Cpl Stu Crimps** for winning the snowboarding novice championships.

1 (UK) ARMOURED DIVISION SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS - EXERCISE PIPEDOWN 04

In January the Sqn Ski Team drove (tightly packed into an Astra hatchback) to the Divisional Skiing Championships in Les Contamines-Montjoie, France. Despite the miserable weather, the racing went ahead. This led to some impressive head plants into deep snow! We all skied beyond our abilities and a had a lot of fun in the process - especially when we were told that we needed to cut up three bags worth of pine needles to mark the course. We thought it was it a wind-up! Three hours of cutting up pine branches later, we had loads of blisters and a sense of humour failure. A complete waste because, although it wasn't a wind-up, they were never used!

The best fun was trying to ski on powder snow, off piste and in full view of the chairlift! **Cpls Carl Shackleton** and **Ali Skene** were embarrassed again when they forgot to get off the chairlift and it had to stop in front of all the racers. After a full weeks racing, we were placed second in the minor units competition. We are blaming **Cpl Shackleton** for not winning. **Lt Holly Richardson** came second in the women's event and went on to compete at the Army Championships in Serre Chevalier, where she came eighth. We all had a great time and the championships are highly recommended to anyone who is considering attending next year.

LCpl Woodley and Sig Dinsdale at the Royal Signals Skiing Championships

7th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj Chris Ford**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Martin Walsh**

BOWMAN is the word on everyone's lips at the moment. With the Sqn due to undergo Digitisation this year, our main effort is about to switch from our war-fighting role to preparation, of both equipt and personnel, for the new comms era. **Capt Alf Cupper**, SO3 NBC and Digitisation, is the driving force for this project amongst the Bde Staff, and we must congratulate him on his marriage to **SSgt Kim Castledine**, 15 Sig Regt. The pair finally tied the knot at Beverley Minster, East Yorkshire on Saturday 22 November 03 – the same day that England won the Rugby World Cup! Additionally, the Sqn is enjoying a newfound sporting prowess on both the Badminton court and muddy paths of many cross-country courses. So, as you can tell, Sqn life is as hectic as ever, but we wouldn't have it any other way!

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Peter Wettenhall**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Lockie**

SHQ Tp has had several new arrivals over the past few months. December saw the arrival of **LCpl Lewis** and **Sig Egglestone**,

Capt Alf Cupper and his bride, SSgt Kim Castledine

both straight from their Class 3 course in Blandford. January saw the arrival of **Sgt Smith** and **LCpl Mortimer**, both from RSS. The Tp is also preparing for the departure of **FofS Jim Ross**, who is leaving due to the imminent BOWMAN conversion.

The Tp has also been deeply saddened by the news the **SSgt Lockie** will be leaving for an 8-month tour of BATUS. The sadness is not of course that he is leaving, but that **Sgt Zoë Dolan** will be temporarily in charge. 17 January was the date for the Techs belated Christmas Function. The event, organised by **Cpl Clark**, was held at *Dakotas*, our local steak delicatessen. The evening started and by the end of the night we were all extremely merry!

ALPHA TROOP – *by Cpl Codack*

Tp Comd	**Lt Aileen Grant**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Steve Walton**

The Tp returned from Christmas leave refreshed and ready to take on any of the new challenges that awaited a Bde Sig Sqn in its support year. Those challenges didn't involve the repainting of the Tp's fine fleet back to green, however.

Congratulations to **Cpl Jim O'Mahoney**, on his promotion, posting and finally getting his feet under his new desk. **Jim** takes up his new role as Tp Sgt at SYSEX in Blandford. Farewell to **Sgt Link**, who after much deliberation, finally accepted his posting to OPTAG.

We welcome **Sgt Al Clark** on his posting from the BFG office up to the tps (were all the work really gets done). Also welcome to **Sig Heron** on making it into Alpha Tp.

Soldier Development was first on the 'to do' list for the Sqn in January. This involved several stands run, by the Sqn's seniors, in which the JNCO would prepare a sec and lead them through the competition. The sec would be graded on how it performed. **Cpl Lane** managed to wrestle the title from **Cpl Yeomans**, but this was mostly down to **Cpl Yeomans** being rushed off the medical centre at the time. Congratulations once again go out to **Cpl Lane** on becoming a father.

The FTRS lads have settled in very well, with **Cpl Ryan** running the sqn bar extremely well. **Cpl Byrne** has managed to put a team together for the Sqn Badminton team.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Simon Lord**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Giddens**

We welcome **Sigs Nickie** and **Lewis**, who have joined us from RSS Blandford; and **LCpl Davies** and his wife, **Xenia**, who have moved over from Cyprus. Congratulations to **Sig O'Conner**, who returned to the Tp just after New Year, having successfully completed P Coy. The Tp took part in the Sqn's Soldier Development Week, which gave the Cpls a chance to hone their organisational and teaching expertise while everyone else brushed up on their basic skills. The winning Sec was led jointly by **Cpl Constable** and Alpha Tp's **Cpl Lane**. Members of Bravo Tp have also been heavily involved on the armd driving course that is being taught by Bravo Tp's **SSgt Giddens**.

EX MERCURY GLACIER 7 AND EX PIPEDOWN 04
- by Sgt Morris

The Sqn Alpine Skiing Team took part in the Corps Skiing Championships in Kaprun, Austria, for 4 weeks prior to Christmas and the 1 (UK) Armd Div Ski Championships in Les Contanimes, France, for 2 weeks in January. The team consisted of **Sgt Andy Morris** (Team Capt), **Cpl Paul Wraight**, **Cpl Billy Richards**, **LCpl Jay Preston**, and **Sig Stray**.

After a 3-day trip, the Team arrived in Zell-am-See in Austria, where we stayed at the Jugendkitzsteinhorn Hostel (saying that to a taxi driver at 2 in the morning was one of the challenges), our base for the next 4 weeks. The Camp comprised 3 weeks' ski development and race trg with the Corps Race week in the final week.

On the Monday morning we awoke to find no snow around the Hostel, but we were reliably informed that there would be plenty of snow on the Glacier. This proved to be right, but rain, gales and temperatures of -10° C accompanied the snow. The trg proved to be invaluable, with instruction from **SSgt Andy Dawson** and **WO2 John Driver** for which the team were very grateful (most of us found out that ski's have things called edges)! And it proved a major source of entertainment with everybody, including the instructors, face planting on times too numerous to mention. However, the trg must have worked as the team managed a Bronze Medal in the Team Giant Slalom and **Cpl Wraight** getting the Gold in the Individual Giant Slalom. The best prize however was coming first in the BA(G) Minor Units Championships.

19th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC	**Maj Greg Wilson**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Steve Gorton**

EX PANTHER'S CHARGE

Because of our busy Sqn schedule over the past twelve months, it has been a long time since we have managed to deploy a full armd HQ into the field on ex. With the cumulative trg year ex in BATUS becoming just a distant memory, there remains only a handful of personnel who have encountered the joys of erecting 19 Mech Bde's HQ. The lack of experience and the added complication of the HQ being made up from an amalgamation of the two radio tps, were further hampered by gale force winds and rain. With all of these factors considered, it is a credit to the dets that the build was achieved without any major hitches. To ensure that people were under no illusions as to the size of the full lay, it was not only the main complex that deployed. Full admin set (cookhouse, wash tent, sleeps and field latrines), Bde Spt Gp, Comd's Tac HQ and the new and very shiny DRASH (Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter) all sprawled themselves across Shaibah Trg Area.

After a few minor tweaks, the Sqn was ready to receive the new Bde Comd, **Brig Chapman**, for the first viewing of his HQ. The Bde Staff, most of whom had only arrived in the last six months, deployed to the trg area to be educated before carrying out their own planning ex. Whilst everything was set up, the Sqn decided that it could assist with the Corps recruiting plan, and invited Leeds UOTC for a brief and guided tour.

With the ex objectives met, all that remained was to tear down and return to camp. The soldiers and Staff now have a greater understanding of the armd HQ 'Beast'. In record time, the area had been returned to its original state and the armd packet was lined up and ready to move. The most surprising factor was left until last. Of the twelve AFV 43s that deployed, all of them returned unassisted.

HILL WALKING IN FORCE 10 CONDITIONS
- by Sgt Wayne Bramwell

During the 'Other Tasks' year, the Sqn has the flexibility to introduce more 'Fun' into the trg programme. So, with this in the back of their minds, a large number of the Sqn were questioning why they were peering out of the TCVs, parked at the base of Ingleborough, in the howling wind and rain at 08.00hrs on a Tuesday morning. The answer was quite simple. A day spent hill walking in the Yorkshire Moors in small groups has to be far more appealing than the mundane duties in bks.

The 15km route started with a rude awakening, the initial steep slope draining the most enthusiastic of spirits. On reaching the flatter summit ground, the next challenge emerged. The force of the wind and driving rain ensured that everybody got a detailed view of the ground beneath their feet. Indeed **LCpl McDermott** and **Sig Galyer**, manning CP1, must have wondered what they had said to upset everybody so much, that they barely stopped to catch their breath.

After dropping off the summit, the morale began to rise. Normally, this is a good sign, but obviously the groups were so busy having fun, that they decided to stop using the maps. With a few minor adjustments and navigational lessons under the belt, all teams made their soggy way to the finish checkpoint. A quick change into warm dry clothes and into the pub for a well-deserved pint gave the perfect end to a demanding day. In all, it was a very worthwhile day and I am sure on reflection, most people involved would admit that they enjoyed it.

Special mention must go to the Sqn's only JSMEL, **Lt Will Taylor**, as his group was the only team to miss CP2 out completely, being so badly off-route (i.e. lost!).

ALPHA TROOP - *by SSgt Bri Heslop*

Tp Comd	**Lt Will Taylor**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Bri Heslop**

The Tp has now returned safely to bks with more manpower than we have ever known. With all dets now quite healthy, manpower-wise, we have set about removal of the sand and the dust that has somehow built up over the last six months. The accounting process has begun in prep for the bi-annual check, and things don't look too bad so far!

Concurrently the Sqn has embarked on some Iron Man quest, with PT sessions 5 times a week! We thought only **Sig Si Rankin**, the Tp PTI, had volunteered for P Coy, not the entire Tp. We also eagerly await any news on our Bde re-role to a Light Bde, and it should then be out with AFV436S and in with Land Rover FFRs we hope!

We say goodbye to **Sgt Wayne Bramwell**, off to Bravo Tp; **Cpl Sean Fielding**, on promotion to Rear-Link Sgt at 39 Regt RA; and **LCpl Perry**, also on promotion to 21 Sig Regt (AS). We say hello to **Sgt Whitaker**, **Cpl Johnston**, **LCpl Carl Renshaw**, **LCpl Steve Barton**, **LCpl Parker**, **Sig Houghton**, **Sig Evans**, **Sig Mapals**, **Sig Sykes** and **Sig Westbury**.

BRAVO TROOP - *by SSgt Paul Beattie*

Tp Comd	**Lt Jim Chatman**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Paul Beattie**

The New Year has seen the Tp grow in size and adapt to a series of minor tweaks. Turning the equipt around after the deployment has taken centre stage, with EX PANTHER'S CHARGE serving as a good reminder to both the young and old that an Armd HQ is a large and awkward beast.

With the arrival of **Sgt Wayne Bramwell** and **Sgt Luke Venni**, the Tp hierarchy has swelled. **Cpl Engleby** has stepped into the role of Tp Cpl after the departure of the newly promoted **Sgt Mac McMullen**, posted as Rear Link Sgt to 40 Regt RA. Our congratulations and best wishes are extended to **Mac** after his years of hard work for the Tp. Other new arrivals include **LCpl Whitham**, **LCpl Thompson**, **Sig Harrison** and **Sig Urwin**.

CHARLIE TROOP - *by SSgt Lee Calvert*

Tp Comd	**Capt Elisabeth McLellan**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Lee Calvert**

From the beginning of time, 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) had three Tps: Alpha, Bravo and Support. Bring forth the 21st

The newly-formed Charlie Tp

Century, and 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) moves into 2004 with a fourth Tp, Charlie Tp.

Charlie Tp is headed up by the Sqn Ops Cell, with newly signed Ops Offr leading the pack as Tp Comd. So, welcome to **Capt Elisabeth McLellan**, FofS, **WO2 Andy Riglar** and YofS, **A/SSgt Matt Hill** (who is with us for a short time prior to his Yeomans course later in the year).

Also included are the Tech Wksps, led by **SSgt Winston Calvert**, who doubles as the Tp Staffy; the IS Cell, with **Sgt Ski McKie** at the helm; the Sqn Trg Wing, headed by **Sgt Col Brotherston**; and the Crypto Cell, with the controller, **Sgt Mick Lynn** and **Cpl Maxwell**. **Sgt Mick Lynn** has so far done an outstanding job filling in as Yeoman since our return from Iraq.

We are now moving into a frantic period for the Tp, preparing to move into a light role. Sadly, the time has come when the AFV 436s are going to be replaced with piddly Land Rovers. The IS Cell is as busy as ever still trying to locate the 'on' switch for the DII computer and finally the Bde crypto has returned from Iraq, giving **Sgt Lynn** and **Cpl Maxwell** more than a headache.

We say hello to **Cpl Matt Gill**, posted in from 225 Sig Sqn; and **Cpl Graham Le May**, from 280 Sig Sqn. We also say a belated goodbye to **Cpl Andy Wood**, and wish him all the best on his Class One in Blandford; and to **Cpl Chris Kelly**, who also goes to Blandford on his Class One accompanied by his new wife, **Sueann**.

SUPPORT TROOP - *by SSgt Gaz Sullivan*

Tp Comd **Capt Chris McKinley**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Gaz Sullivan**

Following our return from OP TELIC 2, the Tp has now fully adjusted back to life in the Garrison after a well deserved Christmas stand down. The MT Dept continues to function as normal, with three new additions to **Cpl Charlie Listers** clan, **Sig Will Halpin**, **Sig Chris Reece** and **Sig Gavin Thomas**. The EDs, under the watchful eye of **Sgt Al Henderson**, are currently extremely busy with revamping all the Sqn's generators.

In the QM's Dept, we said farewell to **Cpl Smudge Smith** and his wife **Maxine**, who have been posted to 7 Sig Regt. Congratulations also to **Smudge** on his recent promotion to Sgt. The Dept also said farewell to **LCpl Gaz Marsden**, who is now at 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt. It has been an excellent year for promotions, as **LCpl Budgie Burgess** has been selected for promotion to Cpl and **Sig Rachel Fowler** has picked up her first stripe.

12th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj Chris Paterson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Ken Marsh**

The Sqn is now in place in Bulford having completed a, relatively, smooth relocation from Aldershot. The facilities in our new home are a significant improvement on those that we enjoyed in our previous loc. We now have ample, good quality real estate, an abundance of LCSS(R) connectivity (indeed we are the first unit to trial a LAN, using Windows Professional XP), and an excellent trg area right on our doorstep. As such, we are well placed to embark on what will be an extremely challenging Trg Year.

The BOWMAN programme is now developing apace, and the difficulties associated with introducing such a complex and all-embracing system are keeping us all on our toes. The knowledge base across the Sqn is rapidly expanding, and we are looking forward to the first Operational Field Trial in March.

BOWMAN AND THE TRAINING YEAR – A LOOK AHEAD
- by Sgt Tiplady

After the successful completion of most of the computer-based BOWMAN trg and a well-deserved Christmas Leave, it was time to get on with more BOWMAN, and settle into our new home in Bulford. The joys of the New Year are already upon us, with a busy Trg Year enabling us to become the first deployable BOWMAN Bde at High Readiness in 2005.

Having completed our trg, all we need now is BOWMAN-fitted vehs to put into our new, but empty garages. The Sqn will start BOWTAT (BOWMAN Training Advisory Team) team training in February, and this will be the first time that the Sqn will have hands on BOWMAN equipt and see how it all integrates within a Bde HQ complex. The Bde Operational Field Trial (OFT) in March will enable the Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, along with 2 Inf Bns, to trial BOWMAN within a Peace Support Operation scenario. The trial will involve the biggest BOWMAN deployment to date – quite a significant challenge. As well as trialling BOWMAN, the Sqn is also involved in trials of new Bde HQ tentage.

The Trg Year will incorporate plenty of exs to keep the Sqn busy. But not everything is focused on BOWMAN. The Sqn will participate in some arduous AT in Canada, as well as running a comprehensive Battlecamp and deploying to Cyprus on EX LION SUN in January 05. The finale of the Trg Year will be the deployment of the Bde and Sig Sqn to BATUS in May 05. The culmination of lots of progressive BOWMAN trg and the development of core soldering skills, will ensure that the Sqn deploys to BATUS with a positive attitude for the task in hand – 'The first BOWMAN Bde at High Readiness'.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE BULFORD RELOCATION
- by LCpl Hutt

The Unit's relocation was virtually concluded prior to Christmas Leave, but after a hard-earned break, there were still the finishing touches to complete, and everyone was eager to get stuck in to make ourselves fully at home. This is where the Sqn's new SQMS, **SSgt Parr**, came into his own, feverishly attempting to make himself a ubiquitous entity throughout the Sqn - sorting out outstanding work services and general niggles. He must have got through about six reams of paper in his ever-ready notebook. Problems have been steadily ironed out, and we are now left with excellent facilities - a vast improvement to Aldershot.

This year is going to be busy. The BOWMAN equipt is now arriving and the BLIS accounting system is, hopefully, imminent. The focus at present is the mad scramble to prepare the accounts for the dreaded LSI, not to mention the roll-out of the A2 Rifle. If the weapon is as good as everyone keeps telling us, maybe my average scores for the APWT will look a little healthier this year. The other item of news is that finally, UNICOM has caught up with the Unit, meaning we have even more work to look forward to placing all the accounts on the system! However, we now have the welcome support of new civilian staff, **Mrs Mary Honaker** and a certain **Mr Peter Mullen** (who looks suspiciously like the old SQMS **SSgt Mullen** – nepotism is alive and well in the Sqn).

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Zoe White**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Rob Fogg**

The new garages are finally starting to reverberate to the gentle hum of a posse of 43s starting up in the morning, much to everyone's pleasure. With the new BOWMAN fit, comes a host of new and exciting sharp pointy things to bang your head on, but the important thing is that the vehs are arriving and at last we are able to get our hands on real BOWMAN kit. BOWTAT trg is currently occupying much of the Tp's time, and it will lead straight into our first field deployment with BOWMAN kit – the first Operational Field Trial. Our last ex now seems like a dim and distant memory, and this initial shakeout should prove to be quite a challenge, as it will be the largest BOWMAN run-up undertaken to date.

A warm welcome to the following recent 'factory' entrants, **Sig Sharples**, **Sig McCann**, **Sig Ward** and **Sig Hazell**, who can hardly be blamed for a look of slight confusion when confronted with the BOWMAN installations. Also welcome to **Sig Penney**, who joins us from 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, and must find the landscape familiar, if not the vehs.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Christian Barker**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Simon Donnelly**

During the move to Bulford, Bravo Tp have endured some long hard days up and down the M3. Masts, rags, DAFs and all personal items had to be shifted out into the countryside – quite a change from the usual hive of activity we loved in Aldershot. But before the move, a little time was found for some morale-boosting activity to welcome the new faces in the Tp. This took the form of a morning's paintballing, where we found a potential Rambo in **Sig Lewis**, and a potential something else in **Sig Morris** – who took a pounding.

In the evening it was off to the dogs for a spot of gambling. Newly promoted **LCpl Elgumaty** leaving his impression on the Tp as a bit of a player and, shock horror, and **Lt Barker** finally bought his Tp some drinks. Unfortunately, the clouds came in at Reading, and the dogs stopped running. But festivities continued late into the night and nobody could get away from the fun had by all on the bus (you had to be there). **Sig Lewis** found it so funny he couldn't contain himself.

The Sqn Seniors v Juniors Rugby match proved less of a health and safety disaster than was at first feared. **Capt Courage** came up with the lame excuse, but Bravo Tp were ably represented on both sides. **LCpl Nicholl** was heard but rarely seen, and we think **Sig Hernon** was somewhere in the mud. **Lt Barker** had apparently been watching the World Cup and walked away with the Man of the Match Award. **LCpl Nicholl** nominated him.

Now we are in Bulford in the middle of Salisbury Plain. There is heating in the garages, the lights come on in the dark, and the vehs have started to return, fitted out with BOWMAN KIT. We are now finally about to deploy into the field with the new kit, and looking forward to doing what we do best. A big welcome to **2Lt Cuthbertson**, who will be commanding after his Tp Comd's Cse, and **Sigs Charlery**, **Davies** and **Shaw**, who have arrived fresh from Blandford.

101st LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj TJS Allen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) KRJ Smith**

EXERCISE SPRING VIPER - *by LCpl Olivierre*

On the 2 February 04, 261 Sig Sqn deployed on EX SPRING VIPER. The ex was launched successfully and all was going well, but as we all know the weather is never on your side. As soon as you are on your way, no matter how bright and promising a day it starts out to be, the weather is going to get you. No sooner were we in sight of our first loc, Sennybridge (aptly renamed Sunnybridge), the clouds began to form, and needless to say, the rain began to fall - and it didn't stop until we were ready to move loc.

The ex was designed to be a test of the Sqn's comms capability post OP TELIC, and to practise setting up the HQ complex - which is one of the primary roles of the Sqn in an operational environment. As the ex progressed to Salisbury Plain, the Sqn started on its ITD program for the year. Topics such as Law of Armed Conflict, NBC, Map Reading, First Aid and Security were covered. These took place not in tents or just sitting around on the cold damp ground as you usually do in the field, but were made interesting and fun by introducing practical scenarios to the sections. Our time on the Plain culminated in a night of entertainment, provided by the different Depts in the Sqn. The night passed in laughter as section after section presented short skits to us, **LCpl Frater** being among the favourites. The climax to the night was surprising, seeing two of the Sqn's members, **LCpl Helliwell** and **LCpl Ollivierre**, promoted to the rank of Cpl.

SSgt Gardiner reflects over his assault course performance

As the ex was intended to test our operational ability, it also had to test our flexibility and adaptability, meaning we had to once again tear down and move loc. This time, we moved to Longmoor Trg Area. Once there and set up, we then began prep for the Bde Staff to come out to do their ITDs. Whilst the Staff were busy, stands such as generator maintenance, off-road driving, occupying a harbour area, and ex prep were provided for the troops. This was not merely as a teaching tool, but as a means to help everyone improve on their everyday skills and learn any new procedures that they have not been taught. A lot was learned, thanks to the excellent instruction from **Cpls Jackson**, **Motimore**, **Carr** and **Wornham**.

Once again, this loc was not without its twists. TROOPIES' CHALLENGE 2, which was first introduced in Iraq, returned to test the guile, wit and wisdom of the Tps. This saw teams mixed from the both Radio and Support Tps taking part in competitions, such as veh first parade, reversing with a trailer, cross-country driving, and **LCpl Marshall's** physical delight, the assault course competition. The assault course in particular, proved to be very challenging and funny as we got the opportunity to see the Sqn seniors ragging themselves around the course.

ENDEX was called on Thursday 12 February, but we cannot go without thanking our accompanying chefs, who once again lived up to the reputation they built up in Iraq for delivering the best a field kitchen can provide.

Cpl Marshall boasts about the size of his grin

102nd LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC	**Maj Justin Hodges**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) RC Douglas**

FAREWELLS AND WELCOMES

The Sqn must be well and truly up and running if we are beginning to post manpower out instead of being on permanent receive! In the past 2 months we have said goodbye to **Sgt Haynes**, who has gone to 5 Bn REME; and **LCpl Aitken**, who has made the short journey down to Elmpt Station to join 7 Sig Regt. We wish both of them the very best in the future.

On the incoming side we welcome **2Lt Des McGukian**, who arrives fresh from Sandhurst prior to attending the Tp Comd's Course. He survived his inevitable 'wind-up' but seems now to think that the quantity of tentage required for the Bde HQ is a further joke! Also new in is **SSgt Shuck**, who will take over whip cracking duties with A Tp. He arrives from BATSUB, and is rapidly learning that jungle pattern DPM is not best suited to a German winter. Finally, we welcome **LCpl Reid** and **Sig Lewins**, who arrive fresh from Blandford.

Lastly, a note to the QM on a forthcoming posting. If you hear that you are getting a box of Maltesers through the system don't get too excited, it is just the new 2IC, **Capt Ben Psaila's** MFO!

ALPHA TROOP – *by LCpl Charnock*

Tp Comd	**Lt Mark Bentley**
Tp Sgt	**SSgt Shuck**

EX MERCURY HALBERD 1 was a Tp level trg ex aimed at the Class 3 Sigs and the Det Comds from 262 Sig Sqn. The ex started with some basic trade lessons to refresh the Class 3 personnel of the skills they were taught at Blandford. Then it was out into the field for a quick PACEX. After a smooth running PACEX, the vehs were lined up for a night deployment to Achmer Trg Area. On arrival, the Dets deployed to their various locs, ready to start the serials the following morning. After a few serials, we were given the order to move to our new locs, an ideal opportunity to show off the Sqn's impeccable map reading skills. Impeccable that is, until **Sig Steve Brown**, despite having glasses big enough to see the Beagle 2 project on Mars, became geographically embarrassed for a number of hours. Apart from this minor incident, the ex ran smoothly, thanks to the good organization of **Cpl Bob Lindley**, who ensured all personnel involved benefited from the experience.

Sig Bennett poses for the Racal Catalogue

ISM TROOP – *by LCpl Anderson*

Tp Comd	**Capt David Orr**
Tp Sgt	**SSgt Loz Moore**

The Technical Tp of 262 Sig Sqn, consisting of Sys Engrs, Inst Techs and a solitary IS Op, **Sgt James Paton**, deployed on EX MERCURY HALBERD 1 on 21 January 04, while the rest of the IS Ops were skiving on a really 'taxing' course in UK. To everyone's surprise, we deployed in a pair of 1 AAC Lynx helis, rather than the usual 110 war chariots to which we have become accustomed. For most this was their maiden voyage in any form of heli, but for old hand, **Sgt Jo Smith**, it was one too many. Having successfully navigated through the dense undergrowth of Haltern Trg Area, our patrol arrived in loc a little late. We had deployed for what was to be an informal refresher of the Clansman Radio system, under the close scrutiny of **LCpls Mark Reay** and **Nath Fearn**. Joining us on ex fresh from the factory, was **LCpl John Reid**, who had **Sgt Joe Smith** showing him the ways of creature comforts whilst in the field.

Equally new to the life in the field game was **LCpl John Hill**, on loan from DCSA(G). When en route to and from lessons **SSgt Loz Moore** persuaded **Cpl Gaz Watson** to take the minibus through a small patch of the Somme - where it became lodged. Although self-recovery techniques were not part of the lesson plan, we practised them 3 times in all. **Cpl Craig Jenkins** dug the bus out with only a Gerber to hand, ably assisted by **LCpl Matty Anderson** at the wheel - instead of waiting for the tractor that **Cpls Scott Gemson** and **Ian Cooke** had acquired. Successfully freed from the mud, we were free to chop logs for **LCpl Aide Moseley's** fire. Needless to say, by the end of the ex, we got comms to the Alpha Tp Class 3 Trg ex first time.

Cpl Jenkins having his back scratched

DEFENCE COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY (GERMANY)

FROM DCSA(G) TO PASTURES NEW

For **SSgt Vince Body**, a posting to JHQ was just another routine part of the job for him and his family during his 18 years service. In May 01, he moved on promotion to WO2 to join G6 Branch based in JHQ. Here he worked in the IT cell for a year until its migration to the relatively new DCSA'(G) in May 02, where he joined the Project Implementation Team 3 (IPG 3). It was here, working with a team of approximately 8 civilians (all of whom held the rank equivalent to that of a Capt/Maj), that **Vince** had his first experience of working in a joint military/civilian environment. The IPG 3 team are responsible for installing LCSS(R) throughout BFG, which involved building domain controllers, establishing links to the RLI, and ensuring servers were up and running for the customer. **WO2 Body** had a very busy role to play in DCSA(G) and, working first hand with numerous military units such as the BFG Health Service, the Service Children's Education Service and Customs and Immigration of the Jurisdiction Branch, he certainly added a lot of variation and travel to the job. **WO2 Body** said 'It was the modular way in which all the depts worked together that made my time with DCSA(G) such a rewarding experience. SCIDA would firstly carry out the on-site survey and the Sigs Wksp or Wk Svcs would ensure that all infrastructure, such as cabling and connection points, were in the designated places. It was then my responsibility to install all the specified equipt, for example LCSS(R) terminals, and ensure the customer was up and running.' **WO2 Body** left DCSA(G) in September 03 on promotion to WO1. He is now currently serving with 16 Sig Regt, and although he is thoroughly enjoying his time in Elmpt, he strongly recommends a posting to DCSA(G) for anyone looking for a challenging yet rewarding tour.

CLASS 2 TECHNICIANS RECEIVE CERTIFICATES FROM HEAD DCSA(G)

Col Paul Eaton, Head DCSA(G) had the pleasure of awarding **LCpl Oxley** and **LCpl Kane** from JHQ, their Class 2 Sys Engr Tech Certificates on Wednesday, 21 January 04. Other successful candidates were **LCpl Dibique**, also from JHQ; and **LCpl Copson** and **LCpl Farr**, from the Herford Det.

WO1 Vince Body bids a fond farewell to DCSA(G)

Col Paul Eaton presents LCpl Oxley (left) and LCpl Kane with their Class 2 Certificates

ELMPT JNCO CADRE COURSE 2003 THROUGH THE EYES OF A SIGNALLER - *by Sig Pearson*

On a cold and frosty 21 November 2003, 42 potential JNCOs of the Corps gathered together at the start of the 2-week arduous Cadre Course at Elmpt Station. Upon arrival we were all invited to undertake the standard CFT, which the majority passed with ease. This left only a few unprepared individuals in need of the transport home and it suddenly made me realise that all the pre-course trg I'd done had really paid off. Once we were showered and changed, the remainder of the day was spent on receive, whilst the staff kept us all awake with the usual barrage of mandatory course briefings.

The majority of the first week was taken up with refresher lessons, such as how to use the All Arms Tac Aide Memoire and, much to our delight, back to basics with Cam and Concealment and the old favourite, Patrolling. The cadre course also contained those two terrifying letters, PT. I am sure I can speak for my peers, when I say that these sessions were definitely some of the most demanding we had done throughout our Army careers to date. At this point, I would like to express our sincere thanks to all the PTI's whose continuous words of encouragement made the whole experience so memorable.

At the end of the week, we all deployed on EX SHAKE OUT, confident in the knowledge that the DS has prepared us well for life in the field. This ex phase was to serve as a refresher on skills such as Harbour Drills, basic feeding and hygiene in the field, and finally formations and patrolling. The last night of the ex was the dreaded night navex, that was roughly 6 check points over no more than about 8km. Despite a minor detour and eventually crossing the finish point at 02.00hrs, my section were pleased with their efforts, regardless of the fact that the majority of the other sections were now safely tucked up in bed!

Following a well-earned if not slightly short night's sleep, we all departed on what was to be the culmination of all our previous week's trg and hard work, EX FIRST STEP. This was an ex where, over a 5-day period, several individuals would take on the role of Section IC and complete a given mission. All the sections were professional in their approach, and most successfully completed their objective, amongst which were **Sig Kenna**, also from Herford Det. He rose to the challenge of Charlie Fire Team Leader, and would have completed his mission of locating the enemy position, had it not been for his section alerting the enemy and provoking an attack! However, following an exhausting 5 days in the field, what better way to finish an ex than with a ride in a Chinook back over Haltern Trg Area. A photograph back in barracks taken in front of the Chinook with all our DS and Seniors, certainly made it a memorable occasion for all.

On Friday, 5 December 03, the final day of the course arrived and the hours of drill tuition expertly provided by **WO2 (SSM) Townley**, seemed just a dull and distant memory. The Pass Off Parade was a complete success and was reviewed by **Brig T Inshaw**, Comd 1 Sig Bde and attended by members of DCSA(G), 16 Sig Regt, 7 Sig Regt and 280 Sig Sqn. Celebrations continued well into the evening, with an end of course meal in the Junior Ranks Mess, silverware and table decorations kindly being provided WOs' and Sgt's Mess. Following the meal, presentations were made to the Best Student and Most Improved Student. **LCpl Copson** and **Sig Saunders**, also from Herford Det, both received awards for Best Section.

WO2 Kev Peters presents Sig Stephens with his farewell gift from DCSA(G)

The JNCO Cadre Course 2003 was, without doubt, an extremely demanding yet rewarding experience for all those who took part. On behalf of everyone who attended the course, I would like to pass our sincere thanks to **Capt Higgins** and the rest of his staff at Elmpt Station.

ANOTHER FAREWELL

Sig Stevens bade a fond farewell to friends and colleagues of DCSA(G) on Friday 6 February 2004 at the *The Blues Bar*, JHQ. After a brief but very enlightening farewell speech by **WO2 Kev Peters**, he was presented with a decanter, glasses and a bottle of Champagne to thank him for all his hard work during his tour with DCSA(G).

During his 14 years' service, **Sig Stevens** has served In Soest, Bulford, Herford, York and Elmpt, and has also deployed on operations to Bosnia and Kosovo. He leaves the Army with our fondest best wishes to move to Leicester with the support of his wife **Joanna**.

HEADQUARTERS LAND COMMAND

EXERCISE TRAETH DRAGON - *by Maj AR Knott*

There are those out there who think the G6 Staff in HQ LAND are content to sit about all day, smoking *Gauloises*, drinking tea and moving units around the globe willy-nilly. True, but no one can accuse the cutting edge of the Royal Signals Desk staff of not getting out to stretch our legs - as we proved on EXERCISE TRAETH DRAGON. Childish schoolboys playing with our CIS train set? Maybe. Sedentary dinosaurs too old to remember that there is a life outside of the Office? No chance!

And so it was that the G6 Operations Branch, led by **Capt Ben White**, descended upon the Offrs' Mess, 14 Sig Regt (EW) ready for a long weekend spent on the Pembrokeshire Coastal paths. Day One started with a battlefield tour, at the site of the 1797 'Revolutionary' invasion of Wales by the French, south of Fishguard. **William Tate**, a veteran of the American War of Independence, led a force of 1,400 Frenchies (mostly ex-convicts) of the Legion Noire. **Tate**, aged 70 and armed only with a walking stick, quickly established an onshore Tac HQ at a local farmhouse, but failed to realise that in order to invade a country, you must actually leave the comfort of your living-room chair. Wine, and crucially cheese supplies exhausted, the French eventually threw up their hands in surrender, after taking advice from the Ship's monkey.

Our minds having been stimulated, the pressure was now on our bodies - stiff from preceding months spent starring blankly into our computer screens, and inanimate in the staff environment. No one wants to be the first on the support veh, and the smart money was on the LEs to be first to drop out. No such luck! After the full 18 miles of the first leg, we were all glad to get on the bus ready to soak away our aches and pains in a bath. But we did think it a little mean that the QM of 14 Sig Regt (EW) had turned the heating off. The water was icy cold, but we resolved to look on the bright

The old men and the sea

side. Until then we hadn't made up our minds about the next OP TELIC Regt. Suddenly the choice had narrowed to one!

The evening was spent waiting 2 hrs for our curry to appear in the local restaurant, followed by a couple of scoops in the *Chatham House Rules* bar, a discerning little establishment in Haverfordwest, where nothing ever happens. Day 2 was spent in a slightly higher gear, pacing out the next 17 miles by late afternoon. With no hot water in the Mess, it was down to the pub to warm ourselves by the fire, play Space Invaders, and pluck out our eyes with a blunt fork whilst **Maj Neil Fraser** talked us through the Air Assault War again. The next day, it was on the bus, ready for a late start back at work (and a normal one for **Capt Phil Ashworth**).

Two days' AT might not seem that long, but to us it was one of life's little luxuries. Most took advantage of that weekend to invite the mother-in-law to stay, and with the average age in the office being the wrong side of 40, a longer walk might have involved calling an ambulance! Finally, it gave us the opportunity to say farewell to **Maj Terry Waites**, off to 1 Sig Bde after serving in perhaps the busiest 2 years this office has seen in recent memory. We wish him good luck in Germany, where it still rains - but the bath water is always hot!

UNITED KINGDOM SUPPORT UNIT HEADQUARTERS, SHAPE

EXERCISE VIA FERRATA BACKSTOP
- by WO1(RSM) CJ Dubique

Over the period 16 - 29 Aug 03, 9 members of the Unit and one instructor from an outside unit participated in EX VIA FERRATA BACKSTOP, a Tri-Service Level 3 AT ex taking place around Cortina D'Ampezzo, in the Italian Dolomites. The party consisted of 2 Navy, 6 Army and 2 RAF personnel, including 2 Royal Signals members, **WO1(RSM) Charlie Dubique** and **SSgt Jase White.**

The aims of the ex were to further personnel development in a physically and challenging environment, to introduce members to the Alpine activity of Via Ferrata, and to conduct a Level 3 trekking exped across the Sella Mountain Range at altitudes above 2,800m. Via Ferrata, roughly translated means 'Iron way.' It is a network of wire ropes, ladders and staples throughout the mountains, initially devised to allow the early rock climbers freer and rapid access to the more challenging pitches.

The exped spent 6 days negotiating the various Via Ferrata routes in the Dolomites, followed by a 3-day trek across the Sella Mountain Range. Our main base camp was situated just North of Cortina D'Ampezzo at the Olympia Campsite. The group was split into 2 teams of 5 with one instructor per team. For many of the group, this was their first visit to Italy. During the day the weather was great - temperatures ranged from 32°C to 38°C and every day was dry, apart from the first day. It did however make up for it by raining every night, often accompanied by thunder and lightning, which wasn't too good for some of the tents we were using.

The first day was the dress rehearsal for what was to follow over the coming days, with steep strenuous climbs of anywhere from 1½ to 3 hrs from the bottom just to start the climbing phase. We started on a Grade 1A in the morning moving onto a Grade 1B in the afternoon. Following the successful completion of the first day without anyone falling off, or breaking anything, we were ready for Day 2 and the challenges that would bring.

The following day was the Col Rosa, a Grade 3B Via Ferrata with a maximum height of 2,166m and an arduous 6 hrs to complete the task. Once at the summit, we were able to explore the caves and observation points, a relic of the stand-off between the Italian and Austrian Armies during WW1.

The third day was a double whammy. We followed the Terza Cengia VF route (graded a 2C), and reached the maximum height of 2,301m. After a short lunch stop, we followed the Michielli Strobel VF route (graded 3B) with a maximum height of 2,240m. This proved to be not only one of the hottest days we encountered, but the most strenuous.

The following day was quite relaxing compared with the previous days. We travelled to Monte Piana to view the tunnels, observation posts, communication trenches and the museum all atop the plateau, which at 2,324m afforded the Italian Army almost completely commanding view of the surrounding area.

The fifth day saw the team return to the challenge of conquering mountains. Ivano Dibona was a long day, which involved the use of two cable cars to reach the start point at Refugio G Lorenz (2,932m). It was then a short climb to the summit, which included the crossing of a wire-rope bridge.

After climbing to the summit (3,008m), we headed off along the ridgeline as part of the 6hr decent off the mountain to the finish point at Ospidale. The day was marked by a couple of wrong turns, which were realised almost as soon as they were made, but it didn't stop some members of the group complaining about the extra few metres. The saving grace was the thought of a cold refreshing beer once we reached the finish point, and a chance to relax in the summer sunshine.

Day 6 was the start of the 3-day exped across the Sella Mountain Range. After a long drive, we reached our start point at Val Gardena and headed onwards and upwards on Route 666 towards our overnight stay in the mountains. The day was again hot and dry and the climb to Refugio Pisciadu Cavazza (2,585m) proved to be a little more tiring than we had expected - not that any one complained. However, from there the route to our overnight destination Refugio Boe (2,873m), the going was a little easier. We reached our destination in good time, and unfortunately

Climbers sat at the top resting

Climbers climbing a ladder

for us, the cloud started to build up, depriving the sun worshippers of the opportunity to top up their tans.

The team found the second day of the 3-day trek much easier than expected. Most of the trekking was done contouring at height or descending only a few hundred metres at a time. It did however, give us the opportunity to relax a little and take in the truly outstanding views. The prospect of tackling a Scree slope, billed as one of the longest in the Dolomites, filled us with visions of descending in wanton abandon for a couple of hundred metres and requiring new boots at the bottom. The reality was that there was a path to follow and the rocks were far too large to allow for any free sliding. The day finished with a sharp descent towards our final destination, Refugio Castiglioni (1,624m) nestling at the foot of the Mighty Marmolada and our final mountain.

Day 8, the final day, couldn't have got off to a worse start. The night before, it rained like there was no tomorrow, and to make matters worse, thunder and lightning continued through most of the night. Even when the heavens gave us a break, the Refugio owner's dog started barking for Britain, or was it Italy? After a big breakfast, we boarded the minibus and headed for the start point of the route Eterna Brigata Cadore. 1,200m of wire, an ascent of 1,000m and a maximum height of 2,962m, almost straight up and Graded a 5C - they don't come any more difficult. It was what we had been working towards, albeit with a little trepidation. The day was damp and claggy and the clouds to the northeast were not full of eastern promise, but rain! The instructors carried out intensive checks of the conditions, rock friction and weather, and the prospects were not looking good. They decided to wait an hour, keeping a weather eye open. After 45 minutes of anxious waiting, they decided that the conditions allowed for a green light, so off we went.

The ascent was straight up and no mistake, however it was good finally to be getting on with it. The weather held out, and towards the end of the ascent, the sun came out to cheer us on our way. It was hard going at times, so when we stopped for a breather, it gave us the opportunity to take in the absolutely breathtaking views and compare how much the surrounding mountains had receded into the distance since our last break. The ascent was only the first stage of the route; we still had to tackle down climbs, traverses and ridge walks to get to finish point. However, the end was reached, and everyone was in a congratulatory mood, with much hand shaking and back slapping. But most of all, the group were rightly proud of what they had achieved.

Following the Trekking and Climbing we came to the R and R phase of the ex, which was spent in Venice. The architecture and the sights are incredible and you have to be there to really appreciate them. After an overnight stop in Venice, it was time to

The lone wall climb

move on to the second phase of our R and R, white water rafting in Garmisch Germany.

Garmisch is another truly beautiful place both in winter and summer, and is dominated by the Zugspitz, which at 2,962m is the highest mountain in German Alps.

The white water rafting was the final activity of the exped, and the final night under canvas. As it had done during previous nights, it rained again! The next day was the scheduled departure day, back to reality and normal life, with just one more task to perform en-route, to see our assistant Instructor **SSgt Stu Nanson** off at Charleroi Airport.

A very challenging, highly enjoyable and fun expedition had come to an end, but the thought of a nice warm bed rather than lying in a tent with the rain pouring down was a very comforting thought!

The group pose at the summit

SPORT

SKIING

SUCCESS FOR ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS SKI TEAM - *by Sgt RC Lloyd*

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 7

November and December 03 saw the Royal Signals Snow Sports Championships held in Kaprun, Austria. A 3-week trg camp was followed by a week's worth of racing for the coveted title of Corps Alpine Champions. RSS and 11 Sig Regt entered 2 teams, which ranged from Sig (Phase 2 Trainee) up to the rank of Capt.

During the trg, Chief of Race, **SSgt Dawson** wanted us on the first lift by 08.00hrs and ready to go not long after. If the weather had been kind to us then this wouldn't have been a problem, but we had whiteouts, blustering winds and temperatures down to -10°C prior to the wind chill factor. This did not stop us donning our facemasks and searching for some more of that moral fibre that we allegedly have, and believe me, we found it. Over the next few weeks, various courses were set for us to learn, test and adjust our skills, with the ever helpful **SSgt Dawson** and Start Judge, **WO2 Driver** critiquing us on our efforts. Then all too soon, Race Week was upon us.

The Royal Signals Alpine Ski Champions 2004

It started with the Giant Slalom, a hard, ice-packed red slope with a few gates, a start line and a finish line. It sounds easy, but the butterflies you have in your stomach when the rest of your team depend on you getting from A to B as fast as you can on 2 lengths of plastic can be terrifying.

Later in the week the racing moved to the Slalom course which, when added to the Giant Slalom, gave us the overall results. The B Team, with their limited experience, did themselves and the Corps proud, attaining 13th place out of 24 teams. The A Team lived up to its title, taking team Silver in the Giant Slalom, Gold in the Slalom, with individual results of **Capt Corkery**, 2nd overall combination; **Capt Bryan**, 2nd overall female combination; **SSgt Pollitt**, 3rd individual Giant Slalom.

The combined team effort of the A Team resulted in the Royal School of Signals, for the first time in history, receiving the title of The Royal Signals Alpine Ski Champions 2004.

This was not however, the end of our race season. On return to Blandford Camp, **Capt Bee Bryan** quickly put the wheels into motion for us to apply for and subsequently race in the Div Championships, as reported next.

EXERCISE SPARTAN HIKE (DIVISIONAL SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS) - *by Capt AE Corkery*

It is mid-January, high in the French Alps at the end of the first week of the LAND (UK) Ski Championships in Serre Chevalier, France. The static temperature is -5° C, and the sky is overcast.

I am standing in a red plastic tent, open at both ends but temporarily, at least, sheltered from the alpine winds. Clad in a Lycra suit and attached by stiff bindings to long race skis, I survey the gates and slope ahead of me. My heart is pounding and I struggle to suppress a slight feeling of sickness. I am very nervous about the consequences of falling at high speed, and also the fact that my race time will directly affect the Team's overall points. The burden of individual responsibility to team competition is heavy. I inch forward under the direction of the Start Judge, and see the snow fall away at 45° below my ski tips. I hear encouragement from behind me, and the Judge gives me a 20 second warning.

I double-check my helmet, goggles, bib, boots and bindings, although I already know that they are all in place. I visualise the gates and turns, and tell myself again that I can manage the line of the course in a low tuck position, without standing up or skidding. I carefully place my poles over the start wand, sufficiently forward to enable good propulsion out of the gate. I shiver with the cold and nerves as the Judge says '10 seconds,' and I look up and align my skis to the racing line. 5 seconds and the clock starts beeping. My body tenses and 2 seconds before the long beep, I eject myself from the start in a co-ordinated action of pulling then pushing of arms, and skating of legs. As I hear the long beep now 15 metres behind me, I settle into a tuck, the wind roars past my helmet, and I begin to curve towards the first gate.

All nerves and sickness are gone, replaced by excitement and adrenaline. As I gain speed, I battle with every turn: red then blue, my legs forcing my body away from the fall-line in order to make the next gate. I remain low and reach 50 mph within about 6 seconds, my feet just 45mm from the icy surface. I am on the Super-Giant Slalom (Super G) Course with gates that are 50-75 metres apart, and I aim to pass within 6 inches of the markers. I tear down the slope for 60 seconds before hitting the rollers. I approach in the tuck and lean forward as I take off, trying to remain aerodynamic as I fly. With exhausted thighs and with the second jump successfully behind me, I can see the finish line and reach it seconds later in a long sweeping curve. I cross the line, stand up and skid to a stop, feet from the netting, exhaustion turned to exhilaration and nerves to relief. I have recorded a time of 1 minute and 30 seconds, and am anxious to see the times of my team-mates.

There are many sceptics as to the merits of Alpine Skiing. Some class it as easy, others as a holiday. I find it to be neither of these, but rather a good test of courage and willpower, and an excellent medium through which to develop team spirit, resilience and fitness – all key military attributes. There are 4 disciplines in Alpine skiing: Slalom, Giant Slalom, Super-G and Downhill. All have their own challenges but all provoke in competitors the reactions described above.

SWIMMING AND WATER POLO

ROYAL SIGNALS AGAIN DOMINANT IN THE INTER-CORPS SWIMMING AND WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS

INTERNAL CORPS COMPETITION

The Internal Corps Competition was held at Colerne on 18 November 03, with the Individual Training Organisation (ITO), UK and Germany contesting the medals and cups.

The swimming was a 2-horse race between UK and ITO. The UK team won the first 4 races, building a commanding early lead. Notable was **Sig Beez Beasley**, who won the male 100m freestyle in 58 secs. As the remaining individuals events unfolded, UK led ITO by 19 points to 17 going into the relays. The first two relays saw ITO and UK both earning 10 points each so UK kept their slender lead. UK won the next event and ITO finished 3rd, which gave the UK, team a 6 point lead with four events remaining. However, a disqualification in the penultimate race for UK saw ITO take the lead for the first time in the day. ITO won the last event, the 4 X 50m Male Medley Relay to win by 2 points.

In the Water Polo, all 3 teams appeared similar, and close games were expected. Germany played UK in the first game, which UK won 7-5, with **Sgt Robbie Love** scoring 5 of the UK's goals. BAG confronted ITO in the next game, but the close affair that was expected never materialised, with ITO winning 10-1. **Capt Pete Griffiths** scored 5 of ITO goals. Again, we expected the final to be close but ITO built up a 4-goal lead in the first quarter, and UK were never to recover, with the final score of 10-3 being a fair reflection. Again, **Capt Pete Griffiths** had the highest goal count with 6 - not bad for a goalie! For the first time in the history of this Competition, ITO took both trophies - outstanding. Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas MBE**, kindly presented medals and trophies to the winning teams.

Brig JE Thomas MBE presenting LCpl Chrissy Rodway with the Swimming Trophy.

INTER-CORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS PREPARATION

Selected individuals remained at Colerne for trg prior to the Inter-Corps Championships, which were to be contested at the Aldershot complex. **SSgt Mike Openshaw** again trained our swimmers this year, and **Mr Mick Flaherty** continued the development of our Male Water Polo Squad. **Capt Lee O'Rourke** coached the Female Water Polo Squad, who were desperate to better the runner-up position they achieved in 2002. The Water Polo team had 2 warm-up games: against RNAS Yeovilton and against HMS Collingwood. We played RNAS Yeovilton in our first game and managed to win 8-4. They had 3 current RN players, so we were content with the result. HMS Collingwood had 5 RN players, and proved a much stiffer test for us. The game was extremely tight with the Navy beating us 7-6. **Sgt Robbie Love** scored all 6 of our goals.

INTER-CORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS

After a good trg week, we moved confidently on to Aldershot. We were defending Champions in the Male Swimming and Male Water Polo titles from the year before.

The Aldershot complex has an Olympic 8 lane 50m pool, and the Water Polo pitch is the maximum size of 30m X 20m. (A 1:50,000 map, compass and GPS are recommended for all players!) The Championships are held over 2 days.

The female swimming team was outstanding on the day, winning all 3 of their Relay events. In the first event, the 4 X 50m Freestyle Relay, the team of **Capt Vanessa Galloway**, **Capt Harriet Cairns**, **Cpl Helen Stanyer** and **Cpl Michel Scott** broke the old record, **Cpl Scott** swimming her leg in 30.5 secs. The 4 X 50m Breaststroke Relay saw **LCpl Sarah Parker**, **Sig Becky James**, **Capt Harriet Cairns** and **Sig Julie Richards** winning the event by over 2 secs, both **LCpl Parker** and **Sig Richards** recording times under 43 secs. The final event was the 4 X 50m Medley Relay. The team of **LCpl Sarah Parker** (backstroke), **Sig Julie Richards** (breaststroke), **Capt Vanessa Galloway** (butterfly) and **Cpl Michel Scott** (freestyle) won by nearly 3 secs. A clean sweep - superb.

In the Female Water Polo, unfortunately 3 teams withdrew, leaving only 2 teams in this Championship. The final was against Int Corps, and our team was looking forward to the challenge. The team played amazingly. I can not recollect our goalie, **Capt Vanessa Galloway**, even touching the ball, demonstrating the superiority of our team! At the end of the first quarter we had established a 4-0 lead with **Capt Harriet Cairns** scoring all 4 goals. The second quarter was exactly the same, with another 4 goals going in, **LCpl Sarah Parker** and **Sig Becky James** both contributing a goal each and **Capt Harriet Cairns** another 2. In the fourth quarter, **Cpl Helen Stanyer** scored another goal for us

Ladies Inter-Corps Champions: Standing, LR: Sig Becky James, Capt Harriet Cairns, Capt Vanessa Galloway, Cpl Michel Scott. Kneeling, LR: Sig Julie Richardson, LCpl Sarah Parker, Cpl Helen Stanyer

Maj Wendy Kirby being presented the Ladies Inter-Corps Water Polo Shield

to make it 9-0. The efforts of the coach, **Capt Lee O'Rourke**, had paid dividends, with a terrific team performance.

In the Male Water Polo, we again entered 2 teams. Due to the dimensions of the pitch, the majority of games would be low-scoring. By the time you swam from one end of the pitch to the other you hardly had the strength to shoot! The B Team were drawn against RE and REME. In their first match was against the REME, where they lost 13-4, **Cpl Carl Greenhill** scored one, **Sig Pete Smale** chipped in with 2 and **SSgt (FofS) Kenny Kenyon** scored the goal of the Championship with a howitzer shot from the halfway line. You don't see many of those! RE then lost to REME by a similar score, so our match against RE would be tight, and would decide who went into the Semi-Finals. It was a hard-fought game, with our team giving all they had, but unfortunately, we lost 6-5, with **SSgt (FofS) Kenny Kenyon** scoring 3 of our goals.

The A Team were defending their title from the previous year, and we were joint favourites with the REME. Our first game was against APTC, whom we demolished 9-0, with **Sgt Andy Carnegie**, **LCpl Ollie Smith** and **Maj Tim Langford** all scoring one apiece and **SSgt Baz Ward**, **Sgt Robbie Love** and **Capt Pete Griffiths** each putting in 2. Our next game was against an extremely strong RM team, who boasted 5 RN players and some excellent swimmers. The standard of the game was amazing, with both teams playing superbly. The match was ours, with a score of 1-0, **Sgt Robbie Love** scoring our goal and **Capt Pete Griffiths** playing stupendously in goal, stopping at least 3 one-on-ones with attackers. Our semi-finalist opponents were RE. We did not play particularly well, but won comfortably 9-2. Scorers were **Sgt Robbie Love** and **Sgt Andy Carnegie** with 2 each, **Cpl Shaun Peart**, **Maj Tim Langford**, **LCpl Ollie Smith**, **Cpl Ollie Olver** and **SSgt Baz Ward** all scoring 1 each.

In the final we met REME, who had beaten RM by one goal in the other semi. Again, we did not perform to our best! In the first quarter **Sgt Robbie Love** gave us a one-goal lead. The second quarter saw us concede 2 and score only 1, **Sgt Love** again. In the third quarter we lost 1-0, and therefore entered the final quarter 3-2 down. With about 30 secs left on the clock **Sgt Love** saved us with his third goal of the game, and 2 additional quarters extra time would be played. In the first period, **Sgt Andy Carnegie** scored to settle our tattered nerves, and then **Sgt Love** scored his fourth of the game in the second period of extra time. We were Inter-Corps Champions for the fourth successive year! **LCpl Ollie Smith** was presented with the Best Royal Signals Player for this year.

Sgt Robbie Love being presented the Inter-Corps Water Polo Cup

The male swimming team was strong again this year, but RM and REME also had excellent teams, and we knew that with ourselves, there were 3 potential Championship winning squads. In the first relay, 4 X 100m Freestyle, we finished fourth, with **Sig Beez Beasley** returning a time of 58 secs. The second event was the 4 X 50m breaststroke, where the team of **Cpl Matt Lee**, **Cpl Mark Chilvers**, **SSgt (FofS) Kenyon** and **LCpl Shaun Peart** won, REME were second and RM third. The 4 X 50M freestyle saw **Sgt Jezz Greenlee**, **SSgt Baz Ward**, **Sig Pete Smale** and **Cpl Matt Lee** finish fourth again, with RM winning and REME finishing second. Going into the last event, the points were RM 38, REME 36 and Royal Signals 30. The Medley Relay was extremely close, with our team of **Sgt Andy Carnegie** (backstroke), **LCpl Shaun Peart** (breaststroke), **LCpl Tony Davies** (butterfly) and **Sig Beez Beasley** (freestyle) coming second, behind REME by 0.03 secs. And so we finished 3rd overall, with REME being crowned Champions and RM in second place.

It was a magnificent effort that fell just short, but winning 3 of the 4 titles on offer was a tremendous feat. Yet again, we have demonstrated the talent we have in the Corps. My thanks to all individuals for their effort over a very hard week, and to their Units for releasing them. Special thanks to **Mr Mick Flaherty**, **Capt Lee O'Rourke** and **SSgt Mike Openshaw**, for training the teams.

Anyone interested in representing the Corps should contact **Maj Tim Langford** on 94382-5839. The next Internal Competition will be held on 16 November 04, with the Team Camp running until the Inter-Corps on 22/23 November 04. The Water Polo will again include a Female tournament, where we would welcome some new talent.

RUNNING

THE EVEREST MARATHON 2003 - BRITISH GURKHAS NEPAL - *by Capt Ben Howarth QG Signals*

When one thinks of a marathon, an image of thousands of ultra-fit, scantily-clad and often overly-thin runners under a big banner springs to mind. These individuals are poised, ready to spring into action. Now picture sixty-something tired looking, shivering wrecks, dressed as if for a trg run in the height of winter. Short of breath we gazed hopefully south, far more eager for the first rays of sun than the starting gun. The temperature hovered around 10°C. So how did I find myself, just before 07.00hrs on Sunday 23 November 03, in this predicament?

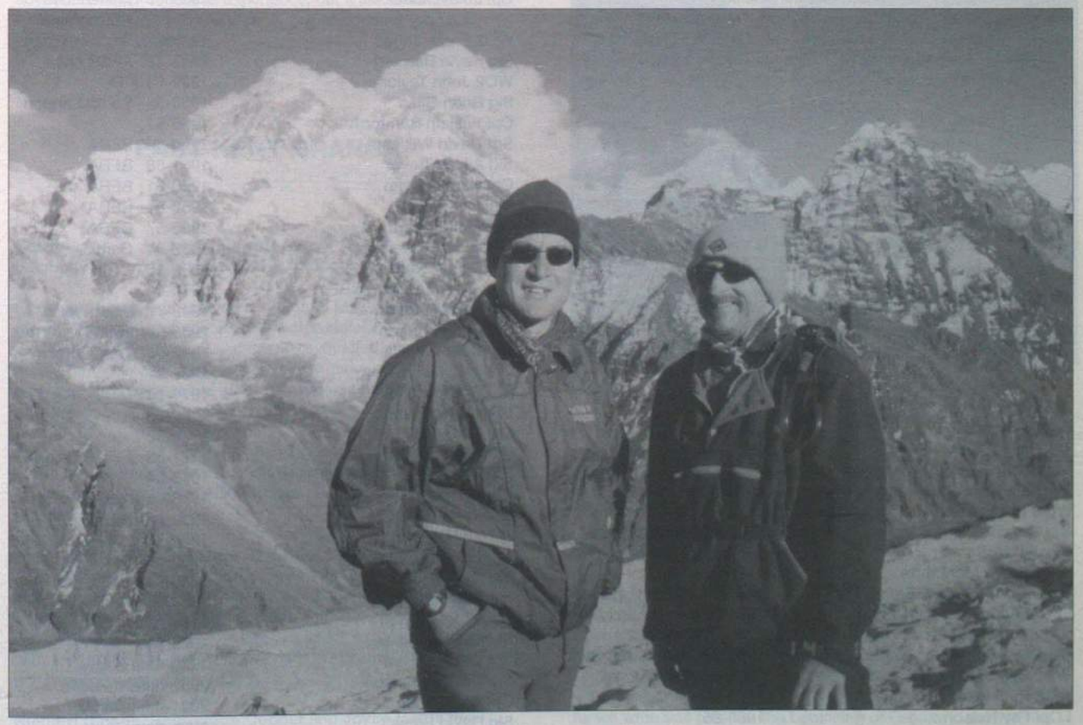
The BGN team began trg in May 03 to give us plenty of time for long runs. The monsoon was mild, but the Katmandu smog forced us out on to the valley rim for fresh air as much as hill trg. **SSgt Nirmalkumar Shrees** (QOGLR) and **Cpl Dev Bdr Sherpa** (QG Sigs) were the team trailblazers, and sought out what are best described as 'interesting and varied' routes. Not only did we experience the sights and smells of rural Nepal, but we got to do it at 06.00hrs on a Saturday. The six months trg passed remarkably quickly, and we soon found that it was time for final kit checks (we were limited to 12 kgs) and pre-race briefings.

The Marathon itself starts at an altitude of 5,184m (Gorak Shep) and finishes at 3,446m (Namche Bazaar), so acclimatization is vital to surviving the race. We trekked for 16 days to get to the start. First we headed off to Gokyo Ri (5,483m) and then back down to Khumjung, before turning north again for the Gorak Shep. Our biggest battle in the Solo Khumbu region was curiously not altitude, but sickness. BGN had a team of six runners and we were checked daily by a GP from UK, who happily dispensed pills of a variety of shapes, sizes and colours to combat our growing number of ailments. The air is very cold, dry and dusty, so much so that a specific ailment 'The Khumbu cough' is a virtually guaranteed souvenir from Nepal for the many trekkers and climbers who visit the region.

Just prior to the race, there was a final medical inspection at Lobuche (4,900m). I had ascended Kala Pathar (5,623m) to see the classic view of Everest the day before, and was suffering from a hacking cough, but I squeaked through. Sadly, the other British Officer blacked out briefly following altitude problems the very morning of the inspection, and became our first non-runner. The other five of us were declared fit to run and headed off towards Gorak Shep, but we had reached only around 5,000m when one of our number developed serious breathing problems. For him too, the Marathon was over. Both individuals recovered sufficiently at lower altitudes to join the last half of the race.

So four out of six of us stood ready, stamping a start hole in the snow at the start of the Marathon. I remember feeling reasonably comfortable, if horribly out of breath, up to the monastery at Tengboche (roughly half way) and thereafter it was simply a case of one foot in front of the other to the finish. The climb around Sarnassa was particularly vicious: a 350m ascent between miles sixteen and seventeen. I was a little put out to be asked by the marshal at the hilltop whether I was a runner. I know I was going slowly, but really, who else was in shorts on the trail? The first BGN runner, **Cpl Dev** completed the course in eighteenth place in an incredible 5hrs 36mins 30secs. I, as the team sweeper, crossed the line in 7hrs 10mins15secs, half way down the field.

The Everest Marathon is a truly amazing challenge. The acclimatisation trek yielded some incredible views of the Everest region, and all the team learned much about the affects of altitude. I would personally like to thank our generous supporters, including the Corps Units and the RGR; the other members of the team for their good humoured company in the face of adversity; and finally my wife for bringing the COS's champagne to the finish line and presenting the medals.



Capt Ben Howarth (left) and Maj Kevin Thorpe taking in the scenery at the top of Gokyo Ri

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: MajGen A H Boyle CB

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Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C P Conlon
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr P J Cuckow

Soldier Recruiting Panel	**Brig NF Wood**
Officer Recruiting Panel	**Brig SGM Gordon**
Unit-based Branches Panel	**Brig N Moss**
Advertising Panel	**Brig CA Brown**

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERS SECRETARY'S DESK

BRANCH NEWS. Sadly Jim Neil passed away whilst in office as Hon Secretary of the **Hartlepool Branch**. Miss Donna Scott was elected as the new Secretary and she can be contacted at; 35 St Leonard's Close, Peterlee, Co Durham SR8 2NW. Tel: 07963-479997. The following officers were elected at a meeting of the **Exmouth Branch** in February:- Bill Irving as Chairman, Olive Irving as Secretary and Bob Coole as Treasurer.

E-MAIL MESSAGES. When sending messages to Assn HQ, could members please ensure that they include their name. When messages are received from, for example "Michael239 @....", with no name at the end of the message, it is difficult to identify which of our members it is from. Also please don't forget to inform Assn HQ if you change your E-mail address.

MAIL FORWARDING. We are always pleased to forward letters on to other members, or those in the Retired Officers List, however an appropriate postage stamp must be affixed to the envelope in order for us to do so.

ANNUAL REUNION 26-27 JUNE 2004. Full details, including order forms for meals and car passes, are available from Assn HQ.

NEW MEMBERS. The following have been enrolled as Life Members since the last issue of the WIRE:-

Rank/Name	*Service*	*Branch*
Cpl Gerry Richardson	1969-83	
WO2 Don Adams	1963-03	
Brig Mike Shaw	1966-96	
LCpl John (Geordie) Jackson	1963-71	
LCpl Ian Hurt	1979-85	
WO1 Taff Eynon	1974-94	
Cpl Alan Bell	1979-03	East London
Sig Jim Hoffman	1943-47	AFSR Assn
WO1 Steve McMahon	1968-92	
Brig Mike Taylor CBE	1961-98	
Lt Col Andy Locke MBE	1960-97	
WO2 Tony Waugh	1958-73	
Sig Dave Stuart	1995-99	
WO2 Bill Burnham	1961-83	East Kent
SSgt Paul Fowkes	1976-00	
LCpl Fay Nelson	1989-95	
Cpl Alan Fishenden	1963-75	
LCpl Ken Bailey	1953-55	
Cpl Ed Cahill	1951-56	East London
Sig Chris Hughes	1984-96	
Sig Michael Jones	1984-87	
Maj Stephen Galpin	1967-02	
LCpl Anthony Chilmaid	1958-62	
WO2 Robert Shaw	1945-71	
WO2 Ian Myers	1976-95	Leeds
Cpl Michael Wilding	1964-75	AFSR Assn
Sig Rob Gilbey	1999-02	
Sig Francis Kane	1979-84	
Cpl John Clarke	1959-68	Malta/Libya Comd Assn
WO2 Frank Jones	1945-71	
Sig Kevin Barnard	1943-47	AFSR Assn
WO2 John Taylor	1949-53 + TA	
Sig Brian Giles	1950-52	South London
Cpl William Bamforth	1955-57	
Sgt David Williams	1950-59	BEBA
Sig Albert Trevor	1951-58	BEBA
Cpl Harold Cram	1950-61	BEBA
Maj Gus Cook	1950-84	BEBA
LCpl Mike Bradford	1953-57	BEBA
Lt Michael Peterson	1962-64	Cardiff
Sig Danny Youles	1992-96	
Brig Cedric Burton OBE	1970-04	
Sig Herbert Williams	1942-47	West Wales
Sig Con Fehrman	1955-57	West Wales
Sgt Chrissie Mills	1992-98	West London
LCpl Michael Hilton	1982-01	
Sgt Gordon Whale	1971-94	
SSgt Brian Flynn	1990-date	
Cpl Dean Ward	1975-85	
SSgt Robert Taylor	1971-88	
Brig Charles Le Gallias CBE	1972-04	
LCpl David Longstaff	1978-94	
Sgt Peter Whitham	1952-64	BEBA
Sig Phil Beaven	1970-74	
LCpl Geoff Coates	1962-68	
Sig David Holt	1986-91	
Sig Nigel Harris	1970-85	
LCpl Tony Hogan	1996-02	
Sig David Pinchin	1975-79	
Sgt Lianne Snow	1989-date	Derby
Sig Colin Robinson	2002-date	Derby
Cpl Karl Dabell	2001-date	Derby
Sig David Binns	1995-date	Derby
Sig Andrew Dawson	1980-85	

Cpl John(Iain) Logan	1960-70	
Pte Donna Scott	1978-80	Hartlepool
Cpl Percy Howard	1953-60	
LCpl Fred Freeman	1953-64	Darlington
WO1 Stan Staniford	1982-04	
Cpl Nick Crown	1979-89	
Sig Martin Firth	1978-85	
LCpl Sean Pollock	1985-97	
Cpl Jimmy Smith	1970-92	
Cpl Dave Cairns	1986-99	
Cpl Carl Westerman	1991-99	

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Jane Knight**

We pride ourselves on having a good representation at the Corps Carol Service, and last Christmas was no exception. As in the past, the choir excelled itself and the vicar was assisted by our Honorary Corps Padre, the **Rev Peter Clemmett**. After the service, we retired to the church hall for sherry and mince pies, courtesy of RHQ, where we were pleased to see the Master of Signals in good form on this his first attendance since taking office.

In January, we were hosted to a most enjoyable evening by the WOs and Sgts of 261 Sig Sqn in their Mess in Buller Barracks. Courtesy of **Maj Tim Allen**, the evening was organised by **RSM Kevin Smith**, redoubtable member of our Branch Committee, and was the opportunity for both of them to give us first hand illustrated accounts of the Sqn's recent service in the Gulf, where they provided logistics comms for our troops in southern Iraq. This was most informative, and was an eye opener to those of us who fought our battles long ago. Not only had OPERATION TELIC advanced on our technical experience, but it also sounded as though the victuals and the standard of air conditioning had improved considerably.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs J Barrett**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

Christmas lunch was enjoyed by 80 or so Members and friends at the well known wateringhole, the Marine Hotel in Tankerton, where we donned paper hats, pulled crackers, quaffed whatever one quaffs on these occasions and generally had a good time. **Marion de Rose** and her posse of aides relieved us of raffle money and made £151 profit for the Branch funds as a result.

Early in January, 57 Members attended the Branch AGM, again at the Marine Hotel, where our Chairman, **Mrs Jo Barrett**, welcomed our special quests, Asst RSA Secretary, **Lt Col Carl Conlon** and **Mrs Conlon**.

At the conclusion AGM business, **Lt Col Conlon** spoke to a hushed audience on Serving Corps and Association matters. He was warmly applauded, and the newest Committee Member, **Marie Crisp**, presented **Mrs Conlon** with a bouquet and **Mrs Badcock** with a potted orchid as thanks for sharing her house with the Branch on so many occasions during the year. The usual scrumptious lunch followed.

Richard Gibson, **Bernadette Cooper** and **Joyce Harris** have joined the Casualty List, but will hopefully be on the way to full recovery soon. **Peter Foakes** remains in hospital battling his way back to when he can return home to relieve **Peggy** of her daily visit to the hospital.

It is with sadness that we report the death of **Mr Jack Caplan** at the age of 88. **Jack** was no longer a Member of the Branch, having resigned some years ago. He was something of a National figure in the media, fighting for recognition by the Japanese of their treatment of Prisoners of War during the Far East campaign, where he was captured and endured much hardship on the infamous railway.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman Maj (Retd) P Burton
Secretary Maj (retd) JB Greenwood

We got off our New Year to a cracking start at the January meeting with the guest speaker, The Mayor of Redbridge, **Cllr Vanessa Cole**, giving us a detailed explanation of the role of Mayor and how one gets to the position. She finished off by taking questions from the floor. The Mayor of Havering, **Cllr Eddy Cahill**, was also in attendance. It turned out that **Eddy** was ex-Royal Signals, so he was presented with Membership Forms and signed up as a new member during the evening. Well done, Mr Secretary.

Chairman Maj (Rtd) Paul Burton with Mayor of Redbridge, Cllr Vanessa Cole

At the end of January, we had an invitation from 36 Sig Regt Sgts' Mess to attend their Burns Supper Night. This was taken up by several members, who enjoyed a very good evening, with the traditional piping in of the haggis.

Looking forward, we have a return trip to The Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch, to see the RAF Squadronaires perform for a SSAFA Concert on 22 February. Last time we saw the Squadronaires, they had been a last minute stand-in for the Royal Artillery Band, who had withdrawn due to commitments on OP FRESCO.

As we write this piece at the beginning of February, most of the 140 places for our Dinner Dance on 13 March have been snapped

up. Last year we were oversubscribed and were not able to accommodate everybody. Our Guest of Honour this year is expected to be the SOinC (A), **Brig David McDowall MBE ADC**.

For more details of our future events, please see our web page at http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/east_london/index.htm

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. We are aiming to be inclusive and would welcome, as Associate Members, serving or ex-service men and women from other Arms, Regts and Corps. Our meetings are held in the Sgts Mess of 36 (E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 8pm on the fourth Tuesday of each month, except December.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J McMillan**
Secretary **Miss I Muir**

On Tuesday 20 January the Branch Chairman **Jim McMillan**, asked the members to stand for two minutes silence, in memory of Branch Founder Member, **Donny Sheridan**, who passed away very suddenly on the 17 January 2004.

Capt Lynch, Dianne, Col Petrie, Mrs Norah Petrie and Jim McMillan

The 6th Annual Burns Supper was held on Saturday 31 January 2004, organised by Branch member, **Bill McNamara** with the help of the Branch Committee and other volunteer members. Branch President, **Col AS Petrie**, **Mrs Nora Petrie**, Branch Chairman, **Jim McMillan**, **Mrs Isobel McMillan**, **Capt John Lynch**, with his fiancée **Diane**, and **Capt Graham Reith** were at the top table.

The Welcome and *Selkirk Grace* was said by **Col Petrie**. To the sound of the pipes, the Haggis was then carried in on a silver platter by the chef. **Capt Reith** then gave a fearsome address to the Haggis, cutting into it with a large dirk. He finished the address with gusto, waving a cavalry sabre around his head. Fortunately no one was sitting or standing near him, although the chef was seen ducking out of range.

After the traditional meal, *The Immortal Memory* was given by **Capt Lynch**, bringing a sustained round of applause from the company. Several of the really serious Burns enthusiasts, said it was the finest tribute to the Bard they had heard in the many Burns Suppers they had attended over the years. This scribe read a monologue written by **Peter Storey** of the Association of Speakers Clubs, entitled *Albert at the Wedding*, a take off of the *Albert and the Lion* classic, and this seemed to be well received. **Bill McNamara** was in excellent form, with his rendition of *Death and Doctor Hornbook*, with only a couple of prompts from **Frances**, his wife, who had a book in front of her at the table. Later, without prompting, he performed *Holy Willie's Prayer*, dressed in a striped nightgown, a nightcap and carrying a lighted candle in a holder. **Bill** has a fantastic memory for the work of Burns.

The *Toast tae the Lassies* was given by **Col Lapsley** - with tongue in cheek, as **Mrs Ruth Lapsley** was sitting beside him as he mentioned that he might be in trouble once he gets home. **Andy McArthur** popped up every now and again to expound his knowledge of jokes to an appreciative audience. **Jim Lockhart** was also versatile, with a variety of jokes and songs. **Ivana**, the Branch Secretary replied to the Toast to the Lassies in her own inimitable style, did not spare the punches, and was also able to raise a few laughs from the men.

Col Petrie, as Branch President, gave an appreciation of the evening. He thanked the Regt for allowing use of the Officers' Mess for the function, and the participants for their contributions during the evening. He then asked that the 32 Sig Regt Chefs, **Cpl Debbie Carruthers** and **LCpl Christine McCormack**, together with the waiters for the evening, **Jim Cook**, **Sharon Whiteford**, **Angela** and **Eric McWaters Jnr** be brought into the room. The Colonel thanked them personally for their efforts and service, and the company showed their appreciation with a standing ovation. To complete the evening, some of Burn's songs were sung, finishing with the old and ever-lasting *Auld Lange Syne*. Agreed by all, it was an excellent night and the Branch organisers can be proud of their efforts.

HUDDERSFIELD BRANCH

Chairman **Mr D Tippen**
Secretary **Mr G Scott**

On Saturday 31 January 2004, the Huddersfield Branch held their Annual Dinner at Bradley Park Golf Club. There were 37 present, including members and their guests. Principal guests this year were members of 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn from Imphal Barracks, York, led by their 2IC, **Capt Krishna Gurung**.

A raffle was held and raised £170 for the Gurkha Signals Veterans' Fund. The aim of this Fund is to raise £15,000 to bring 25 ex-servicemen from Nepal for the Remembrance Parade at the Cenotaph in London in November this year.

If anyone wishes to make a donation, please send a cheque payable to 'Central Bank, 2 Signal Regiment' addressed to: **Maj AD Clewlow**, OC 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, 2 Sig Regt, Imphal Barracks, Fulford Road, York. YO10 4HD.

WO2 Tara Pun, Capt Krishna Gurung, Sgt Bishwa Sibba and Sig Gautam Gurung receiving from Branch Secretary, Geoff Scott a cheque for £170 towards the Gurkha Signals Veterans' Fund

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr John Brown**
Secretary **SSgt Ian Wolfe**

On Saturday 24 January, some of our Members represented the Guernsey Branch at the funeral in Newtownards, Co. Down of one of their Members, **Bob Savage**, who was to be buried in Movilla Abbey Cemetery, Newtownards. Branch Secretary, **Ian Wolfe** attended, along with Vice-President, **Maj (Retd) Noel Johnson**. Standard Bearer, **Billy Dixon** paraded the Branch Standard at the service, and during a short walk afterwards to the graveside.

Just as the above arrangements had been made, we learned of the passing of one of our long time Members, **Cecil Scott**, whose cremation at Roselawn was at the same time as the Newtownards funeral. There was also a very good turn out of Branch members at **Cecil's** cremation. The sympathy of the Branch Officers and Members goes to his family.

In January, we were treated to a presentation on OP TELIC by members of 15 Sig Regt. It was most interesting to hear the first hand experiences in Iraq of the three speakers, **Capt Ben Norton**, **SSgt (FofS) Rick Allen** and **SSgt Mark Laughton**, and to know that Royal Signals are doing a wonderful job throughout the world. Our thanks go to the speakers for their fine presentation, and to **WO2(RQMS) Steve Griffiths**, who arranged the talk. We were delighted to welcome several other members of 15 Sig Regt who attended. We were also pleased to have with us the CO and RSM of 40 (U) Sig Regt (V), **Lt Col Stuart Hodges** and **WO1(RSM) TA Henry**, to whom we are grateful for the use of their premises.

On Saturday 7 February, a Service was held at the Memorial Garden, Palace Barracks, Holywood to dedicate a Tri-Service Memorial to members of the three Services killed since WW2. Over 1,000 members of the three Services paraded, with 112 Standards. The NI Branch Standard was paraded by **Billy Dixon**, and Branch Chairman **John Brown** led a good turnout of Branch members.

The third Wednesday of each month in Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast is the place to be if you are serving or ex-Royal Signals Regular or TA.

PETERBOROUGH BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) Bob Rowland**
Secretary **Brian Overland**

On 11 December fifty three members and guests assembled at the *Blue Bell Inn*, Warrington, for our annual Christmas Dinner. The Branch was honoured by the presence of **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** Chairman of the Association. Sadly, **Mrs Boyle** was unable to be with us due to the illness of her father.

Gen Tony was welcomed by our Branch President **Col Ken Smith**, our Chairman, **Maj (Retd) Bob Rowland** and his wife, **Dorcie**. It was the General's first visit to the Branch, and in a very crowded room he met and talked to **Brian Overland**, our Branch Secretary, who had organised the evening, and met and talked to other members and guests.

After an excellent meal, **Col Ken Smith** welcomed our special guest and talked briefly about the Branch's past years, before inviting the Chairman of the Association to say a few words. **Gen Tony** replied with some amusing anecdotes and mentioned that **Bob Rowland** had expressed some concern about the location of the hotel he had chosen, in a rather less salubrious part of the city.

An amusing interlude followed, when two Committee members, **Michael Lady** and **Graham Pollard** announced an auction for a signed copy of a book by **Andy McNab**. This resulted in fifteen minutes of frivolity and laughter, during which the auctioneers worked hard at engineering things so that **Gen Tony** did not win. The auction eventually raised over £80 for Branch funds. A raffle, organised by **Brian** and **Pat Smith** and **Bill** and **Rae White** raised a further £210.

Our Chairman, **Bob Rowland**, said that the Branch felt it was important to mark this special occasion, and it was with very great pleasure that he wanted to make a presentation to **Gen Tony**. A cast model of a 'modern major general' wearing **Gen Tony's** decorations was unveiled and handed to our visitor. In thanking the Branch, **Gen Tony** was generous and kind in his remarks, saying that the model was a truly marvelous piece of work and would be given a special place at his home. The model had been obtained through the kindness of a friend and colleague of **Mark Overland**, a Branch member.

After dinner the General spent more time meeting and talking to members and guests, before departing to his hotel with **Bill White** at the end of what had been a memorable occasion for the Peterborough Branch.

Bob Rowland presents Maj Gen Tony Boyle with the 'Modern Major General' statue

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Chairman **Sid Smith**
Secretary **Tony Dear**

The Branch did not meet in January, as the meeting date was too near the start of the New Year. However, twenty members made the effort and came together on 5 February for the monthly social.

Our venue for meetings is now the Archer Road Social Club in Southampton. Previously it had been the ExServicemen's Club, but times change and in order to stay in business, the Club had to resort to attracting the civilian element. Where once the walls were decorated with plaques, standards, photos and memorabilia from all three Services and from two World Wars and subsequent conflicts, these have now given way to posters and gaudy decorations reflecting civilian interests and social activities. It is only through our long association with the Club and the kindness of the management that we are still permitted to have our meetings on the first Tuesday of each month.

Our AGM was due to be held on 2 March, but the staff decided to go on holiday for a week and the Club closed for this date. So the AGM will now take place in April. Our Annual Lunch will take place on Sunday 25 April at the Kings Court Masonic Centre, Chandlers Ford.

We send Wedding Anniversary congratulations to Beryl **Tony Hull**, 33rd on 6 March; to **Cis** and **Jumbo Chapman**, 62nd on 16 April; to **Betty** and **John Riggs**, 61st on 17 April; and to **Frank** and **Hazel Sidey**, 5th on 28 April.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

In mid December we held our Christmas party, courtesy of the RBL Club in Richmond. It was a most enjoyable event, with a full house. Our traditional Christmas raffle was successful and lucrative, and we are indebted to our members for their contributions. Our Ladies Section produced an excellent buffet, impeccably presented, and we congratulate them and thank them for their devotion to duty. What would we do without them?

BEVERLEY EXBOYS ASSOCIATION

Secretary **Mr Tony Hull**
Chairman **Mr Mick Teague**

It seems but a short interval since our last Reunion, but it is now time to give you a reminder about the next one again. The date will be 10-11 September 2004 and it will take place at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Willerby, Hull. This is near to Beverley and will be our 6th Reunion. We have reserved 50 double rooms and 10 singles, which must be booked at least 6 weeks before the event. Booking forms for the hotel are available from **Tony Hull**, 01202770261. Booking forms for the actual Dinner will be printed in our next Newsletter.

Our Treasurer, **Arthur Cotillard**, is emigrating to Australia and **Peter Smith** will be taking over the job at the end of March, when he returns from an extended visit to America. We would like to take this opportunity of thanking **Arthur** for all his sterling work.

The following photo shows our Chelsea Pensioner, ExBoy, **David Walker**, with **Shirley Ballard** and **Michael Broadbent**. **David** was on parade at the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall in November.

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

MY KOREAN WAR - *by Col Kevin Kirkby*

The coverage of the 50th Anniversary of the end of the Korean War in the August 2003 issue of *The WIRE* provided the catalyst for me to pen these notes. They focus on a few events that have remained fresh in my mind over the years and, in consequence, are bound to be selective.

29 Indep Inf Bde Gp Sig Sqn was my first posting after leaving Sandhurst and completing my Young Officer's Course in Catterick. I joined the Sqn in Colchester in March 1950, with **Maj Tubby Marshall** as my OC. Little did I know what lay in store.

MOBILISATION AND INITIAL DEPLOYMENT

North Korean forces invaded South Korea in June 1950. 29 Bde mobilised in July and the Sig Sqn was rapidly brought up to strength in manpower and equipt. Manpower reinforcements included a large number of reservists who, once they recovered from the shock of being recalled, settled down quickly and brought valuable experience and stability to the Unit.

Bde units embarked in troopships in late September and arrived at the South Korean port of Pusan early in November. At this time, UN forces were pushing rapidly up into North Korea and towards the Manchurian border. **Brig Tom Brodie**, eager to be in at the kill, got his Bde onto trains and headed north, initially to Suwon, just south of Seoul.

Unfortunately for the Sig Sqn, *SS Pinehill* carrying our vehs had broken down en route and would be several days late. While the Sqn went off to war by train, I was left in Pusan with the drivers and orders to rejoin the Bde as soon as possible.

Our road journey north on the Main Supply Route (MSR) was 400 miles and seemed to take an age. The roads were choked with vehs and choking with dust. Winter was setting in fast, and recalcitrant veh engines were persuaded to turn over in the freezing morning temperatures by placing a Tommy cooker under the sump. Somehow, **MT Sgt Rolf** made sure that all our vehs stayed the course.

I expected to rejoin Bde HQ at Suwon, but when we arrived, the Bde had already gone north, with the Sig Sqn using a collection of borrowed vehs and equipt. We headed on through Seoul into North Korea, finally catching up with the Bde north of the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, just in time to draw breath before

The author and some of the Sqn's drivers on a hilltop behind the transit camp in Pusan

joining the great exodus south as the Chinese People's Army entered the war.

THE RETREAT SOUTH

29 Bde was under operational command of US 1 Corps and during the retreat of 150 miles, we occupied a series of blocking positions to delay the Chinese advance sufficiently for a defensive line to be established further south.

Our first real contact came in January 1951, north of Seoul, when a major Chinese attack attempted to open the road south. The Ulster Rifles bore the brunt of the attack, with 200 casualties. In addition, a number of Churchill tanks from 7 RTR became bogged down and were completely overrun by the Chinese. The attack was held, 29 Bde broke contact and passed through Seoul to another defensive position.

Linemen: Cpl Bestwick, Cpl Jarvis, Sig Glass, LCpl Simmonds

The retreat south ended abruptly when **Gen Ridgeway** took over command of the US 8th Army, turned his forces to face north and rekindled their offensive spirit.

THE BATTLE OF THE IMJIN

Winter gave way to spring, the UN line stabilised north of Seoul and 29 Bde moved into a position on the Imjin River. We knew that the Chinese were there – they frequently came up on our radio nets – but patrols across the river failed to flush them out.

Then, as night fell on 22 April, the eve of St. George's Day, the Chinese launched their Spring Offensive to take Seoul. 29 Bde had been allocated a fourth infantry battalion, the Belgians, which enabled us to cover a wider frontage. We had the Gloucesters on the left, Northumberland Fusiliers in the centre, Belgians on the right and Ulster Rifles in reserve. The attack built up rapidly as waves of Chinese waded across the river, and soon 29 Bde was heavily engaged along the whole of its front. We were in the path of a Chinese Army.

Bde units held the vital ground for three days with RA units, 45 Fd Regt and 170 Mortar Bty, pounding away at enemy concentrations and Centurion tanks of 8th Hussars keeping the roads open - except the one to the Gloucesters, who were effectively cut off from Day One. After withstanding the initial attack, the Belgians were relieved by the Ulster Rifles.

Cpl Bestwick and his linemen kept phone lines through to the forward units for as long as they possibly could, then it was up to the radio operators to keep their links going. On the second day, DRs **LCpl Hodgetts** and **Sig McGuinness** volunteered to run the gauntlet up the valley to deliver battle batteries to the Northumberland Fusiliers and Ulster Rifles, stopping on the way back to scoop up a Chinese soldier and deliver him to Bde HQ.

Dispatch Riders, Sigs McGuinness and Jeffery

On the morning of 25 April, 29 Bde was given orders to break contact – easier said than done. **Brig Brodie** gave the Gloucesters permission to try to break out, and 46 of them, under **Capt Harvey**, eventually managed to make their way back to the UN lines. The Royal Signals rear link detachment, including **LCpl Ward**, **Sigs Cairns** and **Jennings** and **Dvr Miles** were taken prisoner. The Northumberland Fusiliers and Ulster Rifles had a difficult time breaking free, but were magnificently supported by 8th Hussars. Bde HQ came out with the gunners firing over open sights.

The excitement was not quite over for the linemen. **Tubby Marshall** had told me that our next blocking position would be a few miles down the road at a junction on the MSR, with infantry units covering the approaches. I was to get there with my line dets and lay the cables. As the day wore on, the line parties beavered away, but in an increasingly eerie atmosphere and with no Bde units in sight. Dusk fell and, concerned that the next arrivals might not be friendly, we moved south and eventually came across a US CP, where I was told that 29 Bde's orders to establish another blocking position had been cancelled. The Bde had pulled back into reserve south of Seoul. The line dets continued south, following the Bde TAC signs and rolled into the new HQ loc in time for a late breakfast. I sometimes wonder if, for a few hours, we had been the UN rearguard.

In the immediate aftermath of the battle, the Gloucesters and 170 Mortar Bty were presented with the United States Presidential Citation and, closer to home, the part played by the Royal Signals rear link detachment in the Gloucesters' heroic stand is recorded for posterity in the painting that hangs in the HQ Mess, Blandford.

In the Honours and Awards for the period covering the battle, **Cpl** (later Sgt) **Bestwick** received the Military Medal and **Maj Marshall**, **Lt Kirkby** and **LCpl Hodgetts** were Mentioned in Despatches.

The sobering statistic is that, in the three days of fierce fighting, 29 Bde suffered 1,100 casualties.

LIFE GOES ON

In July 1951, HQ 1 COMWEL Div arrived and took 25 Canadian, 28 COMWEL and 29 Bdes under command. 29 Bde Sig Sqn duly held a wake to mark our loss of independence, reduction to troop status and to use up some of the NAAFI rebate accumulated from the consumption of Asahi beer.

The war continued for another fifteen months as an uneasy stalemate, with outbreaks of fierce fighting, usually to establish local tactical supremacy.

29 Bde units and individuals began to return to the UK, and a few months later it was my turn to board the *Empire Orwell* bound for home and the next stage of my YO training in Catterick.

POST SCRIPT

We all like to be able to point out particular achievements as the highlight of various periods in our lives, and I am no exception. However, my Korean War highlight had nothing to do with military matters.

My proposal of marriage sent by Forces Air Mail to the girl I left behind kept me on tenterhooks, and the rest of the Bde HQ in various states of concern, until her reply arrived. Luckily this confirmed the adage that the power of the pen is mightier than the sword, and in March 2003, **Lorna** and I celebrated our Golden Wedding Anniversary.

WEALD RECEIVING STATION

For anyone who might be interested, the receiving station at Weald, Bampton, Oxon, has now been dismantled. I am not a Royal Signals member, though have served in the Armed Forces.

During the last part of 2003, VT Merlin Communications took down all of the 150ft masts (of which there were very many) together with all the other aerial arrays contained on this site. I was privileged to be invited to shoot a broacast quality video of the dismantling of the site.

No doubt many of your members served at Weald during WW2. Subsequently the site was taken over by 2 and 81 Signals Units, RAF, and a detachment of RAF personnel remain at the site until the end of February this year. It appears that eventually the site will be returned to the landowners.

Alan O'Shaughnessy G6ZMX/GOITO Buckland, Faringdon, Oxon.

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

134 FD REGT- INDIA, BURMA, 1942-45; 29 INF BDE GP- KOREA, 1950-51

Doug Durham would like to hear from anyone who served in 134 Fd Regt in India and Burma, 1942-45 and in 29 Inf Bde Gp in Korea, 1950-51. Anyone who can help, please contact **Doug** at: doug.e.durham@clear.net.nz

GORDON HUNTER

Doug Robinson seeks **Gordon Hunter** from 48 Inf Div Sig Regt, Morperth in 1945. **Gordon** was from Barnsley. Anyone who can help, please contact **Doug** at: dnr55@shaw.ca

JACK ROBSON

John Wiseman is seeking the whereabouts of his former pal, **Jack Robson**. **Jack** was in the Junior Leaders Regt in Towyn, North Wales c. 1962-64 and left as J/RSM. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **John Wiseman** at: wj.wiseman1@ntlworld.com

JASON WOOD

Ex **WO1 (YofS) Jason Wood** now works as the Town Crier for the East Riding of Yorkshire and is also honorary Town Crier of Hollywood, California. He is writing a book about his life and wishes to include memories from his days in Royal Signals.

Anyone with any stories connected to him, good, bad or ugly, please contact **Jason** on Tel: 01482 227907, Email tcmike@callnetuk.com

JED KEEGAN

Maj Ian Comerford REME is seeking **Jed Keegan**, with whom he served at CPA Blandford between 1982-83. Last contact was at Krefeld, when **Jed** was a Sgt. Anyone who can help, please contact **Ian** on 0049-5051-962908.

KEVIN MARRIOTT

Francis Burak seeks contact with **Kevin Marriott**, who is believed to be still serving in the Corps. Please contact **Francis** on 07776-142495 or email francisburak@aol.com

SSGT NEIL HUNT

Miss K Raja is seeking the former **SSgt Neil Hunt**, now believed to be living in Canada. Anyone who can help is asked to pass on her email address to **Neil**. khoularaja@yahoo.co.uk

9AA BDE HQ and SIG SQN, INDIA, BURMA and GERMANY

Fred Powell would like to hear from anyone who served with him during WW2 in 9AA Bde HQ Sigs in India, North Burma and Germany. Contact him at: 32 Grassington Way, Sheffield S35 2ER.

AIR TROOPING SCHEME INDIA 1946

I would like to make contact with anyone who flew out of India early in 1946 by the Air Trooping Scheme. Would anyone who can help please contact:

W Markham
26 Hayden Close
Leicester
LE4 2DG.

VIRGIN VILLAS, CATTERICK, 1950s

Does anyone know what happened to Virgin Villas, which was home to SNCOs at Catterick Camp in the late 1950s? **Eddie Toole** would be interested to hear from anyone who knows the answer. Call him on 0161-4856323.

1 SIG REGT, MUNSTER 1951- 53

Eddie Lock is seeking his former pals from 1 Sig Regt in Munster 1951-53: **Bob Nelson** and **Vic Sands**, from London and **George Lynas**, from Manchester. Please contact **Eddie** via his daughter at jppoole1@aol.com

OWL COURSE CATTERICK, MAY 1944

Leonard Humphrey sends this photo of his squad taken at the end of May 1944 at the conclusion of their OWL course at Catterick. He says that a few days later they were all posted to Aldershot, where they were informed that they would be re-enforcements for the second front, which started the next day in Normandy.

Leonard is hoping to attend the D Day services in Normandy in June this year, and would very much like to meet some of his fellow students, particularly **Graham Gollop** (third from the right sitting), with whom he was posted to HQ 8 AGRA, and with whom he served with in Germany until the end of the War. **Leonard** is fourth from the left standing in the row behind **Graham**.

Anyone who is in the photo, or who knew **Leonard** is asked to contact him at:

543A Harlestone Road
Northampton
NN5 6NX
Tel: 01604 587545

REUNIONS

THE SULTANATE OF OMAN

Did you serve or work in the Sultanate of Oman? A reunion for ex soldiers and civilians who were stationed in the Oman is being held in Hull, Yorkshire, on Saturday 1 May 2004. Newcomers welcome.

Please contact **Mick Scott** for further details on 01702 218896

MALTA LIBYA CLUB - INCORPORATING MALTA, TRIPOLI, BENGAZI, BENINI, ELADEM, TOBRUK

The 11th Reunion of the above Club will be held on 10 - 11 September 2004 at the Jarvis Hotel, Loughborough, Leics. For a booking form, contact **Patricia** or **Roy Andrews** on 01227 264551, or email roypat.andrews@ic24.net

LANGELEBEN REUNION 2004

The Eleventh AGM and Reunion will be held on Friday 28 May - Saturday 29 May 04 at:

Burleigh Court
Loughborough

For more details contact the Secretary on 0208 300 7577 or visit the website: www.langeleben.btinternet.co.uk

CORRESPONDENCE

SIGNALMAN N WALLACE

From: **Keith G Stevens**
9 Cherry Glebe
Mersham
Kent
TN25 6NL

Tel: 44 (0)11233 502410

We corresponded briefly some months ago about a Signalman who died in China during World War 2, and I promised that when I had completed my researches on the unit concerned, I would send the relevant extract for your Corps Magazine.

Sig Neil Wallace was one of three fatalities during an operation in China during World War 2, in which small contingents of British officers and men served in a remote rural area of southern China training Nationalist Chinese Special Forces, known as Surprise Troops, in the skills of demolition and sabotage.

Wallace died of amoebic dysentery on 13 August 1942 in the British Methodist Mission Hospital at Lingling (Hunan province), and was buried at Lingling (now known as Yongzhou), a county town about one third of the way from Tonggu on the rough track to Qiyang. The Methodist missionaries did much for the contingents both medically and in hospitality. And though these hospital services were paid for, the British Mission was beholden to **Dr Willoughby** and his staff, and to the nonmedical missionaries, **Mr Webster** and **Mr** and **Mrs Harrison**, for their medical care and hospitality to the British.

Wallace's grave, which lay just outside the town, was cared for by the missionaries until 1949 when the Communists overthrew of the Nationalist Government. It was last referred to by a senior British officer in 1943 who, when passing, visited it and paid his respects.

The Imperial War Graves Commission does not keep a record of the place and circumstances of death, and wrote to say that due to the political climate, they have been unable to maintain the graves of casualties buried in China. It was therefore necessary to commemorate all casualties buried in China on various memorials throughout the world. So **Sig Wallace** is commemorated on the Brookwood Memorial.

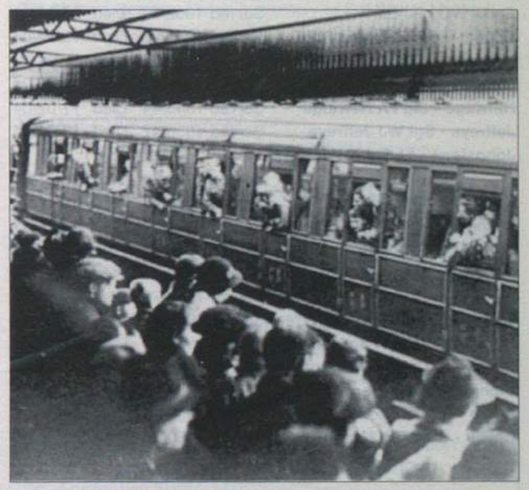
Yours...

ROYAL SIGNALS, ABERDEEN AND PETERHEAD

From: **Mr EWH Rackham**
Newseat Cottage
Inverugie
Peterhead
Aberdeenshire
AB42 3DT

Dear Sir

I have enclosed a photo of a troop train departing Aberdeen with members of the Royal Signals on board. Having been in the Royal Signals myself, I cannot remember a time when personnel from



were posted like this. It was always as individuals.
I am doing a study of history in this area, and would also like to know if there any members, can remember what Troop, Squadron served with the RAF at Peterhead Airfield, also known as Longside Airfield.

Yours...

TACTICAL RECOGNITION FLASH

From: **Mr JWH Jarman**
Meadow View
Upper Thornton
Milford Haven
SA73 3UF

Dear Sir

I think I must mention the 15,000 members of the ATS Signals who wore the Royal Signals cap badge above the left breast pocket, and on either sleeve, the blue and white diamond patch that marked them out from other ATS members.

Also, today we do not see the blue and white square on Royal Signals vehicles on the offside wing and rear tailboard. The unit number was painted in red. This was so important for field units finding their HQ and detachments (1939-45). Have a look in *Swiftly Ashore* at the picture of 3 Div on D Day. The book is obtainable from the Museum shop.

Yours…

LAST POST

Brooker - Sig E Brooker	Served 1944/47	Died	24/02/04
Burnett - SSgt RDJ Burnett	Served 1947/69	Died	??/??/??
Burrows - SSgt RD Burrows	Served 1947/69	Died	05/01/04
Cartledge - Cpl G Cartledge	Served 1949/51	Died	??/??/??
Chapman - Cpl WA Chapman	Served 1945/48	Died	??/12/03
Cowley - Maj N Cowley	Served 1938/70	Died	07/01/04
Davidson - Sig W Davidson	Served 1963/85	Died	22/08/03
Earl - Lt Col A Earl	Served 1939/79	Died	20/01/04
Earl - WO1 PJ Earl	Served 1952/57	Died	20/02/04
Friend - Maj TJ Friend MBE	Served 1962/98	Died	10/02/04
Gibbons - LCpl WJ Gibbons	Served 1954/56	Died	??/??/??
Hague - LCpl JD Hague	Served 1944/52	Died	??/02/04
Herridge - Sig FA Herridge	Served 1943/44	Died	??/02/04
Jeffreys - Sgt WJ Jeffreys	Served 1936/47	Died	18/01/04
Johnstone - Lt Col PH Johnstone	Served 1938/74	Died	03/02/04
Kew - Sig AJ Kew	Served 1951/57	Died	05/12/03
Lewis - Capt GB Lewis	Served 1941/57	Died	29/12/03
Long - ?? PJ Long	Served ????/??	Died	20/11/03
Long - Sig MA Long	Served 1940/42	Died	26/11/03
Neil - Sig JM Neil	Served 1963/72	Died	??/10/03
Oakley - Sgt AJ Oakley	Served 1936/67	Died	10/02/04
Scrafton - WO1 R Scrafton	Served 1958/70	Died	11/02/04
Simpson - Cpl GCM Simpson	Served 1947/49	Died	21/01/04
Stanger - Sgt P Stanger	Served 1959/83	Died	10/01/04
Stone - Sig JH Stone	Served 1939/46	Died	02/01/04
Unwin - SSgt EW Unwin	Served 1950/74	Died	08/02/04

OBITUARIES

FORDYCE - SSgt F Fordyce (Fred) died on 28 December 2003.

Fred joined the TA in January 1939 and trained as a keyboard operator. He served with 3 AA Div Sig Regt in England, India and Burma and reached the rank of SSgt (CQMS). After WW2, **Fred** become the first Membership Secretary of 19 Sig Regt Association and played an important part in the forming of the Association.

Fred bore a painful decline in health with great fortitude, and to the end was outwardly cheerful, always thinking of others. He will be sadly missed by his many friends in the Association and in the Corps.

KEW – Sig Alfred James Kew (Alfie) died on 5 December 2003.

Alfred Kew was born in Tweedmouth, Northumberland in 1935 and as he grew to adulthood, he was always known as 'Alfie.' **Alfie** joined 6 (Boys) Trg Regt, Beverley on 10 January 1951 at the age of 15. As he was very short, he had difficulty in marching and keeping up with the other boys. **Alfie** was reputedly the smallest soldier in Britain at the time and because of this he became the Regimental Mascot in the Band. He was also used as a marker on the podium whenever there were officers or dignitaries inspecting the parade.

After 2½ years in Royal Signals, **Alfie** transferred to the Kings Own Scottish Borderers as his hometown was Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland. During this time, his photograph was taken with **Bill Speakman VC**, who was very tall, and with **Alfie** being so short, the photo was printed in the national newspapers. Because of health problems, he was given a medical discharge in 1957, and was unable to work full-time, although he did work at Ferranti Electronics and Beppi for some years.

He married **Meg**, his third wife, at the age of 30 in 1966. He taught himself to play the piano accordion and his son, **Dean**, grew up to the sound of music in the home. The family moved to Doncaster in 1973 and then to Somerset in 1983. **Alfie** was very excited when he found an advert for the Beverley Ex-Boys Association in March 2002, and joined immediately. He was very pleased to make contact with some of his previous friends, and one of the members, **John Thomas** said that his memory of **Alfie** was his perpetual smile, even when he was being ragged about his size. He was small in stature but big in heart and an example to us all.

The funeral was held at Taunton Crematorium on 15 December 03 and was attended by **Tony** and **Beryl Hull**, representing the Beverley Ex-Boys and **Tony** gave a short oration. The Corps Colours were draped over the coffin. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, **Meg**, his son, **Dean**, and all the family.

MCHUGH - Sgt Walter McHugh died on 5 February 2004.

Walter was at Dunkirk, and served with 15 Field Regt RA in 7 Armd Bde. 'The finest troop sergeant in the British Army' according to his great friend, **Lt Col (Retd) Geoffrey Davis**.

Walter lived in Goole and leaves a widow, **Alma**.

SIMPSON – Cpl GCM Simpson (George) died on 21 January 2004.

George was born in Brora in the Highlands in 1930 and was called up for National Service in 1947. He trained as an Operator Wireless and Line (OWL) and served with HQ Scottish Div in Edinburgh being discharged in 1949 as a Cpl. He then joined Government Communications, serving in both in Brora and Cheltenham. He was then posted to Burma, where he met and married **Laura**. Tours back in Brora, the Far East, Cupar in Fife and Cyprus followed, with **George** and **Laura** finally settling down in Glenrothes in Fife when they were posted back to Cupar.

George retired in 1991, and from then on devoted himself to his beloved golf (he twice achieved a hole in one). As well as his golf, **George** loved a good argument and would take the most outrageous stand just to get one going but always with a wee twinkle in his eye.

George is survived by his widow, **Laura**, his son, **Colin**, and three daughters, **Linda**, **Heather** and **Gillian**. He will be sadly missed by them all, and by the Tayside and Fife Branch of the RSA, where meetings are now much quieter.

SHERIDAN - Sgt Dominic Sheridan (Donny) died on 17 January 2004 aged 74.

Donny served in the TA/TAVR from February 1957 to February 1979. He was the holder of the TA medal with two bars. Don served as an Operator Wireless and Line and as a Driving Instructor. He joined the Association at the inception of the Glasgow Branch on 7 May 1991, and was an active member, attending regular meetings and the functions organised by the Branch Committee.

A master tailor cutter in the clothing trade, **Donny** donated to the Branch, the drape used to cover the coffin at members' funerals, and the flags in the Corps Colours used to decorate the hall at Branch functions. These were well-made and appreciated by all members. He was also very proud of the Warrant he received as an Adult WO in the ATC, 1011 Monklands Sqn from early 1979 to 1984. He became an active member of the ATC Civilian Committee, helping to raise funds, and was so until his death. **Donny** was an avid collector of a variety of objects. Visitors to his house would be shown items of his collection, spread over several rooms, so varied in their range.

The Funeral Mass in Saint Philomena's Church, Provanmill, was conducted by the parish priest **Rev Fr J McCauley** assisted by **Rev Fr T Harley**. Afterwards the coffin was taken to Daldowie Crematorium where a short service and eulogy took place.

At the church and the crematorium, the Guard of Honour comprised the ATC Sqn with their standards, and the Glasgow Branch members with **Bill McNamara** the Branch Standard Bearer parading the Branch Standard. The Branch members offer their sincerest sympathy his wife, **Ann**, his family of sons, daughters and friends. He will be sadly missed at future meetings of the Branch.

STANGER Sgt Peter Stanger died on 10 January 2004.

Peter Stanger was born on 9 September 1944. He joined the Junior Regiment Royal Signals, Newton Abbott in 1959, and went on to serve for 24 years. He served in several overseas stations in Europe and the Far East and Middle East. Whilst in Hong Kong he met and married **Davena**. They have three children and seven grandchildren. **Peter** was an all round sportsman with football and cricket his favourite sports.

A lasting memorial and reflection of **Peter's** life and the service he gave should be '**Peter** was a good, kind and very sociable person.'

Our condolences go to his wife, **Davena**, his children, **Christine**, **Ian** and **Lorraine**, and to his grandchildren.

Certa Cito, **Peter**. You will be forever in our thoughts.

Contribution by his brother, Michael Stanger

DONATIONS

£10.00 from 3 Div Signals Reunion Club, in memory of **Maj (Retd) DJ Roberts**.

£20.00 from **Mr AR Ayres**.

£300.00 from 56 Division OCA.

£10.00 from the Certa Cito Lodge.

£20.00 from **Mr D Bouchope** in memory of his father, **David Bouchope**.

£250.00 from the will of **Mr GEJR Eynon**.

£10.00 from **Rev George Paton**.

£25.00 from **Capt (Retd) Victor Dugdale** in memory of **Lt Col AC Earl**.

£25.00 from the Guernsey Branch in memory of **Robert Savage**.

£18.00 from **Mr AR Homes**.

£100.00 from the Dorset Branch in memory of **Maj (Retd) TJ Friend MBE**.

£25.00 from **Geoffrey Davis**, in memory of **Sgt Walter McHugh**.

£50.00 from the Lincoln Branch.

£8.80 from **Terry Wickens**.

£10.00 from the Certa Cito Lodge.

£50.00 from the Peterborough Branch.

£80.00 donations in memory of **Mr Albert WJ Courtney**.

ADVERTISEMENTS

ARMY TECHNICAL FOUNDATION COLLEGE ARBORFIELD

RECLAIMING OF GIFTS TO MESSES

From 13 August 2004, Army Technical Foundation College Arborfield will cease Phase 1 training for Apprentice Tradesmen.

Hazebrouck Officers' Mess will continue to serve Arborfield Garrison, as will the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess, but all the gifts that have been made to the College and have been placed in these Messes are eligible to be reclaimed before the property is redistributed to other locations.

Those wishing to reclaim any gifts given to Hazebrouck Officers' Mess should direct their applications to **2Lt W Hankins**, and those wishing to reclaim any gifts given to the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess to **WO1(RSM) Osbourne**.

The address is: Army Technical Foundation College
Rowcroft Barracks
Arborfield
READING
RG29NU

The cut off date for all applications will be 15 July 04.

THE ARMY BENEVOLENT FUND DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

In 2004 the Army Benevolent Fund (ABF) celebrates its Diamond Jubilee 60 years of giving to the Army Family. The ABF thanks everybody for their support and invites you to join in the celebrations. The Charity is planning a schedule of fundraising events throughout the year, the most spectacular of them being *Music on Fire*, which takes place at RMA Sandhurst on 9 and 10 July.

Brought to you by **Sir Michael Parker** and his team who produced the Golden Jubilee celebrations at Buckingham Palace, *Music on Fire* promises to be the most amazing sight and sound show ever seen in the UK, featuring huge displays of fireworks, lasers, and projected images of dancing flames. We are holding it at the Royal Academy in Sandhurst, a fitting and awe-inspiring backdrop steeped in military history. So bring the kids, enjoy a picnic on the Academy lawns and let us entertain you this summer.

The Army Benevolent Fund was founded in 1944 to provide extra support for the 4.5 million men and women who had served their country during WW2 as they returned to civilian life, a huge task that could not be undertaken by Regimental and Corps Benevolent Funds alone. Today, the ABF remains strongly committed to the welfare of soldiers, ex-soldiers and their families providing substantial grants to those in real need. Last year alone a total of 150,000 individuals benefited directly or indirectly from ABF grants.

Even though those for whom the ABF was originally set up are getting older, there are still over 300,000 war widows and pensioners eligible for the ABF's help, as well as a further two generations of soldiers who have served all over the world. We expect the demands on the Fund to increase for the foreseeable future, so your support is as vital as ever. Although we are celebrating, there is still a massive job to be done for us to continue to provide for our soldiers and their families if and when they need us. Without your support we wouldn't be where we are today looking back on the thousands of lives we have changed for the better.

For *Music on Fire* ticket information, please call 020 8675 3582. For a fundraising pack or to make a donation to the Army Benevolent Fund, please call 020 7591 2000.

WAR MEMORIES 1939 - 45

RSA member **Len Moore** has written a book entitled *Z17- My War Memories 1939-45*. It recalls his time on the radio intercept side of warfare.

Len does not wish to make money from the book; he merely wishes to cover costs.

Anyone interested should contact **Len** on 01277 352449.

HIGH QUALITY SNCOS REQUIRED

HQ SOinC(A) is always looking for volunteers male and female of any trade who hold the rank of Cpl (recommended for Sgt), Sgt or SSgt to fill the Royal Signals recruiter posts. The length of tour is 30 months and you must not be in your last tour of duty with the Army. Successful candidates will attend a ten-day attachment at a recruiting office followed by the four-week Regular Army Recruiters Course prior to reporting for duty.

The following post are expected to become vacant as shown:

Recruiting Office	Reporting Date
Leeds	6 Dec 04
Taunton	6 Dec 04
Edinburgh	4 Apr 05
Colchester	4 Apr 04
Blackheath (London)	Jun 05
Newcastle	Jul 05
Stoke on Trent	Jul 05
Brighton	Aug 05
Nottingham	Aug 05
Croydon (London)	Oct 05
Middlesbrough	Nov 05
Warrington	Jan 06
Swansea	Jan 06

To register as a volunteer with Royal Signals MCM Div complete Annex C to AGAI Volume 2, Chapter 46 or if you wish to find out more about the job then contact **Maj (Retd) B T Dearman** on Blandford military 94371 2132 or civilian 01258 482132.

SOinC(A) places a high priority on filling these important post with the very best SNCOs that the Corps has to offer therefore if you have what it takes go for it.

TOP STITCH DESIGN

We specialise in embrodered garments for Royal Signals

Name tapes, Tee-shirts, Polo shirts, Badges, etc

A bespoke logo design service available for your Regiment, Squadron, Troop or RSA Branch

For details, contact Tony or Sue McCarthy on (01747) 838223

M62 COACH BOMB DISASTER COMMEMORATION

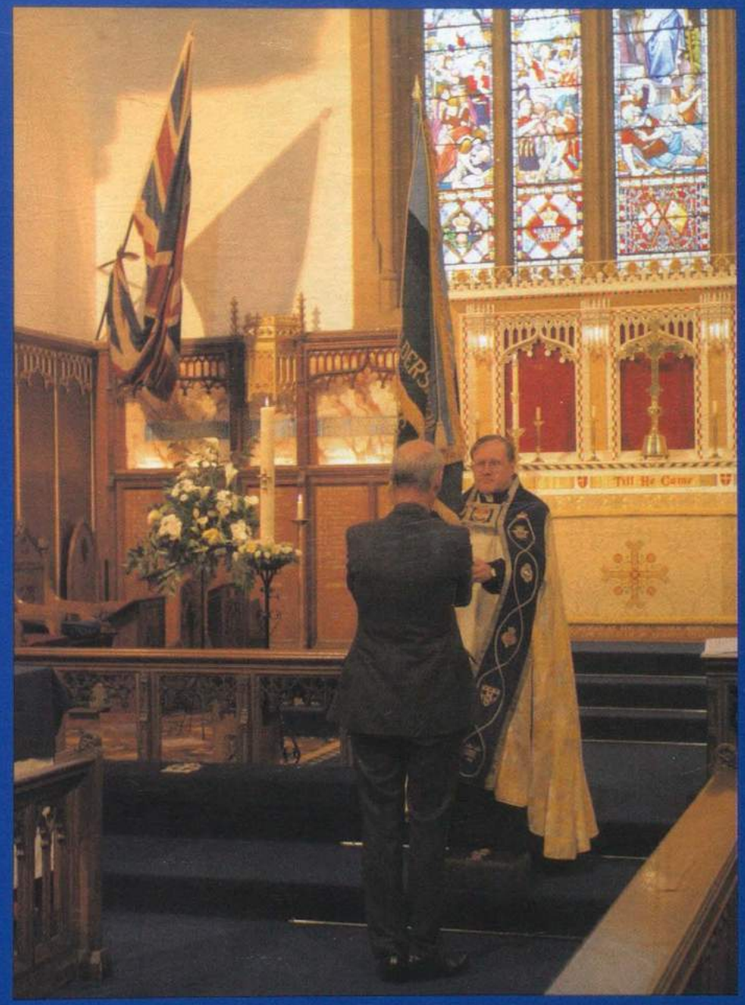
A TRAGEDY REMEMBERED

In the early hours of Monday 4 February 1974 the country was rocked by the savage murder of nine soldiers and three civilians who were killed by an IRA bomb planted in the luggage compartment of their coach travelling back to Catterick from Lancashire. Three members of the Corps died in the blast: **Sig Michael Waugh** aged 22 and **Sig Leslie Walsh** aged 17, both of 8 Sig Regt, and **Sig Paul Reid** aged 17 of 11 Sig Regt.

The thirtieth anniversary of the bombing was marked by a short service held at the Hartshead Moor Service Station on the M62, where the killings are recorded on a wall plaque. Following a short service of commemoration family members and Regtl representatives laid wreaths. Our photo shows Michael Waugh's brother **Peter**, himself a former Sgt in the Corps, with his sisters **Catherine** and **Carmel** along with the Regtl Col, **Col John Ewbank**. **Michael's** other brothers **Andrew** and **William** were unfortunately unable to attend the ceremony. The Royal Regt of Fusiliers provided the bugler.

THE wire

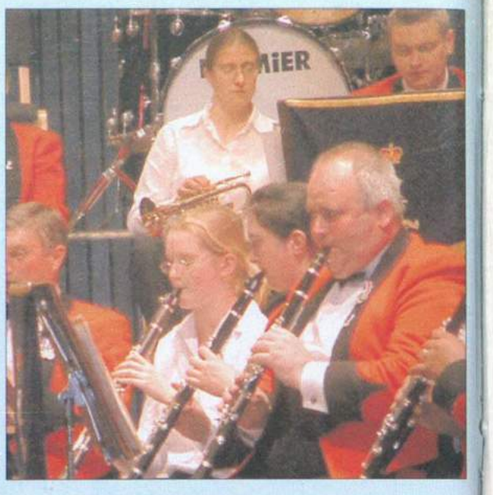
June 2004



The Royal Corps of Signals

A NIGHT AT THE PROMS, ROYAL SIGNALS STYLE

The audience settled down, the house lights dimmed, the drums rolled and the combined Bands of the Royal Corps of Signals marched on to the *Grand March* from Verdi's *Aida*. An impressive opening to the 2004 Proms Concert given by the Corps Band at *The Lighthouse*, Poole's Arts Centre, it set the scene for a crisp, fast moving and varied evening of musical entertainment. Now an annual event, Saturday 15 May was the sixth concert the Band had given here in aid of The Army Benevolent Fund. Word had got around from previous years' events, and this year's was a sell-out.



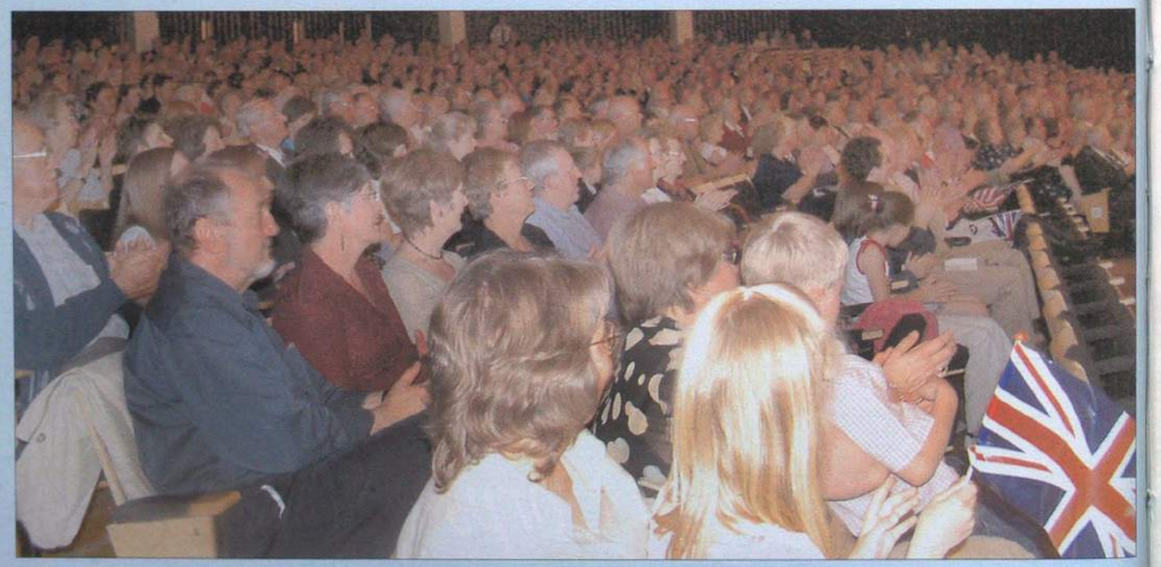
Work Experience students (in white blouses) Clare Howard, Cornet and Elizabeth Bustard, Clarinet join in with the seniors

Premiered by the Corps Director of Music, **Maj Paul Murrell**, Bandmaster, **WO1 Paul Wilman** and the Director of the Corps Northern Band, **Capt Tom Milford**, this year's programme was strongly orientated towards WW2 to mark the 60th Anniversary of the D-Day Normandy landings. But the WW2 theme was presented imaginatively. The Band marched to Glen Miller's *St Louis Blues*, both in quick and slow time. And **Musician Tracy Clark** led a WW2-style Community Sing with a number of Vera Lynne favourites. And many of the audience knew the words!

One of the stars of the show was diminutive **Cameron Elder**, son of **Pipe Maj Mick Elder**, who marched on with the Corps Pipes and Drums (or 'Pipes and Drum' because he was the only drummer on the night). The fact that his drum was nearly as big as himself, did not faze **Cameron** as, with sticks flying, he let rip with a complicated solo, much to the delight of the audience. **Cameron's** (only slightly) larger brother, **Jamie**, a fine young piper, made it almost a family affair.

Also performing were a number of Work Experience students and a student from Kneller Hall. The amount of time that they, the Corps Northern Band and the Pipes and Drums had had to practise together had been limited, but all turned in a flawless performance.

Tracey Clark charms them all with a WW2 sing along



And the audience just loves it!

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The Magazine of the Royal Corps of Signals

Established in 1920

The Wire

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FRONT COVER

In April 04 the Aldershot and Reading Branches of the RSA both dedicated their new Standards. (See their reports on pages 263 and 268 respectively) Here we see Brig Noel Moss, Chairman of Aldershot Branch, presenting their new Standard to Aldershot Garrison Padre, Rev Christopher Cook CF for the blessing.

BACK COVER

The Combined Bands of the Royal Corps of Signals held their annual Proms Concert in Poole on Saturday 15 May 04. (See report on inside front cover) Here we see the Corps Band, the Corps Northern Band and the Corps Pipes and Drum all on stage together. Somewhere in the centre, lost from view, is young Cameron Elder – honest!

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

SUCCESS IN THE THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

Not being content with doing the Three Peaks Challenge in the mandatory 24 hrs, 37 Sig Regt's 93 Sqn had a go at doing it in less than 20 hrs. And they did it - in 18 hrs 45 mins and 26 secs! In doing so, they raised a few blisters, but more importantly, £285 for a local hospice. See 37 Sig Regt's report on page 242.

SKIING SUCCESS

16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216), relative newcomers to serious competitive skiing, have chalked up some remarkable successes. Finishing 13th overall in the Corps Championships, they were the only Minor Unit to qualify for the Army Championships. Against the better-funded and more experienced units, they went on to finish 19th in this latter event. See16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216)'s report on page 238.

BOWMAN FIELD TRIALS COMPLETED

After much trg and effort, 12 Mech Bde and Sig Sqn (228) were at last able to put BOWMAN to the test in a full Bde operational field trial. The kit and its operators passed with flying colours. Each BOWMAN set contains GPS equipt so that its loc is always known. As their report on page 250 says, 'Basic Situational Awareness was achieved, allowing personnel to track the RSM as he approached their loc!'

COMMEMORATIVE FAULKLAND ISLANDS YOMP

JCUFI entered two teams in the Commemorative Yomp, held each year, to mark the one done by 45 Commando from San Carlos to Port Stanley in 1982. It was a gruelling 3-day event, with several comd tasks thrown in to simulate some of the problems the Marines encountered in that operation. Despite many blisters and bad weather, our people made it safely into Stanley. See JCUFI's story on page 254.

RESERVES TRAINING AND MOBILISATION CENTRE (RTMC)

RTMC Chilwell is mentioned with increasing frequency in unit reports, but what is it, and what does it do? Briefly, its role is to do all the admin and some of trg for TA and Reservists who are deployed to operation theatres. But find out more in their article on page 189.

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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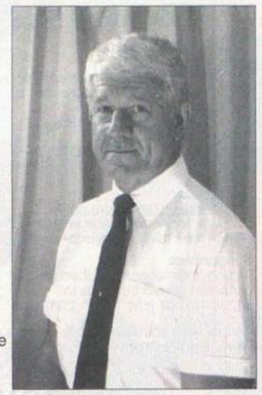
Editorial



Readers will have noticed that we are increasing the amount of Corps information at the beginning of the magazine, particularly in the last two issues. In keeping with the aims of *The WIRE*, this will continue. We are currently tasking people to write articles on such things new developments, as well as established things that we need to be reminded of. So far, much of this information is Serving Corps orientated, but for the interest of the Retired Corps, we try where possible, to write it in a style that is more understandable to them as well.

As units get to know me and I them, and as we discuss together what we can do to make *The WIRE* better and more interesting to read, new and different approaches in unit writing are now emerging. Some units, instead of reporting in every issue come what may, are now reporting only when they have something to say. Others, instead of reporting Sqn by Sqn, Tp by Tp, are just writing specific articles on things they have achieved, milestones they have passed or operations they have deployed on. In this issue, 36 Sig Regt, 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, and 97 (Balkans) Sig Sqn reports are good examples of this. Personal perspectives and observations, such as **Capt Rob Hamilton's** piece in 2 NZ Sig Sqn's report, and the stories by **Cpl Campion**, **Cpl Langley** and **Pte Large** in 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn's report, also make interesting and refreshing reading. More importantly, they appeal to a wider range of readers, both Serving and Retired. I look forward to more and more units (and RSA Branches) sending in more interesting and appealing stories like these.

Unit reports, especially in the issue, frequently include a list of arrivals and departures. Now it is RHQ's turn. As this issue goes to press, we will have lost three from RHQ and gained one. Regimental Secretary, **Col Andrew Carter MBE**, after 7½ years in post has finally retired (or so he says), to be replaced by **Col Neil Donaldson OBE**, our previous Regimental Colonel. I personally owe a great deal to these two. Both have been good mentors to me, giving me loads of encouragement and stopping me put my foot in it. Whilst I am sorry to see **Col Andrew** go, I am delighted that **Col Neil** has come back to us. Corps Property Officer, **Maj (Retd) Pat Lafferty** and Museum Attendant, **Dave Walker BEM** also leave us. In their different styles, both have been generous with their time and help, and have provided humour, joy and encouragement to us all. I wish all three departees the best of health and happiness, and look forward to seeing them back in Blandford from time to time.

The RSA website has moved ahead quite remarkably over the past few months. In this issue, many RSA Branches are advertising their websites, and many Branches now email their *WIRE* reports in to me. We owe a lot to the Corps Webmaster, **WO2(FofS) Andy Soward** for the technical help in getting the main RSA website together, and to RSA Admin Officer, **Peter Cuckow** for getting out to encourage RSA Branches to participate in the scheme. But we must not forget the effort that Branches themselves are now putting into building their own websites. Some have made a sterling effort. If we can make the same progress over the next 12 months, we should truly 'have comms in' to all Branches.

For RSA Branches and their Members, the Dedication of a new Standard is a serious and often moving occasion, similar to that for Regimental Colours of Serving Units. Aldershot, and Reading Branches have recently laid up their old and dedicated the new Standards, and it is pleasing to note that on each occasion, the Dedication Service was well supported, by their own Branch Members, Members of other Branches, and by senior ranking Officers.

As we know, many TA and Reservists have, and still are deployed on operations such as TELIC and OCULUS, and their contributions have been considerable. Often these personnel mention in passing 'going through Chilwell.' But where or what is Chilwell? In a nutshell, The Reserves Training and Mobilisation Centre (RTMC) Chilwell is an establishment whose function is to provide all the admin and pre-deployment of trg for TA and Reservists who are mobilised for operational deployment. We have included more about RTMC and its role in this issue.

YOUR ONE DAY'S PAY - WHAT HAPPENED TO IT IN 2003

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 2003.

INCOME

The total income for the year was £895K. The main source of income was from the subscriptions of Officers and Soldiers (£575K). 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 (£159K).

Income from our investments amounted to £113K, loan repayments £22K and donations account for the final £26K. 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.

EXPENDITURE

Some £318K, or 35% of total income, has been spent on benevolence in support of both the Serving and Retired Corps. This includes a grant of £32K 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 £114K. The Royal Signals Institution and Heritage costs totalled £30K, 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 £12K, 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 £8K and £4K respectively.
The Games Club authorised expenditure of £57K in support of Corps Sport and the Royal Signals Yacht Club received £9K. The Wire was subsidised by £28K. Capital Grants of £4K were approved by the Heritage Committee for the purchase of Corps Paintings and Silver. £20K and £15K respectively have been set aside in support of the White Helmets and Royal Signals Yacht Club for future capital replacement programmes. Two yachts have been replaced this year at a cost of £76K.

The funds allocated £55K to Corps Entertainment, including such occasions as Royal Visits to Units and the Annual Reunion of the Royal Signals Association. Further financial support of £127K was made to the Serving Corps and is summarised at Note 1, including £26K for Adventure Training and Grants to the Royal Signals Museum and for the purchase of Tactical Recognition Flashes of £13K 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 2003 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 2003

Where did the money come from?

INCOME	£k		%
Soldiers' Subscriptions	390		43
Soldiers' Gift Aid	107		12
Officers' Subscriptions	185		21
Officers' Gift Aid	52		6
Investments	61	52	13
Donations	26		3
Loan Repayments	22		2
	£895K		

Note: The Association is shown in shaded areas

How was the money spent? (All figures are in thousands)

EXPENDITURE	£k		%
Association, Welfare and Benevolence	281		31
Association Grants (Army Benevolent Fund etc.)	37		4
Salaries	53	27	9
Running Expenses	19	15	4
Institution	23		3
Heritage	7		1
Corps Music	24		3
Sports	66		7
Wire Subsidy	28		3
Capital Grants	115		13
Entertainment	16	39	6
Other (Note1)	127		14
Investment or Carried Forward	18		2
	£895K		

Note1:	£K
Adventure Training	26
Grants	44
Recruiting	37
HQ Officers' Mess	18
HQ Sergeants' Mess	2

HONOURS, AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS

We congratulate the following Royal Signals personnel who were granted Honours, Awards and Commendations in the List announced on 22 April 04:

OPERATIONAL HONOURS – NORTHERN IRELAND

Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE)

WO2 SD Metcalfe 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)

WO1 PJ Carley 21 Sig Regt
WO1 IG Hawkins 600 Sig Tp
WO1 SA White BOWTAG(S)

GOC'S COMMENDATIONS - NORTHERN IRELAND

Cpl G Wallace 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt

OPERATIONAL HONOURS – FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)

WO2 NJ Barnett MS Branch HQ NI

JOINT COMMANDERS' COMMENDATIONS - OPERATION TELIC

SSgt SHJ Billiard 81 Sig Sqn (V)
LCpl SRD King 215 Sig Sqn
Lt R Pun Brunei Sig Tp
WO2 PI Timmis 11 EOD Regt RLC
Cpl MJ Trotman 2 Sig Regt

PAY ISSUES – *by Maj LC Westerman, SO2 O and D, HQ SOinC(A)*

It is about time that we at HQ SOinC(A) issued an update on one of the most emotive of issues - pay. It has been a turbulent time with the introduction of Pay 2000 in April 2001, the adjustment of pay for many Royal Signals operators in April 2002 and the extension of FRIs to operators in April 2003. As many will have experienced, not everything has gone smoothly and pay is always an area that encourages comparison and resentment. This article aims to update serving members of the Corps on the latest situation so that at least you know the facts even if you remain dissatisfied! It should be noted that direction on pay issues is given centrally from the MOD, with HQ SOinC(A) representing Royal Signals views but not setting policy. So whilst we would love to drive policy forwards for the benefit of Royal Signals soldiers and officers, we can only try to influence it.

Pay 2000

There were some problems with transition to Pay 2000 such that a few are still not on the correct pay increment. A programme of remedial work, called Pay 2000 Follow-On Work, is being pursued and we are promised that many of the remaining anomalies will be cleared up this year. However, in many cases the dissatisfaction arises from perceived unfairness in the system rather than incorrect implementation. A number of anomalies has arisen which resulted in some significant disparities in pay received between soldiers of very similar seniority, many as a result of the reallocation of JNCO operators to the high pay range in 2002. When representation was made to the pay authorities highlighting these inequalities and the pay overtaking that they caused, it was made clear that there is no solution that is practicable, fair and affordable. The following points are worth bearing in mind:

The people who make pay policy agree that differences in pay between soldiers of equivalent seniority are undesirable and damage the integrity and fairness of Pay 2000.

Each trade has different career and pay progression, so comparison between trades is often unfounded and unhelpful.

No one has lost money as a result of transition to Pay 2000. The dissatisfaction is often as a result of someone of similar or lower seniority receiving more money.

A system that includes overlapping pay ranges between ranks will continue to be prone to anomalies. However, most cases are due to the change from the old system, and occurrences will decrease as the Job Evaluation system settles down.

There is no viable solution that can be implemented now to solve the existing grievances where they are as a result of anomalies rather than incorrect application.

The centrally led Review of Pay 2000 as part of the Service Personnel Change Programme will attempt to address the sources of these anomalies for the future. If you have an outstanding issue that is one of incorrect implementation rather than a grievance due to overtaking then you should continue to pursue the issue via your RAO.

Job Evaluation

Some of you will have been involved in the Joint Service Job Evaluation Team (JSJET) evaluation of supervisor, support and technician trades in 2003. This was part of the rolling 5 year programme of job evaluation which recommends the pay ranges for each trade group at each rank and also provides data on which the Armed Forces Pay Review Body can set the overall pay levels. Having witnessed the process this year, I can confirm that it is rigorous, fair, even handed across the Services, and makes every effort to interview representative jobholders in each rank and trade.

Despite all of this work, we have been told that the JSJET results from last year's judging are not to be published or implemented this April. However, it is anticipated that they will be released later this year to influence pay scales in April 2005, although pay range allocations for Royal Signals trades are unlikely to be affected significantly.

If the job evaluation programme sticks to schedule, all Royal Signals trades will be reassessed in 2008. If however, we feel that the role of any one trade has changed significantly we can ask for that trade to be reassessed before then.

FRIs and Specialist Pay

The revised system of Financial Retention Incentives was introduced in April 2003, with briefing material that everyone should have had access to. For those who missed it completely, the scheme allows for taxable payments of £2,500, £5,000 and £10,000 to be paid to operators, technicians and supervisors completing Class 3, Class 1 and Supervisory courses from 1 April 2003. The FRIs, as the name suggests, are designed to encourage retention and pull through, by the completion of career courses. The scheme is under constant review by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body and the Adjutant General. For the moment, the payments remain in place for those completing courses before the end of March 2005, but of course, this cannot be absolutely guaranteed.

The FRIs were always intended to be an interim arrangement, pending some form of specialist pay for those with ICS skills which are in high demand in the civilian IT and telecomms job market. This HQ is still pursuing the possibility of specialist pay. However, were it to be approved no such form of pay could be introduced before JPA is in place, which is unlikely to be before 2007.

RESERVES TRAINING AND MOBILISATION CENTRE (RTMC)

The Reserves Training and Mobilisation Centre (RTMC) came into being at Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell in Nottingham on 1 April 1999. The Centre was set up with the specific responsibility for the administrative preparation, individual training, and HR requirements of Reservists (both from TA and Regular Reserve) volunteering or called up for operational service with the Regular Army. RTMC is permanently manned by up to 100 personnel, including Regular, FTRS, NRPS and civilian staff. RTMC is responsible to the Adjutant General for the delivery of both a steady state and surge mobilisation operational capability.

RTMC's Mission is:

To administer, equip and prepare service personnel (and civilians when required) in order that they can take their place with the Regular Forces with confidence, either when deploying for operations or when entering a commission, engagement or commitment for a peacetime attachment.

RTMC's Aim is:

To achieve integration through confidence.

The Centre was originally designed for an annual throughput of 3,600 personnel (1,800 each on mobilisation and de-mobilisation), with an 'any one time' capacity of 200. The latter, in accommodation terms, has recently been increased to 650. Prior to attachment to their Regular host unit, all Reservists undergo a 2-day package covering the spectrum of dental and medical checks (which may include CDT), clothing and equipment issue, and administrative preparation and documentation.

All mobilised personnel are fully inoculated to Theatre requirements

Professional clerical staff address individual requirements, including pay, allowances, wills, insurance and employment issues. The pay and documentation process function represents the RTMC 'Main Effort'. The administrative package is followed by an 8-day individual training module, aimed at achieving Regular Army individual training standards in, for example, skill at arms, first aid and personal fitness, to meet mandatory requirements. Individuals mobilised to serve with Regular units on operations will also attend the relevant Special to Theatre training package prior to deployment.

Reservists both start and finish their Regular attachment at RTMC. Completion of Regular service is marked by a formal demobilisation package, which takes approximately half a day. The Centre ran its first administrative and training course in May 1999. Since then, it has mobilised over 15,500 Reservists to operations and demobilised around 13,500.

In order to provide holistic support to operations, RTMC also fulfils a Depot function for Reservists serving with Regular Forces on operations. In essence, we provide a 'One Stop Shop' for problem solving, Reservist welfare and the handling of individual cases. By providing this function it has quickly, and effectively, become the central focus for mobilisation and all operational Reservist related issues.

In addition to the functions above, RTMC expanded in 2001 to help meet the demands of the many small-scale operations that the Armed Forces found themselves committed to. For example, in April 2001, RTMC's Reservist remit was extended to include the Royal Marine Reserve, which required a Royal Marine manning increment at the Centre. 2002 saw a rapid increase in the numbers of personnel applying for FTRS, which is now an established manning initiative.

Full dental checks are given

Personnel prepared at RTMC are now not only deploying operationally, but also to all areas of Regular Forces and into a variety of global operational theatres. RTMC, along with the Augmentation Cell at APC Glasgow, has been instrumental over the last 3 years in providing a more coherent man-management strategy for Regular personnel deploying to operations mainly for those who do not have a parent unit to help prepare them for operations. These personnel are now offered the full support of RTMC in all J1-J4 functions in order to ensure they are correctly prepared, holistically, for operations.

As well as preparing Regular Service personnel for operations, RTMC also assists the Regular Army manning figures by operating with the APC a 'fast-track' enlistment or re-enlistment system. This system is an integral part of the demobilisation process for those Regular Reservists who express an interest in re-enlistment following a period of mobilised service. To date, RTMC has facilitated entry to the Regular Army for 146 individuals, with a further 64 applications currently pending. Interest in enlistment or re-enlistment post OP TELIC has been most encouraging.

Breaking new ground in November 2001, was the mobilisation of 97 Sig Sqn (V). This TA Sqn, drawn from across 2 Sig (NC) Bde, provided the Forces Sig Sqn for OP PALATINE, substituting for a Regular Sqn which would otherwise have been deployed. In February 2002, RTMC completed the first UK compulsory mobilisation since the Suez Crisis of 1956, by mobilising elements of 3 Military Intelligence Bn over 2 tranches to augment the

All mobilised personnel are fully kitted to operational scales

Defence Intelligence Staff in support of OP VERITAS, following the events of 11 September 2001. There were several further compulsory mobilisations throughout 2002 which mainly involved specialist medical personnel.

Other interesting current business of note has been RTMC's involvement in preparing international personnel (Chilean, New Zealand and Icelandic) for operations in Bosnia and Kosovo as part of the MOD's ongoing Defence Diplomacy edict.

Finally, and most recently, RTMC undertook the surge mobilisation for OP TELIC to support and augment operations in Iraq. RTMC mobilised and deployed around 7,500 Reservists (mainly TA) for this operation. To facilitate this, we received 200 functional specialist augmentees, mainly J1, Med and Dental personnel, and these have been attached to RTMC for the past 12 months. As part of the OP TELIC deployment, RTMC also prepared around 180 civilian personnel, through FCO and DOMA, to enable them to join the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Aid in Baghdad. The main challenge facing RTMC over the next few months is the demobilisation of those Reservists who were involved in combat operations in Iraq.

To conclude, RTMC has expanded rapidly not just in terms of throughput and output but, more importantly, in terms of the diverse nature of its customer base and the increasing number and scope of operations it now supports. This trend looks set to continue in 2004. New initiatives, such as preparing civil servants for deployment to operations, will add to RTMC's already full portfolio, emphasising the importance of operational preparation for all individual personnel – be they military or civilian - deploying to operational theatres.

PROVISION FOR THE DISABLED AND SPECIAL NEEDS DEPENDANTS AT OVERSEAS COMMANDS

Background

Do any of your dependants come within the category of being disabled or having special educational needs? Do any of your children receive extra help, or require one-to-one teaching? Does a dependant have a condition that requires specialist medical treatment or specialised equipment or facilities at school or at home? If so, then have you considered how the Army provides the support required when serving in an overseas Command?

Whilst living in the United Kingdom, the provision for the disabled and special needs dependants is a Local Authority responsibility, and parents have the backing of legislation to ensure that all that should be done is being done. However, when serving in an overseas Command, which includes British Forces Germany, it is another matter. Where it is practical to do so, the Army endeavours to provide a standard of support and facilities commensurate with those available in UK. This standard reflects current UK legislation:The National Assistance Act, 1948; The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, 1970; The Children Act, 1989; The Education Act, 1996; and the Special Needs and Disabled Persons Act, 2001.

This legislative basis, together with the MOD duty of care as an employer, constitutes the Army's holistic Special Needs policy. It is necessarily constrained by resource availability; therefore, the more acute or unusual cases may be beyond the support capability of the overseas Command.

In real terms, the limitations are applied, in most cases, to children with more complex disabilities. A disabled child's social, educational and medical support needs become more individual and complex as the child matures. In general terms, younger disabled children are easier to accommodate within existing mainstream educational settings, than their older counterparts. Unfortunately, as a child becomes older, their particular pattern of needs may vary markedly from their contemporaries.

Older disabled children may also require a socially simplified environment, i.e. smaller group and social demands, and expectations that are easier for the child to contend with. The requirement for a different context and curriculum and the widening gap in maturity and independence between the disabled child and their contemporaries, will require dedicated support, which may be difficult for the Army to sustain in overseas Commands. Similarly, age is an important factor when considering provision of specialised facilities and equipment.

The limitations are not hard and fast rules. Each individual is unique, and is therefore assessed in his or her own right, whether the need is educational, medical or physical, or combinations thereof.

How can Service personnel alert the Chain of Command to their circumstances?

Army General Administrative Instruction No 108 (AGAI 108) is the Army's instruction on Disabled and Special Needs Dependants. All Service personnel who have disabled or special needs dependants, should be made aware of AGAI 108 and comply with it. It is available from unit administration offices. It provides direction on reporting the facts to the MCM Divisions via Commanding Officers.

Who assesses the Disabled or Special Needs requirement?

Overseas Commands are required to carry out an assessment to determine whether the needs can be met. Each case is unique, and will require an individual assessment. Professionals in each field carry out the assessments. It may require access to information held on confidential medical or educational documents, or to discuss the case with consultants or teachers. Parents will be expected to grant permission for such access, as without it, the assessors will not be able to gain a true understanding of the requirement.

What are the affects of withholding the information from the Chain of Command?

The most frequently asked question is, 'Does having Disabled or Special Needs dependants affect the Serviceperson's career?' Within the generic area of Disabled and Special Needs, which includes both adults and children, the Army is obliged to minimise the disadvantages to personnel who have Disabled or Special Needs dependants.

The Serviceperson should not be discriminated nor career fouled. Their careers will be managed with care and compassion, and every practical assistance will be given. However, postings to overseas Commands must be carefully considered and discussed with all relevant parties before an informed decision is made.

The Army will need to be able to determine the provisions required, and how many professionals will be needed. Support can only be provided when the requirement is known. The withholding of information reduces the Army's ability to predict or determine these requirements.

What is the worst-case scenario or the consequence of withholding vital information?

To report for duty at an overseas Command and then announce that a dependant has Special Needs or a Disability may result, in the worse case, with the family being returned to UK if support cannot be provided.

It is not hard to understand the distress this would cause, especially if the Serviceperson is made to continue with the posting. But the stark reality is that it does happen!

Where can more information be obtained?

Unit Representatives Your Unit Welfare Officer, Regimental Careers Management Officer or Regimental Administrative Officer.

Army Welfare Service AWS is located in all UK and British Forces Germany Garrisons, and is able to provide advice and assistance. Contact your local AWS representative or telephone: 01722 436565.

Personnel Welfare Service PWS is located in Northern Ireland and Cyprus. Contact your local PWS representative or telephone NI: 02892 29491 or for Cyprus: Episkopi Mil 2009.

Service Children's Education (UK) Disabled or Special Educational Needs children should be registered with SCE (UK). This centre can provide advice on education and schooling in overseas Commands. Contact details: SCE (UK), Trenchard Lines, Upavon, Pewsey, Wilts SN9 6BE (Tel: 01980 618244 or Mil 94344 8244).

SSAFA Forces Help Special Needs and Disabilities Advisor SSAFA FH has a Special Needs and Disabilities Advisor to provide advice and assistance on all matters. Contact details: SSAFA FH 19 Queen Elizabeth St, London SE1 2LP (Tel: 02070 463 9234).

When should you take action?

Do not wait until a Posting Order is received. Seek advice. Act now!

ADVANCE ELECTRONIC WARFARE KIT COMES INTO SERVICE

INCE - *Reproduced by kind permission of 'Focus' magazine*

The next generation of non-communications electronic warfare (EW) equipt is about to come into service.

Produced by Thales Sensors of Leicester, INCE (Interim Non-Communication Electronic Support Measures) is designed to identify and intercept enemy radar signals and locate their positions. INCE is installed in rugged Pinzgauer 6x6 vehicles, making the system extremely mobile in a variety of terrain and conditions. It can be deployed in less than 20 minutes.

IPT leader **John Helsop** said: 'INCE replaces ageing intercept and DF equipt, bringing with it a huge advance in technology and effectiveness. Using commercial off-the-shelf technology, it is faster, easier to use, has greater automation and analysis - and new vehicles give it better mobility.

'But what makes INCE such a big step forward is the combination of automatic processing and reporting, which allows the user to gather a more detailed analysis of the intercepted signals – meaning that they can provide a much improved level of intelligence and accuracy.'

SCARUS - *Reproduced by kind permission of 'Soldier' magazine*

Specialist EW units, including 14 Sig Regt (EW), have taken delivery of SCARUS, the next generation of lightweight equipt designed to intercept enemy comms and pinpoint their locations.

Battle-proven during OP TELIC, the system was produced by Falcon Ltd of Tewkesbury. It is more sensitive, more capable and easier to use than existing EW equipt and, critically, light enough to be man-portable.

Land Command and the manufacturers pulled out all the stops to make SCARUS available to troops in Iraq.

It was reported to have performed faultlessly during OP TELIC and was used on many occasions to gather vital intelligence in combat situations.

Twelve complete systems have been delivered under the £2.5 million contract to EW units, including 14 Sig Regt (EW) and the Royal Marines.

JOB VACANCY

The job of SO3 Potential Officer Processing is about to become available in the Recruiting Branch, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford. The position was an RO3 job, but is now a Grade D Military Support Function post, and is thus available to anyone with suitable experience and knowledge of the Corps and the Officer recruiting processes.

It is a very interesting job, where you will be personally involved with those wishing to become an Officer in the Corps, processing them through the system and providing advice where appropriate.

Further details can be obtained from the present incumbent, **Maj (Retd) T Mountford** on (Civ) 01258 482308 or (Mil) 94371 2308; **Maj M Rayner**, SO2 Officer Recruiting, on Ext 2305; or **Lt Col (Retd) AF Browne**, on Ext 2077.

THE ARMY FLYING ASSOCIATION

Have you ever fancied learning to fly a civilian fixed wing aircraft? Or perhaps you already have a civil private pilots licence and want some affordable flying in a friendly environment? The Army Flying Association is able to help you.

The Army Flying Association was formed on 21 September 1936 as The Royal Artillery Flying Club Limited, and the original aim was to provide encouragement and facilities for members to learn to fly and to continue to fly after they had qualified as pilots. This is still our aim today, and one which we want you to be part of. In due course, the Army Air Corps took over the focus for aviation, and with it, the AFA. So we are based at Middle Wallop in Hampshire.

Membership of the AFA is open to all serving and retired personnel of the Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy, the Territorials and the Reserves, and their immediate families. Exceptionally, other applicants may be considered for membership, and their applications will be considered by the AFA Committee.

Full Flying Membership is required to operate the Club's aircraft, but Associate Membership is available for those who do not wish to fly, but wish to maintain contact with the Club through the Newsletter and social events. There is also annual Family Membership, to allow a member's immediate family members to be carried as passengers. Membership fees are: Full Flying Membership for serving personnel, £24.00 p.a., for retired service or civilian personnel, £36.00 p.a., and Associate Membership, £5.00 p.a. Family Membership is an additional £2.50 p.a. per member.

The AFA operates a Piper PA38 Tomahawk, at £52 per hour, including fuel and oil; and the Wessex Flying Group, operating from the same premises as the AFA, offer the use of their Cessna 172M, at £72 per hour, including fuel and oil. The AFA offers training for a Private Pilot's Licence (Aeroplanes) and IMC ratings. Instructors' fees are £15 per lesson.

AFA flying training normally takes place outside the operating hours of the School of Army Aviation (SAAvn); i.e. at weekends, summer evenings between SAAvn day and night flying, and during any SAAvn block leave periods. However, qualified members may fly during SAAvn operating hours if they are familiar with Middle Wallop Airfield and Air Traffic Control procedures.

You can find more details on our website at www.afa.flyer.co.uk. A Membership Application Form is available from the Secretary:

Lt Col Peter Adams
Secretary Army Flying Association
DASC
Bentley Priory
Stanmore
Middlesex
HA7 3YN
Tel: 0208-838-7603 Email: pgadams@dasc.mod.uk

DISPOSAL OF CORPS-OWNED MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Prior to the formation of the Corps of Army Music, Corps and Regiments were responsible for the purchase and maintenance of the musical instruments used by their own bands. Band instruments are now provided by the Crown, and the Corps is therefore able to dispose of a number of instruments that are no longer required. All have been valued, and provisional arrangements have been made for their sale to a professional dealer. However, the Corps Finance Committee has agreed that they may first be offered for sale to entitled personnel at a price not below the valuation figure.

The list of available instruments and other equipment is shown:

Instrument/ Description	Model	Serial No	Reserve Price
A Clarinet	Emperor	548391	£250.00
A Clarinet	R13	381836	£375.00
Bb Clarinet	B12	278479	£32..00
Bass Guitar - Korean	Washburn	9208078	£63.00
Bassoon	Huller	53145	£625.00
Bundy Bass Clarinet	1430P	62987	£250.00
Bb Clarinet	R13	339709	£315.00
Bb Clarinet	B12	449318	£57.00
Bb Clarinet	B12	450491	£57.00
Getzen Bb Cornet	850	EC9077	£250.00
Bach Bb Cornet	184L	319283	£188.00
Sovereign Bb Cornet	BE928-1	808133	£188.00
Bach Bb Cornet	184MLG	395704	£250.00
Cello	Medio Fino		£125.00
Cello	Reghin		£50.00
Cello	Fairfield		£50.00
Baritone Saxophone	Yanagisawa	161732	£1,250.00
Sovereign Eb Tenor Horn	BE950-1	825171	£500.00
Sovereign EEb Tuba	BE982-1	746251	£500.00
Sovereign EEb Tuba	BE982-1	815161	£938.00
Electric Piano	Korg	3176	£13.00
Electric Piano	Yamaha	7734	£13.00
Sovereign Euphonium	BE967-1	811960	£313.00
Paxman French Horn	20M	1291	£250.00
Paxman French Horn	20M	1282	£438.00
Paxman French Horn	20M	1701	£375.00
Yamaha Flute	YFL411S	20476	£94.00
Yamaha Flute	YFL411S	20704	£63.00
Yamaha Flute	YFL211S	341595	£38.00
Oboe	Howarth	B0455	£563.00
Piccolo Flute	Yamaha	31965	£50.00
Piccolo Flute	Yamaha	54806	£50.00
String Bass	Unmarked		£63.00
Synthesizer	Korg	7734	£63.00
Synthesizer	Korg X5	910310	£63.00
Tenor Trombone	Yamaha	201173	£50.00
Bach 12 Tenor Trombone	12	83571	£94.00
Tenor Trombone	Conn	37201544	£63.00
Bach Tenor Trombone	42B	45447	£188.00
Yamaha Tenor Trombone	YSL683	201761	£188.00
Viola 16" Bubenreuth	702	Hofner	£107.00
Viola 2	Poller		£50.00
Violin 1 Klier	Klier		£50.00
Violin 2	Antonius		£32.00
Violin 3 Klier	Klier		£50.00
Violin 4	Unmarked		£50.00
Violin 5	Unmarked		£50.00
Violin 6	Unmarked		£50.00
Violin 7	German		£50.00
Violin 8	Unmarked		£50.00
Bongos - pair	Sonar		£7.00
Drum Kit - Taiwan	Pearl	123522	£125.00
Xylophone - platform type	Unmarked	083/010	£125.00
Premier Xylophone	751	13976	£188.00
Premier Glockenspiel	6801		£63.00
Flight Case semi	Unmarked		£63.00
Flight Case semi	Unmarked		£63.00
Speakers - pair	Peavey	05838664/5	£63.00
Clip on Mics x 3	Various		£7.00
Amp	Merlin	103100	£13.00
Omni Directional Mics x 4	Various		£7.00
Digital Reverb unit	Peavey	547537	£63.00
Fold Back Speakers(Pair)	Peavey	5584450	£63.00
Speaker - Stands (Pair)	Peavey		£7.00
Speaker (Pair)	Tannoy		£50.00
Vocal Mics x 10	Various		£7.00

Entitlement to Purchase Instruments may be purchased by individuals who fall within the following categories:

Serving members of the Corps who contribute to Corps Funds under the Day's Pay Scheme.
Retired members of the Corps who subscribe to Corps Funds.
Members of the Corps of Army Music who are currently members of the Corps Band.

Equipment may be purchased only for private/personal use. Bids suspected of having been made solely for the purpose of re-sale or personal gain will be rejected.

Viewing Arrangements Items will be available for viewing in the Band Block, Blandford Camp between 14 and 25 June 2004. Those interested in purchasing any items listed may make arrangements for viewing by telephoning the Bandmaster, **WO1 Wilman**, on Blandford Mil 2778.

Bids Bids should be made in writing and must reach the Regimental Secretary at RHQ by no later than 1 July 2004. Bids should be made at, or above, the reserve price shown. In the event that two or more bids are received for the same item, the highest bid will win. In cases where there is a 'tie' for the highest bid, a coin will be tossed! The results of the auction will be promulgated by letter to all bidders by 5 July 2004.

Payment Successful bidders will be required to pay for their purchases by cheque (made payable to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund) by 26 July 2004. Instruments may be collected as soon as payments have been cleared through the Corps Accountant.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS

AUGUST 2004

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Maj WEH Adsett	30 Sig Regt
Maj MR Bever	7 Sig Regt
Maj DJM Bizley	HQ 3(UK) Div
Maj IA Blower	EC/CM(BM)/DEC(GM)
Maj J Ceaser	Hague Det NATO C3 Agency
Maj CN Cooper	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Maj P Deans	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Maj MS Dooley	19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn(209)
Maj DJ Duggan	2 Sig Regt
Maj MJM Emslie	32 Sig Regt
Maj GW Fletcher	264(SAS) Sig Sqn
Maj CA Ford	COS HQ SOinC(A)
Maj SO France	DCSA Customer Relationship Management
Maj RJ Freeman	SP SCM IPT
Maj DC Gaul	DSTL Land Systems
Maj ST Gillespie	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Maj MJ Hanby	15 Sig Regt
Maj JHN Harrington	30 Sig Regt
Maj JP Hazlewood	16 Sig Regt
Maj G Inglis	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Maj D Mactaggart	34 (Northern) Sig Regt
Maj DG Maculay	Concepts HQ SOinC(A)
Maj SJ McConnell	D Info(A) Info Coherence
Maj CD McGrory	COS HQ SOinC(A)
Maj AJ Mould	D Info(A) Info Coherence
Maj JM Norris	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (262)
Maj AJ Parsons	8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (218)
Maj CSK Patterson	JSC and SC Defence Academy
Maj LS Pilling	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Maj K Pritchard	DEI Test and REF Branch Blandford
Maj MJ Rayner	2 Sig Regt
Maj MJ Rayner	2 Sig Regt
Maj PR Smith	3(UK)Div HQ and Sig Regt
Maj RJB Spencer	12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228)
Maj RG Strawbridge	Intel Posts Bds(W)
Maj PI Turner	JSC and SC Defence Academy
Maj AR Urwin	Royal School of Signals
Maj IA Walton	11 Sig Regt
A/Maj MP Purves	38 Sig Regt
Capt AB Arthurton	HQ NorIreland
Capt HC Cairns	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt JKR Hawkins	16 Air Assault Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Capt I McNelly	SO3 (W) G6 ICS Tech
Capt GJ Oliver	COS HQ SOinC(A)
Capt P Pearce	Royal School of Signals
Capt NPM Pritchett	35 Sig Regt (V)

Capt PA Rose	... ...	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Capt JE Toze	... ...	DAAVN
Capt ES Warhurst	... ...	Const Engr School

OFFICERS

SEPTEMBER 2004

Name and Rank		*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col JW Cooper	... ...	37 Sig Regt
Maj GD Anderson	... ...	Theatre and Formation Comms IPT
Maj CE Caie	... ...	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Maj MA Eaton	... ...	Pan Army Tech Refreshment Prog
Maj JS Gunning	... ...	16 Air Assault Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Capt EA Williams	... ...	HQ 143 (WM)Bde/9 Sig Regt AFHQ
Capt GP Wills	... ...	209 Sig Sqn

WOS AND SNCOS

APRIL 2004

Rank and Name			*Unit to which posted*
YofS	**JG**	**Phillips**	Bowtag (G)
A/WO 1 YofS	**PN**	**Smith**	Bowtag (N)
A/WO 1 FofS	**IJ**	**Walling MBE**	HQ 1 Sig Bde
A/WO 1 RSM	**SA**	**Hadley**	11 Sig Regt
A/WO 1 RSM	**AB**	**Lothian**	101 Log Bde Hq and Sig Sqn
WO 2 YofS	**G**	**Thomas**	Bowtag (G)
WO 2 YofS	**ME**	**Wyldes**	19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
WO 2 FofS	**RL**	**Cleminson**	7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 YofS	**K**	**Heaton**	7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 FofS	**PA**	**Mayer**	600 Sig Tp
A/WO 2 RD	**SA**	**Alexander-High**	31 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 2 RD	**GP**	**Dixon**	7 Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD	**JR**	**Raybould**	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD	**L**	**Tobbell**	14 Sig Regt
SSgt	**CP**	**Ashworth**	JSSU Digby
SSgt	**AL**	**Korchel**	2 Sig Regt
SSgt	**MA**	**Tench**	7 Sig Regt
SSgt	**DJ**	**Turner**	Bowtag (G)
Sgt	**GP**	**Bleazard**	252 Sig Sqn DCSA (G)
Sgt	**DB**	**Cattle**	Royal School of Signals
Sgt	**JM**	**Cooper**	UK PSC 506 Comms Base
Sgt	**NC**	**De La Rosa**	16 Sig Regt
Sgt	**JD**	**Liddell**	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt	**TD**	**Murray**	Bowtag (G)
Sgt	**DG**	**Rawlings**	Bowtag (G)
Sgt	**JM**	**Richmond**	Bowtag (G)
Sgt	**SA**	**Robson**	Royal School of Signals
Sgt	**DA**	**Royle**	Bowtag (JRRF)
Sgt	**MG**	**Seal**	Astor Sqn
Sgt	**SW**	**Shaw**	32 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt	**BJ**	**Spruce**	Cyprus Communication Unit
Sgt	**T**	**Thirwell**	35 Sig Regt (V)
A/Sgt	**N**	**Beevers**	Bowtag (G)
A/Sgt	**J**	**Kent**	Bowtag (G)

WOS AND SNCOS

MAY 2004

Rank and Name			*Unit to which posted*
WO 1 RD	**SA**	**Gorton**	11 Sig Regt
WO 1 RSM	**DM**	**Forrester**	19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/WO 1 YofS	**GG**	**Tabor**	BMATT Sierra Leone
A/WO 1 YofS	**T**	**Williams**	15 Sig Regt
A/WO 1 FofS	**KR**	**Clarke-Brown**	HQ SOinC (A)
A/WO 1 FofS	**CJ**	**Raynor**	Royal School of Signals
A/WO 1 FofS	**AJ**	**Riglar**	DCSA DEI Cyprus
A/WO 1 RD	**PM**	**Duke**	11 Sig Regt
A/WO 1 RSM	**PA**	**Hay**	11 Sig Regt
WO 2 YofS	**RJ**	**Faramus**	39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
WO 2 FofS	**JW**	**Chambers**	36 Sig Regt (V)
WO 2 FofS	**AR**	**Fletcher**	7 Sig Regt
WO 2 FofS	**JB**	**Harper**	BMATT Sierra Leone
WO 2 FofS	**R**	**Pace**	HQ DCSA Gibraltar
WO 2 FofS	**BD**	**Pradhan**	243 Sig Sqn
WO 2 RD	**G**	**Davies**	30 Sig Regt
WO 2 RD	**NR**	**Jennings**	243 Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 YofS	**IM**	**Fawcett**	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 YofS	**MJR**	**Mitchell**	30 Sig Regt
A/WO 2 FofS	**JL**	**Collins**	Royal School of Signals
A/WO 2 FofS	**AR**	**Draper**	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/WO 2 FofS	**MI**	**Fawcett**	16 Air Assault Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216)
A/WO 2 FofS	**DK**	**Fielding**	8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 FofS	**LJ**	**Morrison**	19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 FofS	**A.A.**	**Nicholls**	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD	**DW**	**Burdus**	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD	**DB**	**Holroyd**	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD	**SM**	**Lithgow**	Exeter UOTC
A/WO 2 RD	**M**	**McDonald**	JSSU Cyprus
A/WO 2 RD	**KP**	**Overton**	11 Sig Regt
A/WO 2	**DS**	**Marrs**	225 Sig Sqn
SSgt YofS	**MR**	**Kutzner**	2 Sig Regt
SSgt FofS	**P**	**Ceaser**	252 Sig Sqn
SSgt FofS	**PJ**	**Challis**	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt FofS	**JA**	**Clarke**	HQ SOinC (A)
SSgt FofS	**MP**	**Clish**	CCU Cyprus
SSgt FofS	**ID**	**Glover**	DCSA DEI Germany
SSgt FofS	**A**	**Thomson**	225 Sig Sqn
SSgt FofS	**DG**	**Ware**	30 Sig Regt
SSgt	**AM**	**Black**	2 (CofD) Sig Sqn (V)
SSgt	**NJ**	**Clay**	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
SSgt	**AP**	**Dear**	4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
SSgt	**IDM**	**Macdonald**	21 Sig Regt
SSgt	**A**	**Richardson**	Royal School of Signals
A/SSgt FofS	**JE**	**Ashman**	16 Sig Regt
A/SSgt FofS	**RM**	**Avery**	Bowman Trials
A/SSgt FofS	**MAJ**	**Brown**	600 Sig Tp
A/SSgt FofS	**SE**	**Colbeck**	21 Sig Regt
A/SSgt FofS	**MA**	**Holloway**	35 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt FofS	**MW**	**Ind**	Cyprus Communication Unit
A/SSgt FofS	**DJ**	**Mulheran**	33 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt FofS	**LM**	**Openshaw**	15 Sig Regt
A/SSgt FofS	**GJ**	**Watkins**	38 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt FofS	**PE**	**Wright**	600 Sig Tp
Sgt	**DK**	**Butler**	DEI Test and Ref Brch Blford
Sgt	**AS**	**Butterfield**	2 Sig Regt
Sgt	**DJ**	**Counter**	21 Sig Regt
Sgt	**N**	**Flanighan**	15 Sig Regt
Sgt	**AL**	**Gambles**	16 Sig Regt
Sgt	**JJ**	**Murphy**	2 Sig Regt
Sgt	**MJ**	**Murphy**	242 Sig Sqn
Sgt	**MA**	**Passfield**	JSSU Oakley
Sgt	**MP**	**Pryce**	2 Sig Regt
Sgt	**DW**	**Reid**	HQ LWCTG(G)
Sgt	**W**	**Stainthorp**	Royal School of Signals
Sgt	**SJ**	**Upcraft**	1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/Sgt	**LKJ**	**Jakeman**	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt	**CS**	**Mcbride**	36 Sig Regt (V)

RETIREMENTS

MAY 2004

Avison - Lt Col BP Avison	22/May/04
Charnock - Maj JS Charnock	01/May/04
Morris - Capt BWM Morris	04/May/04
Prince - Maj TJ Prince	29/May/04
Reith - Capt GGA Reith	20/May/04

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt **Capt A Youngman**

The last few months have seen the Team's six new members arrive and the full time trg beginning for the coming season. **Cpl Hooper**, the Team's Senior Instructor began familiarising the first years with the tricks they would be doing, whilst the remaining Team members took the opportunity to update their trade skills or assist with the annual servicing schedule of the motorcycles. Then we were off on our annual pilgrimage to RAF Sealand for our full time trg camp.

At this time of year, the Team also makes its charity outreach trip to work in a school in South Africa. Forest Town School in Johannesburg is a school for children with Cerebral Palsy and severe learning difficulties, and it opened nearly 60 years ago. Designed to cater for 180 pupils, the School now has over 300 children of all ages. It receives little funding from the government, so it is dependent entirely on the support and sponsorship it gets. This is the third year in a row that the team has made the trip, and it provides a rare opportunity for the team members to experience a very different way of life and help those less fortunate than themselves.

14 members of the Team flew out at the end of January. The main tasks for this year were repairing and repainting the School hall roof, refurbishing the speech therapy department, refurbishing 2 classrooms and a number of smaller jobs, ranging from repairing equipment to manufacturing computer tables for the disabled children.

Painting the School roof

On this group's return to UK, the whole Team went to Chester to start the trg season with 6 weeks at RAF Sealand. Here Team members learned new tricks and rides and put together the show and for the coming year. Although the trg went well, there were a couple of accidents. Unfortunately **Sig Fitzgerald** sustained a bad wrist injury, but is now on his way to recovery.

On the final week in Chester, the Team put on a display at RAF Sealand. This was their chance to give a little something back to the people and families of RAF Sealand, who have supported us so well. There were also members from the Triumph Owners Club, some of the teams sponsors and children from a local special needs school.

At the time of writing, the whole Team is back at Blandford busily preparing for the SOinC(A)'s Opening Display on 6 May 04.

New member, Sig Poole taking it easy

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj Guy Benson**
SSM **W02(SSM) Bob Lawrence**

On 5 April 04, RSG said farewell to its OC, **Maj Guy Benson**. We were fortunate enough to have CI, Comd Div, **Lt Col Jim Dryburgh** and CI, Sys Div, **Lt Col Matt Fensom** as honoured guests. After the meal the 2IC, **Capt John Lyons** invited us to watch a rather interesting presentation, depicting what could have happened if the OC had decided on a different career. With the help of his wife, **Rosemary**, who kindly assisted by providing access to his photo album, the presentation was very entertaining. The night passed with good humour and various speeches. On the whole, the night was enjoyed by all. It gave us the opportunity to say goodbye to a good and well respected OC who worked hard for his men. We are now looking forward the arrival of the new OC, **Maj Baugh** in June. Until then we are in the capable hands of **Capt Lyons**. Standby! Standby!

BECOME A RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP INSTRUCTOR
– by one of them

I was first attracted to RSS when I came Blandford to do my Class 1 Rad Sys Course. I realised pretty quickly that the instructors and assessors in RSG had a huge amount of responsibility for Phase 2 Soldier trg. As instructors, they could add value, achieve terrific job satisfaction, further develop themselves, and also benefit from the quality of life on offer at Blandford. When I became an instructor, little did I know what kind of impact it would eventually have on my career.

Initially I was posted to Rad Ex Tp as a Cpl instructor/assessor in Soldier trg. I was directly responsible to my OC for the management of 8 FFR vehs and their respective Det Comds. Every 2 weeks, 16 Phase 2 Soldiers would be entrusted to me for further assessment and development, prior to their posting to the Field Army. It is hard work but we are very well supported by the chain of command.

Having served approximately 9 years in the Army, I began to think long and hard about where my career was going. After advice

We shall fight them on the beaches and in the trees! Rear: SSgt (YofS) MartinWoodgate, W02 (YofS) Hutchinson, Mr T Luckman, WO2(SSM) R Lawrence. Front: Capt J Lyons, Maj GL Benson, Capt J Dennis RM

from my OC and the YofS, I set my sights on the prestigious appointment of YofS. I was not alone. There were 3 other members of RSG who believed that they had something to offer the Corps as YofS.

Although a lot of our time is spent instructing and assessing, it is possible to plan well in advance. This allowed all four of us the opportunity to develop our personal and management skills prior to YofS selection, and it also allowed us to pursue our sporting interests and hobbies, which would give us all a much-needed, break from academia.

All four of us decided we needed to improve our academic skills, and we were able to take part in various evening classes at the local adult education centre. Had we been in a field unit, we know that it would have been extremely difficult to programme this type of trg. With intense support from our chain of command, all four of us were selected for training as YofS, and start the YofS Course in 2004. During the process, two of us have been promoted to Sgt and the one is waiting for a vacancy within the Gp. We need replacing, so get your posting preferences in to MCM Div for RSG as soon as possible.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AP Hudson MBE**
RSM **W01 (RSM) DM Forrester**

BLANDFORD SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Mackay**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Davies**

The Sqn has been busy as always, keeping Blandford Garrison supported. We bid a fond farewell to the Garrison Welfare Offr and Sqn 2IC, **Capt Colin Milne**, posted to 7 Sig Regt as UWO; and welcome in his place, **Capt Taff Burdge**, from 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

1 (OUSTON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JC Boisvert RC Sigs**
SSM **W02 (SSM) Roberts**

The Sqn farewells **Sgt Gordon Dunderdale** and family posted back to 15 Sig Regt, and welcome to **Cpl John Marshall** and his wife, **Nicky**.

EXERCISE PUMA STRIKE - *by Sig Titus*

On Wednesday 3 March, 2 Puma Helicopters of 33 Sqn, Royal Air Force came to 11 Sig Regt to shoot a video commercial for the recruitment of Loadmasters. We were given a safety brief, followed by a few details of the Puma by the Loadmaster Sgt. After learning how to approach the Puma, we were organised in groups for flights around Dorset and shown a few manoeuvres. We all had an excellent time and hope to get the chance to fly again in a Puma in the future.

On behalf of the group I would like to say thanks to 33 Sqn for making this possible and wish the flight crew all the best in Iraq where they are now taking part in ongoing ops.

EXERCISE OUSTON WARRIOR

EX OUSTON WARRIOR was a navex based on Blandford Camp, where Phase 2 recruits were given lessons on all aspects of navigation to prepare them for 2 exs, one by day and one by night. After the trg phase, it was time to test **SSgt Morley's** expertise and find out how much the soldiers had taken in. They were given 15 CPs to find on Blandford Camp, and all teams managed to complete the course. They then broke for evening meal, to return at 19.00hrs for the night ex. This involved 10 CPs all over Blandford Camp and trg area - about 5 sq miles. The

Trainees receive a safety brief on the Puma before boarding

teams set off at 10 min intervals from 19.00 to 20.30hrs. Each team was given 3 hrs to complete the course or return to the start. Most teams managed this course, but a couple of teams found it a bit different in the dark, and now realise that navigation is very important to learn and understand.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj SSM Youngson**
SSM **W02(SSM) EC Williams**

2 Sqn said goodbye to **Cpl Rigg**, posted to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. **Cpl Lee** is still officially with us, but is in fact now doing his IS Op course prior to being posted; **WO1 Curtis** is posted to 71 Sig Regt as RSM; **SSgt Allan** is remaining in RSS but is posted to Military Leadership Group; and **SSgt Meek** is posted to Kukri Tp. On the bright side, the Sqn congratulates to **Cpl Gus Hopkinson** on his marriage to **Kerry**.

HARROGATE CUP NETBALL COMPETITION
- by Sig Chapplow

On Wednesday 10 March, 11 Sig Regt's Harrogate Cup Netball Tournament took place between 1, 2 and 3 Sqns. The gym was filled with spectators generating enthusiasm and competitive rivalry. Some players had never played before, creating a wide variety of team ability. The games were still exciting and extremely heated. 1 and 2 Sqns played in the first round, with a clear win for 2 Sqn. 2 Sqn booked their place in the final after a brilliant game against 3 Sqn. Last to play before the final was 1 and 3 Sqn, with

The victorious Harrogate Cup Netball Team with OC Maj Scott Youngson and SSM W02 (SSM) Williams

3 Sqn winning. The final, between 2 and 3 Sqn was a different story. It was the most heated and intense match of the competition, ending in a draw, but someone had to win, so the game went to sudden death. 2 Sqn were victorious, and again kept the Harrogate Cup Netball Trophy.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj R Jones**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) T Ward**

The Sqn has had a busy period this year so far, the Harrogate Cup Competition has started, involving all Phase 2 trainees. The Sqn Mil Skills ex took place in South Wales, and the Sqn OC has changed. We wish **Maj Miles Webb** all the best on his move to 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn as QM, and welcome **Maj Rachel Jones** as our new OC.

HARROGATE CUP VOLLEYBALL - *by Sig Pain*

After a brief trg period, we were able to enter two teams to represent the Sqn. We were ready to wipe the floor! The competition was over three nights, and each night 3 Sqn went well, winning the majority of their games - even though the competition was tough. We won six of our nine games, which in addition to the female results, gave us the edge over the other two Sqns.

It was a great competition with lots of fun. Thanks to **SSgt Hawtree** and **Cpl Widdup** for time and effort in training the team and encouraging us throughout. It was 3 Sqn's first ever win in the Volleyball competition. Well done and congratulations to all.

EXERCISE HARROGATE FOLLY
- by Sig Russell and Sig Mesmer

'Wocka Wocka Wocka,' it speaks to us, the genial Chinook. Two of these magnificent beasts took off from Blandford carrying a band of Phase 2 trainees (nay, future technicians in the Royal Corps of Signals) to some forlorn part of South Wales as part of EX HARROGATE FOLLY 2. A lot quicker than catching a bus.

HARROGATE FOLLY was billed as an escape/evasion style ex, with elements of recently-taught survival skills thrown in. In the weeks running up to the ex, the 100 trainees had undergone instruction in various skills by several NCOs from 264 Sig Sqn. Amongst other things, they were taught how to build improvised shelters, water collection techniques, navigation (without map or compass), and methods of capturing and preparing food, i.e. rabbits and chickens.

The helicopters crash landed (exercise play!) and all participants were led away by local partisans to a forest, where they were told to basha up for the night. After sleeping under many variations of 'improvised shelters,' and cooking food without hexamine or mess tins, it was time for the trainees to 'escape and evade'. For most, this would be the only chance to participate in such an ex during their Army career, and it would be a test of both character and endurance. Split into groups of four, weighed down by a couple of Bergens, each team had 24 hrs to visit 25 CPs whilst evading a hunter force comprising of 40 bloodthirsty Phase 3 Cpls supported by a plethora of vehs, and sniffer dogs.

On the whole, the recruits managed to frustrate their elders. About 12-14 hrs into the ex, several hunter force patrols were overheard by them, conversing and speculating on the whereabouts of the escapees after several hours without so much as a brief glimpse.

Night eventually descended, making navigation somewhat harder for the trainees, but calling for a less than tactical approach. Sticking to main roads and diving in ditches when veh lights were spotted, proved highly effective, and most teams preferred to visit CPs under the cover of darkness. A handful of teams that had managed to visit all CPs settled down for a few hours shuteye, with a cheeky few even pushing out Zzzz's on disused train carriages in an area regularly patrolled by hunter forces.

At ENDEX, the honours went to **Sigs Mesmer**, **Morgan**, **Moon** and **Payne**, who managed to last the entire ex without being tagged by the hunter force, visiting 24 of the 25 CPs. It would have been 25, but CP 4 managed to disappear.

The dreaded umbrella of Health and Safety had threatened to lessen the realism of the ex, but, thanks to the hard working staff of 3 Sqn (some forgoing sleep for a ridiculous length of time), everybody walked away with new skills and, more importantly, had had the chance to improve on essential basic mil skills something we don't get to do as often as we'd like to in Royal Signals.

The exercise accommodation proved a little more spacious than we had bargained for

TROOP COMMANDERS' COURSE 057

- by 2Lts Ed Jagger and Chris Fulthorpe

On 9 April 04, Officers of TCC 057 completed their 5-month course at the newly renamed Defence College of CIS. We have grappled with all aspects of the Tp Comd's role and are now raring to return to our units. Included on the course were two Kuwaiti officers, **Lts Aldehani** and **Al Ojaill**, who will sorely miss Britain's culture more than learning about half-wave dipoles.

The Course was led by **Capt Parke**, and **WO2 (AT) Driver** organised an excellent AT skiing expedition to Austria, with help from flights manager, **2Lt Berry**.

During the course, we have been instructed and assessed on the many admin, comd and tech areas required for our first tour. The comd trg has further enhanced the academic trg given at Sandhurst.

Maj Gen AD Leakey CBE presents 2Lt Panting with the Top Student Award

The two main tech Gps involved were Area Systems and Radio Systems Gps, and we thank the soldiers of SYSEX and RADEX Tps for their support, guidance and technical ability. Assessment was in the form of final exs, both of which involved giving orders and establishing comms networks around the whole of the south-west.

Throughout the Radio Systems final ex, the DS were baffled by the lateral thinking and originality of the more bizarre plans. Working relationships became somewhat strained during the later stages of the campaign.

The inability of a group of officers to complete even the most simple of technical tasks without a screaming argument was soon evident. **2Lt (A/Gen) Allt** was on permanent send and **2Lts Kirk** and **Stubbs** insisted that all callsigns should be contacted over the net, producing a few moments.

The DS were always most helpful, especially the Foreman's constructive comment on how long it was taking us to erect our larger means (mast) in the dark. **2Lt Jagger** thought that he had heard the last of the Foreman until the next weekend when he arose in horror when handing over duty. 'Are you still on British Winter Time? Because I'm on British Summer Time.' cackled **WO1 (FofS) Holland**.

Congratulations go to the Top Student, **2Lt Panting**, whose Award was presented at the Leadership Dinner by DG ATRA, **Maj Gen AD Leakey CBE** (Late RTR). Congratulations also go to **2Lt Scott**, who was married to **Sandy** on the weekend after the course. **2Lt Stubbs** may also find himself in a similar situation.

We are now looking forward to returning to our units. The true gentleman of the course, **2Lt Andrews** will shortly be equipping 7 Sig Regt Mess with modern luxuries. 14 Sig Regt (EW) can look forward to an injection of culture with the return of **Lt Matthews**. And Osnabruck beware - **2Lt Fulthorpe** is returning.

ARMY

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT LICHFIELD

CO	**Lt Col JAH Welch MBE** RE
RSM	**WO1(RSM) S McLelan**

1 (TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj PC Baker**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Fadzilah**

SKILL AT ARMS MEETING 2004 - *by WO2(SSM) Fadzilah*

On a wet and windy 26 March, the Sqn entered a team into the Regtl, Inter-Sqn Shooting Competition. This was the first of 12 competitions, part of the CO's Challenge 2004-05. The team consisted of: **WO2 Fadz Fadzilah**; **Sgt Charlie Kama**; **Cpl Mark Sibbald**; **Cpl Mark Saunders**, Para Regt; **Cpl Adam Proud**, Para Regt; and **Cpl Jamie Slade**.

We had started training on 21 March, which didn't give us a lot of time to memorise and practise the shoots. This could explain why **Cpl Slade** hit nothing at all on the day, even with SUSAT fitted. Remedial trg for him, we think. Anyway, he has received a lot of grief since the competition, and now it has been published for the whole of the Corps to read, we will put it to bed.

The day started off with the sun shining, but it wasn't long before the weather took a dramatic change. Just when the RCO gave the order to load, the heavens opened and the wind became gale force. On my RMQ Course, I seem to remember that the weather has an affect on the firer. It did!!! However, we carried on.

All members of the team produced some excellent scores, but unfortunately not enough to win the competition. But we did get one prize. **Cpl Sibbald** received the trophy for the best JNCO in the Regt.

MATHER TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Harriet Cairns**
Tp Sgt **LSgt Farrar**

The trg team is slowly changing, with the arrival of **Cpl Steve Hall** from 7 Sig Regt, and **Cpls Andy Savage** and **Ashley Jackson** soon to start. Congratulations to **Cpl Jamie Roderick** for completing his Class 1 RS Op.

COOK TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt James Savage** Para
Tp Sgt **Sgt Charlie Kama**

Pass Off Day commenced in earnest, as those who had made it to the final day of 12 weeks of hard work, marched on. It was good to see that all the finetuning of rifle drill had at last come to fruition. The Parade was a resounding success, and went down well with all attending. Congratulations go to **Sig Collins**, Best Drill Turnout, and **Sig McCalla**, Most Improved Recruit.

We welcome **Cpl Mark McCarthy**, from 11 Sig Regt, Blandford; and farewell **Cpl Stu Daynton,** who goes back to C Sqn. Congratulations to **Cpl Steve Pearce**, whose wife has delivered a baby boy, **Declan**.

SMITH TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Harriet Cairns**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Fitzgerald**

On 26 February 04, 18 members of Smith Tp passed out. The parade was a joint affair, conducted with Hackett Tp, and led by **Capt Harriet Cairns**. The day went well, and fortunately the weather held out. Guests and recruits alike had a thoroughly enjoyable day, and everyone involved should be congratulated with how well events unfolded. The following recruits gained awards:

Best Recruit	**Sig Lloyd**
Best PT	**Sig Smolinski**
Best Shot	**Sig Sawyer**
Best Drill and Turnout	**Sig Dunn**
Most Improved	**Sig Collins**

The staff now have a slight lull in battle. The next troop that they pick up won't be until the end of June. That is, unless your name is **Capt Harriet Cairns**, who is currently helping Mather Tp out, and will pick up the reins again for Smith Tp, before being posted to 21 Sig Regt (AS) in August.

C SQUADRON

OC **Maj Katrina Reynolds**

Welcome to **Capt Eric Udell** and his wife **Anne**, who join us from the DCSA(G) Rheindahlen; to **Sgt Rowbottom**, from 225 Sig Sqn; and **Cpl Lovell**, from 7 Sig Regt. Good luck to **Cpl Blacklock**, who is posted to 21 Sig Regt (AS).

Finally, we seem to have broken our losing streak in the CO's Inter-Sqn Sports Competition with victories in the rowing, shooting and, most recently, rugby. Unfortunately this last minute surge of sporting prowess won't save us from the bottom of the scoreboard, but there is always next year!

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col NP Metcalfe MBE**
RSM **WO1 D Mitchell**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj MA Wright-Jones**
SSM **WO2 AV Gill**

EXERCISE INVERNO BIANCO FINN

Planning for the ex started way back in May 03. The idea was to take 40 people away skiing for an introduction to the sport and the opportunity to experience some of the famous Italian culture.

The ex, from 6-20 March 04, comprised two one-week packages, with 20 people on each. Instruction was provided by **Sgt Sharman**, **Flt Sgt Neil Willis** and **LCpl Ange Fewster**.

The first week saw the instructors, the admin party and 20 participants travelling to Italy via Stanstead. There were tense moments as we arrived in Milan to see if the bus, arranged over the Internet, would actually be there, but it was, with bar and all. A rapid debus at the *Residence Campolongo* meant we could re-hydrate and prepare for the first day's skiing.

The week progressed from great to awesome, with huge dumps of snow coming mid-week. Memorable moments were **SSgt Danny O'Neil's** run in with the lift at 'Vegas' and **LCpl Leyla Alp's** inability or reluctance to stop. The food and accn were superb throughout the week, with the socialising at the Tea Dance being an excellent end to the day. The week culminated with all completing the 45km Sella Ronda Circuit - a real achievement for anybody, let alone first week skiers. Unfortunately the week's end came too quickly for the first 20 people, who had to make way for the next group.

A smooth timely transfer saw the arrival of the second group. The start of their week saw the weather getting hotter, but luckily the snow during the previous week was more than enough to keep us skiing. And it had the added bonus of our getting the all-important panda eyes. Memorable moments for this week were **Capt Nom Pritchet's** stopping ability - or lack of it, and **Capt Ben Norton's** fall in the snowboard park.

Again the Tea Dance was frequented, with all slipping straight into the relaxed Italian way of socialising. The second week saw the change from high to low season, so a little more time was spent back at the hotel in Arabba. Again the food was superb, with the seafood night on the last Friday going down particularly well.

As for the first group, the end to the week came far too quickly, but this time saw all of us returning to the Province. A quick stop over in Colchester (Thank you, 216 Sig Sqn for the hospitality), and then it was home for everyone. Roll on next year's trip!

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SJ McConnell**
SSM **WO2 TJ Lappin**

BRÜGGEN 10 MILE RACE

On 25 March 2004, six members of 15 Sig Regt deployed to Brüggen to take part in the famous ten-mile road race. Following an epic road trip, we arrived early on the morning before the race. On the day, **Cpl John Foley** achieved the winning time for the team, completing the ten miles in a very respectable 66 minutes. Not far behind him was **SSgt Mark Laughton**, with a time of 67 minutes. **Sgt John Martin** achieved 74 minutes, **Cpl Dougie Parker**, 76 minutes and **Sig Richy Kingston**, 77 minutes. Last from the team but not least, was **Cpl Jamie Edgell**, finishing in 82 minutes. We weren't due to travel back to Northern Ireland until 29 March, so we invested the spare time wisely in the local pubs in Roemond!

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CROSS-COUNTRY

The annual 15 Sig Regt Cross-Country Championships took place at Hillsborough Forest, just outside Lisburn. After a trg programme, run by **SSgt Laughton**, the 233 Sig Sqn team was ready for anything. There were groans from all teams when the race brief announced that the course would be 6 miles for males and 3.5 for females. However, we did cheer up when we were told there was only one hill to contend with. The bookies' favourites were **Cpl Foley** in the male event, and **Capt Coslett** in the female, and neither failed to disappoint. They both achieved comfortable wins. With his marathon trg, **Cpl Jimmy Foley** had an obvious advantage, and by the time this goes to press he will have completed the London Marathon. As nobody could keep up with him in trg, there was no surprise that **SSgt Mark Laughton** came in a very respectable third. After slacking all the way around the race, **Capt Coslett** just hadn't had enough, and continued to run a further lap to give the male team some much-needed encouragement. Following her, **Cpl Nicki Harrison** came in second, which although not counting for the overall team score, was a great help in reducing the points available to other teams.

The top five males and top female counted for the overall score, so the individual placings made it impossible for our team to be beaten. Then it was on to the *Peake Inn* for the presentation by the CO, and a few much-deserved beers. First Male, First Female and First Team trophies all went to 233 Sig Sqn.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Inglis**
SSM **WO2 B Hogg**

THE CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEET

Once again the time arrived for 15 Sig Regt, led by **WO2(SSM) Tom Lappin**, to travel to Pirbright for the 2004 instalment of the Corps Skill at Arms Meeting.

The following fortnight of trg for the competition almost unbearable due to weather of biblical proportions, the highlight of which was a two-hour onslaught of horizontal hail and rain. During this build-up trg, several personalities began to shine through, one of whom was **Cpl Baz Worrall**, who jealously guarded his targetry. **LCpl Alex Blake** was another colourful character who, having spent twenty minutes convincing club bouncers he was over eighteen, proceeded to fall asleep at the earliest opportunity.

After the fortnight of rigorous trg, the final five were selected for the HQNI and 15 Sig Regt 'A' team: **Capt Ben Norton**, **Cpl Dean Dickson**, **Cpl Barry Worrall**, **LCpl Alex Blake** and **Sig Pete Udall**.

The week of the Competition went well, with glorious sunshine every day. It was a very competitive CORPSAAM, with most of the major units putting in 2-3 teams. But our team achieved a respectable eighth position out of twenty-six teams, our points total was higher than last year's, and much fun was had by all in the process.

3rd INFANTRY BRIGADE HEAQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

OC **Maj TJ Carmichael**
RSM **WO1(RSM) D Buckingham**

Sqn HQ have had quite a steady period over the last few months. **WO2 (RAOWO) 'Tiger' Skeldon** is making full use of his Pro Golf qualification certificate – every Friday! Congratulations to **SSgt Dawn Marritt**, on her recent selection for promotion to WO2 and to the Trg Sgt, **Sgt Davey Graham**, R Irish, on his selection for promotion to CSgt. Welcome to **Sgt Brennan**, from 3 R Irish and to **Pte Oakes**, from Worthy Down.

COMMUNICATION TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt F Loxton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt K McIntosh**

Comms Tp have had a very busy period considering the time of year. TM Sec's time has been dominated by a number of big projects that have kept everyone busy – planning, preparing and then long deployments to get the job done. Well done to everyone for all their hard work! In the changing times, there has been a steep learning curve for the newer members to the Tp not only in TM, but also in Syscon.

The Tp wish the following all the best: **Sgt Mac McKenna** (who is now **Mr McKenna**) - thanks for all the hard work you have put into the Sqn over the last eighteen months; **Sgt Adam Dixon** – congratulations on your promotion and posting to 15 Sig Regt; **LCpl Peck Ridgeon**, who leaves us for 14 Sig Regt (EW); **LCpl Karl Whittaker**, who goes to 30 Sig Regt; and **LCpl Doc Foster**, who goes to 21 Sig Regt (AS). We also welcome the following posted in: **Cpl Russ Hamilton**, **LCpl Mark Balsdon** and **LCpl Glen Clifton-Sprigg** and his family. Congratulations to **Sgt Cecil** on his selection to SSgt, and to **LCpl Alan Croston** on his promotion.

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

The day began with a hearty breakfast. The WOs' and Sgts' Mess hosted the Offrs in the Mess annex, where the AO, **Maj Max Hanlon**, cunningly gave us the option of contributing to the Army Benevolent Fund by paying cash or having it added to our Mess bills.

A six-a-side football competition was run in the afternoon, with a number of depts taking part. A good standard of football was played by all, and competition was fierce – many were seen limping away from the pitch. But once the results were in and the strong left standing, it was Comms Tp who took gold in the first event of the Mahon Cup. Thanks to **Sgt Richmond,** for organising the competition.

The All Ranks function in the evening was successfully organised by **SSgt Jim Burnham**, ability assisted by the Junior Ranks PMC, **Cpl Chris Craven**. A very enjoyable evening was had by all. During the day, around £300 was raised for the Army Benevolent Fund.

CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEET 2004

With a week of trg under our belts, it was a better-prepared team that set off from Portadown than had done the previous year. Once again held in Pirbright and accommodated in the luxurious Brunswick Camp, the Corps' SAM competition looked fierce, with the highest turn out in years.

Looking especially fierce was the Minor Units Competition, as many Regts had decided to enter Sqn-level teams. Our team consisted of **Lt Fi Loxton**, **LCpl Lloyd Newell**, **LCpl Dave Street**, **Sig Chris Brock** and **Sig Fitz Fitzpatrick**, with **LCpl Craig Wilkinson** as the GD soldier. The week went well, with good shooting from everyone. Special mentions go to **LCpl Newell**, who was the best rifle shot in the team; to **Sig Fitzpatrick** for his 176 in the Association Cup; and to **Sig Brock**, who won best B Class Pistol Shot in the Corps – an outstanding achievement.

HILL WALKING DAY – *by Sig JJ Cascarina*

On a dull Monday morning, nine members of the Sqn boarded a minibus bound for the Mourne Mountains in Co. Down, home of Northern Ireland's highest peak – Slieve Donard. At the drop-off point I was unexpectedly given the map and told to take to group to a clearing at the end of the woods. After a 150m climb up a steady slope, the older members asked to slow the pace. Those who weren't best equipped for the rain and strong winds (never turn up to the Mournes in just a tracksuit and softie!) were at this point, soaked to the skin. Still, it was better than work! **Sig Balsdon** got us to the next CP, the Saddle, without any problems.

When the group got to the Mourne Wall, we used the small shelter it provided to stop for lunch and to vote on whether or not we should take on Slieve Donard. It was decided that the weather was too bad. Even crossing the wall without being blown backwards, was tricky. We then had to adopt a monkey-style walk to keep our balance on the way down - all following **Sig Roberts'** map reading, across two rivers and a 10ft drop!

Although the idea was to get the new guys out to 'see' some of Province, with visibility 10ft at best, everyone had a good day. Many thanks to **Cpl Dickenson,** for organising it.

SUPPORT TROOP

QM	**Maj J Williams**
RQMS(T)	**WO2 A Buckle**
RQMS(A)	**WO2 T Priestly**

Supt Tp wish the following all the best: **SSgt Kev Johnson**, who finishes off his last six months in the Army by returning to 33 Sig Regt (V); **Cpl Mark Garrity**, who leaves for a tour of Bosnia; **LCpl Grom Wallace**, who is to try his hand at being an RP at DST Leconsfield; to **Pte Scott Mitchell**, who leaves us on promotion to HQNI and to **Pte Todd**, who is off to EOD at Didcot.

Supt Tp Jolly Boy's outing to Newcastle-upon-Tyne was an excellent trip, and showed the amount of entertainment that can be supplied by glue, pound coins, PA systems and **Cpl Hepworth**. It was a worthy farewell to **Cpl Garrity**.

39th INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj S Evans**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Downie**

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Maj S Harvey** R IRISH
WOIC	**WO2 (RQMS) DM Coates**

Supt Tp has been very busy over the last few months concentrating on the 39 Inf Bde March and Shoot Competition and training hard for the CORPSAAM. The Tp is also looking forward to providing a number of first class athletes to compete in the Mercury Cup Athletics competition. The RQMS Dept has farewelled **Cpl Lee Patterson**, who is posted to 16 Sig Regt. We welcome **Cpl Matt Stratton**, who has recently arrived from 14 Sig Regt (EW) and is already getting to grips in the Dept. Sqn Ops bids a fond farewell to **Capt EC Dickson** and extends a warm welcome to **Capt A Senneck**.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt S Bennett**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt PP Corcoran**

Ops Sec bids a fond farewell to a few members, **Sig Bromhead**, leaving on promotion to 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. The departure of **Capt Steve Bennett** was marked with the usual eventful farewell drinks. **Cpl Dougal Grimes** returns just in time for the forthcoming Mercury Cup Challenge.

TM Sec welcomes **Cpl Donaldson**, in from 280 Sig Sqn. He has already become involved in unit basketball competitions. They farewell **Cpl Phil Rawlyk** and **Sgt Mark Murphy**. **Mark** is off to Edinburgh.

Rigging Sec farewells **Cpl Dave Healy**, who is posted on promotion to Henlow; welcomes **LCpl Grieves**, from16 Sig Regt; and congratulates **LCpl John Dent** on his promotion.

FOOTBALL - ROYAL SIGNALS CUP

It was the first time a Minor Unit had reached the semi-finals of the Royal Signals Cup, and a very proud moment for 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. On our arrival at York, despite attempts by 2 Sig Regt to put us off by accommodating us unfed and miles away from a football pitch, our team spirit was not dented at all.

The day of the match began with a warm-up session, and dressed to kill in our new strip, we were ready and looking the part. 2 Sig Regt came at us early, and it was clear from the outset that we were in for a hard game. An early goal from a very dodgy offside decision seemed to raise the spirits of the opposition, and within 10 minutes, they had scored another. It seemed a rout could be on, but 39 IBSS was not to give up, and after 20 minutes' hard graft, **LCpl Jay Currim** stole the ball from an opposition defender, scored and brought us back into the game. This left the opposition dumbstruck, and it wasn't long before the equaliser was scored - again by **LCpl Currim**. The crowd fell silent - apart from the lone voice of **Maj Steve Harvey**, who hailed the equaliser. The remaining period of the first half was an even battle, with the sending off of **LCpl Dent** being the turning point.

The pace of the game slowed in the second half, with both teams realising an early mistake could punish them. Good performances in defence by **LCpl Gavin Stubbs** and **Cpl Tom Black** kept the opposition at bay. Then an opposition player was sent off, which evened things up. In the final 4 minutes, an opposition attacker cut one into the box, and with the tiredness of the journey beginning to show on our defence, no one could get a tackle in, and the ball was squeezed into the net. 39 IBSS then threw everything into the last couple of minutes, but to no avail. Although very disappointed with the result, the lads were happy in the knowledge that they had given it 100%. It was a good effort, and we look forward to going one step further next year and winning the Cup.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HOCKEY COMPETITION

The Sqn turned up for the tournament with high hopes that they could do well and bring home a pot for the RSM. We fielded a lot of experienced players, and with only a few extras needed to make up the numbers, all were determined not to let the Unit down. A total of 8 teams entered the competition, and our first draw was against one of the strongest teams, 2RRF. Both teams showed skill and determination, with the lead changing hands all the way until the final whistle, the match ending a 3-3 draw. The following three pool games resulted in another 2-2 draw, a 2-1 victory, and a 1-2 narrow defeat.

At this point in the competition, there were clear favourites, and the competition was still wide open. Unfortunately our newly-arrived OPSO, **Capt Senneck**, and **WO2(FofS) Duffy** were both called away, severely weakening the team, and despite a mammoth effort from the remaining players, we made only a 0-0 draw in the final match. So we ended up mid-table; but we're looking forward to the next competition when hopefully we can remain together and do ourselves justice.

MONRO CUP MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION

Monday 22 April 04 saw the Sqn take part in the annual 39 Inf Bde March and Shoot Competition. This year's competition had a slight twist, as not only were the Unit administering the competition, but the teams were to be made up of 30 personnel at company level from all units within 39 Inf Bde's AOR. The competition involved a 5-mile march carrying 18 kg, and included a 2-mile stretcher carry (with 3 stretchers) and a final 1-mile sprint. It was soon apparent that a few old warhorses were going to have to come out of retirement to make up the requisite number of 30. After weeks of intense trg, and with a top-heavy team including the OC, the RSM, three Bde Staff Officers, and three WOs, the team was ready.

At the start of the race, morale was high, with **WO1(RSM) Downie** motivating his volunteers to do their best, particularly against the inf companies taking part. Ultimately, the varying levels of fitness in the team began to tell, with some struggling to keep up. However, the team arrived at the stretchers in excellent time. The stretcher carry then began to take its toll, but with the highly motivational words from **WO2 (RQMS) Coates** ringing in our ears, we pushed on hard to the finish. At the end of the March phase we had the fastest time of all the support units, and were only fractionally behind the lead inf companies. So it was then all about the shoot!

A random 10 were selected from our 30 to fire, but unfortunately, few of our best shots were among these. At the prize giving ceremony, all 15 teams watched as 2RRF picked up the trophies, and we all headed home to rest our weary bodies and look forward to next year.

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

MULTI-NATIONAL TASK FORCE SIGNALS UNIT (BALKANS SIGNAL SQUADRON)

OC	**Maj Tom McCappin**
SSM	**WO2 Billy Duggan**

As we enter the twilight of our tour, time has come to reflect upon all that the Sqn has achieved. Our entry in history will be as the Sig Sqn that managed one of the biggest transformations in the Pan-Balkans Theatre since 2002, namely the draw-down, re-basing and re-structuring of the comms footprint in the Multi-National Bde (NW) AO.

To put this into perspective, the comms supported and maintained by the Sqn cover an area similar in size to Wales. A lot of hard work has been invested by every single member of this Sqn in effecting the close-down of sites of Mkronjic Grad and Sipovo and seamlessly establishing the new Multi-National Task Force Battle Group HQ (MNTF(NW)BG) in new HQ here in Banja Luka Metal Factory (BLMF). Additionally, the Sqn aided and assisted in the planning and implementation of the comms infrastructure for Monitoring, Observation, Surveillance and Targeting (MOST) Sector HQs and Team House across the AO.

Additionally, we devised and delivered a comprehensive trg package on all comms equipts used in the MOST concept to

Comd Gp Medal Parade

enable secure and efficient passage of intelligence gathered on the streets back to MOST HQ for analysis.

The Sqn was put together from across the Corps and the three contributing nations in this AO (UK, Canada and the Netherlands), all with different backgrounds and experience. This latter has somehow pulled the Sqn together, diversity being our strength. The success of the Sqn should perhaps not be judged solely by our ability to provide comms, but also by the very valued contribution the Sqn has made to the patchwork fabric of this little community that calls Banja Luka its home.

Every member of the Sqn will agree that our six-month tenure has flown by, and we would challenge anyone who was to say that the Pan-Balkans theatre is not busy. Somehow, this forgotten theatre remains important, the work we carry out here in support of SFOR is essential if the Balkans is to return to prosperity with its people free to live without fear and oppression.

All that remains is to say 'Au revoir' to our Canadian colleagues and 'Tot ziens' to our Dutch partners. We wish them all the best for the future. As for the Brits, we will all split up and go our separate ways, but everyone should remember the friends they have made here and the experiences they have shared, and all should be very proud of what we have achieved. We will give our replacements a warm welcome and hope they too have an excellent tour. Undoubtedly they will remain very busy.

UK SIGNALS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Graham Dorrington**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Fisher**

During the last few months, the Tp, formerly known as UK NSC (Bosnia) Tp, has renamed under FSR and is now known as UK Sig Tp. We have lost the Signals Maintenance and Repair Team, who like to call themselves SMART, but we think otherwise! Still remaining are the Theatre Systems Control Point (TSCP), Commcen, ISIS Team, ISM Team and ODA.

In the grand scheme of things, the changes are all to do with the downscaling of NATO's presence in Bosnia. The Bde has changed to a completely new concept of operations, adopting small teams integrated in the community with a multi-national battle group operating as a reaction force whilst still conducting focused operations. So it's all change (again) for the last month of the Tp's 6-month tour. It has been a tremendously busy tour with a lot happening to ensure the Bde transforms with the minimal amount of disruption. As always, comms have been maintained with minimum inconvenience to our expectant users. It has taken lots of dedication, professionalism and hard work, but we've made it.

With the roulemont of personnel in BLMF and surrounding areas, we were charged with educating people into the ways of using the comms systems deployed in theatre, which is where our 5

UK Sig Tp Medal Parade

months' experience has proven really useful. The trg has been delivered to Multi-National troops from Holland, Canada and Chile, with **SSgt Andy Fisher** using his bi-lingual skills to great effect and amusement. Also lending a hand (doing most of the work) were **Sgt Toby Brooksbank**, **Cpl Ben Redfern**, **Cpl Paul Marshall**, **Cpl Eddie McNeil**, **Cpl Paddy Grills** and **LCpl Andy Dean**.

Whilst working hard, the Tp has been playing hard. We entered the Banja Luka Combat Fitness Competition, competing against various other unit teams from around the Balkans. Everyone performed superbly well achieving 5th place out of 12. The events comprised comd tasks, 8 km rowing on machines, aerial obstacle course, a veh push, mine awareness and the ever-favourite stretcher race. It was a really spirited team effort, demonstrating how everyone had bonded over the last 5 months. Well done to the competitors, **SSgt Andy Fisher**, **SSgt Dave Thomas**, **Sgt Al Murray**, **Cpl Richie Savage**, **Cpl Ben Redfern**, **LCpl Tom Madden** and **LCpl Kat Cullern**.

The majority of the Tp has had the chance to participate in the AT package in Slovenia. This comprised a week's Alpine skiing, leading up to achieving either the Basic or Advanced Skiing Proficiency qualification. It was a very well put together package based in a civilian hotel, giving a welcome break from the rigmarole of BLMF and a busy operational tour.

With the Tp suffering from 'ground rush,' it was time for our well-deserved medals parade. The Tp formed up alongside the rest of the Sqn and were presented with the NATO Non-Article 5 Medal by **Col CEI Beattie**, Dep Comd MNTF(NW)/COMBRITFOR. Many thanks to **Cpl John Botting** and **Sig Angie Dowling**, who acted as medal bearers, for not dropping the medals! The parade was conducted with our colleagues from the partner nations, Canada and the Netherlands. It was amusing to see how multi-national drill could lead to such a large degree of confusion! However, everyone was pleased to receive their medals in recognition of the first rate support that the Sqn has provided to SFOR.

With our replacements identified, mainly from 97 Sig Sqn (V) we are preparing our handovers. We look forward to meeting them and we hope they have as good a tour as we have had.

UK SIGNALS TROOP (KOSOVO DET)

Tp Comd **Capt Gordon Stanger**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andrew Perkins**

The Tp has gone through a lot of changes recently out here in Pristina, with manning being reduced and jobs being re-allocated. We were all sorry to say goodbye to **LCpls Tanka** and **Bal**, who left us for Banja Luka in the middle of February (we will miss their bhats), and **Cpl Andy McLaren** and **LCpl Uttam**, who departed for Banja Luka in early March. Before leaving, there was some on the job trg for the Syscon techs on COMMCEN procedures, but after a few initial hiccups, all went as planned.

Sgt Pete Mason, and **Cpl Dave Harkness** have been going through the TDA accounts with the help of **Capt Alex Stanger**. The Syscon Techs **Cpls Gaz Millings**, **Graeme Banks** and **LCpl Jacob Bates** have got used to the extra work normally done by the now departed COMMCEN guys.

Sgt Andy Ward comes back off R and R to a week of Orderly Sgt. **Cpl Wes Morse**, our resident ISIS Manager, has been active as usual when not catching his beauty sleep, while **LCpl Chris Hesketh** keeps an eye on all the new mobile phones from Banja Luka.

All seemed like it would fall back into routine until...OP MERCIAN. Cold Showers, worse food (if you can believe it) and an extra 1,100 Brit troops, including dets from 14 Sig Regt (EW) and 30 Sig Regt. This resulted in a larger workload for the Tp, including escort duties. **Cpl Lee Green's** workload increased, allowing us

to call on our reserve Telemech from Bosnia, **LCpl Andy Anderson** to accompany him.

The last few days have seen a return to normality and everyone is looking forward to EOT at the start of May.

MNTF (NW) SERVICES TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Terry Samms** CA
Tp SSgt **Sgt Gilles Bèrubè** CA

Sadly it is time to start saying goodbye as the tour draws to an end. The civilians taking over the networks seem to be settling in nicely as the Canadian members of the Tp pack up and prepare to return home for a well-deserved break.

HQ MNTF(NW) Svc Tp (Formally known as HQ MNB(NW) Sig Tp) hosted the Sqn with an excellent Beach Party. **Cpl Debs Slade** CA and her team did themselves proud, and the evening was enjoyed by all, despite **Miss Melanie Driscoll** providing some of the male members of the Sqn with some Bikinis to wear (she wants them back – washed!).

E-mail addresses have been exchanged, and even **Cpl Larry Kettlewell** CA shed a few tears as we waved goodbye.

Services Tp Medal Parade

Congratulations to **Sgt Gilles Bérubé** CA on his commendation from the Bde Comd for the excellent service he provided and recording the fastest time to Sarajevo.

All in all, I believe we all leave with fond memories of our tour together. Ladies and Gentlemen, it has been emotional.

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

11th SIGNAL BRIGADE

Comd **Brig DP Meyer**
COS **Maj JA Compston**

HAIL AND FARWELL

It has been some time since the Bde has been mentioned in *The WIRE*, so we have a few hails and farewells to announce. We recently bade farewell to **Brig Charles Le Gallais** and **Jackie**, who have departed to Civvy Street, and we wish them both all the best for the future. **Maj Steve Abram** and **Liz** had a short spell as caretaker SO2 Ops before his posting to RSS. **Maj Kenny Kendrick** and **Maureen** have been posted to 71 (Y) Sig Regt (V) as Trg Maj. **Capt Mark Edwards** is off to RSS on the CISM course. **Flt Lt Ed Elliot** and **Vicky** have departed back to RAF Conningsby, where he will be looking after CIS for the Typhoon (Eurofighter). Finally, Ops Clerk, **Cpl Ken Spence** and **Donna**, have moved on to 1 PWRR at Catterick. We have welcomed our new Comd, **Brig Simon Mayer**. **Maj Jon Watt** and **Sophie** fills the SO2 Ops role after a tour in Canada. The new SO3 ComSec/Cts, **Capt Gary Shakespeare** and **Sharon** come to us from DCSA. **Capt Rich Byfield**, the new SO3 Ops/CIS has arrived from 11 Sig Regt. The new SO3 Ops (Air), **Flt Lt Mark Akehurst** and **Pennie** joins us from the RAF Tac Comms Wing. **Maj John Hiorns** arrived with **Kath** as the new CEC and CORMORANT project manager (again). Finally, we welcome **Cpl Christopher Douglas** as the new Ops Clerk.

EXERCISE ARRCADE FALCON 04 RECCE PARTY

The very important task of finding suitable comms sites for EX ARRCADE FALCON 04 was conducted over a two-week period in March. Recce teams from 60 and 94 Sig Sqn, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 40 Sig Regts (V) all contributed to what must have been one of the highest profile recces conducted in Germany in many years. The 30-strong team consisted of 2 Offrs, 8 WOs, 16 SNCOs and 4 JNCOs, mainly the PSIs of the TA Regts going on the final ex. The TA were also strongly represented, but I'm not sure that **SSgt (YofS) Jim Bole** set the best example in driving skills when he wrote off a Land Rover and a German car with the ominous number plate, 666. Standby, **Jim** - the Devil will have his revenge on you. With 138 comms sites in the bag and ARRC G6 consulted with regards to general progress of the Ex, we set about Phase 2, the duty free run. This stage of the recce was conducted more enthusiastically by some than others, with 40 Sig Regt leading the way. Well, who could resist 3-litre bottles of brandy? Not **SSgt Al Finn**, that's for sure!

11 BRIGADE SPEED TRIALS

With the recent changes of staff it, was decided that a bonding session was required, and so with the direction that there should be no 'tree hugging' involved, **Maj Bob Appleton** set about arranging a go-karting Grand prix for the Bde staff.

At 13.00hrs on 31 March, sixteen Bde staff arrived at Stoke-on-Trent for the safety briefing. Once the brief was complete, and race suits, helmets and gloves were donned, the assembled team was ready to compete. The afternoon was split into 2 practice laps, 10 heats with each individual completing 5 heats, followed by 2 semi-finals and a final. For entertainment value in between the semi-final and the final, five of the bravest/maddest racers from the HQ took part in a demonstration of Mini-Moto. For the uninitiated, Mini-Moto is the motorcycle equivalent of go-karts, using bikes that are 2 feet long and 1 foot high. As you can imagine, this led to many wobbles and spills, none of which surpassed **Maj Bob Appleton's** monster wheelie, which resulted in a flipped bike!

But back to the serious go-kart championship. The afternoon was filled with action that F1 would be proud of. Go-karts were diving up the inside on corners, going round the outside on the fast sweeping right-hander and causing the type of mayhem and crashes only usually seen in banger racing. However, a good afternoon of racing was had, with lap times and accidents both reducing towards the final races.

Finally, the important bit - the heroes and zeros of the day. Firstly, the overall points championship from the points accumulated

during the 10 heats: First, **Col Steve Potter**, Second, **Cpl Aide Hoskins** and Third, **Flt Lt Mark Akehurst**. Next, the podium positions for the Grand Prix Final: First, **Cpl Aide Hoskins**, Second, **Maj Gary Hailstone**, and Third, **Flt Lt Mark Akehurst**, with the fastest lap of the day going to **Cpl Aide Hoskins**. Now for the rogues gallery. First and with Honourable Mention was **Maj Bob Appleton**, for tee-boning a kart, overtaking during a yellow flag, collecting 2 black flags (a black flag is the motorsport equivalent of a red card) and generally driving like he was in the British Touring Car Championship. Second place in this category went to **Maj Jamie Compston**, for collecting one black flag and again driving like he was in the British Touring Car Championship. Finally the special Driving Miss Daisy Award went to **Maj Colin McGrory**, for collecting the least points and being the most sensible driver on the track. If you are planning a teambuilding event in the future, I can highly recommend go-karting - unless you have any real race drivers, then this type of event is a real leveller, and of course great fun into the bargain.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

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

CO **Lt Col AP Bristow**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Bruce**

The Regt is still managing to keep up its formidable task of combining extra-curricular activities with normal Regtl business - and doing it in style. We have just completed our Inter-Sqn winter sports competition, organised the Herford Half Marathon, been on exercise and we still managed to get the guys away on AT. Busy, busy busy.... just the way we like it!

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Trevor Keates**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Steve Mayell**

INTER-SQUADRON WINTER SPORTS COMPETITION
- by Sig Pawson

The Inter-Sqn sports competitions have all been full of competitive spirit, novices playing better than hardened veterans and excitable OC Sqns! The winter season sports competition has just come to an end and has proven highly interesting. All Sqns battled it out in a range of sports to gain those all important points that eventually led up to deciding the Champions. The competition included football, rugby, volleyball, cross-country, basketball and hockey.

The four Sqns were keen to trounce each other, each eager for the overall title of Regtl Champion Sqn. However, by the halfway point it became clear that 201 Sig Sqn was taking the competition by storm, with only 212 Sig Sqn posing a possible threat.

The wrangling over the title came right down to the final event, the hockey match. With a large proportion of the Regt away at the time, it was quite obvious that some players had never even laid eyes on a hockey stick before. This was highly alarming for the Umpire, **Capt Fisher**, as well as those who had played before. With sticks flying and the ball speeding off in all directions, it was surprising that casualty rates were low. However, it just proved that everyone can have a go at any sport, whatever their level.

Overall, it was a hard but fun day for all, with HQ Sqn winning the hockey for the second year running. But it was the total points from all the competitions that crowned 201 Sig Sqn the Inter-Squadron Champions 2003-04. 212 Sig Sqn came a close second.

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Andy Churchill**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Joyce**

SUPPORTING 4 ARMOURED BRIGADE CAST EXERCISE
- by Sig Scribbins

06.00hrs. Exercise begins. I'm up ready and all my kit is packed. it's far too early for two weeks of full grafting.

06.30hrs. Into the cookhouse with the Tp to have a full fat boy's breakfast. Everyone is still half asleep, wanting to go back to their beds, and wishing it wasn't Monday morning.

11.00hrs. We arrive in loc and split into two groups. Switch and Switching Centrals go up onto the top of the ridge. Support Lineys (including me), Techs and EDs go off to another bivvy site. We start putting up 9x9s, 12x12s and cam nets, and generally just setting up. It takes us one hour and ten minutes exactly. It's fully tactical now: cam cream on, webbing and rifle. I'm a real soldier now!

The first week starts off with the normal routine - wake up, wash and have breakfast (with **Cpl Fox** cooking, this means another fat boy's breakfast for everyone!). The EDs go up to the ridge to fix their generators. The Area Systems lads from our loc do their radio stags and guard patrols. I go off and do POL and resup, up to the ridge first to collect all the empty cans, then straight to the resup and POL point. Everyone gets well involved in their trades, working really hard.

In the second week, everyone is getting tired and stressed out. Little things are starting to go wrong as people are becoming forgetful. Waking up in the mornings is getting even harder now. More radio stags are getting handed out, too.

But overall, the ex goes well. Everyone has worked hard (more enthusiastically in the first week). I think we have given good comms and general support to 4 Bde on their CAST ex.

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Andy Lucas**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Shaun Fleming**

HERFORD HALF MARATHON

On 14 March 2004, 211 Sig Sqn organised the second Herford Half Marathon. The demanding course, which started and finished on the sports pitches on Wentworth Bks, incorporated the Herford and Bad Salzuflen Bismarkturms. After weeks of very changeable conditions, the weather on the day was bright and sunny, and the majority of the track was dry. Prior to the start there was an excellent 10-minute aerobic style warm up session taken by the PTI for the 385 runners, 39 of which were local Germans. The winner, **WO2(QMSI) Neil McCallum**, from Div HQ, mastered the course in 1hr 30mins 29secs. The fastest female runner was **Cfn Karen Holden** from 1 CSMR.

The CO was rumoured to have said that it wasn't the most enjoyable thing he had done recently, but he was pleased to have completed it. All competitors received a finisher's pack, which included a T-shirt, an isotonic drink, a bratwurst voucher and a can of Herforder Pils. Most went straight for the isotonic re-hydration programme. A brave few opted for the Herforder Pils!

Overall, it was a very successful Anglo-German event, which every involved thoroughly enjoyed.

REGIMENTAL SAAM

The Sqn deployed two teams of five capable personnel to Sennelager Ranges to compete in the Regtl SAAM. **2Lt Carpenter** captained the A Team and **Lt Hamp** captained the B Team. Morale started off high, with everybody having a fairly good shoot on the fire team assessment range. However as the day went on, things were starting to look a little bleak with **LCpl Neil** not keeping up to his usual high standards on the Roberts Shoot. With just the Falling Plate competition to go, and HQ Sqn throwing the gauntlet down at 46 seconds, all looked lost. Then, to the amazement and disbelief of the onlooking teams, **Lt Hamp** with the B Team took their place and obliterated all the falling plates in a mere 38 seconds.

The prize giving turned into almost a whitewash, with the B Team picking up the trophies for the Falling Plate and the Best Team. Maybe we'll name you the A team next time. The medal presentation became a little overwhelming for **Sig Walsh**, who picked up trophies for Best Young Shot and Best Overall Shot of the day.

EXERCISE AXE VITALITY - REBRO TROOP

Rebro Tp's day kicked off with a game of 5-a-side football, where **Sig Daniel Dixon** showed off a few of his energetic scoring goal celebrations.

The second activity was Go-Karting, and after a short delay while both the **Sig Patons** bought the NAAFI out of every thing with pastry on, Rebro Tp were under the starters orders. After only half a lap, **Sig Pete Heardly** showed that he was more eager to take the title than finish the day unscathed, taking out a large section of the safety tyres. Drawing blood on his nose (even though he was wearing a helmet), he also sent his kart into the pits for the mechanics to have a look at.

Sig Daniel Iddison made the first corner his own. So much so, that the corner was renamed Iddison Corner - a corner where you could find him closely inspecting the quality of the safety tyres. **Sig Kev Paton** preferred to drive though fellow competitors, even if it meant at times having to drive the wrong way round the circuit. The eventual winner of the day was **Sig Sam Paton,** who narrowly pipped **Sig Richard Gibson** and **Sig Liam Jones**.

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Paul Buck**
SSM **WO2(SSM) John McNeil**

EXERCISE PREMIER LINK- A SUPPORT TROOP VIEW
- by Cpl Bruce Noble

It was a cold and miserable morning and once again 212 Sqn were deploying on EX PREMIER LINK. We proceeded to Hammersmith Bks (going the long way), and once there, we set up in record time, blending the complex match in perfectly with its surroundings. All this was done with **SSM McNeil** giving loads of encouragement.

24 hours had passed and it was time to move loc to Sennelager, with **Sgt Dave Hudson** as packet commander, an important job. We set off in high spirits, but this evaporated as we neared our final destination. A wrong decision at the tac sign had sent us in the wrong direction, wasting about half an hour.

When we arrived, the Techs, EDs and Lineys were there ready to go. All that was missing were the operators with Diamond 1. Once the portaloos were moved into loc, it was time to move on to the job in hand installing comms into both Diamonds. This was done with the minimum amount of fuss, with **Cpl Chris Lord** putting in some good face time.

Winners at the Regtl SAAM, 211 Sig Sqn display their silverware

Yes it was as cold and bleak as it looks

Then the weather hit us. At first it started with the fine rain, the kind that soaks you through. This led on to snow, which was to stay with us for the duration of the ex. But we were prepared for this - or at least some of us were.

At daybreak, we moved on to the round robin, a series of lessons which included pairs fire and manoeuvre, section battle drills, basha erection and the extraction of a casualty under fire. All lessons were masterfully executed due to the high calibre of the Cpls within 212 Sqn.

Early the following morning, we tore down the complex ready to move loc to another deeper in the heart of Sennelager trg area. Once there, it was all go. Comms were in and working in record time. We were becoming quite efficient by now. The character building was obviously working.

We then moved into a hide loc for an overnight stay, giving everyone time to recuperate before moving on to our last loc. With comms in, the cookhouse was erected and we were good to go. Diamond 6 was well situated if you were a duck - right in the middle of a swamp.

As everything was going to plan, it became apparent that it wasn't - the weather was against us. It seemed that we were in the middle of the Antarctic, a time when soldiers decide to go to the hospital suffering from mild hypothermia.

As this was happening **LCpl Daz Barker** did a superman off the back of the Line DAF injuring his hip. Another man down - they were dropping like flies! With the elements against us, the OC, **Maj Buck** decided to call it a day. We stayed there overnight, then returned back to Harewood camp.

It looked pretty but, it was cold! 212 on Ex Premier Link

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col D Hudson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) S Kelly**

202 (ARMOURED) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Simon Meadowcroft BEM**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Ollie Reed**

After an excellent tour on OP TELIC 2, the Sqn are now well rested and ready to embark on a busy trg year. The reformation of 202 (Armd) Sig Sqn brings with it a period of change before embarking on a busy ex period, to be followed by the preparatory phase of BOWMANisation. We say goodbye to **WO2(SSM) Bob Low**, who leaves us to join Birmingham OTC as RSM, and we welcome **WO2(SSM) Ollie Reed**, who joins us from the Regtl Trg Wing.

WATERLOO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Lee Chamberlain**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Kev Cooney**

Since returning from our role in the Gulf, 202 (Armd) Sig Sqn has undergone considerable change. Waterloo Tp now provides 3(UK) Div with 2 armd fwd HQs, and is currently preparing the personnel and vehs that comprise the GOC's TAC for transition to BOWMAN. The first 3 Panzers are already being stripped and are awaiting removal to Ashchurch for full conversion.

Farewell to **Cpl Welsh**, who moves to 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn on promotion to Sgt; to **LBdr Daz Neary**, who rejoins 19 Regt RA; and to **Sig George Brookesbank**, who moves to 21 Sig Regt (AS) on promotion to LCpl.

OVERLOON TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Marcus Speed**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paddy Bickerstaff**

Having enjoyed Christmas in Iraq, morale hit an all time high as our plane touched down at RAF Brize Norton. The 5 weeks POTL that followed were enjoyed by all. Fully rested, Overloon Tp reformed on 16 February and now comprises a mixture of OP TELIC 2 personnel, new arrivals from RSS and the inevitable old faces. With the reformation of 202 (Armd) Sig Sqn, come a series of changes to the Tp structure. The new role for Overloon Tp is to provide a wheeled and fly forward HQ. Aside from that, the Tp will have the opportunity to involve themselves in helicopter handling and underwater escape trg. This has brought both excitement and anxiety for a few, especially **Sig Scott**.

As we wait for the return of our vehs from post op inspections, we have kept ourselves busy under the orders of **Sig Walsh**, preparing for EX LIGHTNING STRIKE (a UOTC demonstration). This gave some members of the Tp a chance to see what our 'new concept' HQ would look like in reality.

With Tranche 1 of BOWMANisation approaching, we have also received our BOWTAC brief and are preparing to attend the relevant BOWMAN courses at the end of April.

INKERMAN TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt John Walton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Dawson**

Since arriving back from the Gulf, the Tp has reformed with lots of new faces, and has farewelled some old ones. We welcome **Cpl Taff Colwell** from 7 Sig Regt, and say good bye to **Cpl Clegg**, who is off to 19 Mech Bde after being with us for just over 3 years. Congratulations to **LCpl Smurf Murphy**, who has been picked for Women's Army Rugby Trials. Well done!

We are currently preparing our vehs for the longawaited transition to BOWMAN. We have also been involved in EX LIGHTNING STRIKE, where **Sigs Newton**, **Webb** and **Lightly** helped to set up a small DRASH demo and a series of comd tasks for OTCs visiting from all over the UK. We have also taken part in EX PHANTOM BUGLE, where a few members of the Tp were used as DS Staff. The next major events for Inkerman Tp are the forthcoming trg courses for Advanced Sigs and Combat HQ Users. We are eager to get back out on ex, and look forward to the summer AT camp.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Roy Freeman**
SSM **WO2 Matt Wakeling**

Touch wood, things seem to be settling down in the crazy world of comms. The Sqn has recovered from OP TELIC and now prepares for EX RAMPANT RHINO, more of which later. BOWMANisation is continuing, and it is good to hear positive feedback coming from those who have done the trg.

The DRASH concept is continuing to bemuse the Sqn 2IC, whose kind suggestion to use the Millennium Dome for spares wasn't well received by the Sqn Yeoman! The next project to come out of the OC's Acme Evil Projects Box ® is to arrange a Corps Surfing Competition!

Well done to **LCpl Tim Tyler**, who has recently represented the Army Under 23 hockey team, winning the Most Valuable Player award. Lastly farewell to **Cpl Thomas**, who departs to MOD London.

NORMANDY TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Bennett**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Stebbings**

EXERCISE RAMPANT RHINO *by Cpl Ross*

Conceived over endlessly twiddled thumbs during his stint on OP TELIC, this challenging ex and the trg package preceding it was the brainchild of **WO2 SM Matt Wakeling**. It sought to improve our inf skills beyond the level usually trained to by ordinary Sigs exs, giving us the opportunity to be action men for a couple of weeks.

The trg prior to the ex included classroom and field work, and familiarisation with, weapons such as handgrenades and the LAW

Cpl Ross and his action men prepare for battle

94. This culminated in a three days in the Brecon Beacons to prepare us for the main 10 day, fully tactical, ex. By this time we had already been unofficially renamed '2064 Fighting Sqn' by those wags anxious to highlight our endeavours.

The ex kicked off with a gruelling insertion tab, via a route chosen to avoid the watchful gaze of our enemy, the Welsh National Liberation Army. Although only 18kms as the crow flies, taking the Brecons topography and the weight of our Bergens into account, it felt more like 80!

For the first three days, we gathered int on our foe by setting up and manning OPs and carrying out CTRs. Using this int, ambushes were set and sprung the next night, followed by platoon-strength attacks against a well-armed and surprisingly jovial enemy, who were dug into a series of farm buildings.

The next few days encompassed live withdrawals from contact at night, live sec attacks, followed by being DF'd (simulated with a judicious application of plastic explosives) and deliberate attacks staged at short notice. By now all the sec were working like well oiled machines, more than ready to engage the enemy in a final showdown a platoon defence shoot at night in a howling blizzard, pouring thousands of rounds down on an implacable enemy, with music and sound effects blaring over the top of the gunfire.

EX RAMPANT RHINO gave 206(4) Sqn the opportunity to be real soldiers for a couple of weeks, and our thanks go to those who took the time to organise it. Thanks also to the courageous leaders of 1 and 2 Pls, **Lt Ellis** and **Lt Watson**, to the Brecon weather for behaving itself, and to that first postex beer for tasting so good!

MONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Ellis**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Watt**

Having seen the return of troops from OP TELIC 2 and POTL, we set about turning would-be civilians in to soldiers again. With no sigs kit available until April, we turned our hands to our infantry skills with EX RAMPANT RHINO, a 6-week trg ex for 206(4) Sig Sqn. After a cold but successful ex, we were faced with the arduous task of preparing our veh fleet for EX IRON TRIANGLE and BOWMAN conversion in the coming year. During this time, we said goodbye to newly promoted **LCpl Lou Walker**, off to 1 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt; and to **LCpl Anderson**, off to 7 Sig Regt.

Cpl Garside issues QBOs during live firing

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Nick Range**
SSM **WO2 Mark Fitzpatrick**

The re-organisation continues apace, and the view from the Sqn windows still looks like the final resting place of all things 4-ton. With the small matter of EX ACE HIGH in the way, BOWMAN has now become a Sqn catchphrase for anything except a data comms platform, e.g. 'This weather is completely BOWMAN.' Fuel and portaloos being the main focus of the ex, TN 083 got their throne delivered just as ENDEX was called. But the ex was a good opportunity to shake out the Sqn and expose the new blood to winter on SPTA and -7°C. It was a good start point from which to continue to develop as a Sqn.

OMAN TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Ted Lowe**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Wayne Dunbar**

EXERCISE ACE HIGH - *by LCpl Bale*

When I was told that I was to deploy on ex with 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt for 2 weeks, my initial thoughts were not good, as people in Blandford had told me that the Unit has a lot of new soldiers, so knowledge would be limited. However, on spending the 2 weeks with TN083, from 222 Sig Sqn, whilst they were supporting 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn during their BOWMANisation trg on Salisbury Plain, I found more than enough knowledge, professionalism and motivation to get things done. Everyone worked as a team member, and the network was in place quickly. Good effort! Any problems with links were quickly rectified and the comd and control was very efficient and swift in setting up contingency plans. On my return to Blandford, I will be quick to put right the image of 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, as I feel it is one of the most professional units that I have deployed with.

SHARJAH TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Howe**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Baker**

EXERCISE FINAL FLIGHT

During March, a small group of us departed for Blandford Camp to lend a hand to Sysex Tp on EX FINAL FLIGHT, a comd trg ex run by ASG for Tp Comds, Yeoman and Foreman courses. A very early Monday morning saw us leaving Camp for our TN locs in the beautiful Dorset countryside, Bovington tank trg area and Bullbarrow Hill to name a couple. A very big thank you to everybody at ASG (in particular Sysex Tp) who made us feel very welcome indeed throughout the week. It proved to be a good experience for some of the newer members of the Tp to dust off the cobwebs, whilst giving some of the older members a chance to show the boys and girls at Sysex how to drive, (without hitting anyone else).

QM (T) DEPT

QM(T) **Capt Jon Duckworth**
RQMS(T) **WO2 Andy Lothian**

Like the rest of the Regt, QM(T) Dept has re-organised following OP TELIC, and although we are now divided into those with tans and those without, the collective effort cannot be understated.

The busy programme for 2004 will present some significant challenges. The BOWMAN introduction and preparations for the D Day 60th Anniversary are top of the 'to do' list, with DRASH taking up a considerable amount of **LCpl Chris Margrave's** time and brainpower!

We welcome **SSgt Mick Rees**, **SSgt Brooker**, **Cpl Gwennap**, **LCpls Kelly Butterfield**, **Wood**, **Musgrave** and **Marsden**; and farewell **Cpl Marie Bailey**. Congratulations to the RQMS on his selection for WO1 and to the QM, who is about to taken over the reins as OC Sp Sqn with 30 Sig Regt.

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col GR Norton**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Manktelow**

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj D Hay**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Welsh**

SQN BATTLECAMP WARM UP - *by Cpl Gaz Collins*

EX BERLIN BATTLECAMP was planned for 229 Sig Sqn to take place from 29 Mar to 2 Apr, but due to the lack of inf trg for the Sqn for some time, the need was realised for a little warm up and section bonding. **Cpls Ben Pember** and **Gaz Collins** were soon on the case, classrooms were booked for ITDs and the trg area recce'd for mil trg.

With skiing, the Corps SAAM and other Regtl activities planned, numbers were rapidly depleting. But despite this, trg commenced and ITDs such as LOAC and HASAW were covered. The bulk of the trg was practical, including FCOs, sec attacks and patrol drills. The one thing that was really missing was a bit of sec bonding, so the OC came up with the OC's Challenge - and what a challenge! In secs, the guys all took off on a burden retrieval/navex, collecting such items as stretchers, tyres, and ammo boxes along the way. The mental side was also tested with map reading, and TAM familiarisation tests at the end of the run. All secs worked well together and with the added incentive of a day off for the winning sec, limits were being pushed. It was finally won by 1Pl 3 Sec. Many thanks to **SSgt O'Neill**, **Cpls Pember** and **Collins** for their efforts in organising it - although I'm not so sure the lads will echo that!

From a DS point of view, I now realise the time and effort that goes in behind the scenes to make these sorts of events happen. But it was still satisfying to see the end result, and to have confidence in the prep of the secs for Battlecamp.

EXERCISE BERLIN BATTLECAMP - *by Sgt Doyle*

Once again it was time to deploy the Sqn from the comforts of Elmpt Station to a not so comfortable Haltern Trg Area. EX BERLIN BATTLECAMP was conducted over a 28 March – 02 April 04, with the first week being dry trg under the supervision of **Cpls Collins** and **Pember**.

The second week was fully tactical with **SSgt Curry** as 2 Pl Comd, which scared the Pl more than the enemy! Both pls were given the task of conducting a recce on **SSgt O'Neill** and his enemy forces. These were conducted in a thoroughly professional manner, until **Cpl Lewis** was captured and brought back to EXCON for some tactical questioning. **SSgt Curry** was slightly peeved when one of his secs returned minus a sec comd, and **Lt Cassidy** was confused when the said sec comd arrived at her harbour area stating 'I am British – please help'. I will save **Lt Cassidy** the embarrassment of not mentioning that a complete sec of her Pl surrendered to four enemy troops (despite her last warning, 'Don't get caught and don't surrender')

The exercising troops did manage to get their own back on the DS during a coy-level ambush, where **Sgt Doyle** was ceremoniously dumped in a peat bog. The final attack saw a lot of hard work and determination from all troops involved, and the overall result was a convincing victory, with only minor casualties.

LCpl Bentley MBE on stag

2 Pl Comd Gp get their marching orders

The ex was successful and the Sqn is already preparing for the transition to live firing tactical trg to be conducted later this year – so watch this space.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Andy Fallows**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Dixon**

With spring and summer in the air, it's ARRCADE GUARD again. The Sqn has been working far too hard in the lead up and during the exercise period, so the Easter break was welcome relief.

We farewell **WO2 (FofS) Cleminson**, who is off to 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; **WO2 (SSM) Kev Read**; and **Capt Caroline Woodbridge**, who is off to train the lucky OCdts at RMAS. Hello to **WO2 Dixon**, the new SSM and **Capt Eddie Maskell-Petersen**, the new Sqn 2IC.

RADIO TROOP - *by LCpl Baxter*

Tp Comd **Lt Mark McNelis**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Gaz Chapman**

The past few months have been extremely busy for the Tp, with exs from Tp level all the way up to ARRC deployments. We have been busy keeping up the standard of veh, and with UWI/RSIT this prep is always ongoing. Unfortunately, some vehs have recently been taken away for BOWMAN conversion.

The Tp has been doing its own in-house trg, courtesy of **SSgt Gaz Chapman**. He organised and oversaw EX WOODLAND WOLF, a mid-range HF ex, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Whilst this ex was in full swing, the rest of the ARRC deployed on the annual EX ARRCADE GUARD, although not many war stories came of that one!

A big welcome to **Sigs James** and **Hook**, who join us straight from Blandford; and to **Sig Donna Moore**, who joins us from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. And we say good-bye to **LCpl Jim Burgess**, off to 16 Sig Regt; to **Cpl Nathan Beevers**, who is off on promotion to Sgt; and to **Cpl Seaun Lovell**, who leaves us for ATR Lichfield.

QUEBEC TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Tim Cooper**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Taff Kinsey**

Saturday 27 March was the 25th anniversary of the Brüggen 10 Road Race. Quebec Tp's tug of war team contingent, **Sgt Orr**, **Cpls McEwan** and **Petch** ran the route carrying the Tug of War rope.

Sadly, we farewell **Cpl Shirley**, who is off on his T1 course; **LCpl Pearson**, who joins 16 Sig Regt; **Sig Scott**, who is off to 102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; and **Sig Legg**, who is off on promotion to 21 Sig Regt (AS). We welcome **Cpls Davies** and **Petch**, both from TM Tp.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Ingram**
SSM **WO2(SSM) S Littlefield**

EXERCISE WINTER DAGGER – SQUADRON BATTLE CAMP

Bayonet Lesson: After all was demonstrated, we assumed the killing positions crawling for 20 metres whilst being balled at by the DS. **Sig Godwin** went to extreme measures to get off Battle Camp by thrusting a bayonet into his knee, much to **Capt Wilson's** horror.

He's not heavy – really!

Pairs Fire and Manoeuvre: Surprise surprise, we came under fire! Even **LCpl Jase Brown** with his commando rolly polly and half hour cam cream application wasn't brave enough to take on a whole sec. Failing the mission was the only option.

Casevac Shoot: The fire team came under fire and the Padre was shot. We had to withdraw under fire, carrying/dragging, him back to safety. **LCpl Rees** galloped down the range with the Padre over his shoulder, without even breaking into a sweat!

Night Section Defence: Loads of trip flares, illum, tracer rounds and firepower from the GPMG. The enemy were eventually repelled, along with **Capt Wilson's** shoes! And there were a few bush fires from the tracer rounds.

Deliberate Section Attack: Loads of hearts thumping, warry faces and stabbed sandbags. **SSgt Bath** was last seen running down the range with a GPMG, tripod and 400 rounds!

Bayonet Range: Courtesy of **SSgt Bath**, puddles were conveniently covered by machine fire. The result was loads of muddy, tired DS and soldiers. **Maj Ingram**, **WO2 Littlefield** and **Sgt Smith** spent hours playing and dragging poor soldiers through the mud.

A massive thank you and well done go to **WO2 (SSM) Littlefield** for all his work in organising a fantastic week. Same again next year please!

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col PW Glibbery**
Adjt **Capt NC Bruce**

The Regt has had an exceptionally busy last few months with planning and trials for the 2004, UK-wide, project delaminating of ISIS pilot roll-out at Brecon, with other routine ICS work continuing at a frantic pace. Last year, the Regt completed its transformation from the former ACISG, and continues to provide global ICS support to Land operations. 10 Sig Regt offers opportunities to the majority of Royal Signals trades for an exciting and rewarding posting. The current UK geographic Regtl Orbat looks like this:

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

Sitting below the CO is the Operations Group led by **Maj Mick Boxall**, then 5 key departments as follows:

Applications Support A recently set up team, located in Wilton and led by **Mr Craig Pond-Barrett**, which provide a single focus for all in-service application support for Land Command.

Installations and Support Led by **Mr Bill Logan**, I and S 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**, this is 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 and Training Led by **Miss Paula Jones**, this is responsible for the personnel management of approximately 600 civilian staff and for the trg of all staff within the Reg.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

The Implementation Team is part of the I and S Dept, and is managed by **Mr Dave Brown**. It contains 2 military personnel, **WO2 (Supvr IS) Simon Graham** and **Cpl** (soon to be Sgt) **Auz Gambles**; and 3 civilians. 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, such as in OP FRESCO.

Demand for LCSS(R) connectivity has grown immensely in recent months, so the team has been busy completing installations in Germany, Brunei, and BATUS and throughout UK.

COMMUNICATION PLANNING OFFICE

Since the demise of the Airfield Communication Planning Office (ACPO), this office has seen re-birth as the Communication Planning Office (CPO). We have removed the 'Airfield' from the old title because MOD has closed all the airfields in Germany. But our core business has not changed. We are still primed and ready to deploy to all the four corners of the globe.

LIMA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt GJ Clarke**
Tp SSgt **SSgt SM Watts**

Once again, Lima Tp has had an extremely period, with Tp members deploying to op theatres in Afghanistan, Oman, Falklands, Gibraltar, and Brunei as well as the usual deployments to Bosnia and Kosovo.

Despite being extremely busy, time was still found for the Tp to undertake the arduous Coast to Coast Challenge, whereby 24 men will carry 2 logs 192 miles in only 14 days from the Cambrian to the Yorkshire coasts, in aid of the NSPCC.

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Tom Hall**

The Sqn recently said farewell to **Len Nicholson** our unit driver, who after 12 years with the unit has retired from the Civil Service to concentrate more on his passion for fishing. To mark this sad occasion (for us), **Len** was presented with a certificate of appreciation, from CO 10 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Paul Glibbery**, and

Mrs Gill Greenyer presents Len Nicholson with his certificate

CO, 10 Sig Regt, Lt Col Glibbery, presents Mr Malcolm Dunning with his MSM

all members of the Unit, by our unit Civilian Personnel Manager, **Gill Greenyer**. This short ceremony was quickly followed by a departure for lunch at a local hostelry.

To mark 31 years with the Civil Service, **Malcolm Dunning**, who also retired recently, was invited back to the Sqn to receive the award of the Meritorious Service Medal. At a small unit ceremony in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess, **Malcolm** was presented his medal by CO, 10 Sig Regt.

Following a recent visit by the CISM course, our reputation for hosting courses from Blandford has been further enhanced by a visit from course No 74 FofS Course. The event organisers, **WO2(FofS) AJ Matless**, **WO2(Supvr IS) Craig Collins**, **SSgt Jim Robertson** and **Mr John Roberts**, gave our guests a full day on what we are all about, and wined and dined them.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj N Beecher**
SSgt **SSgt P Nealis**

A fond farewell is extended to **WO2(YofS) Pat Smith**, and family. Congratulations on your promotion and we all hope that Catterick treats you well. **SSgt Jim Bromfield** stays with us to slip into those massive shoes and shoulder the burden.

Congratulations to **Cpl Emily Ironmonger** on passing her IS Op course. A big pat on the back for the OC, **Maj N Beecher** and for

251 Sig Sqn's Fleet Half Marathon team

Cpl Kev Hebenton for their prowess on the ranges this month. Both made it into the 10 Sig Regt Shooting Team. Best of luck to you and the Team in the upcoming competitions.

Well done to the 10 plucky individuals who entered the Fleet Half Marathon in March. **Maj Nick Beecher**, **Maj (Retd) LB Gurung**, **Capt Andy Campbell**, **SSgt Pete Nealis**, **Sgt Richie Bryan**, **Sgt Ian Welsh**, **Sgt Andy Dobson**, **Cpl Lee Barney**, **Cpl Tracey Hendin** and **LCpl Matt Richards** all turned out to compete in, what can only be described as horrendous conditions. The chosen charity for this year was Great Ormond Street Hospital. A special well done to **Sgt Ian Welsh,** who came in top of our pile at 1hr 28mins. **SSgt Pete Nealis** trialed a 'Run and Ride' scheme this year. By all accounts it was a great success. Apparently the scheme is set out so as you run eight miles, hand the conveniently situated ambulance your spine and get a five-mile lift back into town. Maybe there'll be more takers next year Staff!

Congratulations to **Cpl Lee Barney** and his fiancée, **Jemma**, who are getting married at the end of May. Well done also to **Sgt Richard Webb**. His sterling work, to push the envelope set by the engineers at Vauxhall, claimed its fourth victim at the end of last month.

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col IPF Vingoe**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Hancock**

CORPORAL BRUMMIE BAKER

Cpl Christopher Baker, died in a trg accident on Catterick Garrison in February. He was a popular member of the Regt, and will be sadly missed. In his memory, 256 Sig Sqn raised over £2,600 for the Great North Air Ambulance.

Christopher Baker, known as **Brummie**, was born on 6 October 1971. He was raised in the West Midlands and when he was able to, he left home to pursue a profession in the British Army.

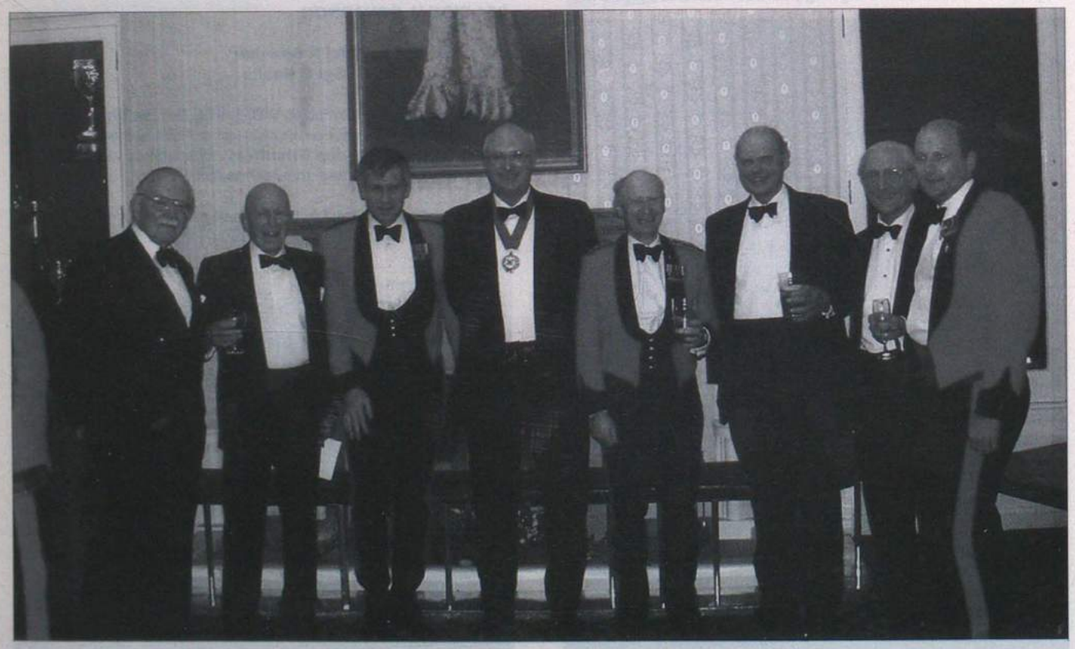
He enlisted in Cannock on 6 October 1989, and shortly after trg was deployed to the Middle East to play his part in the liberation of Kuwait. **Cpl Baker** then served with a variety of operational units, in the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland and in Germany.

Brummie Baker was a popular member of the Sqn here in Bramcote, often snowed under with work, running about the hangar organising the movement of vehs and troops. Despite his busy job, he always found time to help others and to give advice when it was needed. There are few JNCOs who generate the fondness and respect that **Brummie Baker** had. Ready to see any job through to completion, and to look after those who worked for him, his dedication was exemplary. He gave everything to service life. He was a keen runner and rugby player

Brummie Baker will be missed by all that knew him. May he rest in peace.

CYGNET DINNER

The Regt's association with the Worshipful Company of Dyers is the reason why we wear the White Swan on a Black Background as our emblem. This association started in 1960 and has flourished since. The annual Cygnet Dinner took place on 3 April



30 Signal Regiment CO's Past and Present, Col (Retd) Gilbertson, Brigadier (Retd) Rose, Col Oldfield, Mr Lee (Prime Warden of the Dyers), Col Lithgow, Col (Retd) Byng, Lt Col (Retd) Jarrett, Lt Col Vingoe

04 and was attended by the Prime Warden and Clerk of the Dyers, Comd 11 Sig Bde, and six previous commanding officers.

BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP *- by Capt Sean Keilty*

The British Rally Championship took place in March at Gamecock Bks. Advertised as a 'must see' event, it was the fun and games in setting it up that amused us most. A group of us was tasked with preparing up the area for the event, and this started with the signing for more stores than the SQMS, **SSgt Ganesh**, could hold on his shelves. Putting up 18 x 24 tents in 70 mph winds was pretty bad, and it seemed certain that one of us would be decapitated. **Cpl Ian Bain** tried to convince the SSM that we should be elsewhere. However, **WO2 (SSM) Coupland** encouraged us with such all time great clichés such as 'the ball is in your court,' 'My tea's a salad....' and so on. After what seemed like weeks of orange fencing and **Cpl Taff Jones** telling his stories, we finally finished the set up and were ready for the fun to start.

British No 1 Rally Driver David Milner at Gamecock Barracks

Sunday morning arrived, the wind had thankfully settled to a more workable 50mph and the rain was only moderate. Morale was as would be expected. At 09.30hrs the gates opened for members of the public. Half an hour later, the first cars embarked upon a convoy recce of the stage, with Subaru Imprezas, Renault Clios, EVO 8s and many more revving their engines and ripping around the circuit. Between the rallying around camp, the fans got their chance to meet their rallying idols (British No 1, **Johnny Milner**, to name but one) and look around the numerous stalls, which seemed to be extremely popular. Amongst us 'locals' the two main stalls that gained our attention were the Burger and Hot Dog stall and the Page 3 Girl Sun Fun Bus. Watching the cars and the talented guys who drove them was worth all the hard work we put in to the setting up, and the event was hailed as a great success by **WO2 (SSM) Coupland**.

ENTERTAINING THE TROOPS ON EXERCISE SWAN SURPRISE - by Cpl Holly Glen

EX SWAN SURPRISE was a 5-day tactical comms test ex for 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn. Sp Sqn provided the DS and life support for the duration, made all the more unusual as this was the first time that Echelon had deployed since the Regt's arrival at Bramcote. This was all in preparation for the arrival of the incoming CORMORANT comms system.

The acting CO for the ex was Ops Offr, **Maj Douggie MacTaggart**, who came up with the cunning plan of a scenario involving **Lisa Scott** (ex *Steps* band member) being flown into theatre to perform a CSE show for the deployed troops' entertainment. Thinking this was a bit of a wind-up and hoping my involvement would be minimal, I cheerfully went with the flow. Little did I know that the end result would be performance to end all on the back of a DAF.

With little more than an hour to practise our routine, **Cpl Helen Caplin**, **Pte Lana Monaghan** and I donned our make up (cam cream) and our trendy stage wear (NBC kit) and proceeded to prance around, much to the enjoyment of the deployed heroes of 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn and Sp Ech. Getting a little tired of banging my head on the roof of the veh, it was time to get the troops involved, which they did with great gusto. By the way, the Ech deployment went really well too!

EXERCISE ARRCADE GUARD 2004
- by 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron

EX ARRCADE GUARD is a critical step in the process of certifying the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) as a high readiness Force (Land) HQ. This annual ex always involves one SATCOM det from 30 Sig Regt. This year, a 501 det from Victor Tp became the nominated asset for the ex, and six members from the Sqn led by **Cpl Subaraj Rai** departed from Gamecock Barracks. The main task of the det was to provide the Joint Operational Command System (JOCS) and IMN link between the deployed HQ and PJHQ. Despite the cold, freezing and snowy weather the ex was conducted smoothly.

501 KHAKI Det crew, standing: Sig Edwards, Sig Sahabir, and Cpl Dickinson. Front, seated: Cpl Subaraj Sunuwar

OPERATION MERCIAN

The Spearhead Land Element (SLE) Battle Group is one of the most important assets of HQ LAND. It remains at high readiness to deploy at anytime to anywhere in the world. The SLE Det, part of 30 Sig Regt is one of its components, and its task is to provide strategic CIS support and tac comms to the BG.

Spearhead Det in Kosovo

On 17 -18 March 04, violence broke out in Pristina between the two old ethnic rivals of Kosovo, and within two days, over 20

people were killed and many more injured. British troops deployed on OP MERCIAN to Kosovo in order to prevent further violence in the region. 30 Sig Regt's SLE Det was one of the first units to get deployed in this op.

The SLE Tp was deployed on 18 March 04, under the command of **Lt Buddhi**. All the hard work and trg we had done in the previous couple of months was put to the test, and it was a good opportunity to prove our comms skills. For the duration of the op we were attached to 1RGBW, the current SLE bn. In addition to providing comms facilities, we also volunteered for foot patrols and escorts around our AOR, and assisted 14 Sig Regt (EW) on several ops.

Within a week of deployment, the situation in Kosovo was under control and there were no further reports of violence. The presence of British troops had reduced the violence, calmed the situation and saved many lives and properties. Routine patrols are still being carried out by 1RGBW to maintain the peace, and the operation as a whole, is running very smoothly.

EXERCISE MAYAN MERCURY *- by 256 Signal Squadron*

The staff at PJHQ have been longing for another sunshine tour, so the JFHQ was initialised, and Alpha Tp duly delivered it to the Central American paradise of Belize. As we stepped off the VC10, it was a case of hitting the ground running for everyone.

The ex was split into to two phases, an initial recce mission carried out by the OLRT teams, followed by the Main HQ build and CPX. The OLRT consisted of a small team of staff offrs from PJHQ and **Cpl Gibney** and **Sig Harrison** from the Tp. They had the luxury of being delivered to the ex by Virgin Atlantic via Miami, whilst the second OLRT team travelled in style by Crab Air. OLRT 1 then carried out the recce from a hotel in the capital of Belmopan and passed their info to OLRT 2, who stayed at Price Bks. The main CPX took place up country and proved to be highly successful for both the Signals element and the Staff.

Once the ex was over, prep for the extraction began, running concurrently with a jungle trg ex. Half the Tp endured big snakes, whilst the other half loaded big cargo pallets. Before returning to Bramcote, a few days of R and R had to be endured, so many of the Tp stayed by the pool at Price Bks, whilst others went on a road trip to Cancun, led by the OC and his trusty sidekick, the QMSI (Quarter Master Sunbed Instructor). The flights back were delayed, allowing us an extra couple of days sampling the delightful Belikan beer. Bramcote is now glowing under the success of another JFHQ manoeuvre and a Tp full of suntans!!

The Signal Crew plus Staff Officers at SBMA Forward Qatar. Capt Tydeman, Sig Penneck, Cpl Hayes, LCpl Pennock, LCpl Griffiths, Sig Marshall, Cpl O'Neill

HANDOVER OF HEADQUARTERS SBMA FORWARD
- by 258 Signal Squadron

It has been another busy period for the Sqn, with everyone now fully focussed on the incoming CORMORANT vehs that are due any day. Our fond farewells have been said to the Sqn Ops Offr, **Capt Sarah Irwin**, who has returned to Blandford with husband **Gary**, in preparation for the birth of her first child. **2Lt Davis** has returned from her Troopies' Course and the Yeoman, **WO2 Al Campbell**, is off to Germany on promotion, so our best wishes go to him and **Jo**.

258 Sig Sqn has been supporting SBMA forward in Qatar since June 2003. Initially **LCpl Barron** was the man in charge, with the rest of the personnel held at R1 back in UK. Since last summer, **Capts Staples** and **Tydeman** have been deploying back and forth alternately, supporting the SBMA Staff with a small team of soldiers from the Regt. From January to March this year, the Det has been in the hands of **Capt Jules Tydeman**, and although the Det is about as far away from the sharp end as possible on OP TELIC, it makes amends by following the 'work hard, play hard' rule.

In between sustaining an impressive array of CIS and catering for a needy bunch of Staff, there was activity everywhere, from the football pitch and the dartboard to the shops of Doha. The Det is now in the safe hands of **Lt Gordon** from 256 Sqn and we wish them well in the Middle East.

EXERCISE CYPRUS FORUM *- by 258 Signal Squadron*

The Staff Offrs from Northwood who hadn't made it out to Gibraltar or Belize were feeling a bit left out, so F Tp were sent off to Cyprus armed with a 501 det and some JOCS equipt. With the Staff busy practising scenarios for Cyprus, the rest of the Det got on with some valuable military trg. This included a navigation practical, which resulted in **Cpl Whitworth** and **Sig Greenhalgh** being geographically challenged just 400m into a 3km course. When not on duty in the Det, all the soldiers made full opportunity of the local facilities, with **2Lt Gallacher** leading the way. Horse riding, canoeing, beach volleyball were all tackled with great enthusiasm, although everyone ensured that they had time to get a reasonable tan to ensure that the rest of the Sqn was suitably jealous on return to Bramcote.

ARMY

31st (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col SG Hutchinson MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Johnston**

Another year, another TA CORP SAAM, and 31 Sig Regt (V) are once again the proud possessors of most of the TA CORPS SAAM Silver. Well done to **Capt Alan Walton**, **SSgt Gronn** and the team.

The rest of the Regt has also been busy over the last 2 months. The Regtl Recruiting Team spent 2 weeks touring the five Sqn locs, 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn came second in the Courage Trophy, the LAD have competed in Southern Craftsman, getting very wet in the process, and the Regular members of the permanent staff went on a 3 day ITD camp to the Isle of White. Not only that, but GOC LONDIST, **Maj Gen Roberts**, popped over for some tea and biscuits. You would think after all that, that a period of recovery would be in order, but judging but the look in the CO's eye and the whispered conversations behind closed doors, I think this may be a vain hope.

Congratulations to **WO2(RQMS) Hadley** for his promotion to WO1 and also for being selected as RSM 11 Sig Regt, and potentially the Corps RSM. We also say goodbye to **WO2(YofS) Wyldes**, who is off to be YofS for 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. **SSgt Dee Peart** retires at the end of April after 40+ years in the Corps, and **Sgt Butler** is off to work in Lanzarotti for an exorbitant salary, complete with a 5 bedroom villa thrown in. We wish them all good luck and all the best in the future.

We welcome several newcomers to the Regt: **WO2(RQMS) Alexander-High** and **Cpls Abbott** and **Derrick**. Finally we congratulate **2Lt Sarah Barnes** on her commissioning into the Corps and wish her good luck for her the rest of her career.

REGIMENTAL RECRUITING AND PRESENTATION TEAM

31 Sig Regt (V) formed a mobile Regtl Recruiting and Presentation Team (RRPT) over the period 21 February – 6 March 2004. Their aim was to recruit for the Regt whilst also raising the profile of the Regt in each Sqn's catchment area. The team gave a series of presentations about the TA to schools, colleges and local cadet units, and manned recruiting stands in college and university refectories over lunch periods.

Capt Debs Speakman, the Regtl Recruiting Offr and **SSgt Nav Elliott**, SPSI 94 (BY) Sig Sqn headed up the team. They were joined by reps from each Sqn as the team moved into their areas. The RRPT began their 2-week whistle stop tour in Windsor, where they visited 4 colleges in 2 days. Over the 2 weeks, the Team visited colleges in Windsor, Cauldron, Eastbourne (at the Eastbourne Half Marathon), Southfields, Reading and White City.

Maj Lamb and OCdt Lower join in the Eastbourne pre-Marathon warm-up.

Overall the project was a success, with over 40 potential recruits coming into TACs across the Regt in the weeks immediately after the project. Thanks go to all members of the team **OCdts Jonathan Eaton** and **Chris Lower**, **WO2 (SSM) Rob Watson**, **SSgt (FofS) Wayne Ratcliffe**, **SSgt Mick Dowds**, **SSgt Steve Hall**, **Sgt Andy Smith**, **LCpl Babs Ennis**, **Sigs Tanya Roberts**, **Amy Tapping** and **Howard**.

CORPSAAM 2004

Following on from the success of the two teams the Regt entered into CORPSAAM in 2003, **Capt Alan Walton**, took on the challenge of retaining a reasonable amount of silver for the Regt with a much-reduced squad and about one third of the trg time available.

Recognising the constraints, **Capt Walton** knew he needed a very special PSI to get the best out of the squad; so following the lead of the England football team (and not knowing the result of the Sweden match) he brought in **SSgt Sven Gronn**. A legend in Eastbourne, **Sven's** tough no-nonsense image, combined with range briefs that fill the most nervous soldier with confidence, meant he was the perfect man for the job. **Sven** also knows that a hard-working team needed to play hard too.

Team selection was finalised on the Friday night of the competition. After much poring over attestation dates, we approached **Sig Steve Thomas**. Despite having not trained with the squad, nor having fired any of the competition shoots before, he still turned in on Friday night when we kidnapped him and hustled him into the Sqn minibus.

After consistent shooting on the Saturday, and modest shooting on Sunday, we approached the prize giving without having been allowed into the scoring tent. We were just happy that **Cpl Paul Carter** hadn't won the Champion at Arms Competition, as we really didn't think we would be able to carry him on the winner's chair.

The Winning Team pose with their Trophies

The results were a very pleasant surprise - the Regt had won the Overall Team competition (LSW, Pistol, Rifle), Team Rifle, LSW, Roupell, Best Individual Rifle, Best Young Officer Rifle, Best Class B Rifle, Best Individual Roupell; and we had come 2nd in the Association Match, and the FIBUA Match

The 2 teams were as follows:

A Team: **Lt Lee McEvoy**, **WO2 Matt Cahill**, **Cpl Paul Carter**, **Sig Stuart Titchener** and **Sig Steve Thomas**.
B Team: **Capt Andrew Knight**, **SSgt (FofS) Wayne Ratcliffe**, **SSgt Mick Dowds**, **LCpl Liz Lafferty** and **Sig Gary Esprit**.

Individual: **Cfn Daniel Haw**

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col EM Blyth TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Greenwood**

CORPSAM 2004 - A SCOTTISH PERSPECTIVE

- by WO1(RSM) JH Greenwood

On Wednesday 25 March 04, some 20 officers and soldiers of 32nd (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) commenced their annual migration to Pirbright for the Royal Signals Corps Skill at Arms Meeting (CORPSAM) 2004, which runs in conjunction with the Joint CORPSAM. This combined competition now has over 900 TA and Regular soldiers from five Corps competing over a 10-day period.

Our involvement with the Competition began over ten years ago, when the then RSM, a certain **WO1 Graham Reith**, decided that our Corps' input and admin in the event needed more direction, so he promptly volunteered the services of the Scottish Regt. Over the ensuing ten years, this association has now grown to the extent that we now provide all Royal Signals range staff (including the Senior Range Conducting Officer), and the Secretary (the now **Capt Graham Reith**) and Asst Secretary to the Royal Signals Shooting Association (RSSA). Furthermore, the Regt also undertakes the entire admin of the event from a Royal Signals perspective.

With tents erected, white ropes and pickets still being hammered and tied, a rehearsal day took place on Friday, 26 March and many teams took the opportunity to practise some of the more complicated shoots, such as the Roupell and Association Cup, under match conditions. What was heartening to see was the preparation and trg that many Units across the Corps invest in this important Competition, despite Unit trg cycles becoming ever more hectic. In many cases this is the only opportunity for their soldiers to participate in any other shooting outside their APWT.

Throughout both the TA and Regular Competitions, the considerable task of collating Royals Signals stats was performed by **Capts Jeph** and **Helen Jephcote**. They performed this

Left hander, Sig Whiteside competes in the Pistol Shoot

The Master of Signals tries his hand with a .45 calibre Martini-Henry rifle from the Boer War era

unenviable task with their usual cheerful aplomb, crunching the many hundreds of individual scores into the final results.

The culmination of the TA Competition was on Sunday, 28 March, when prizes were presented by Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas MBE** and the Hon Col of 32 Sig Regt (V), **Col AC Cunningham TD**. The following week saw the Regular Competition, culminating on Friday 2 April, when the Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** and SOinC(A), **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC** arrived to see the final morning's shooting and to conduct the Regular Competition prize-giving ceremonies. Much deserved praise was heaped on all Units that competed, and 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) was praised for the continued and outstanding support it provides to the competition. In particular, **Capt Mick Granitza** was singled out for an individual award for the professional and flawless manner in which he has run the butts over the last 5 years of competition.

As the Scottish Regt packed up and headed north the following day, it was with great satisfaction at not only their organising and admin achievements, but also some very creditable results from

our shooting teams - 3rd Overall in the TA Competition, Runners-up in the Falling Plates and Corps Clay Target Shoot, to mention a few. The Regt's task now is to top this in 2005!

EXERCISE SNOW LION

The CO congratulates the 32 Sig Regt (V) Ski team for another trophy winning performance on EX SNOW LION.

Ssgt Jackie Smith In Action

32 Sig Regt (V) Ski Team 2004

PIPES (WATER) AND DRUMS IN IRAQ

WO2 DY Smith (known as 'DY') was somewhat surprised and amused when he received his call-out notice on 18 February 03. As the Pipes and Drums Officer, he had visions of leading the advancing combat troops towards the enemy with pipes playing and drums beating. But he had something a little more frightening to do. He was to be the SSM of the Joint Media Ops Group in the Forward Press Information Centre, looking after 22 other reservists of various cap badges and 70 civilian journalists and support staff. Scarier things were still to come. How do you move 44 vehicles with 22 drivers?

After the combat phase, **DY** found that his civilian skills as a water utilities expert were needed, so he offered his services. He was quickly attached to the Royal Engineers, and with other reservists with relevant water and sewage backgrounds, went about assisting the civilian agencies to restore services. During this time, his going home date was put back three times, his skills being in such demand. **DY** was demobbed on 31 October 03, after spending eight months in theatre. But he is back again already, continuing his good work, this time as a civilian attached to the CPA in Southern Iraq. He hopes to be back in UK at the end of May. We wish him well and continued success.

Other members of the Corps Pipes and Drums have also found themselves in Iraq during both the combat and the reconstruction phases. **Cpl Rab Brannigan** of 32 Sig Regt (V) was attached to 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, and did excellent work with the QMs Dept. Also deployed were **Cpl Neil Anderson** to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, **Cpl John McKenzie** to 600 Sig Troop, and **Lt Grice** to 2 Sig Regt. No sooner had they returned to UK, when **Cpl Anderson** went back again. **Lt Grice** however, found his talents as a piper was required in Canada for six weeks. **Cpl Ronnie Mills**, also of 32 Sig Regt (V), found himself playing pipes in Saudi Arabia for the Armistice Sunday service.

In peace and in war, pipers and drummers can be found not only as musicians but also as soldiers, and the Royal Corps of Signals Pipes and Drums are no different. It is unique in the Army as being the only Pipe Band that comprises Offrs and ORs (both Regular and TA) as well as Queens Gurkha Signals. And when the time comes, they will be found side by side with other members of the Corps on operational deployments. As our motto says, we are indeed 'swift' in our response to come to arms, and 'sure' in our resolve to see the job done, piping or otherwise.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Phil Donegan**
SSM **WO2 Norma Sproul**

NEW ARRIVALS

The Sqn welcomes our newest recruit, **Sig Louise Hansen** following the completion of her recruit course in January. As well as socialising, **Sig Hansen** brings horse-riding skills to the Sqn. As a result, rumours abound that we are soon to see the return of the horse-driven line tp to the Regt. We also welcome a more experienced new arrival, in the shape of **Sgt Jackie Sliman**, who has re-badged to Signals after a long and distinguished service in the REME. We wish him well in his new role as the Sqn RRTT rep.

EXERCISE SCOTTISH ROVER

Led by **Capt Steve McBride**, a happy bunch gathered in Edinburgh on Friday 20 February for some intense map work and briefing. Braving heavy traffic, they arrived at Garelochhead on the Saturday afternoon. Thanks to the extensive preparation work from HQ's MT and REME, all the vehs passed strict pre-race inspections, then it was off to register and collect route cards. From here some concentrated map marking was needed, as the route is indicated in different ways, such as pictures and spot heights. That completed, it was off to dinner, then to wait for the start time.

The scenic route followed the edge of Loch Long, and into Argyll Forest Park, over a range of surfaces, from forest tracks to main 'A' roads. It provided many challenges to both driver and navigator, **Cpl MacRae Plunkett** getting badly lost twice - both on the same stage. But at least they didn't crash out! All in all, a really fun weekend, and one with a lot of skills learned and practised. The HQ Sqn participants are raring for the next rally, and would recommend the ex to those who enjoy a challenge.

PSAO'S WEDDING

On Saturday 28 February, PSAO **Capt John Lynch** married **Dianne** on the beautiful island of Arran. An intrepid bunch of HQ Sqn revellers **Maj Phil Donegan**, **Capt Keith Anderson**, **Capt Terry McVey** and piper **Sig Alastair Beaton** made the short ferry trip from Ardrossan to Arran to assist in the celebrations. Arran has been described as Scotland in miniature, and provided a fantastic backdrop for a great wedding. **John** is set to retire to Arran to run a hotel with **Dianne**, and we wish them well in their

new venture. We also look forward to a future Sqn trg weekend hosted by the new couple!

OPERATION TELIC

The Sqn has two representatives involved in operations in Iraq. **SSgt Garry McCracken** continues to impress with 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; whilst **WO2 'DY' Smith** (albeit in his civilian capacity) is still involved with the regeneration of Basrah's water supply system. We wish them both a safe return.

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj AR Thompson TD**

First of all, congratulations to **Sgt Justin Gray**, **Sgt Alison McKay**, **Sgt Ricky Taylor** and **Cpl Ricky Melia** on their recent promotions.

OPERATION FRASER'S AWA

This was a major ex co-ordinated and planned down to the last detail by our PSAO **Capt Norrie Donald**, with the aim of providing a fitting tribute to send off to our retiring SQMS, **SSgt George Fraser**, at the end of 43 years of distinguished and valued service.

On the night of Friday 30 January 2004, a company of around 160 assembled in the dining hall of Gordon Bks. **George** went off to the pub for his for usual Friday evening, with the intention of playing a few quiet frames of snooker. A change of venue was suggested to him, but en route, a snatch squad grabbed the unsuspecting victim, bundled him into a van, and drove him around Aberdeen to cause a little confusion. Of course, the local constabulary had been informed, in case any members of the public became alarmed. On arrival at the crowded but silent venue, the victim was led to the front of the crowd and the hood removed. Without a nanosecond of hesitation, the great man, entirely unfazed, launched into a lyrical address, not pausing for breath for around 10 minutes, ending with a tirade of his thoughts about the Army of today.

When **George** finally paused for breath, **Capt Donald** spoke of his career, achievements and value, but remarked that it was hard to do justice to the man in words alone. After a pause for **George** to meet and greet some of the assembled company, the pace picked up again, with the arrival of the ABBA tribute band. The band consisted of civilian mechanic, **Peter Brown** and civilian storeman (ex RQMS) **Jim Urquhart**, as the two men; **SSgt Andy Minorczyk**, as the slim, but well endowed blonde; and our OC (in spite of a well known extreme aversion to singing) as the extremely buxom brunette.

The formal part of the evening over, everyone settled down to catching up with old friends and acquaintances, while **George** wallowed (deservedly) in the limelight until the early hours. All in all, it was a tremendously successful operation, both in the planning and execution, and a thoroughly fitting tribute. The most amazing fact of all was that the man himself was oblivious throughout the planning phase - quite an achievement by all concerned, considering he prides himself on always knowing what's going on.

EXERCISE MERCURY

This ex, run by our 2IC, **Capt Mick Granitza**, took place at Binhill Trg Area, and was designed to reflect a realistic OP MEDWAY scenario. Dets deployed from Gordon Bks, Aberdeen on the Friday night to the concentration area, at Elgin TAC. Following briefings, it was heads down until reveille at 05.00hrs, followed by deployment of the Sqn CP, and 3 dets to various locs on the trg area for a comms check before further deployment. The scenario was that of widespread flooding in and around the Elgin area - an event that actually happened, to devastating effect, to the local community in 1997 and 2002. A notional Civil Contingency Reaction Force, in the form of 3 inf coys and comms dets, was deployed to areas of reported flooding or related incidents to allow passage of information to a SILVER HQ co-located with our SCP.

In spite of occasional blizzard conditions, the ex was extremely successful, with short range HF comms working throughout the day and the net being kept extremely busy, by the enthusiasm and commitment of all. At the end of a long but productive day, the Sqn headed back to Elgin TAC, with haggis, neeps and tatties on the menu, and some traditional Scottish twilight wine to wash it down.

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

CO **Lt Col Somerville MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Browitt**

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Dave Titheridge**
SSM **WO2 Rooster Coburn**

EXERCISE NORTHERN MANCUNIAN WARRIOR

At the end of January, 30 lucky members of the Squadron headed north for the annual ski trip to Aviemore in Scotland's Cairngorm Mountains. The aim was to complete the week long Army Basic Ski Proficiency (Alpine) Course, as supplied by HQ AT Gp based in Sennelager Camp in Germany. Happily, all members of the party completed the course satisfactorily and have been recommended to attend the advanced course in Austria in February next year.

BALKANS SIGNAL SQUADRON

In March 2003, 98 (Balkans) Sig Sqn was formed and deployed to Bosnia shortly afterwards for a six month tour. Out of the ten original members of 42 Sig Sqn who volunteered to take part, all but four have returned. **Sgt Alwyn Murray**, **LCpl Barry Smith**, **LCpl Teresa Bastiman** and **Sig Peter Walsh** have soldiered on, and will be returning in May this year.

THOUGHTS FROM THE METAL FACTORY
- by LCpl Teresa Bastiman

The start of November saw a mass exodus from Banja Luka Metal Factory (BLMF), as the UK Battlegroup was taken over by the Gurkhas, and all the familiar friendly faces who'd done the summer tour left for a well-earned break. Amongst them were most of the original Balkans Sig Sqn that had been mobilised back in March 2003, but for some reason around a dozen decided to stay for the winter - including we four from 42 Sig Sqn. Then as the new Sqn took over, and the strange new personalities turned into more friendly faces, we grew to realise that around here nothing really changes!

Sig Peter Walsh has moved Tps and is now working for the Multinational Bde (NW), on the helpdesk. I have moved in the opposite direction, from FRT to the UK NSC Tp, to work in the TSCP. **LCpl Barrie Smith** remained in the TSCP until he injured his leg playing football and was sent back to Chilwell to recover, and **Sgt Alwyn Murray** remains in the ODA. We continue to work in a multi-national unit, providing secure comms to the Canadian and Dutch BGs in the Bde AOR. The TSCP has taken over responsibility for providing video conferencing to the Bde Comd, meaning that we are now also communicating with the two other Bdes in theatre - and many more nationalities. However, the MYRA BLACK telephone system used throughout the UK AOR is still probably the Sqn's main remit, and along with it, the difficulty of juggling calls being made across the seven or so different telephone systems used in theatre. You have to feel for the guy on the other end of the phone when you explain that you're going to put him through to yet another switchboard!

Throughout the tour, there have been plenty of jobs to take us out of camp, both by road and helicopter. We were given the chance to do battlefield tours of Sarajevo and Bihac, and there have also been opportunities to take part in sporting events. We proved that the British 'have-a-go' spirit really does count when some of us entered the 'Drvar Challenge' a 32km Bergen run up Gos Peak with the Canadian BG. When we turned up, we discovered that, not only were the other competing personnel infantry and twice our size, but that they also had been training for the event for several months! Nevertheless, it was a Canadian Signaller who won - and the rest of us did the Corps proud!

I personally have had the chance to spend nights at six different camps, and have seen both the beauty and the scars that Bosnia parades today. Much of the country is now in the process of being rebuilt. Since arriving in theatre, we've seen Route Smudge transformed from the character-building Bosnian dirt track to a proper tarmac road. But the haunting valleys, which are still mined and inhabited by only skeletons of former villages, will live in my mind forever. It has been a privilege as well as a challenge to be here on my first operational tour, just nine months after completing my basic trg at Blandford.

Cpl Dave Curtis outside the Metal Factory

EXERCISE CARIBBEAN ENDEAVOUR *- by Sig Richard Lewis*

During October 2003 I took part in EX CARIBBEAN ENDEAVOUR as a crewman on the 67-foot Nicholson yacht, *Endeavour Challenger 67*. I had no idea what I had let myself in for. As I arrived at the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre, Gosport late in the evening, lots of things were preying on my mind. I had absolutely no experience in sailing, and I was about to spend fourteen days sailing to Portugal with experienced senior officers from the Navy, Army and Air Force. Understandably, I was beginning to feel a little anxious.

The first day involved briefings on getting into life-rafts, use of life-jackets, operating safety equipt and man overboard drills. We were also assigned our cabins and issued with lifejackets and waterproof clothing, which would later prove to be invaluable.

Next on the agenda, was a crash course in seamanship, starting from the very basics including the difference between port and starboard, a little matter that I often mixed up.

The following morning we set sail for Poole - a short trip to shake out any faults with the boat. This turned out to be a wise move. A fault with the compass was identified in time for a new one to be driven down to us.

Eventually, we were off non-stop to Vilamoura in Portugal. For five days all the crew saw was dolphins and each other. With all of us suffering from a bit of cabin fever, a night in Porto was a welcome break. This was the first time in five days we had seen land, and we just had to visit a local to compare Portuguese beer with English. No one can remember the result.

With the crew back on board, we set sail for Vilamoura. The journey was slow and the sea was rough, but after another three days of sailing, we had finally made it to the Algarve with two days to spare. The first day was spent cleaning the boat, with a large crew meal in the evening and some more beer. The second day gave us a chance to see some sights and buy some souvenirs.

The whole experience was most enjoyable, and I now have a Competent Crewman qualification. I now look forward to increasing my experience by taking part in more sailing events.

Sig Richard Lewis master of all he surveys

55 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Capt Campbell**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Stowers**

EXERCISE SNOWDONIA TRAIL

On 27 February 04, thirty members of 55 Sig Sqn journeyed to Snowdon on one of the coldest weekends of the year. Organised in three groups, we partook in a navex starting from the Beddgelert area. With heavy snow, conditions underfoot were very hard going, but all teams maintained high spirits throughout. During the weekend we were based at Capel Curig Trg Camp, which allows easy access to some of the most demanding yet beautiful terrain in the UK. **WO2 Tommy Guy** was so inspired by the day that he has since applied to do a Unit Expedition Leader Qualification so that he can continue to enjoy the mountains - despite having been bogged in by snowdrifts.

Sgt Billy Hogan, LCpl Kev Jones, LCpl Sarah Williams, Sig Jay Nicholson, Sig Trish Cavanagh and 2 Lt Abby Adey

Each member had to plan a route and lead the team on individual legs throughout the day. Reliance on compass bearings was paramount and a heightened level of map reading skills was needed, as snow had masked all paths and many ground-based landmarks.

There were many newcomers to the mountains, but the old hands imparted their experience and knowledge when needed, whilst still allowing the younger members to try their hand at group leadership.

Thawing the teams out was achieved in one of Betws-Y-Coed's finest pubs. **Cpl Eric Lewis**, REME, needed more thawing out than most, as his bootlaces had frozen together - just like his wallet.

Our thanks to **Maj MacFarlane** for organising the ex. All of the Sqn who took part thoroughly enjoyed the experience and said, 'Hopefully there will be more in the future.' Thanks also to the UELs who supervised the teams and provided much help and encouragement.

59 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj McFarlane**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Olssen**

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER

Six members of the Sqn recently took part in EX MERCURY GLACIER in Zellemsee, Austria. Ably led by **2Lt Abby Adey**, the party, who were all first time skiers, experienced the Kitzstine Horn Glacier at a height in excess of 3,000m. During the ex each day's best effort was rewarded by the individual having to wear a jester hat (see **Sgt Billy Hogan** above). The ex was thoroughly enjoyable and everyone managed to return uninjured and smiling, with plans to return next year.

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col G Hearn**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) D Newton**

49 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

Congratulations to **SSgt Tommy Simpson** and **Sgt Tracy Craig** on their promotions. Also good luck to **Sgt Craig** at her new TA Centre, wherever that may be.

TRAINING SUCCESSES - *by 2Lt Darryl McKerr*

During the last recruit cycle of 2003, three members of 745 Tp successfully passed out from their Phase 1 trg at Darlington TAC.

Sig Blakesley Sig Grey and Pte Jarret

The TA Sqn Comds' Course, Blandford Mess

These were **Sig Blakesley**, **Sig Grey** and **Pte Jarret**. They all looked the part on parade, being nearly as smart and soldier-like as **Cpl Daz Ford**. They found the trg straightforward, and now all look forward to getting straight into their Phase 2, then their Phase 3 trg to be able to get more involved in Sqn and Regt activities, especially the weekends. On Sunday 14 March 04, **Sig Baker** passed out from his Phase 1 trg at Darlington TAC, and he enjoyed it so much that he wants to get straight on with Phases 2 and 3 as soon as possible. In addition to this he is also looking at a career in the Regular Army.

TA SQUADRON COMMANDERS' COURSE

There was certainly a touch of the 34 (N) Sig Regt (V) about this year's Sqn Comds' Cse at RSS, Blandford. The DS comprised **Lt Col Grindrod** SO1 (TA), ex 34 Sig Regt and **Maj David Sixsmith**, current Trg Maj, 34 Sig Regt. Both have been OC 49 Sig Sqn. Three syndicate members out of nine, were also from 34 Sig Regt, namely, **Capt Jenny Bowes**, **Capt Paul Denning** and **Capt Keith Williams**. Most memorable moments were **Capt Jane Dodd** trying to murder the Mess piano (see photograph), and **Maj Andy Fletcher** proving that Cpl 'Old and Bold' has a friend in the Officers Mess.

EXERCISE SPRING FALCON

EX SPRING FALCON was the first comms ex the Regt had undertaken since Annual Camp in September 03. It was good to get out and blow the dust off the radio sets and the wagons, and do the job we are all trained to do. Hull and Leeds even managed to deploy with encouraging numbers. **LCpl Ed Beer**, (RR Det Comd) showed true commitment to the Tp when he dragged himself from night shift straight to Strensall during the early hours of Saturday morning to take part. **Sig Baker**, **Sig Blakesley**, **Pte Jarret** and **Sig Makey** came out to play too, enabling them to find out what we do and how we go about it. Although they confessed to being pretty tired by the end of the weekend, they managed to make the most of the ex by asking as many questions as possible about the comms vehs, the different trades and the comms overview itself.

This enabled them to have a better idea of what trade they want to do on completion of their basic trg. Also on the ex were three 'virgin' Class 3 Sys Ops. It was a huge learning curve for them, being in a position where they were not being constantly watched by DS and left to get on with their job. This will also stand them in good stead for the 11 Sig Bde ex to Germany in September.

50 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JD Bailey**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) JT Howe**

The OC congratulates those who have recently been rewarded with promotion. Fresh from OP TELIC, **LCpl Pat Hutton** has received her first tape. Joining her were **LCpls Greatbach** and **Andy Barrett**, who also received their first tapes. **LCpls Greatbach** is shortly off to OP TELIC. Returning from OP TELIC, and making the Sgts' Mess is **Sgt Paul Standing**. The final promotion for the Sqn was **SSgt Ross Blair**, recently moved from Darlington to Newcastle.

SQUADRON DINING OUT

On Saturday 13 March 50 Sig Sqn held a dining-out for 3 of its members. Those leaving were **Sgt Mark Phillips**, **SSgt Martin Clarke** (both leaving the TA after many years of sterling service) and **Capt Steve Wayman**, who has moved to RHQ as Tfc Offr.

Over a hundred people sat down to dinner, with the Hon Col, **Brig Nigel Wood** and his wife, the CO, **Lt Col Gary Hearn** and his wife **Faye**, Police Chief Superintendent **Michael Banks**, **WO1 (RSM) Newton**, and the Mayor of Darlington, **Cllr Ron Lewis** and his wife **Margaret** being the guests of honour. The Parachute and Royal Signal Associations were also well represented.

A splendid meal was enjoyed by all, and the evening was rounded off with entertaining speeches from OC 50 Sqn and those being dined out. **Sgt Mark Phillips** thanked his wife, **SSgt Carol-Ann Phillips** for all her support; and **SSgt Martin Clarke** provided us all with his renowned entertainment, returning a number of items he had managed to 'borrow' during his time with the TA.

To **WO2 (RQMS) Pat Bell**, he returned her front door key, to **SSgt Carol-Ann Phillips**, he returned a fluffy pink 'garment', and to **SSgt Cath Sproat**, he returned another unmentionable item.

Highlight of the evening was the presentation by the Sqn Offrs' Mess to **Capt Steve Wayman** of a pub sign for his home. **Capt Wayman** and his wife **Nicola** always afford guests the best hospitality.

So a scheme was planned to purchase a *Hurry Arms – Free House* sign. The unofficial Sqn logo was used – see the writer for further details. Throughout the evening all were wonderfully entertained by the Band, led by **WO2 Jim Robinson**.

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col CR Owen**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RG Dalton**

WINTER BLUES

The Regt has just gone through an unusually quiet period, and this is reflected in our somewhat brief notes for this edition of *The WIRE*. We are now looking forward to spring to provide us with some light relief and interesting news items, once our main contributors have raised their heads from their desks after completing the mammoth task of TA CRs. Meanwhile, we can take this opportunity to give you a general round up of comings and goings, medal presentations and some representative sports and trg features to whet your appetite.

We have said farewell to **SSgt Mick Fawcett**, who goes to 16 Air Asst Bde HQ and Sig Sqn on promotion; and to **SSgt Chris Jones**, who joins the BOWMAN Trg Team in Catterick. On OP TELIC, we have said a temporary farewell to our first pair of augmentees, **Sgt Martin Roberts** and **LCpl Chris Fulthorpe**. They will be joined by at least ten others during May. We welcome **Maj David McCormack**, who assumes comd of 58 Sig Sqn; **Sgt Lee Norman**, to 48 Sqn; and **Sgt Tony Thirlwell**, to 89 Sqn.

On Thursday 2 March, 58 Sig Sqn were delighted to host a visit by the Hon Col, **Col BNT Foxon OBE ADC TD**, who during his visit, presented the VRSM or clasp to **WO2 John Lambert**, **Sgt Wayne Amos**, **Sgt Jean Parr**, **Cpl Guy Holt** and **LCpl Steve Feetum**. All medal recipients are to be congratulated on receiving this award for their long, valued and dedicated TA service.

95 and 58 Sqns, having done so well in last years 143 Bde Skill at Arms Competition, busied themselves preparing a team for the Corps SAAM. But would they repeat their earlier triumphs? Read on.

CORPS SAAM 2004

Our reputation as the best shooting team in the Regt was at stake, and as 25 March dawned, all members of the combined team were just a little nervous. Fortunately, the ten of us who made the long journey south to represent the Regt, included a number of SAAM veterans, such as **Capt Pete Mouland**, **Cpl Martin Winstanley** and **Sig Rees Mountford-Jones**.

The intrepid shooting Team

On the morning of the competition our nervousness had not dissipated, as the finest teams in the Corps had gathered at Ash and Pirbright ranges. On arrival at the range, some of us took the opportunity to zero our weapons, while others went on to do the pistol shoot. The day progressed at a great pace, starting with the Association Shoot, with **WO2 Kinsey** and **Cpl Hughes** posting good scores. The Roper Cup was next, and **SSgt Dewfall** shot well.

I forgot my pistol. Will this do?

It was then time for the LSW shoot, which saw **Cpl Winstanley** achieving a good score. The final shoot of the day was the FIBUA, in which **Cpl Pilsbury** achieved the best score in our team (146).

The first shoot on the morning of Day two was the Combat Snap, a team shoot, with your four best firers aiming at the same target. This was followed by the final match, the exciting Falling Plate competition, in which our A Team was defeated by only a fraction of a second. The B Team was also narrowly defeated by a fraction of an hour!

Regrettably, we didn't win anything at the medal presentation, but consoled ourselves with **WO2 Kinsey's** second place in the Pistol Shoot with a score of 141. Using this event as a virtual practice run, now we have set our sights on the 143 Bde Skill at Arms Meeting at Kingsbury in May, where this time we will be competing against each other as individual teams.

continued on page 241

NEWS FROM THE GULF

20th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

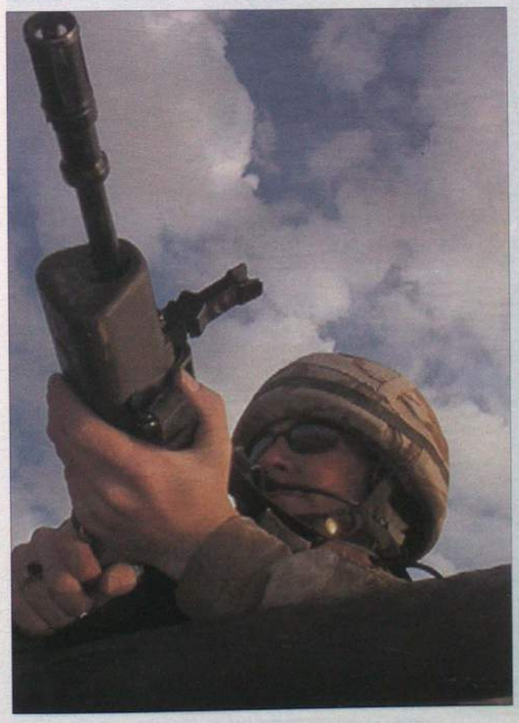
OC **Maj SLP Spiers**
RSM **WO1(RSM) ACE Burdge**

INTRODUCTION

With the end of the tour now firmly in our sights, the Sqn has begun the busy job of preparing for our successors. However, in between finding extra living space for 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, the show must go on and life in Iraq is as busy as ever. The installation of Blue Light Comms – the Iraqi Emergency Services comms system – is all but complete and the swift installation process is a testament to the hard work of the soldiers. The threat is no less than it was five months ago, and soldiers from Tigris, Euphrates, and Support Tps regularly patrol the streets of Basrah city. Although the soldiers remain focussed, everyone is now looking forward to flag change, and by the time this goes to press we will have swapped our desert combats for greens. The flavour of the following articles reflects some of the feelings and memories of six months spent in a hot and dusty corner of the Middle East.

NEWS FROM THE TROOPS - *by Cpl Campion*

It has been another busy few months here at the sharp end in Basrah city. The troops are an ever-changing entity, with soldiers moving from one troop to another as job specifications are revisited. With R and R fully underway, there are gaps to fill and soldiers are lent and borrowed as required. And of course, people have returned home for unfortunate but inevitable compassionate cases. Tigris Tp has welcomed the expertise of the MT drivers and packet commanders, which include characters such as **LCpl 'Massive' Rudland** and **LCpl Sarah Wooton**. Unfortunately, we have had to say goodbye to **Sig Steph White**, who was involved in a car crash in Kuwait and was sent home for medical reasons, but thankfully is recovering well. Other ongoing tasks include **Cpl Stu Storey's** tour DVD/video, which does not have the same budget as *Lord Of The Rings*, but seems to be taking as much time, and it is rumoured to cost £20 a copy! We are still not sure where the money is going, but **Stu** is whispered to have bought himself a new motorbike.



Cpl Hack doing top cover, keeping the streets safe

As always, our other day-to-day work is very busy, with patrols into the city, top cover, and driving duties escorting the Bde staff to various locs around Iraq, and ensuring the general security of the Camp. **Cpl Hendry** and **LCpl Curtis** are instructing another death-defying armoured driving course, and both instructors have taken out extra life insurance cover on hearing that **Sig Rann** was on the course after his 'little accident' during R and R. All that remains to be said is that morale is high and the troops are enjoying the new experiences the tour has offered. We are looking forward to greeting 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn with open arms and handing over the reins to them. By the time they read this, they should be well established in Iraq, and so we wish them a very safe 6 months and hope they all return safely.

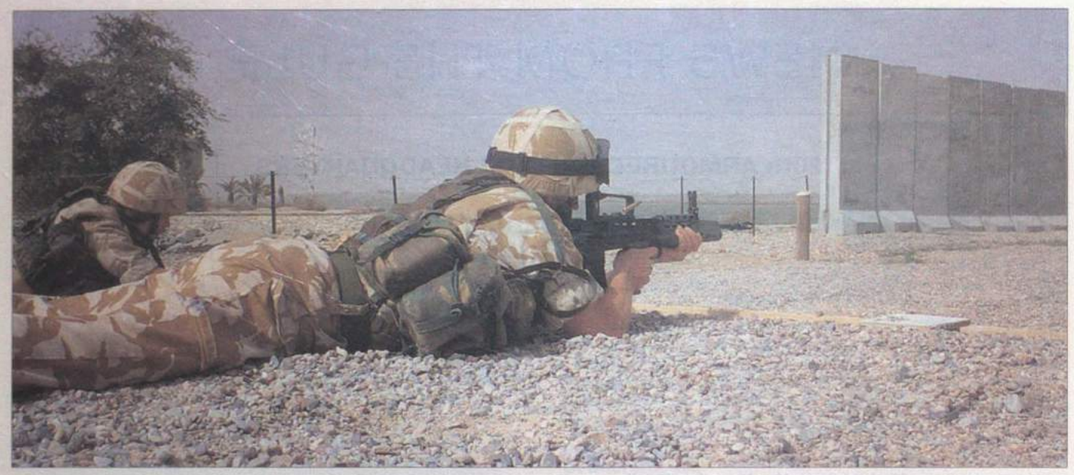
BASRAH PALACE GETS NEW 25 METRE RANGE
– *by Cpl Langley*

After three and a half months of waiting, the 25m range was finally opened at Basrah Palace. A lot of hard work and effort had gone into making sure that the range was safe and met with Army regulations, but it was worth it. The range was opened in a blaze of gunfire on 28 February 04. I was nominated out of a cast of one to be the 20 Armd Bde Range Warden, a task that I threw myself into wholeheartedly. Range bookings flooded in thick and fast, with nearly every Coalition force in the Basrah AO wanting to make use of the facilities that the range provides. There was also immediate interest from civilian units, which made a welcome change to the usual military paraphernalia.

With so many outside units occupying the range, the Sqn was given an opportunity to use SF and foreign weapons. **Sigs Gabbidon** and **Rann** were among the soldiers from the Sqn who got to participate in a shoot with SF. The RN Training Team was also kind enough to lend us AK47's and Glock pistols, which quite a few of the lads got to shoot. Many thanks to OC Sqn for allowing me to be his gun bearer. Unfortunately, I could not provide any pheasants for the shoot. The task, which at first seemed onerous, proved in the end to be very fulfilling. Soldiers from 200 Sig Sqn have fired weapons that they would normally not see, let alone fire. As for me, I got to liase with people and units that I have only previously read about. One day, I may have my photograph shown in a book with a black nasty over my eyes.

COMING HOME - *by SSgt Kidd*

Well, finally it's here, the last month of the tour. I am sure all of the families at home back in Germany are as pleased to see it as we all are.



2Lt Foster zeroes his rifle on the new range

What has happened since the last issue? A lot of hard work behind the scenes from **Cpl Martin Campion**, who has taken it upon himself to relocate the whole of Tigris Tp back to Germany on his own. He is so excited about stores work, that he has to be forced into taking some time off. I think he needs to get out a bit more and get a life! On a serious note it is a thankless task, and he is doing a great job.

The CSE show came to visit, and we were all treated to a break from the norm as we were tasked to help build the stage and lighting. The actual show wasn't bad either. The two lovely singers treated us to sexy renditions of **Christina Aguilera**, **Beyonce** and **Kylie Minogue**, getting the crowd involved. But the real teat was the dancing girls, who whipped the soldiers into a frenzy with their impressive moves. The evening was a huge success, and provided much needed respite from life on tour. So once again, thank you girls.

Soldiers working hard on the armour

As ever the work on the armour continues, and the lads have done a sterling job fixing them up into a presentable state. They will be looked after by **Sgt Giffen** on the boat back to Germany, along with all of those dodgy Russian sailors. Sounds like fun.

The Sqn were treated to a final function and a games night of Al Basrah Bingo. **SSgt Patterson** once again produced a sell out evening, and then proceeded to scare everyone away with his crazy number calling. Apparently 'OP TELIC...Number 3' is a valid Bingo call. Still, the function was enjoyed by all, especially those who won the big cash prizes.

The Tps have also now been re-organised into the new Alpha and Bravo Tps for our long awaited return to Talbot Bks - setting the scene for fierce inter-Tp rivalry. Bravo Tp has managed to get all the quality footballers, so there should be some interesting PT sessions when we get back.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the families back in Germany and UK for their patience and loyalty during some testing times. The tour has been long, but all the hard work has been worth the wait. So roll out the barbecues, and get the beer in the fridge, because we are coming home.

LIFE WITH 200 SIGNAL SQUADRON - *by Pte Large*

I have been attached to 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200) on OP TELIC 3 as a medic and have found the experience exciting and rewarding. As a TA soldier attached to a Regular unit, I have had to adapt to life in the Army on ops. Firstly, living in a confined space with 10 other girls is no easy feat, especially when you are used to living on your own. Nevertheless, I will miss the individual idiosyncrasies and the seemingly endless alarm clocks in the morning. But mostly I will miss the laughs. The girls of 200 Sig Sqn are a friendly bunch; they have made me feel very welcome and have been a constant source of support through the difficult days; and they have been there to share my happy times, too. I have made some really good friends, and that alone has made the tour worthwhile.

Friends aside, I have been given the greatest amount of support from **Maj Simon Spiers**. My proposal to offer a massage service and raise money for 'Save The Children' at the same time was welcomed and encouraged. The service was a huge success, raising $1,400; and hopefully, it also provided some relaxation and stress relief for the soldiers at the end of a long day. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody for supporting the service, and for all the positive feedback.

I also got the opportunity to put my skills into practice on an attachment during a two-week placement with 22 Field Hospital. I thoroughly enjoyed my time there and certainly learned a lot. All in all, it has been a positive experience for me. I have learned so much and met so many great people in 200 Sig Sqn.

We have made it this far in one piece, and I'm thankful for that. I feel strangely attached to 200 Sig Sqn, and will be sad to go. But all good things must come to an end, as they say.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

ARMY

CO **Lt Col SK MacRostie MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Dick**

In spite of the continued draw-down of PTARMIGAN equipt from the Regt, we have remained busy throughout the last two months with activities across the whole spectrum of Army life: ITDs, equipt maint, field exs, ranges, op deployments, recruiting, public relations, charity, fitness and sports.

We continue to trial the incoming CORMORANT equipt in readiness for declaration of its IOC and introduction into service, which will hopefully occur within the next month or so. Overall, we have been very impressed with the CORMORANT equipt. While a few software problems remain to be resolved, the system itself is proving to be very capable; advanced technology with good potential for its future deployments.

This time of year inevitably sees a change around of personnel and we have recently welcomed our new RAOWO, **WO2 Davies AGC**, FSA, **WO2 Mitchell** AGC, **Capt Simon Gladwyn**, and new QM(T), **Capt Tom Smith**. Sadly their arrivals mark the departure of **WO2 Hubbert** AGC, **WO2 Dunne** AGC and **Capt Sue Jeffery**. Prior to jumping on a plane to Sierra Leone, the outgoing QM(T), **Capt Mick McKenna** was visibly surprised on his last day when the CO presented him the Comd's Commendation from OP TELIC.

The Regt's association with OP TELIC continues as the Composite Sqn undergoes its OPTAG trg prior to deploying on TELIC 4, which will see a return of 2 Sig Regt personnel to both Basrah and Baghdad, where they first set up camp last year on TELIC 1 and 2.

Hot off the press, the Regtl Shooting Team have returned from the Corps SAAM in Pirbright clutching much of the silver on offer there, including the Henry Whitehead, LSW and Fire team Assessment events. In the individual honours, **Sig Bloor** won best female shot and **Maj Krishna Gurung BEM** won back the Champion-at-Arms prize (for the fourth time in his career - the last time was sixteen years ago!! The youngsters need to put some more practice in) as well as the Individual LSW. Congratulations are in order to the whole 2 Sig Regt shooting team for their stalwart efforts, particularly for finally wresting the Corps Champions Cup away from 30 Sig Regt, who have dominated the event for the last ten years.

EXERCISE KEY FLIGHT 2004

On 14 February 2004 under the direction of the 2IC, **Maj Smart** and **WO2 Simon McGaw** the Regt deployed over 200 soldiers to Otterburn Trg Area (OTA) on EX KEY FLIGHT. This was a mil trg ex designed to take our soldiers beyond ITD standard. After the Regt's recent return from OP TELIC and the re-balancing of 11 Sig Bde, this was the first chance the CO had to deploy the Regt on a major field ex.

It was split into three phases, the first two of which ran simultaneously, culminating in a CO's challenge. The range

package was conducted under the watchful eye of **SSgt 'H' Baker**, fresh from Arborfield, while the skills package was left to **SSgt Tosh**, still fresh from 264 Sig Sqn. **Sgt Bithell** was left to come up with a CO's challenge worthy of the skills and drills they were about to be taught.

The ex had the soldiers organised into sections of 8-10, with senior Cpls acting as Sec Comds. During the mil skills package each Sec moved around 3 one-day packages, covering 15 subjects in all.

Package 1 proved to be the most physically demanding, with lessons in FIBUA, FIWAF, Recce Patrols and Sec drills from **Sgts Stanbury**, **McLeish** and **Howard** and **LCpl Grady**, all willing volunteers on loan from Hereford for the duration of the ex. Part of the night was spent with **Lt Nyranan**, **SSgt Kedar** and their team putting the laser engagement system TESSEX through it paces with a night cam and concealment ex using a well trained (and briefed) enemy.

The impressive LAW 95 mm

Package 2 was also spent under the stars, but the demands were more mental than physical. Lessons were given on veh recovery by **Cpls Walsh** and **Wildish**, veh convoy and ambush drill with **Cpl Pierpoint** and **LCpl Abbot** (with a little bit of help from **Maj Smart**) and getting the section thinking, was **Cpl Cowan**, with defence of a comms site. Secs were entertained at night with convoy drills and (yes, you've guessed it) a night ambush.

Package 3 was the sec's third night out. Here they set about mine clearance, with **LCpl Hodgson**, carrying out chemical recces with **Sgt King**, advanced medical aid with **Sgt 'Monty' Montgomery** and **Cpl Kelly** and survival with **SSgt Bartcliff**. The secs were entertained at night with a military quiz and a lesson on the 24hr ration pack with **Cpl Holmes**, and the chicken curry with the 'Leighton Hide strangler,' **SSgt Bartcliff**.

The live-firing range package, planned by **SSgt Baker** and conducted with the able assistance of **WO2(SSM) Abson**, was a simple but demanding ex, designed to be a natural progression from individual CQB ranges to Fire Team attacks, including a tank stalk using the LAW 94mm ODT, and posting a grenade.

Once the plan was discussed, recces completed, ammo demanded, range staff identified and the RASPS completed, the plan was put into motion. The troops arrived in the early hours of Monday 16 February 04 after leaving camp at 04.00hrs along with the baggage trucks. On arrival, after a short brief from **SSgt (SQMS) Andy Egan**, issue of trucks to sec comds and directing them to the ranges, it was time for the fun to begin.

In summary, the week was a success, with every body enjoying themselves and putting in loads of effort. A good time was had by all secs, and at the ENDEX debrief, ambush drills was voted most popular lesson. Well done **Cpl Pierpoint** and **LCpl Abbot**. Other special thanks must go to **Sgts Stanbury** and **McLeish** and **LCpl Grady** on loan from 264 Sig Sqn.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Stu Gillespie**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Neil Cooper**

214 Sig Sqn have had a busy couple of months in preparation for the CORMORANT Battlefield Mission taking place in April. Not too busy however to stop **Lt Scott MacPherson** taking a group of soldiers away to the annual Corps Skill At Arms Meet, where the Sqn showed the marksmanship quality of its soldiers, with **Sig Bloor** winning Best Female Shot and **Sig Grant** coming third in the Best Young Soldier category. Unfortunately **Lt McPherson** failed to win anything – not even a wooden spoon!

There have also been a number of departures and arrivals. The Sqn welcomes **Cpl Kelly** from RSS and **LCpl Lee** from trg, who have both joined Supt Tp. **Capt King** has also arrived to take over the role of Ops Offr from **Capt Sherry**.

The list of departures is much longer, with the Sqn saying goodbye to **SSgt Tench**, **Sgt Pope**, **Cpl Gallagher**, **LCpl Craddock**, **Sigs Binner**, **Coole**, **Davies**, **Halton**, **Knowles**, **Lofthouse** and **Preece**.

Finally, congratulations to **Sgt Bird** on birth of **Thomas**, weighing in at 8lbs, 4oz. Congratulations also to **Sig Lynch** on the birth **Elise**. No sleep for you two for the next few months!

ARMY RUGBY SHIELD FINAL

In a fair contest held at the Army Rugby Stadium, Aldershot, 2 Sig Regt finally overcame a strong challenge from 39 Regt RA to win 51-22. After just five minutes, **Lt Russ Piested** opened the scoring for the Signallers, before having to retire with an ankle injury. The final score could not have been predicted at half time,

Sig Parker breaks out

LCpl Clayton receives the Army Shield on behalf of Sig Regt

when the score was 24-17. The 2 Sig Regt scrum faced their toughest challenge of the season, against a big and well-organised Gunners' pack, who contributed largely to their 22 pts. But the Gunners could not cope with an outstanding display from our back line. The first 15 minutes of the second half was very much a display in how to defend by 2 Sig Regt, as 39 Regt threw everything at them and were camped in their 22m line throughout this time.

Try scorers **LCpl** 'Westy' **Westerman** and **Capt Pete Lockitt** added a nice cushion of points to allow the Signallers to relax a little towards the end of what was a tough match. Overall, an outstanding performance to cap what has been a successful season for the 2 Sig Regt Rugby Team, whose strength in depth is unrivalled. **Cpl Andy Parkinson** was declared the Man of the Match with a personal haul of 36 pts, which included an excellent 6 tries. Other mentions from the game should go to **Sig Chris Parker** who had an outstanding game at flanker and **Sig 'Rocky' Roqara,** who injected some deadly pace on the wing.

2 SIG REGT FOOTBALL TEAM – SEASON 2003/04

At the time of going to press, 2 Sig Regt FC are having one of their most successful seasons for many years. We are currently riding high in the Yorkshire Service Football League Premier Division, and are in with a real chance of taking the title. Crunch games against fellow challengers, 1 Kings Regt, RAF Leeming and ITC Catterick in the next 6 weeks will decide the League title.

In the Cup competitions, the Regt have reached the quarter-finals of the 2 Div Cup and League Cup competitions, and for the first time, we have reached the final of the Signaller Cup. We await the result of the 7 Sig Regt v 11 Sig Regt semi-final to see who we will play. Several players have been rewarded for their excellent displays this season by being called up for higher level football.

The Ladies' Volleyball Champions. Standing: LCpl Pircy, LCpl Mathias, Sig Bloor, Pte Donu Kneeling L-R: LCpl Wright, Sig Pennington, Sig Ingledew, Sig Peak

INTER UNIT LADIES VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONS 2004

- by Sig Gokulman Rai

The Army Inter-Unit Volleyball Championship was held in Aldershot over the period 15 – 16 April 04. Despite various commitments and late trg, 2 Sig Regt entered both its male and female teams.

Sport requires teamwork, discipline, fitness and fun. Volleyball encompasses all these. We thoroughly enjoyed playing the game, despite competing against some difficult opponents, namely 1 RGR, GDC Sandhurst, QGE and GDC ITC Wales. Although male team struggled to get a good placing, the female team managed to beat all their opposing teams, which took them to the final against 5 Regt RLC.

Both teams played extremely well, but after a hard fought match, 2 Sig Regt became outright winners for 2004. Well done to the girls! And thanks to **Capt Krishna Gurung**, the Regt I Volleyball Offr, and **Sgt Kosh** the team coach/administrator. We have learned much from this year's event, and are looking forward to retaining the Ladies Cup and increasing our position in the men's competition too, next year.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**Lt Col RD Meinertzhagen**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) M Jolly**

In January 04, The CO promoted our American exchange officer, **Maj Jim Craig** to Lt Col. **Lt Col Craig** is due to finish his two tour with the Regt in July 04. All ranks wish **Col Jim** the very best in his new posting on his return to the US.

On Thursday 12 February, the Regt was visited by GOC Theatre Troops, **Maj Gen Shaw CBE**. Having visited the Regt on ex, he flew to Brawdy to receive a Regt ops brief and then visit the Tps. During his visit, the GOC received SCARUS and BARRACUDA briefs from 226 Sig Sqn. He heard how the kit and Tps from 14 Sig Regt(EW) had performed on OP TELIC and met soldiers from the Light EW Tp (LEWT), the para trained element of the Regt.

The GOC also kindly agreed to christen the Regt's new AT safety boat. She was named *Goldcrest* (a sea going bird) after the RNAS that was operational from Brawdy throughout the sixties.

The new Lt Col JE Craig, US Army and CO, Lt Col RD Meinertzhagen

Maj Gen Shaw CBE christening Goldcrest under the watchful eye of the CO and SSgt Steve Roberts

Accompanied by **Cpl Andy Anderton** and the Adjt, **Capt Bill Holbrook**, the GOC then took her for her first sea test, around Green Scar Rock. She passed with flying colours!

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj P McElwee**
SSM	**WO2 Clash**

EXERCISE POWDER DRAGON - *by 2Lt K Nelson*

EX POWDER DRAGON was an alpine skiing ex in the Austrian Alps. On 27 March, 32 members of 14 Sig Regt (EW) arrived in the Tyrolean town of Hochfilzen with a collective feeling of relief, thanks to the super-human efforts of drivers **LCpl Mitchell** and **Cpl Crosby**, after an epic coach journey from Brawdy.

Under brilliant blue skies, and excellent snow conditions, the 6-day programme of intensive skiing commenced, with many taking to the slopes for the first time. By lunchtime, after a few shaky starts, great progress had been made at a pace that was to set the standard for the rest of the week. By mid-week, confidence was clearly increasing at an alarming rate, leading to some impressive feats of sheer fearlessness. The normally quiet and reserved **Sgt Lock** was transformed into a straight-lining banzai legend, while **Sig Bradley** and **LCpl Moran** seemed determined

The OC and SSgt Comms Tp adopt an all too common pose

to gain a slot in the local ski show with some impressive displays of synchronised skiing. However, others needed a little more encouragement, but with a little private instruction from one of the local instructors, **Sgt Mander** came a long way to conquering her fear of heights and made excellent progress.

As if the skiing itself wasn't enough of a challenge, several thrill-seeking members also had a go at paragliding, enjoying the fabulous alpine scenery with a birds-eye view. Others used their last day to give snowboarding a try. To **WO1 Caley**, **WO2 Radford** and **SSgt McMullan**, the thought of taking on a new sport wasn't enough, so it was up to the Black run for their pioneering first run on boards. Luckily, they picked it up pretty quickly, survived, and set off to encourage the more timid novices!

Altogether, it proved to be a very enjoyable week. Thanks to instruction from **Capt Bromage**, **2Lt Talbot**, **SSgt Fluck** and **SSgt Hayter**, all participants gained their Basic Ski Proficiency Awards, and **Capt Wootten** and **Sig Claughton** gained Advanced Ski Proficiency Awards.

REGIMENTAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COURSE
- by Sigs Luck and Ara

As part of the Leadership Development Course, Comms Tp provided a series of challenging comd tasks out in the wild expanses of Brawdy Airfield. Members of the Tp put two days' work into setting up the tasks, which saw syndicates negotiating plenty of mud and flooded tank tracks, while **Sig Davies** was quick to demonstrate his bog surfing skills. While some of the more elaborate tasks were extremely challenging, everyone agreed that the sense of achievement gained was probably worth the good dunking.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj NGC Yardley**
SSM	**WO2 Burrows**

EXERCISE ALOHA DRAGON - *by LCpl Clifton*

The AT exped to Hawaii in April was organised to trek at altitude with a team of British EW Service personnel who had worked very closely during OP TELIC with US EW ops from the US 3rd Radio Bn, who were based on the island. It was a two-week event following some preparation trg in Wales January 04

After our 30 hr trip to Hawaii, we had a brief rest and acclimatisation period, before commencing our first trek at 07.00hrs, local time, on the following day. A quick stop at *Dunkin'*

Patrolling with the US Marines

Doughnuts (on base) woke us all up, and we started a quick tour of the camp, our base for the next few days. The single junior ranks' accommodation had an uncanny resemblance to a tourist resort, with a *McDonalds*, a *Burger King*, a *Taco Bell*, a *Dunkin' Doughnuts*, a subway, a cinema, 3 private beaches, golf courses, skate board park, small shopping malls and more - all on camp. Twelve very envious faces left camp that morning.

The amazing hospitality shown to us by our hosts was second to none. **Capt Ed Wunsch**, an Australian exchange offr at the 3 Radio Bn USMC was our main POC, and he worked hard to manage our time and organise events so we fitted in as much as possible. **Sgt Ed Halpain**, or 'Big Ed' as he quickly became known was our driver for most of our time on Oahu, and accommodated us at every turn. **Capt Wunsch** ceased referring to us as 'whinging Poms' after a quick reminder about which country currently held the William Webb Ellis Trophy.

Pre-ex trg in Wales

Our first acclimatisation walk was just outside the Kaneohe Marine Base where we were based. Then it finally dawned on us that we were really in Hawaii. Beaches and coastline that seemed to go on forever, clear blue sea that just begged to be swum in, with high volcanic-made mountains that towered above us to our rear. As we continued up this peak, the hot Hawaiian sun continued to beat down on our very pale English skin. We were soon to learn anything less than Factor 15 sun cream was a waste of time. The second part of our walk was through a dense forest, that wouldn't look out of place on *I'm a celebrity*, to a waterfall that just invited us to swim under it.

The following day was the Waimano Ridge, a beautiful walk through dense forest in an 8-mile loop. Unfortunately, our exped leader, **Lt Kelly Rhodes**, twisted her ankle near the start, which meant she had to hobble back to the bus. The next day was an added bonus, especially if you are specialist EW ops. It was the day we got to see the USMC on tactical ex in the field and have a play with their EW equipt. Enjoyment of this phase was from the interaction with the marines and seeing their kit - with little or no walking involved!

Later that day we had the sombre privilege to go on the Pearl Harbour memorial tour. The tour guides told us about the terrible events of 7 December 1941. It was only after the short ferry ride to the actual memorial, *USS Arizona*, which you can still see protruding out of the water, that you realise it is a war grave, with her crew of over 1,400 men still with her.

That evening, the mood picked up again as we went to a *Lu'au*, a traditional Polynesian evening, encompassing traditional dance, song, food, games and hula girls by the bucket load - complete with coconuts. In case anyone thinks we went to a cultural evening and just ogled at hula girls, we did learn a great deal. Firstly, *hula* in Hawaiian means dance. Secondly, palm trees aren't native to Hawaii. And thirdly...er ...um.... okay we just ogled the at hula girls.

Next stop was the biggest and very active volcano, *Mauna Loa*. We left the touristy island of Oahu behind to fly to the Hawaii National Volcano Park. The bit that really caught our eye was the eruption information hotline. This thing really is a real live volcano, with a real possibility of hot red stuff (magma) coming out of it. It was due to explode at any time!

We were dropped off at the 6,000ft lookout, the furthest point for vehs, and then our driver was gone. To start with, everyone was in high spirits as at this part of the climb wasn't very steep and it was easy under foot. But it didn't take long for the trekking poles to come out as the strain started to show. For most of us, this was our first experience climbing at altitude, and the oxygen bottles we brought proved very worthwhile. Before we started climbing, we were briefed that to request the oxygen wasn't a sign of weakness. A few of the lads who tried to ignore this, soon realised that they had to swallow their pride, and ask for some.

We made it to Red Hill Cabin just before nightfall. After a good night's rest, everyone felt refreshed to tackle the 3,215ft to the next camp. This day's trekking was the hardest. We used oxygen more frequently, and the 'buddy system' was in full swing. With fatigue and mild altitude sickness, some were staggering around as though they were drunk. It took one more day to reach the summit, but the hard work was worth it. After photos to prove we had done it, we raced down the volcano to meet the transport at the Observatory. As luck would have it, back at camp in *Doug Arnott's Lodge* it was a free beer and pizza night! Little did **Doug** know he had 12 thirsty and hungry British squaddies in. We kept the British end up!

We woke the follow morning to up a see a lava flow. When you imagine magma, you know it's going to be pretty hot. It has an average temperature of 1,150° C! Although metres away, it felt like opening the oven door. The heat hits your whole body, and is constant. It was so hot, our boots began melting before we turned and headed for home.

Our last day trekking was a gentle 5.2-mile trip round Kilauea Caldera. A *caldera* is the same as a volcano crater, but bigger.

Muddy going on 237 Sqn's March and Shoot

About 100 years ago this caldera was a molten lava lake. It was so deep that it had barriers all around it to prevent people falling in, while frequent plumes of yellow smoke, sulphur, belched up, reminding us of life in the block. R and R was spent on Kona and Waikiki beach, where we unwound and prepared ourselves for the rain and mist of Pembrokeshire!

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JE Sutton**
SSM	**WO2 K Scott**

MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION - *by LCpl Waddington*

The inter-Tp march and shoot took place on Thursday, 25 March in the best conditions available - wind, rain and lots of shouting. Two teams from each Tp competed in the 6-mile march and shoot. A trophy was awarded to Tango Tp. Thank you to **Cpl Jamie Matthews** for organizing the event.

EXERCISE FOXES FIND SPTA - by *Lt Dave Allen*

EX FOXES FIND took place in the snow, wind, rain and sun of Salisbury Plain. The aim was to get out, have a shakeout of all the kit and to familiarise the newcomers with it and the SOPs. This aim was taken slightly too literally by **Cpl McCluskey** and **LCpl Malait**, who were trying to break the world record for crossing Salisbury Plain in a Landover - on its roof! **Sgt Smith** then decided to attempt some kite surfing with a 12 x 12 and a Butler Matrix antenna.

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**Lt Col DG Halstead**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) GC Smith**

EXERCISE MULAS DRAGON - *by WO2 A MacPherson MBE*

EX MULAS DRAGON was a high risk and remote Level 3 AT ex in Argentina over the period 28 January – 21 February 04. The aim of the exercise was to reach the 6,960m summit of Mt Aconcagua, the highest mountain in the Americas and the highest in the Southern Hemisphere. Outside the Himalayan mountain range, it is the highest mountain in the world.

The ex aimed to challenge both novice and experienced mountaineers and to test all individuals to their personal limits. Although the route posed few technical challenges, the extreme altitude and weather patterns associated with the mountain made the undertaking extremely demanding for all members of the ex. The group was made up of a mixture of abilities, six personnel from 21 Sig Regt (AS) and two attached instructors from 14 Sig Regt (EW) and the Honourable Artillery Company (HAC).

We deployed from UK to Mendoza via Santiago in Chile. After many hours shopping in the local supermarket, **Capts Lindsey Courage** and **Kate Hannaford** did us proud by arranging all the rations for the mountain phase. The next day we travelled by minibus to Puente del Inca at the bottom of the valley that led to our objective. Here we organised some mules to take our heavy loads along the 24km route to Base Camp (4,350m).

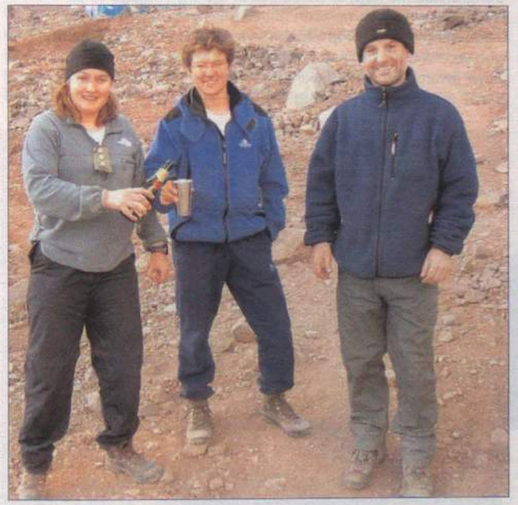
Climbing a mountain of this altitude requires a different strategy from, for example, climbing Ben Nevis. Time has to be spent at altitude, gradually acclimatising along the way, otherwise individuals can become extremely ill from altitude sickness.

The outline plan was to spend three days walking into Base Camp, then have a rest day before starting carrying rations and

Mules arriving at Confluencia, 3,330m

additional equipt up to the next highest camp. The group would then sleep at the lower camp prior to moving up to the next highest camp that had been stocked up the previous day - sticking to the principle of climbing high and sleeping low. Once we were at Camp 4, Piedras Blancas (white rocks, 6,060m) the plan was to prepare for the 6hr climb to the summit.

Whilst at Base Camp, on 8 March 04, it was time for a small ceremony in the field for **Lt Kate Hannaford** to be promoted to Capt, with a kind letter and bottle of Champagne, courtesy of the CO. The alcohol quickly went to our heads, enabling us to drift off into a peaceful night's sleep.



Field Promotion at 4,350m

As progress was made up the mountain from Base Camp via other camps to Piedras Blancas, everyone found that the thin air and lack of oxygen was making the progress harder and harder. By this stage, three members of the team, **Capt Kate Hannaford**, **Cpl Julie West** and **Cpl Cheryl McMurray** had called it a day and returned to Base Camp. Above 5,500m the body doesn't acclimatise any more and, unless you're a Yeti, a good night's sleep is rare.

As summit day approached, although the winds were extremely fierce, it was decided to go for it. After about 30 minutes into the summit attempt, **Tpr John Howie** and I decided to turn back as we could not feel our fingers and toes. At 13.30hrs on 15 March, **Capt Lindsey Courage** reached the summit of Aconcagua, with a French mountain guide. With most of the group now safely back at Base Camp, **Flt Lt Bren Dunn** and **SSgt Mark Morgan** decided to stay at Confluencia (6,370m) and make another summit attempt. As we waited nervously at Base Camp, we heard that **Bren** had made a successful attempt the following day. But, on arrival at Base Camp, **Mark** had to be treated for frostbite on all his fingers.

Capt Lindsey Courage on the Summit 6,960m

The group then moved down the mountain to Puente del Inca. The walk back was further than we had remembered, and took several hours, despite maintaining a rapid pace. The long winding valley seemed to go on for ever! After booking out from the park entrance and collecting our kit from the mule company, we bought a well-deserved burger and beer! We all then returned back to Mendoza for the R and R phase of the exped.

EX MULAS DRAGON was an extremely challenging undertaking, arguably the most ambitious AT ex the Regt has attempted in recent years. Two members of the party had reached the summit of Aconcagua, which is no mean feat. With more favourable weather, two or three other members could have also reached the summit. The acclimatisation programme had worked extremely well. The ex achieved the aims which had been set, but most importantly, all team members enjoyed the adventure, worked close to their own personal limits and felt a real sense of achievement.

REGIMENTAL CADRE COURSE 2004

The Trg Wing has had a busy month running the Regtl Cadre Course during 8–26 March 04. This intensive three-week Course aimed at giving selected Signallers/Privates/Craftsmen a chance to develop and prove their military and leadership skills.

Most of the first two weeks were spent at Crowborough Trg Camp in E Sussex. The pace progressive, with the first week covering revision and presentation skills combined with PT, conducted every morning at 07.00hrs by **SSgt Sid Barrass**. Students started the course with a BPFA and were then split into the sections they were to stay in for the duration, under the expert guidance of section DS, **Sgts Craig Brooksbank**, **Sean McIlroy** and **Billy Morris**. Sections worked and lived together from the start, ensuring maximum team bonding, which was to prove vital during the field phase. After a demanding first week, there was a change of scenery, when we travelled to Folkestone for a weekend of quality shooting on Hythe Ranges, including ETR, MMTT and FIBUA. This was enjoyed by all students, many of whom had not previously experienced ranges of such diversity.

Week Two was a continuation of subjects revised in Week One, but at this stage students were expected to be fairly competent at these subjects. Section competitions took the form of orienteering, night nav and a march and shoot, all demanding

Sig Yadav delivering orders to his section before going over the top

both physical and mental stamina, and a test of both individual character and teamwork. As well as section competitions, there were individual written and practical exams to complete. These included map reading, NBC, weapon handling, fieldcraft and basic military tactics. The week culminated in a three-day shakeout ex on Pippingford Park Trg area, designed to iron out any weak areas at individual and section level, prior to the start of the final ex.

The final week was spent on Salisbury Plain, where students were tested on all that had been taught and practised throughout the first two weeks. The ex was conducted at a very fast tempo, each student having a comd appointment, where individual and section drills were tested to the full. The ex culminated when the platoon flew by Chinook into enemy territory, defeating three enemy positions and then subsequently carrying out a dawn raid on a heavily-defended enemy stronghold.

Sig (now LCpl) Harris receiving the Top Student award and promotion from the CO

Congratulations from all personnel in the Trg Wing go to all students on their completion of this physically and mentally demanding course. Top Student was awarded to **Sig Harris**, who received his promotion from the CO on the day we returned. Other awards presented were Best Endeavour, which went to **Sig Saroj**, and Best Shot, to **Sig Crook**.

Cadre Course about to board the 'battle bus' on SPTA

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

97 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Sarah Streete**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Parker**

Two weeks to go and ready (almost!) to fulfil our role in the Balkans from 1 May, flights depending. The past five weeks have been busy to say the least, with mobilisation at RTMC Chilwell, OPTAG and Special to Arm Training.

MOBILISATION

It all kicked off with the arrival of the Sqn at Chilwell for two weeks of ITD's, G1, G4 and mandatory briefings. Despite the Call-Out Papers having the wrong reporting time (for those who received them), staff at the RTMC coped with amazing good humour and by Tuesday evening, everyone had more or less completed their admin and was ready to begin the trg.

So what delights did we have during those two weeks?

G1/G4 Medicals, dental, pay, documentation, kit issue - we all went around the conveyor belt. There was great disappointment for some, as they had to return their incorrectly issued winter boots for summer boots. **Sgt Drew Hall**, among others tried the old story of 'I have worn them and I have athletes foot. You can't reissue them, so can I keep them?' It fell on deaf ears and his summer boots were duly presented to him.

CFT Warm up (no weight) and then the CFT a 'stroll' up and down the teasing hills. No problems for anyone in the Sqn, except perhaps **Sig Christina Cole**, whose Bergen strap came adrift during the march and as 'no touching' was allowed, she had to hang on to stay in the squad!

BPFA Again, no real problems for 97 Sig Sqn, as it was now the fourth one we had attempted. Great to see our PTI, **Cpl Andy Newson** having a go himself for a change! However, it was the first time we had managed to do a proper length run - but adrenaline got us round, if not our fitness. Congratulations to **Sig Sandeep Sanghera,** who achieved the fastest time.

Led by OC Maj Sarah Streete, 97 Sig Sqn steps off

Weapon Training A2 Rifle, plus pistols for the Offrs. Two freezing cold days with a chill factor of well below zero was not pleasant at all. Beckingham Ranges were bleak, and the camp bleaker. It was good to get back to our very crowded rooms at Chilwell. Minor panic set in for **Sgt Alex Brown**, when the Ops Team told him that since he had not zeroed his weapon, he could not deploy to theatre. A swift discussion and some carefully inspected paperwork overthrew this decision, and he was quickly 'back on the bus'.

Not all Sqn members approached mines training with great confidence

BCDT Previously referred to as BFAT. We were issued with new books and enjoyed a whole day of tuition and practice. The instruction was excellent and all of us managed to save the dummy!

Recognition and Identification Not really how we wanted to spend the evening after two days on the range, but we survived and surprisingly, no-one seemed to have problems with the test. Was it a bit of a group effort? Among many others, the Ops Officer, **Capt Chris Kinvig**, managed to score full marks. (He is obviously a spotter in his spare time!)

All in all, the two weeks at Chilwell passed quickly. It was a very professionally run package and the trg of a high standard. It certainly achieved its aim of giving us the confidence to deploy into theatre.

FORMATION PARADE

Our two weeks at the RTMC culminated with our Formation Parade in Nottingham, accompanied by the Corps Band, who were in excellent form, and in the presence of Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas MBE**. This was a really splendid occasion, organised to perfection by 38 Sig Regt (V) and will certainly be one of the highlights of our tour. After lunch, the OC, **Maj Sarah Streete**, gave a presentation to the families and friends about the deployment; and during the parade, she was presented with the 97 Sig Sqn flag to be flown at the Sqn HQ in Bosnia. Despite only two sessions of drill at Chilwell and a rehearsal prior to the parade 'they put on a very professional display', to quote the Brigadier, and we all thoroughly enjoyed the day. We were just grateful that **Sig Peter Wong** managed to find a pair of boots for the parade having sent two right boots out to theatre in his MFO box!

OPTAG

Now that we know what to expect, we were not sure that we wanted to go any more! Mine awareness, hostages, incidents and more. The language trg was excellent, but hopefully, we will get better! **SSgt Lynne Camm** did the Sqn proud when asked to demonstrate her language skills in front of the entire course and appeared to be already almost fluent. The rest of us have a long way to go.

CONGRATULATIONS

..... to our Labrador puppy alias Tp Comd, **Lt Laura Fernand**, on her well-deserved promotion; and to **Cpl Paul Thompson,** who found the phone number of the chamber maid in his hotel room and very quickly arranged a date!

97 Sig Sqn has not been slow in gaining some trophies to take to theatre. **Sig Stuart Titchener** competed in CORPSAAM during March, and as part of his team, gained five trophies. Also in March, the OC, **Major Streete** won the TA Orienteering Championships.

280th (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Edwards**
SSM **WO2 Dixon**

STORMING OF THE GATES

Prior to moving to Javelin Bks in Elmpt, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn was based in Francisca Barracks in St Tonis, near Krefeld. Whilst in St Tonis, the Sqn and 28 (BR) Sig Regt before it, would hold an annual celebration with the local population called 'The Storming of the Gates.'

This celebration took place at the end of the local Karnival celebrations. The Karnival is traditionally a lawless time, as police and judges are too busy enjoying the celebrations to arrest anyone or press charges. During this period, the locals of St Tonis would gather at the gates of Francisca Barracks and demand entry to the Camp. After a small ceremony, the locals would be invited in to a party as guests of the Sqn.

The 2002 Storming of the Gates didn't take place as the Sqn was in the middle of moving to Javelin Bks, and the 2003 celebration was cancelled at the last minute by the Karnival Committee in St Tonis. That made this year's celebration on 20 February the first to be held in Javelin Bks. The event also had special significance as it was the 28th Storming of the Gates ceremony, linking it to the forerunner of the Sqn, 28 (BR) Sig Regt.

The evening was attended by around 100 Germans of all ages and the same number of Sqn personnel and families. After an evening of speeches and traditional dancing from the Karnival Clubs, the German guests departed, looking forward to next year's Storming of the Gates.

Maj Edwards presents the Prince of the Karnival with a symbolic key to the squadron

2004 NORDIC SKIING CHAMPIONSHIPS

After a year of planning, it was finally time for Team 280 to go to Norway on the first leg of a European tour in pursuit of a sport we knew little more than we had seen on *Eurosport*. We had been briefed thoroughly by **SSgt Mal Pavier**, but the stark reality of what was to come was something else. The brief had mentioned

A toast to the sucess of the evening

The team preparing for the Patrol Race

isolated mountain huts, no ski lifts, no ski bunnies, no cafes, miles from any entertainment centres and more physically demanding than anything we had done before. But we still volunteered

The team arrived in Norway after a twenty-four hour drive. Next day we headed off to Lillehammer to shop and visit the Madshus Ski factory. The camp unfolded, with the team settling down to learn how to ski, wax, shoot and cook. The first weeks were spent learning how to co-ordinate hand, arm and legs to produce a forward motion. However, much of the time was spent with a face-full of snow, wishing there was a café and snow bunnies to console us. And a ski lift - the thought of not having to ski up another hill was more appetising than a free night in a pub!

The camp culminated in the Corps Championships, which saw Team 280 take third place. **SSgt Pavier** was Corps Champion again, and the rest of the team were desperate to go home for rest and civilisation!

January saw us on the road again heading off for a week's trg camp in Ramsau, Austria. On arrival, it was obviously a lot livelier than in Norway, and there was a pizza place not five minutes away! The trg here concentrated on biathlon skills, with every morning spent on the range. Afternoons were spent doing sprint work in the Nordic bowl and any other nasty stuff **SSgt Pavier** could think of. At this point the team had established itself, with **Sig Cross** and **Cpl Ward** being the Classic Specialists. **Cpl Tarrier** was a sniper with his own style but a skiing tempo most OAPs could match, and **Cpl Clark** clearly needed to pack a shotgun rather than a precision rifle.

A week later, we headed off to France for the 1 (UK) Armd Div Championships in Les Contamines. However, we soon swapped waist deep crisp snow for torrents of rain. The first three days were an absolute wash out, literally. After some major work by the local track cutters, the first race had to be held up the mountain – at 2,000m, to be exact! It was a lung-bursting experience, hopefully never to be repeated. After some much needed

LCpl Tarrier bursts a lung during the race

snowfall, the rest of the competition was spent back in the valley. The remaining races went well, with some good results, culminating in the patrol race. This was a 20km March and Shoot on skis with weight and in winter whites, with some shooting and stands thrown in for good measure. Some teddies were thrown, and others were literally brought to their knees, but the Team increased their 13th place average to 11th after that race. All in all, it had been a long and eventful season of intense physical trg, injuries, teddy-throwing and penalty loops. But the Team had won the Minor Units Trophy and had come 11th overall. **SSgt Mal Pavier** was the Veteran Champion and had been selected as an individual to compete at the GB Championships in Ruhpolding. **SSgt Pavier** was also awarded Corps and Army Colours during the competition.

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC **Maj P Smith**
RSM **WO1(RSM) K Weaver**

Recently, the Sqn has been exceptionally busy supporting the Bde HQ programme of exs, ranging from CAST(N)s, to supporting 1 Para Regt's ABTF ex, EX DRUIDS DANCE. In addition to this, we have run a number of Tp and Sqn level exs (including a very successful Cadre Course) and a combined ex with 23 Engr Regt (Air Assault) RE, on EXs MERCURY'S FIST and EAGLE'S SAPPER.

Concurrently over this period, we have supported a large number of sporting activities. The Sqn Nordic Skiing Team won 4 Div's Minor Units and achieved notable success for such a young team, as reported below, in EXs SPARTAN HIKE and RUCKSACK. The Sqn Rugby team made it to the semi-finals of the Army Minor Units Plate Competition, only to be narrowly beaten by Harrogate. The Sqn Boxing Team were unable to compete in the Army Minor Unit Championships, as no other teams entered. Despite our sparring with the Army Major Unit Champions, 3 Para Regt, no other Corps team would box us. In the end, individuals from the Team boxed in a local boxing night. The Sqn Cross-Country Team won the Corps Minor Units Championships, being placed 3rd overall, and a larger team came 4th in the annual Brüggen 10-mile road race in Germany, despite some misguided preparation the night before. **Cpl Sherlock** led a team to the Army Novice and Intermediates Judo championships and achieved a Gold in the inter under 81kg class; **LCpl Woolen** won a Gold in the inter under 73 Kg class; and **Sig Sharpe** won a Silver in the Novices under 81kg class.

216 Sqn Nordic Ski Team

The Sqn says a belated farewell to **Capt Mark Crinnion**, **Capt John Williams**, **WO2 (YofS) Dave Thomas**, and **WO2 (FofS) Jamie Chambers**, and thank them for all their hard work. Welcome to **Capt Sean Lumley**, **Capt Duggy Craig**, **SSgt (YofS) Dean Rudd**, and **WO2 (FofS) Mick Fawcett**. Finally, we congratulate **SSgt Morris**, **SSgt Whitworth**, **SSgt (YofS) Barker**, and **Sgt Watson** for their selection for promotion.

EXERCISE SPARTAN HIKE

312 competitors from 50 teams gathered for the Land Command (UK), Northern Ireland and TA Ski Championships. EX SPARTAN HIKE took place from 10-21 January 04 in the Serre Chevalier valley in the French Alps. 216 Sig Sqn entered a Nordic Ski Team of 6 soldiers.

After the 14-hour journey from Colchester we moved into our self-catering apartment in the town of Villeneuve (near the Italian border) and settled down to a routine of eat, sleep, and ski. We had 5 races ahead of us, ranging from 5 to 20km, including Biathlons and the Military Patrol Race. All the courses had to be recced prior to racing, skis waxed and a number of range days carried out. Surveying the other teams, their equipt and tech support, we felt like 'the Dingles' with our one set of skis and little red wax box. However, we had spent 5 weeks training in Norway under the guidance of **Capt Mark Crinnion**, and we were all fit, with an infectious optimism, looking forward to the ex ahead.

For Race 1, 10km Relay, the weather was harsh and the course was tricky, to say the least. We set out to dominate DA UK, the only Novice team in 4 Div likely to pose a threat. Despite this being the first race, the team put in a strong performance, relying perhaps on our fitness level rather than our finesse on skis. It was a good team race, in which our presence as a Novice team was felt, as we came in 16th overall.

For Race 2, 15km Individual Classic, the weather was bright and the track icy. The first stretch of the course was the hardest, taking up a long flat straight and heading into strong winds. We rallied support and all the team members finished in respectable times and injury free. Unfortunately the team dropped a place to 17th out of 40, but we were the only true Novice team. Well done to the HCR, who knocked us down, following a great performance.

Race 3, the 7.5km Biathlon, was the first Biathlon race. It was run as a four-man team relay, beginning with a mass start. After an average result in the first two races, we needed a good performance to give us a chance of qualifying for the Army Championships, so we picked up the gauntlet. Despite some disappointing shoots, we put in a strong performance, finishing 11th - just 3 seconds behind HCR. It was not only a great performance, but we now looked like we could qualify for the Great Britain and Army Championships. Other teams were now asking, 'Who are 216?'

Steadying up for a controlled shoot

Race 4 was the 10km Biathlon Sprint, probably the most technically demanding race for the Novice team. The title alone was intimidating, suggesting a sprint further than anyone was capable of. The skate was over a 10km distance, with a total climb of 191m. This was punctuated by 2 range shoots, each of 5 targets. The first was from the prone, and the second from the standing position. The track was soft, with a fresh layer of snow covering the piste. It was a question of the Sqn ethos of maintaining a positive mental attitude in physically arduous conditions. Overall, the team finished 14th out of 26, but most noticeably we gave a good account against some very experienced skiers. **Sig Cook** won a silver medal as the second Youth Novice. In a time of 47:17.6, he was only 26 seconds behind the leader of that category.

Race 5 was the 20km Patrol Race. At 09.59hrs, the patrol was stood in arctic whites, carrying 40kg patrol packs and awaiting the inspecting officer, **Col PR Farrar OBE** (late PARA) Comd, ATG Army. Following a strict inspection, wearing all issue dress and equipt, we were awarded 30 seconds for our turnout. The race consisted of a 20km course, over demanding terrain both on and off piste in the Monetier/Villneuve valley. We were issued with a sketch map to navigate a route taking us via 5 stands. These consisted of diverse comd tasks, including a range, a memory test and other physical or mental challenges. Shortly after the start, we realised our wax wasn't sticking, and knew we were in for a difficult race. Following a long leg taking the team over a stream, a road and off piste, our first stand was a Kim's game.

A total of 20 items were presented for us to remember. Each chose 5 items and memorised them before moving off on the next leg. Leg 2 was particularly arduous. From the beginning, we had to remove skis to negotiate a steep off-piste slope. Back over the road and the stream, we recognised the terrain from a previous race following a steep fast decent. We tackled the rest of the comd tasks with ease, and made good time although occasionally having to run. Much of the course was off-piste with snow up to our waist! We entered the range in 11th position, and our trg over Christmas leave paid off. Following some fast and accurate shooting, including the use of ski poles in the standing supported position, we left 2 teams as we headed out towards the finish. Our final position was 9th. A good result for our first patrol race, it took us into 13th position overall. We had also qualified for the Great Britain and Army Championships.

Overall, our first Championships were an enjoyable and exciting experience. It was an impressive performance by an all-Novice team, with little funding and even less experience. Fit, and with a positive attitude, we had finished 13th and picked up two medals. We were the highest placed Novice team and Minor Unit in our Division. We were also the only Minor Unit to qualify for the Army Championships. This was the first time 216 Sig Sqn had skied in ten years. What lay ahead was daunting, but would develop the team's potential through racing. The team were determined to enjoy the experience. We packed our little red wax box on the minibus and set off for Rupholding.

EXERCISE RUCKSACK

40km west of Berchesgarten on the German/Austrian border is the town of Ruhpolding. Boasting an abundance of sporting facilities, including the German National Biathlon Centre, it was the perfect venue for EX RUCKSACK. The British National, Inter Service and Army Biathlon and Cross Country Ski Championships were held from 21 January to 6 February 2004. In addition to the Service teams taking part, the event brought together athletes from the Austrian, Belgium, UK, South African, German Army and the USA National teams. The 2 weeks comprised over 15 Inter-Corps, Inter-Service and British National races around the gruelling World Cup track.

Week One of the programme was dedicated to the Cross Country races and the Biathlon. 216 Sig Sqn were one of 24 Service Units successfully qualifying from Div Championships. This was no mean feat for the 6 male soldiers, who were all Novices. Trained by **Capt Mark Crinnion** in Norway the previous November, the team had only 5 weeks' skiing experience. The standard of competition was phenomenal, from the traditional skiing units such as 22 Regt RA, 1 Hldrs, 1 D and D, 1 GH and 2 RTR. Fielding some of UK's finest athletes from the World Cup Circuit, these teams included skiers such as **Mark Gee**, **Lee Jackson**, **Tom Clemens** and the outstanding new faces of **Stuart Payne** and **Dermot Ahearne**. Unfortunately, as the only Minor Unit and one of only 2 Royal Signals units to qualify this year, we could not hope to match the experience or technical support of these big guns. Our fitness and attitude had brought us a long way since the Corps camp in Norway. We were all very proud, but very tired.

The most arduous and enjoyable event was the 30km Patrol Race. Our best performance of the Championships came in the 7.5km Biathlon. The best individual performance was by **Sig Cook**, who finished in a time of 33mins 33secs in the same event. As a Team, we finished in 30th position overall, 25th in UK and 19th in the Army.

At the end of our first season I am proud of what has been achieved. It took a lot of fitness, technique trg and admin support. I believe we've given a good account of ourselves amongst teams in the British Premier League of the sport. The learning curve has been steep, but those individuals not winning medals have all earned the Advanced Ski Proficiency Award. Next season, we intend to be taken seriously, both as athletes and competitors. The team has learned a lot and must build on this experience.

EXERCISE TUMBLING TIGER

EX TUMBLING TIGER, a freefall parachuting AT exped to Lake Ellsinore in California, took place from 22 March to 08 April 04. The exped comprised 20 personnel from a variety of backgrounds: 13 from 16 Air Asslt Brigade HQ and Sig Sqn (216), 1 from 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (261) and 6 instructors from various sources, including civilian instructors. The aim of the exped was two-fold, firstly to enable 10 students to complete the Accelerated Freefall Course (AFF), and secondly to further the freefall parachuting skills of the 4 experienced skydivers.

The 18-jump AFF Course enables the complete novice skydiver to obtain his Category A Skydiving Licence and consists of a variety of different jumps. The first three jumps are with two instructors, each from an altitude of 13,500ft, and the student is taught basic body position and how to remain stable in freefall. Once the instructors consider the student ready, he or she then progresses onto Levels 4-7 of the Course, where the student is reduced to just one instructor and learns turns, back somersaults and how to fly through the sky. These jumps are again all from 13,500ft. Once the student has mastered these skills, they must show that they can exit the aircraft at 5,000ft, get stable and pull their parachute within 10 seconds. If this 8th jump is completed successfully, then the student graduates from the AFF Scheme and must complete a further 10 solo skydives to be awarded their Category A Licence, They are then no longer be considered a student parachutist.

RSM Weaver about to let it all out

Before the first jump can be made, a lot of ground trg is required to practise body position, canopy flying and malfunction drills. Fortunately, the students managed to complete this at Peterlee DZ in Co. Durham, before arriving in California. This meant that as soon as they arrived at the DZ in Ellsinore, they were on the plane for their first jump. On the second day, four students from 1 D and D joined the exped, just in time to see **Lt Matt King** landing on his reserve parachute due to a malfunction in his main. At this point, **Cpl Nick Howe** 1 D and D lost his bottle and asked for an immediate refund. But he was dragged kicking and screaming onto the plane!

RSM Weaver and Cpl Holland over Lake Ellsinore, California

with the instructors, and after almost strangling himself with his parachute at 5,000ft, he was finally allowed to graduate. **Cpl Graham Wootton**, **LCpl Ben Monaghan** and **Sig John Sharpe** also graduated, and have been let loose on the Skydiving world. Experienced parachutists, **WO2(FofS) Rob Campbell**, **Cpl Dutch Holland** and **Sig Wild** were all indispensable, assisting with filming the student jumps and teaching parachute packing. **Sig Wild** also achieved his formation skydiving qualification under tuition from **Rob** and **Dutch**.

Overall, the exped was a success, and towards the end, students were managing 5 or 6 jumps in a day. Half the participants flew home on 7 April leaving seven personnel behind to terrorise Las Vegas, San Francisco and Los Angeles for a week, where a few of the lucky lads paid a fortune to sleep on the marble floor in Las Vegas's *Luxor Hotel*!

Initially the weather was a problem, although before we arrived, the DZ hadn't had a single day of rain that year. Jumping was very slow to begin with, but the professionalism of the students showed through, and they began to sail through the levels. **WO1(RSM) Weaver**, **Cpl Dunc Gourlay**, **LCpl Rob Everard** and **LCpl Richie Maybank** proved to be the first 'Skygods', but the title was soon unintentionally claimed by **Cpl Jim Kemp**, who produced an outstanding back somersault that lasted for 7,500ft and deployed his parachute somewhere over Utah! The weather soon picked up, so the parties and BBQs that were billed as bigger than Woodstock, had to take a back seat for the serious skydiving to restart in earnest in the second week. Before long, students were starting to graduate, and only a few were left doing battle with an instructor. **Sgt Robbo Robertson's** continued cry of 'I have done 600ft at night' wasn't carrying any weight

Exiting the aircraft

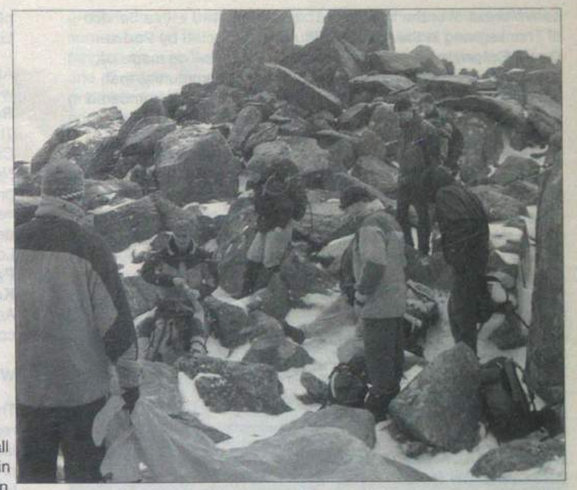
continued from page 224

TA ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS

If 95 and 58 Sqns had a mountain to climb in achieving some success in the Corps SAAM, the same could not be said for the Orienteering Team, whose navigational skills proved victorious once again at the TA Orienteering Champs. These were held at Bordon over the weekend 6/7 March, and the team comprising **Capt Tom Jeffries**, **Capt John Middler**, **WO2 Christ Smith** and **SSgt Dave Arnot**, once again took the honours in commanding style. **Capt Middler's** talents appear to have no limits. If he is not Orienteering, he is busy organising expeds. We are sure he will welcome the next article to publicise the build up to the Regtl exped to Canada.

AN UPHILL STRUGGLE

Anyone who enjoys camping should enjoy hill-walking expeds, and as **Capt John Middler** has already widely publicised, the purpose of them is to promote and encourage backpacking for all members of the Regt. This activity has generated great interest in the Regt, so there is never a shortage of volunteers to take part in the expeds or the weekend trg for them. Last year it was Spain. This year, in July, the exped goes across the Atlantic to the Canadian Rockies. Intensive and vigorous trg for the team members has already commenced in the form of a series of EX HARD ROCK weekend events. The first of these took place in the Brecons in late January when it was cold, frosty and very unpleasant. On the Saturday, the team completed 19kms in a little over 6 hrs in appalling weather - just the kind of trg needed in prep for the Rockies exped. On Sunday, the pace was a little more leisurely, working in the indoor climbing centre at Llangorse. In mid March it was off to Snowdonia in milder and more acceptable conditions, where the trg was still tough and exhausting, but great fun. We're off to the Lake District in May, but more about that in the next edition of *The WIRE*.



Trekking Through Wales

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col PN Willmott TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MA Giles**

GREAT ORMOND STREET HOSPITAL CHILDRENS CHARITY

During January, the WOs' and Sgts' Mess held a Burns Supper Night to raise money for the Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity. This charity had been selected because 8-year-old **Jack Thumwood**, son of **SSgt Jim Thumwood**, had had extensive and very successful treatment at the hospital over the last six years.

When **Jack** was nearly three, a CAT scan showed he had a brain tumour the size of a plum. He immediately was taken to Great Ormond Street Hospital and underwent nine hours of surgery. A second operation, lasting five hours, was needed to remove the remainder of the tumour.

However, **Jack** later became quite overweight and hairy, and in March 1999 it was discovered that he had an adrenal tumour so big it had grown up the main vein into his heart. It took two teams of surgeons operating for three-and-a-half hours to remove the tumour. This was followed by three months of chemotherapy. He is now steroid dependant. Thanks to the dedication and skill of the GOSH staff, who have a policy of looking after the whole family as well as the children, he now lives an almost normal life but is unable to play his beloved football. He follows Colchester United with a passion and attends home and away games as often as possible.

The successful Burns Night Supper and the generosity of mess members yielded the sum of £900, and a cheque was presented by **Jack** and his father to GOSH on Tuesday 9 March. A special mention must go to **Sgt Eddy Allen**, who, on winning a bottle of malt whisky in the raffle, promptly auctioned it off and bought it again himself before selling it for a third time. All in the name of charity - or was it the port, **Eddy**?

Jack and his father SSgt Jim Thumwood present a cheque to Cherie Murphy, Fundraising Executive of GOSHCC, with the RSM and mess members in attendance.

REGIMENTAL FAMILIES OPEN DAY

The Regt held families' open day at Colchester for the CO to thank all members of the Regt (particularly those who deployed on ops) along with their families and employers for their

commitment over the last year. The event started with a Service of Thanksgiving in the Garrison Church, conducted by **Padre David Eaton**, to acknowledge the cost and sacrifice made by personnel, families, employers and the wider community, that enabled the Regt to meet its commitments. It also remembered those currently serving today in Iraq and the Balkans.

A buffet lunch was then served whilst the children were entertained by a magician, a face painter and a bouncy castle. The Hon Col, **Col Stephen Foakes TD DL**, presented a Bosnia medal to **SSgt Alan Beech**, and prizes to 54 Sig Sqn (V), the winners of the Regtl SAAM, which was completed earlier that morning. 54 Sqn's Team Captain, **Lt Rick Morley**, had also won the overall Best Shot Award, assuring his inclusion in the Regtl Shooting Team.

Following on from the success of the WOs' and Sgts' Mess, the Regt raised a further £418 for GOSH from collection boxes at the bar and a raffle organised by **Sgt Karen Ellams**. A big thank you goes to all those who supported the charity and to the Sqns who each donated prizes.

REGIMENTAL GOLF COMPETITION AND ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION DINNER

For some unknown reason, the visit of the SOinC (A) coincided with the Regtl Inter-Sqn Golf. Did this result from his comments made when visiting the Regt on ex at West Down Camp last September? Following a sunny start, the heavens opened on the teams during the final holes, but this should not be seen as an excuse for the results! The overall champion was **WO2(FofS) Bho Pradham**. He was also part of the winning team, with **WO2(RQMS) Gaz Tuff**, **WO2(SSM) Graham Carroll** and **Mr Pat James** of the RSA completing the line up. Several of the players had then to rush back to Ilford to prepare for the RSA East London Branch Annual Dinner.

At this event, the RSA present the Best Tp Award. This year it went to the LAD and was collected by its OC, **Capt Trevor Rawson**, the SPSI, **SSgt Paul Ginbey** and **SSgt Izzy Izzard**. The SOinC(A) also awarded the Comd 19 Mech Bde's Commendation to **Sgt Tex Bennet** for his work on OP TELIC. Not being satisfied with that, **Brig McDowall** then promptly promoted him to SSgt! Congratulations to **Tex** for such a well-earned promotion, and to his wife for supporting him during his deployment. The CO would also like to thank the RSA East London Branch for a wonderful evening, particularly Chairman, **Paul Burton**, Secretary, **Barry Greenwood** and organiser, **Anita Keen**. The continued relationship between the Regiment and the Association is beneficial and important to both. Long may it continue.

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

The start of this year sees the posting in and out of several PSIs recently. The QM, **Capt Geoff Woodcock**, moves to Blandford, leaving the shop to the RQMS, who has been selected for promotion to WO1 and will also be moving in April. Luckily, we have managed to mobilise **WO2 Den Tranham**, who will combine his role as the Families WO with that of the RQMS. The Adjt, **Capt Jamie Noble**, leaves to start a new life in Civvy Street, and will be replaced by **Capt Emma Rae**. Recently arrived in HQ Sqn is **Sgt Keith Betts**, who replaces **Sgt Griff Griffiths**, who goes to 54 Sqn on promotion to SSgt. He in turn will be replacing **SSgt Gary Sinclair**, who is off to Cyprus. 54 Sqn have seen another PSI leave recently, when **Sgt Taff Lean** moved to ATR Lichfield. The next two months will also see the posting of **WO2(FofS) Bho Pradham** and **WO2(YofS) Simone Rouse** on promotion to WO1.

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col RG Mather**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Keen**

EXERCISE CYPRUS DRAGON - *by WO2(YofS) Giles*

In January 2004, seven members of the Regt, and four attached personnel, took part in EX CYPRUS DRAGON, a sub-aqua AT exped at the Cyprus Joint Services Adventurous Training Centre (CJSATC) in Dhekelia Garrison. Under the able command of exped leader, **WO1(RSM) Al Keen**, and instructors, **Capt Steve Dickson**, from ATR Lichfield, and **Sgt Jim Pike**, from Birmingham UOTC, the ex was aimed at introducing new divers to the sport, whilst also developing existing dive skills and adding qualifications for divers already certified. The ex was centred in and around the Eastern Sovereign Base Area.

With visions of warm sea, suntans and brandy sours, we left Heathrow at a chilly 4° C in the early hours of Monday, 26 January to arrive to an only slightly warmer 10° C. Our faces paled as we realised that one pair of jeans and a fleece really was inadequate for a whole nine days, and that the six pairs of shorts and T-shirts we had brought would be redundant. Cyprus in January apparently does not have a tropical climate.

Cyprus has a real treat of a wreck dives in Larnaca Bay, particularly the sunken RORO car ferry, *Zenobia*. Sunk in the early 1980's, *Zenobia* is recognised as one of the top 10 worldwide wreck dives. We did several progressive dives on this site, where the visibility was amazing and the wreckage almost totally intact - including 104 articulated lorries, complete with their various cargos. Other dives were a mixture of shore and boat dives, which were dependent upon the weather, but nevertheless very enjoyable.

But it wasn't all fun and adventure. Most of the participants had drills to learn, theory lessons to endure long into the evening, and most importantly, assessment dives to pass to earn those much-coveted BSAC qualifications. During most days, we managed to complete two dives, even managing a night dive one evening, where **Maj Tony Giles** managed to get himself and his buddy, **LCpl Christina Pollard** hopelessly lost. **Sgt Roz Thwaites** managed to get herself onto an archaeology course, and was seen more with tape measure and notebook than her mask and fins. But she did pick up an admirable Nautical Archaeological Society qualification for her efforts.

The ex achieved all of its aims, whilst being extremely rewarding and satisfying to all participants. The splendours of Cyprus offered sub-aqua diving at depths accessible to the relatively inexperienced diver, in a safe but unfamiliar environment. As a result, most personnel increased their diving qualifications by at least one level. Our thanks go to the professionalism and dedication of the two SADS, ably assisted by Divemaster, **SSgt Martin Keane** REME, who came along to help out with some of the instruction. Those guys worked long into the night to administer and deliver the trg required to a mixed ability group, whilst ensuring that all practical diving was conducted under the safest possible conditions.

Finally, overall thanks go to **WO1(RSM) Keen** for his efforts in putting together a first class exped, and for arranging all of the social activities during the week (How did you know where all those bars were, Sir?). It is hoped that a similar exped can be planned for next year - but could we have somewhere a little warmer please? I hear Belize is very good in the spring!

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Riley**
SSM **WO2(SSM) P Hall**

EXERCISE VON TRAPP DRAGON II 13-21 JANUARY 2004

37 Sig Regt (V) went on a ski trg ex, based at the Austrian Army bks at Walgau, in the Arlberg region of Austria. The Austrian Army looked after us very well and invited us to attend their Annual Ball. Not only can we ski well, we can also dance well. They also provided us with reduced rate ski tickets and hire.

The group was split up in to basic and intermediate ski groups. The trg for all included Avalanche Awareness, Cold Weather Injuries and Arctic Survival.

The beginners group were taught Basic Ski Proficiency in Alpine and Cross-Country techniques, and in four days most were able to ski with confidence down Blue runs. Unfortunately, **Sig Nikki Cruickshank** was injured when she skied off the Blue run into deep snow. The Ski Patrol was summoned and took her to the base of the mountain in the Blood Bucket, (a rescue sledge), where she was taken to the local hospital for treatment. Cross-country ski techniques were taught in the beautiful sunny Sonnenkopf valley. **LCpl Ratcliffe** and **Sig Potter** thoroughly enjoyed displaying their fitness during this sport, and **Sig OBJ Nkochi** loved it so much she bought herself some cross-country ski boots.

Instructor Cpl Judy Dunn and her group

The intermediate group were taught advanced alpine skiing, by **SSgt Pete Harris** and introduced to ski touring. **SSgt Tim Abbott** took them for a day and forced them to improve their skills by covering so many miles. They were also made to lead the group in zero visibility conditions. **SSgt Eddie Hopkins** managed to get totally lost and was assisted by **Lt Lucy Sewell**, who managed to get them all back on the track and home. **Lt Sewell** and **Cpl Smart** both achieved Advanced Ski Proficiency Awards and are hoping to attend an Instructor's course next year. The ski touring was held at the Sonnenkopf Ski Area. The sun shone as it does at Sonnenkopf, and they were treated to fantastic views of the Alps. Avalanche awareness trg involved digging a Rutch Block to identify the snow history and make snow survival shelters.

Then the skins were attached to the skis and we ascended. **Sgt Tracy Fleming** was surprised how easy it is to ascend steep and deep snow. The descent was more challenging. Most of the group found out that off-piste skiing is a lot more difficult and ate some snow on the way down. **SSgt Tim Abbott** became tangled up in some hidden roots of a fallen tree, loosing both skis and all grace. Overall, the ex was a great success, and our gratitude goes to the staff of the *Walgau Kaserne* for all the help and friendship we received.

We congratulate **SSgt Des Eldridge**, on his award of the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal. **SSgt Eldridge** enlisted into the Corps in 1985 and has served in many theatres, including UK, Germany, Northern Ireland and Cyprus. During his 20 years service, he has deployed on operational tours in Cyprus, Northern Ireland, Macedonia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Brig CJ Murray CBE presents SSgt D Eldridge with the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal, with CO, Lt Col RG Mather in attendance

67 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj K Metcalfe**
SSM **WO2(SSM) M Clarke**

The Sqn has gone through some major changes during past months. We have said goodbye to the OC, **Maj MF Cooper**, who has joined the Bde Response Team (BRT) and the PSAO, **Capt GD Pitman**, who has retired after twelve years as PSAO, reverting to the rank of Maj (Retired)!

Recently joined are **Maj K Metcalfe**, an ex-member of the Sqn, who returns as OC, having transferred from the BRT. We also have a new PSAO, the ex Trg Maj of the Regt, now **Capt Matt Helm**.

EXERCISE SHAPE UP

Friday evening, 25 January 04 saw the stalwarts of 67 Sig Sqn heading north to Swynnerton Trg Area to re-hone their field skills. Our accn was a derelict bunker, but at least it was a roof over our heads, as it was bitterly cold.

Up before the lark on Saturday morning and into trg after a good breakfast, we started with field craft and battle prep and then into ambush drills. This was good prep for the evening's entertainment, a veh ambush. At the appointed hour, the ambush section moved out, leaving the DS, **WO2 Monty Walker**, to freeze. The comd of the ambush, **Cpl Crisp**, was foiled because the veh stopped too early. But that didn't stop the 'Fourth of July' display and theatrical firefight.

Sunday was comms day - practice on the less spectacular but very interesting new SAINT equipt, which was tested and trialed. In the afternoon we RTUed, after another enjoyable weekend.

EXERCISE VIXEN'S OUTING

This was the first NCRS exercise for many months. The Sqn deployed two dets and the SCP under **Lt Fisher** and **Lt Lucy Sewell**, one det going to Kineton, and the other to Long Marston.

The NCRS worked well and enough traffic was generated to keep the ops both busy and interested. There was plenty of work to teach the new ops and to refresh the more experienced on the intricacies of the system. The ex was a great success for the Sqn and maximum trg value was gained all.

93 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj M Cosgrove**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) H Kenny**

THE THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

The 3 Peaks Challenge involves climbing the 3 highest peaks in the UK: Ben Nevis (The Ben), Scafell Pike and Snowdon consecutively. This test of endurance is widely accepted as the challenge for the best. Having successfully completed the Three Peaks in 2000 and 2001 with no great difficulty, in 2002 the Sqn made an unsuccessful attempt on the 24-hour challenge (same script but all within 24 hours!). This made the team even more determined to complete the 24-hour challenge in 2003. After 3 months of hard trg and meticulous planning, June arrived and it was time to see if the preparation had paid off. We completed The Ben in 3½ hrs, although our legs were suffering. After a short admin stop it was straight on to Scafell Pike, the hardest climb of the three, both physically and mentally. But once we had pushed through the first half hour, muscles had loosened and resolve strengthened and we made good time. At the base of Scafell we lost 5 anxious minutes trying to wake the driver before heading straight for Snowdon.

The overwhelming smell of hibernating bears in the transport was only overpowered by the odour of deep heat as we prepared ourselves en route. The ascent of Snowdon was teamwork at its best. Having reached the trig point, we estimated that if we could manage the descent in 1 hr, we would be sub 20 hrs - so we went for it! On nearing the base, it became apparent that our calculations were somewhat adrift. As we arrived at the car park, our completion time was confirmed as 18 hrs 45 mins and 26 secs! Not only did 93 Sqn complete the challenge in under 24 hours, we raised £285 for a local hospice (and a few blisters too!)

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col SJ Richardson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) KP Innes**

Recently the Regt has been engaged with a variety of different activities. As part the Formation Parade for 97 Sig Sqn (V) we recently hosted a visit by Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas MBE**. Work for 97 Sig Sqn's formation came to an end as they deployed to the Balkans at the end of April. Project REEBOK continues to trundle along, with the build phase and initial trg packages almost complete.

We have had a change around in the G1 support to the Regt. **Capt David Orr** is now in the seat as Adjt, replacing **Capt Jim Lambeth**, who is off to Colerne as Ops Offr, 21 Sig Regt (AS). Also leaving for pastures new is **WO2 Nobby Clarke**, our RAOWO. **Nobby** and his fiance'e, **Chris** are moving to south west France to start a new life of wine and cheese tasting. We wish them both the best of luck, and welcome in **WO2 George Guthrie** from 4 Para Regt (V) as the new RAOWO.

46 (CITY OF DERBY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj John Pearson**
SSM	**WO2 Peter Beedle**

EXERCISE NORTHERN ICE RAM

EX NORTHERN ICE RAM, 26 February-5 March 2004 was one of the toughest and most arduous trg exs that many in the Sqn have experienced to date. In fact it was so tough that many of us would happily volunteer to go again tomorrow!

Day One was a gentle break in while we found our ski legs. The following day, we let them run. Conditions were good throughout, with plenty of snow and no icy gales. We were based in the ATG Wertach lodge and skied in Oberjoch. This was a good place for beginners, and also offered more advanced skiers the chance to refine their techniques. **WO2 Andy Medley** and **Cpl Caswell** were our instructors, and with a broad range of abilities to cater for, they had quite a tough job. However everyone enjoyed themselves and learned new skills – sometimes with a little frustration thrown in and plenty of unprintable language.

Towards the end of the week, when our legs were long past their prime, we took a trip to Garmisch. The scenery was beautiful and everyone wanted their picture taken on the chairlift with the spectacular Zugspitze in the background. By this time it was becoming clear just how much progress had been made by our novice skiers.

SSgt Ryan Gilbank persevered with her dodgy knee, and along with **Capt Kev Gater**, manage to ski all the way to the bottom in one run. **Capt Gater** even found time to show off his backwards skiing technique to the advanced group. Congratulations go to **Sig Rowlands**, who won the slalom race, despite being a complete novice.

The final day of skiing saw us all up bright and early. There was some notably more dangerous skiing on this final day, including a demonstration by **Alan**, our instructor on how to come a cropper. This fuelled the imagination for the skits on our last night in the lodge, which rounded off a fantastic week.

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj Andy Whalen**
SSM	**WO2 Horton**

YORKSHIRES DALES THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

EX RECKLESS EBOR II was an AT and comms weekend from 30 January to 1 February. The challenge for the weekend was to complete, within 12 hrs, the classic 3 Peaks of the Yorkshire Dales: Inglebourgh, Pen-y-gent and Wernside, as well as a day's refresher trg on NCRS on the Sunday. It had been decided that the Sqn would not take the regular 3 Peaks route, but instead to do the most difficult peak first - just in case one or two individuals felt unable to complete all 3.

Friday night started with a quick brief from **SSgt Wood** on H and S, map reading and route selection on the following day's walk, followed by the customary few pints (for medicinal purposes) before bed. Early Saturday morning, our group of 22 were off to the foot of Ingleborough, where our journey began. It was not long before a pattern began. **SSgt Grant** and **Cpl Newson** formed a sort of recce group and led from the front, while **Sgt Potts** made sure **SSgt Wood** could keep up - or maybe it was the other way around? Either way, it did not take us long to reach the top up fairly straight forward paths.

Our route off Ingleborough led us to the bottom of Pen-y-gent, which incorporated cutting down a quick cliff on the way, rather than taking the path. This was quicker, but less comfortable on the body and knees. After a quick 20-min break, we set off up Pen-y-Gent. This hill was certainly the most difficult, in that there seemed to be a massive tab just to reach the start of the climb, whereupon the path rose steeply up the cliff face. On finally reaching the top and having encountered sun, rain and hail, there were a number of extremely tired bodies insisting they would give the final hill a miss. This included **Lt Fell**, who insisted on using a set of ski poles (actually, a customised Zimmer Frame) to help him move.

Back to the bottom, and as the rain began to fall once again and it was starting to get really cold, our happy faces turned to the thought of a third hill. Blisters, pulled ligaments, dodgy knees and aching muscles seemed to be the general consensus. As much of the group were completely knackered and with darkness soon to be closing in, the OC, **Maj Andy Whalen** decided that the final hill, Wernside, would be completely optional. The weather was turning foul and there we were near the local pub, so unsurprisingly, there were initially only 4 willing participants. But then the most remarkable thing happened. The desire to finish what we had started took over, and as we observed the small group getting ready, more and more of us volunteered, until half of the group (11) decided that they would finish the walk - blisters, sore knees and all!

As the others went to off the pub, we were dropped off at the bottom of Wernside with a spring in our step and a smile on our faces - funny how that happens. The pace quickened slightly and we seemed to power up the hill - led for part of the way by **Capt Jordan**, who despite being the oldest member of the group, was clearly one of the fittest! Eventually, in 3 small groups, all absolutely shattered and muscles exploding, we made it to the top. The wind was blowing a gale, it was getting very cold - then, right on cue, just as we sat down, it began to snow. Deep joy! We stayed for only 3 mins for a quick happy snap and then headed home. Much to everyone's amusement the 2IC, **Capt Andy Powell** made his way down on his backside.

The feeling of success was immense and seemed to make the beer back at the bottom taste so much better. Despite the bruises, blisters, aches and pains and damaged knees, the weekend had been a great success. But a few of the Sqn didn't make it to work on the Monday morning. Well done to all who attended - firstly for getting stuck in and giving it their best, and secondly, for keeping a sense of humour. Oh, and the NCRS trg went OK too!

PROJECT REEBOK

REEBOK is an HQ LAND sponsored project to provide immediate/short NTM integrated C2 ICS support for National and Land environment contingencies, including:

- Nuclear Accident Response Organisation (NARO)
- Integrated Contingency Planning (ICP)
- Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA)
- Military Support to the Mounting of Operations (MSMO)
- Military Home Defence (MHD)

It comprises a det of 2 x 4 ton vehs, each carrying a fully refurbished container box body. One operates as the CP/Staff user working area, and the other is the det Syscon. A REEBOK det is totally self-sufficient for 72hrs and can provide 25 users with the following facilities:

- Secure Voice
- Secure Data
- Restricted Data
- Restricted Fax
- Unclassified data
- Insecure Voice
- GSM Access
- Satellite/Terrestrial TV

Overall control of the REEBOK Project rests with 10 Sig Regt, but the installation and build phase is taking place at RHQ 38 Sig Regt (V) in Sheffield and at Corsham under the direction of the Deputy Project Manager, **WO2 Taff Bryant**. A four weekend package of REEBOK collective trg is running concurrently to the build phase in order to prepare crews from the 2 (NC) Sig Bde Units who will hold this equipt. Once the installation work and trg are complete, REEBOK dets will be held at 32, 38 and 71 Sig Regts.

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col Campbell-Black**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Stillie**

TA CORPSAAM 2004

This year the Regt was able to enter two teams and four individuals in TA CORPSAAM 2004. NRPS Trg SSgt, **SSgt Richie Arundel** and SPSI of 5 (QOOH) Sig Sqn (V), **SSgt Dinger Bell** managed and coached the teams. They ranged from the old sweats (many of whom had just returned from OP TELIC) to younger officers and soldiers who seem to have been in the Regt for only five minutes. Despite having had only one trg session, they brought home silverware for the third consecutive year. The A Team, of **2Lt Oliver Gleave** (Capt), **Sgt Paul Milner**, **Cpl Marv Dyer**, **LCpl Bri Jarman** and the diminutive **Sig Cassie Downs**, won the FIBUA and Association Matches outright, and came joint

Sig Downs – Top Shot

first with 38 Sig Regt (V) in the Combat Snap Match. The A Team also came runners-up in the Champion Unit Team. **Cpl Dyer** was declared the best individual in the FIBUA Match, and **Sig Downs** was named Best Female Shot. The B Team, consisting of **2Lt Alex Orr** (Capt), **LCpl Paul Bray**, **LCpl Darrell Evans**, **LCpl Luke Cemlyn** and **Sig Khushru Cooper** performed admirably. They didn't win any prizes, but they thrashed the A Team in the Roupell Cup! We must not forget those individuals who tried their hardest: **LCpl Manny Gandhi**, **LCpl Jon Godwin**, **LCpl Jon Clarke** and **Cfn Karin Annan** and also our GD man, **Sig Norgate**, who did a cracking job!

5th (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Ruth Empsom**
SSM **WO2 Hall**

The Sqn welcomes **Sgt Claire Rutter**, on her appointment as the PSI (Tech) vice **Sgt Dave Randall**. Congratulations to **Oliver Gleave**, who enlisted into the Sqn in September 2003 and was soon off to RMAS to attend TACC and TACP in January and February 2004, gaining a well-deserved pass. He is now Tp Comd, Alpha Tp.

Sigs Louise Penfold and **Darral O'Sullivan** were jointly selected for the award of the PSI's Trophy for 2003 for the most improved soldiers for the year. **Louise** and **Darral** enlisted in February 2003 and by December 2003 they had completed all phases of recruit trg and qualified as radio operators. Well done!

PRESENTATION OF CHARITY FUNDS

Following the extremely successful Charity Event last year, the Sqn presented a cheque for £1,037.59 to **Cllr Rosemarie Higham**, The Mayor of Banbury and the same amount to **Col James Dunsmure OBE**, Chairman, Army Benevolent Fund, Oxfordshire.

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Carla Lankester**
SSM **WO2 Dave Lambert**

Recently we built and ran the Bde HQ for 2 (NC) Bde during an FTX at Longmoor. This was a valuable and steep learning curve for the newly traded members of the Sqn. We also spent a little time training with the Police, which was good value. Despite the appalling weather during the weekend much was achieved and valuable lessons learned.

Concurrent with this ex, several members of the Sqn were assisting HQ London District during EX LONDON RESPONDER, part of which was held at the TAC Uxbridge. The ex was designed to test the response to a major disaster in the London area. The TAC played host to the whole of the emergency HQ, along with several dets from Sig Regts in the London area. There was also a Rugby match of some significance played during the same weekend.

We welcome **SSgt Dave Rimmer**, who joins us as the PSI (Ops). The PSI Tech, **Sgt Eric Curbishley**, has held the Ops fort admirably for the past 5 months, and all credit to him for organising an excellent first week of Annual Camp

The first 3 months of the year are always hectic and this year is no exception. RDW 1 in January-February was followed by a Sqn comms ex in the Longmoor-Pirbright area in mid February. This was organised by **Lt David Cornick** and gave the det comds the opportunity to get back to basics with their respective dets.

We welcome back our little band of warriors from OP TELIC. **SSgt Gary Cheshire** spent an extended tour with HQ 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt in Basrah, whilst **Sgt Bob Young** and **LCpl Darren Evans** completed their tour with HQ 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, also in Basrah. A fresh layer of sand has been applied to the Sqn bar so that they feel more at home whilst telling, for the umpteenth time, all their stories about what they did in the war!

Looking to the future, the Sqn is planning to canoe from Banbury to Uxbridge sometime in the early summer. This will be in aid of the ABF and a local charity. We also look forward to the first visit of the new Rep Deputy Lieutenant for Hillingdon, **Wg Cdr Partridge MBE**.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Bill Ruthven**
SSM **WO2 Phil Martin**

We have had a busy few months. We had an excellent Sqn ex in Colerne, which was of good value to all who attended. We have welcomed back from OP TELIC our OC, **Maj Bill Ruthven**, **Cpl M Dyer**, **LCpl Bryan Jarman** and **Sig Mike Mann**. We have also said farewell to **Cpl Alistair MacGilp** and **LCpl Steve Allen** in the other direction, and wish them well and a safe return.

Congratulations go to **SSgt Chris Klass**, **Cpl Martin Kane**, **Cpl Sam Estcourt**, **Cpl Herby Hyde**, **LCpl Sara Baldwin** and **LCpl Vanesia Nash**, on their well-deserved promotions.

We have farewelled **Maj Ruth Empson**, who did an excellent job at short notice standing in for the OC while he was on OP TELIC. **Ruth** has now moved on to command 5 Sqn in Banbury. We also said farewell to **Miss Kay Pope**, who retired after 35 years of service at Horfield TAC. **Kay** was much loved by 57 Sig Sqn personnel past and present, providing excellent service over many years. We wish her well in her retirement.

Guess who failed MP5 TOETs?

71st (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col HJ Robertson TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) P Curtis**

265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SQUADRON

OC **Maj Michael Mustoe**
SSM **WO2 Ian Lapidge**

Tuesday 17 February 04 saw the Sqn receive a visit from Comd 2(NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas MBE**. The Brigadier made a tour of the unit lines stopping to chat with the troops, especially those who had returned from operational tours. We then made our way to the Sqn bar where the he presented VRSMs to **Sgt A Gosling (REME)** and **Cpl B Morse** and a LSGC to SSgt S

Anderson.

Over the weekend of 6-7 March the Sqn were busy with maint and ITDs, while the shooting team were down at Pirbright putting in some practice for the Corps SAAM later in the month. On the Saturday evening there was a farewell dinner for **Sgt Alan Gosling** and **Cpl Alan Wheatley**. They will both be missed by all the Sqn.

Cpl Jacky Morse and her Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Meritorious Service

On 9 March, LCpl Arnold, RAMC was promoted Cpl. She spent time training with 4 GS Med Regt, Maidstone on completion of which, she passed her CMT 2 course in York.

On Wednesday 17 March, the SSM, **WO2 Ian Lapidge**, accompanied **Cpl Jacky Morse** and her husband, **Cpl Barry Morse** to HQ RFCA, Fulham House for her to receive the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Meritorious Service, presented by **FM Sir John Chapple GCB CBE DL**. **Cpl Morse** completed the MT SNCO's Course and currently holds the position of MT Sgt (awaiting promotion). Her first trade is Rad Op Class 2, and she is always happy to help on a shift when on ex. On range weekends you will find her on the firing point, as she is qualified to RMQ 1-3; and if you fancy dropping into the gas chamber she is our Sqn NBC Instructor. Apart from all her skills and qualifications, she is a keen member of the Regt shooting team, competing in all major competitions.

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Michael Wood**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Jim Swin**

The beginning of 2004 has kicked off with a flurry of activity. Following the new CO's visit in January, February was comparatively quiet with the emphasis on trade trg and moving people into new roles, some following their return from OP TELIC 2, and others following recent promotions.

The most recent Sqn trg weekend saw a number qualify to drive Landrovers, minibuses and trailers around the windy roads of Britain. Our thanks got to **WO2 Pieper** and the CO's Driver, **Cpl Baker**, for their assistance and patience.

Congratulations go to **2Lt Rawden Leigh**, who gained his commission at the beginning of February; and to **LCpl Ian Went**, **Cpl Matt Evans** and **Sgt John Laskey** on their promotions. **Sgt Laskey** was promoted by a former Essex Yeoman, the High Sheriff of Essex, **Mark Thomasin-Foster CBE DL**, on his visit to the Sqn in March.

THE COURAGE TROPHY WEEKEND

– by Sgt Charlotte Foakes and Sig Ian Brazier

In the words of Robert Burns, '…the best laid schemes o' mice an' men, gang aft agley.' After several weeks of selecting, planning and organising, the skilled and honed Courage Trophy Team ended up being completely different on the day (but, despite this, they performed well). The Team was **Lt Hugh Beattie** Capt), **Cpl Richard Marsh** (2IC) **LCpl Kelly Cloughton**, **LCpl Will Mackay**, **Sig Ian Brazier**, **Sig Taylor**, **Sig Stow** and **Sig** (now LCpl) **Ian Went**.

After an interesting journey to the Competition, the team arrived at their tented accn for a restful night for the competition the following morning. But restful it was not to be! In true Army fashion, the tent developed its own built-in swimming pool, adding to the fun and discomfort! But our team was one of the lucky ones. Some teams lost their tents completely, in the high winds during the weekend.

The competition was made up from a mix of stands, including: Comms, First Aid, Shooting, the Confidence Course, Driving,

NBC, Mine Clearance, Night Navex, an 8-mile March and Shoot, followed by a Falling Plate competition. On the Confidence Course the team had to pick up various marked objects such as an ammo box and strangely they ended up with twice as much stuff as was actually needed! The Team did particularly well on the NBC Stand with the DS describing them as the best team of the competition! **Sig Brazier**, in his enthusiasm, packed his Bergen for the March and Shoot, and proceeded to break the scales!

Maybe this was a cunning plan, for the benefit of the rest of the team.

All in all, the competition was a success and the Sqn team, which was a little fragmented at the start, came together, worked hard and achieved good results.

This was demonstrated in their very respectable placing of eleventh out of seventeen teams.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

OC **Maj D Simcox**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Krikorian**

Congratulations and best wishes our OC, **Maj Debbie Simcox**, and her husband on the birth of baby **Oliver**. Both mother and child are doing well. We also welcome our new SSM, **WO2 Krikorian**, who brings a wealth of experience to the Unit.

Trg in the Sqn has continued a pace, with several of the operators completing their Class 1 courses at Blandford. The latest batch of volunteers have also just finished their SC course and celebrated in fine style at the End of Course Mess Dinner - although details of the night remain hazy.

We say farewell to **Cpl Gaz Wolley** and **Sgt Mick Peace**, who both leave after completing more years' service with us than anyone can remember. **Cpl JP Thomas** also departs to Blandford. We wish them all the best at their next units.

Three TA members, **Cpl Clarke**, **Cpl Jones** and **Sig Coleman**, have answered the call and are shortly to depart for Bosnia. The TA will be holding a big recruitment push this summer and all members are chipping in to help.

EXERCISE GLOBAL LYNX

EX GLOBAL LYNX is held annually each year by the Sqn, and near the end of the SC Ops course. Its purpose is to test candidates on the skills learned, acting as an end of course assessment. This year's ex saw dets deployed to Poland, Romania and the Czech Republic, with base being run from Cyprus.

Highlights of the exercise included when the Ops were treated to extra training in the form of Actions To Be Taken In The Event Of A Vehicle Accident Course instructors. **Cpl Dave Marshall** and **Cpl Pete Stainforth** who with scant regard for their own personnel safety and that of anyone else, performed fine demonstrations of this.

The ex got off to a good start for those on the Polish Det, with the departure to Warsaw going unexpectedly well. We arrived at loc on Thursday night and were shown to our accn. The following day's activities were concerned with setting up the Det and getting comms in. The first phase of the ex was a week of comms, using different types of equipt and antennas. Our Staff Officer arrived on site and was introduced to the members of the detachment. This week also involved meeting and greeting our Polish counterparts, and showing off our equipt to them. Another visitor was the Sqn OC, who was taken out and shown the local nightlife, the first of a few such outings. We had by this point reached the end of the first phase and now proceeded to the beginning of the second, which had us move to a loc in Warsaw, near the city centre. This second phase went well, enabling the course skills to be put into practice.

SERVICE WITH SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Sqn is unique in the British Army being, comprising both a Regular and TA element. Service in the Unit is on a voluntary basis. We currently have vacancies for Regular RadSysOps (Class 2) and ISOps (Cpl). Volunteers are required to attend a 5-day SC Assessment Course. The next two courses will be held in May and August 04. Successful applicants will then be required to attend an 18-week SC course. Regular volunteers can apply using SOinC(A)'s PD No 206, Annex E, available through their Trg Wing.

There are also TA vacancies for RadSysOps, SysEngTech, ISOps and REME trades (up to W02). There is also a Lt Capt vacancy. Volunteers should contact the PSAO 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) V on mil: 94240 8512 or civil: 01908 638512.

2nd (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Steve Roden**
SSM **WO2 Bruce Singers**

We congratulate **WO2(RQMS) Bert Wright** on his award of C in C Commendation for service to the Army. Well done **Bert**, get the boots bulled! We also welcome back the Sqn members who deployed on OP TELIC. That's everybody back safe and sound.

The Sqn says goodbye to **SSgt George Pendrich**, on completion of his 22 years, and wish him all the best in his new

chosen career. We say hello to Recruits **Paul**, **Mulholland**, **Penrose** and **Oppung** who have recently joined the Sqn.

EXERCISE EBOR CHALLENGE

EX EBOR CHALLENGE was an arduous trg ex that took place in March based in RM Camp Condor and the Glen Clova area. The aim of the ex was to give members of the Sqn an introduction to downhill skiing and rock climbing using the excellent dry trg facilities that the Marines have to offer.

SSgt George Cowan doing his best impression of Eddie the Eagle

On the first day, we took part in a round robin of activities that saw many of us falling with style on the dry ski slope (and it hurts!). **Sgt Sheila Chalmers** showed that she could do more than just cook, by getting to the top of the climbing wall, much to the amusement of others.

Intrepid hill walkers. L-R: Cpl Bruce Tarbet, OC Maj Steve Roden, Sgt Rod Hamilton and LCpl Mike Mullen

On the second day, we split into 2 groups, with one half taking on the heights of Glen Clova, led by **Sgt Rod Hamilton**. Apologies for the snowstorm, but all great trg value. The other group stayed at Condor to hone the skiing skills learned on the previous day. Unfortunately, **Pte Dorwood** had an argument with one of the button lifts and came off worse for wear (explain the bruises to your boss).

All in all, a great weekend was had by all, and many thanks to the Trg Wing and the instructors involved.

7th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj Chris Ford**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Martin Walsh**

The Sqn has had the usual busy couple of months, preparing for an ECI (which is swiftly becoming the bane of everyone's life), completing two weeks of Battle Camp and anticipating the conversion of our fleet to BOWMAN. OP TELIC veterans are rumoured to want to return to theatre, as the pace of life there was somewhat slower.

The next couple of months will see a notable change in personnel. We see **WO2(YofS) Phillips** posted on promotion to the BOTA(G) Team. Also posted on promotion is **WO2(FofS) Ross,** who moves down the road as Regt Foreman to 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt.

SHQ TROOP – *by Cpl Richards*

Tp Comd **Capt Peter Wettenhall**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Lockie**

SSgt Lockie is off on an eight month to BATUS, getting the local rank of WO2. **LCpl Gilmartin**, our long term Hohne based clerk, left us mid Battle Camp, and **Sig Steve Baxter** leaves the Army to pursue a career in civilian comms.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd/QM **Capt Sean Lawes**
RQMS **WO2 Andy Maylett**

It's been another busy period for the soldiers in Support Tp with elements taking part in Boxing, Battle Camp and preparing for the ECI in March. But there was much disappointment for the Unit Boxing team. After we had invested months of hard trg for the Corps Boxing Champs, they had to be cancelled.

We congratulate **Sgt Hall** and **LCpl Reed** on the arrival of their new Gulf War babies, and bid a fond farewell to **Cpl Paul Uzzel**, on his posting to the RE in Ripon.

ALPHA TROOP – *by Cpl Codack*

Tp Comd **Lt Aileen Grant**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Steve Walton**

The Tp said farewell to **LCpl Aaron Fox**, more affectionately known as 'Foxy'. Good luck at Blandford, and all the best with the pending marriage.

The major event over the last few months has been Battle Camp. Highlights included the Assault Course, the Gun Run, and if you were a real killer, the Bayonet Range. At prize giving, Alpha Tp clinched two highly sought after prizes. Best Endeavor was awarded to **Sig Fletcher** and Overall Best Soldier went to **Sig Thompson**.

Congratulations to **Cpl Claire Ashdown** for coming off the Board, and welcome to **LCpl Johnny Howells**, from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. We say farewell to **Cpl Codack**, who is off to 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; and to **Cpl Yeomans**, who is off to be Tp Cpl at Kohima Tp in Blandford.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF MY NEW UNIT – *by Sig Ndegwa*

I was posted into 207 Sig Sqn on 17 February 04 after completing my Phase 3 trg as a Tech Supply Specialist at Blandford. On

arrival I was filled with a nervous apprehension of what life would be like in the Unit. I was met by the guys in the QM's Dept, who made me feel at home right away and assisted me in settling in immediately.

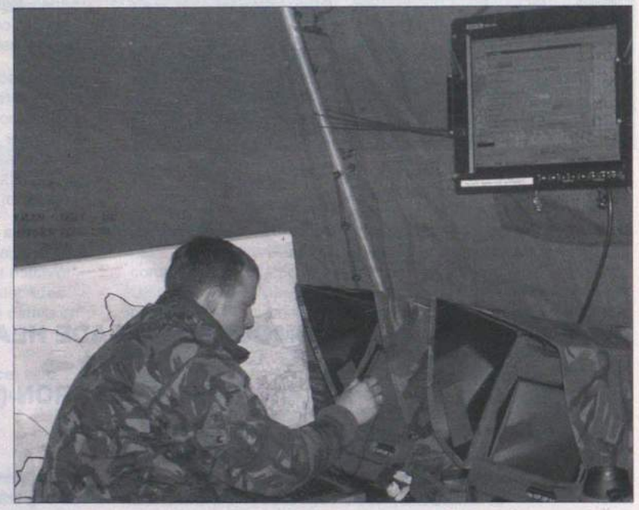
I had been taught a great deal about my chosen trade in Blandford, and soon discovered I had no time to waste with a forthcoming ECI, and assisting with the various elements of the Unit Equipt Table. I soon realised that there was much more about my trade that I would need to learn in the coming months. I am getting used to life in Germany, and am fully enjoying all the social aspects on offer, in Hamburg and Hannover for instance.

My future plans are to complete a number of courses to enhance my trade. One of these is a Forklift Course, which I will attend in a couple of weeks time, after I've had a couple of weeks leave.

12th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj Chris Paterson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Ken Marsh**

Following OUR recent move to Bulford, work has continued apace with the proving of the Sqn's new BOWMAN equipt. Many long days and nights have been spent preparing for the first Bde op field trial, the Sqn's first true opportunity to test both the equipt and the skill sets that have been acquired over the previous few months. The performance and commitment displayed by Sqn members have been exceptional, and a tremendous amount has been achieved. And we now have an even more acute focus, as we have been warned out for OP TELIC 6. Whilst this means that the Sqn will no longer get the opportunity to prove itself at BATUS, we will now become part of the first Bde to deploy on ops using BOWMAN equipt. A new and significant challenge. So BOWMAN trials remain the focus for the rest of the year. The process is complex and frustrating at times, but the Sqn has developed formidable expertise since it embarked on the conversion.



Going Digital. Two terminals and a display screen in the HQ

BRIGADE OPERATIONAL FIELD TRIAL 1
- by Capt E Grieve

OFT 1 was the first time that the Sqn had the opportunity to deploy with BOWMAN into the field. At first it was feared that we would never make it to the start line. A delay of installations hampered the original BOWMAN Training Advisory Team (BOWTAT) trg programme, as did the restrictions and limitations of the delivered equipts. However, after many long hours spent in and out of the garages during February, the Sqn was at last able to deploy in good order.

Although the Sqn had established voice and data networks prior to deployment, it had never worked them over long distances or with other units. So the achievement of establishing a robust voice network over VHF and HF to all Sqn elements as well as to two Inf Bns (1 COLDM GDS and 1 R ANGLIAN) was a highly significant one, and established user confidence across the board.

One of the key design specifications of BOWMAN is the ability to pass data from Bde to BG level. Within Royal Signals this poses no change in concept, as Fmn-level HQs have used data networks for many years. However at the BG level, the ability to receive and pass data from Bde to Coy-level represents a substantial increase in capability. Unfortunately, the data trial achieved only very limited success and was generally the cause of much frustration. High Capacity Data Radio (HCDR) was successful in establishing a 41-platform data network and the passage of small packets of data. However, the ability to pass operational staff work from Bde to BG level was limited.

Other successes included the use of the BOWMAN Gateway Installation (BGI) and the ability to initiate the first BOWMAN to PTARMIGAN call. The use of the NATO Appliqué also enabled successful interoperability between BOWMAN and Clansman. Basic Situational Awareness was achieved, allowing personnel to track the RSM as he approached their loc!

Overall, OFT 1 provided the platform to test, assess and develop the capability of BOWMAN. The individual skills of the Ops, Techs and Application Specialists improved immeasurably. The key lessons identified from the OFT and Conversion to date can be found in the OFT PXR which was published on 02 April 04. The Sqn will also be hosting a Corps Open Day in June to allow all Royal Signals units an opportunity to gain a greater insight into BOWMAN and the Conversion process.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Zoe White**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Rob Fogg**

Congratulations to **SSgt Rob Fogg** for his selection for promotion to WO2, and to **Sgt Steve Piper** and his wife **Emma**, on the arrival of baby **Owen**. Some people will do anything to get out of an exercise. Good luck to **Sig Handley**, on his transfer to the RMP.

The Sqn prepares to deploy

OPERATIONAL FIELD TRIAL 1

This was the first time the Tp had deployed in anger since September 03. During the intervening period we were all busy handing in all our Clansman equipt, completing BOWMAN trg and, after a lengthy wait, receiving our vehs back from Ashchurch.

The first road move for the vehs in over 7 months was the journey to Old Carter Bks where the Tp established a HQ using the new trials tentage – a series of tents interconnected by a series of zips (though there was still the requirement for vast quantities of black nasty to keep the rain out). The benefits of such a short move became evident later on in the ex – it both reduced the risk of vehs breaking down and lowered the chances of the Tp Comd getting the convoy lost. The deployment in Old Carter Bks culminated in a flying visit from the CGS, **Gen Sir Mike Jackson**, who seemed to enjoy the spring rolls more than the BOWMAN equipt.

The Tp was soon on the move to its next loc and surprisingly all the vehs made it in one piece, although the Rebro convoy seemed to take forever to arrive. Despite briefings indicating that the Tp would soon be moving to another loc, events were to dictate otherwise. Eight days later, we were still holding Main at Stoke Hill Farm and had settled in to the extent that we were considering soft furnishings and viewing colour charts for our bashas.

Despite being static, everyone worked hard to test every aspect of the new equipt as thoroughly as possible. This period allowed the soldiers to show their real talent, putting the BOWMAN kit through its paces, assessing its capabilities and limitations. To keep us on ours toes we received various items of BOWMAN equipment from C2DC on a daily basis. Many a box of equipt and co-axes would land in the HQ – though they almost always lacked any form of instruction booklet! However, the Tp fought through and soon mastered any piece of kit that was thrown at it.

BOWMAN proved to be an attractive draw onto the Plain, and the number of visitors grew daily. At one stage, we considered setting up a souvenir shop in the newly-created Reception Area. We were catering for 150+ people each day. By the time ENDEX was called the Tp was well and truly BOWMAN conversant, and had received loads of praise for the drive, enthusiasm and relentless good humour displayed by its members throughout the ex. It was frequently said that the Tp was more experienced in some aspects of the BOWMAN gear than the BOWMAN Trials Team.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Christian Barker**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Simon Donnelly**

Bravo Tp has been through an exceptionally emotional time over the past couple of months. **LCpl Bowen** has left us for 21 Sig Regt (AS), taking away much of the comedy element out of daily life. **Lt Barker** has been attending more meetings than **SSgt Donnelly** has done NBC courses; and **LCpl Elgumaty** has recovered from his exhausting incident with a hose and the garage roof. To a man, the Tp has been working exceptionally hard.

The first BOWMAN Operational Field Trial afforded the Tp the opportunity finally to get its hands dirty after months of preparation. Many of the Tp spent a lot of time with A Tp and the QMs Dept. The QM, **Capt Rouse**, was able to teach **LCpl Towell** everything he knew about Health and Safety, and field hygiene. **LCpl Towell** in turn taught the QM all about passing data efficiently over our new Gucci system. Both are new men.

The weather allowed the BOWMANised HQ to be tested in all sorts of environmental conditions

101st LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj TJS Allen**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Lothian**

Another busy period has seen many comings and goings in the Sqn. In particular, good wishes go to WO1(RSM), now **Capt Kevin Smith** who is posted to DCSA Corsham on commissioning. A big welcome to **WO1(RSM) Andy Lothian** and his wife, **Sharon**, who join the Sqn from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt.

BATTLE CAMP 2004 *- by LCpl Andy Marshall*

Battle Camp 2004 took place in the Dartmoor area in the last 2 weeks of March. Once the main body arrived in Tregantle Fort near Plymouth, the full extent of the pre-Battle Camp injuries became clear as the original nominal roll shrank at rather short notice. As a result, the QM has asked the Environmental Health Team to investigate the water supply in the Aldershot area. It seems that contamination may have caused some people to become weak and unmilitary, with a range of mystery ailments, both physical and mental the week before the ex!

The first week was packed with mil trg to prepare for the deployment phase, and included orders lessons, map reading, heli and boat drills, abseiling, climbing and the GPMG.

The best event took place on Day 2, when the Sqn was introduced to the RM Commando Endurance Course by a team of PTIs from 29 Cdo Regt RA, led by **SSgt Hayes**. Everybody put in maximum effort, and it was a privilege to go around the course. There were no serious physical injuries, but personal pride took a battering in a couple of cases. **Sig Ormisher** particularly enjoyed spending the next two days with his feet inside plastic bags while waiting for his boots to dry out, because he took only one pair.

Congratulations to **Sig Stokes**, who won the GPMG shoot with a score of 91 out of 100. Had he had put his pound in, he would have cleaned up, but the £15 prize money went to LCpl Andy Marshall, with a score of 86 out of 100.

Cpl Helliwell and his section indulge in a spot of river cruising

The Sqn went into the field in the second week, deploying up the Taymar, courtesy of the Navy. On the first night, the troops loaded up with full kit (including SAWES rigs) and completed a tab to an FRV before the first platoon attack. At this point, the new arrivals began checking their posting orders to see where the Airborne/Commando/SF bit was mentioned!

After the first attack, Bergens were loaded onto the transport and the Pl Comd, **SSgt Lee Clark**, set off for a 'small 4km tab'. Several weather systems and 8km later, morale was finally raised when the blizzard cleared and the DAF with the Bergens came into view.

The final attack came soon enough, with an assault on Scraesdon Fort. **Cpl Rick Turner** drew the short straw and led Assault Team 2 into the moat, getting covered head to toe in unpleasant brown stuff, while **Cpl Paul Thurston** took the dry route in. **LCpl Kev Brown** got himself lost on the insertion phase and only appeared above the parapet once the order to cease fire had been given. He was awarded four white feathers for bravery in the face of the enemy.

Overall, the ex phase went successfully, with a well-planned scenario. We can all only look forward to next year's Battle Camp so that B Coy, 1 Flash Heart's Fusiliers (1 FFR) can finally rid the world of **Uncle Tom Cobley** and the Northern Pasty Alliance.

Sig Kani gets to grip with the GPMG

EXERCISE WINTER TIGER
- by Sig Claire Gordon

Due to circumstances beyond our control the original Bde ski trip was cancelled, but before the eager bunch of ski bunnies began crying into their beers, the trip was rescued by some nimble footwork by **Cpl Mortimore**.

The 261 Sig Sqn ski team tackle the harsh conditions

The journey to Bavaria took about fifteen hours, but crammed into our small minibus it felt like about thirty. When we eventually got there, we went straight out to get our skis issued, stopping only to sample the famous hospitality.

It was an early start the next morning for our first day of skiing. The long journey had clearly taken its toll, with a few fuzzy heads evident at daybreak. When we arrived at the slopes, we were put straight into our ability groups. **Sig Ricky Foster** and **Sig Claire Gordon** were in the beginners group and spent the first morning trying to find their feet, embarrassed by the five-year-olds whizzing past.

As the week went on, we all got a lot better and **SSgt Basnett** got the name 'Ploughman' because that was all he could do! **Cpl Piner** was quite good when he was standing on his feet, but he did spend quite a lot of the time with his face in the snow, having mastered the head-plant turn. **Cpl Mortimore's** group had a great time cutting up the slopes, but **LCpl Skelhorn** spent most of the time trying to keep up.

If the action on the slopes was excellent, so too was the après-ski. The German food was good, although we always ended up having chips, because that was all we could say in German. **Sig Corry** and **LCpl Parkinson** put in a good effort for Anglo-Germanic relations, but it seemed that their charms were wasted on the local population.

The facilities that were on offer at the REME Lodge were first-rate, as was the instruction, although the constant knees-to-chest punishment was a little over the top for my liking. All in all, the ex was a great experience and I can't wait for EX WINTER TIGER II next year.

The team relax over a Glühwein or two

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (DIGBY)

CO **Gp Capt J C Rigby** RAF
COS **Lt Col D Whimpenny** R Signals

The unit said farewell to the Chief of Staff, **Lt Col Stewart Sharman** and welcomed his replacement, **Lt Col David Whimpenny**. **Lt Col Sharman's** leaving do was well attended, and consisted of the grown-up pursuits of go-karting and clay pigeon shooting. We wish him well in his new job

OPERATIONAL CO-ORDINATION SQUADRON

OC **Maj Dave Stapleton**
2IC **Capt Lucy Brereton Martin**

Because of an up-coming re-organisation, this will be the last report from OCS as a Sqn in its own right. The current Sqn is to be broken up and split amongst the remaining Sqns, leaving OCS as a 5-man team running the Operational Co-ordination side of things.

Our out-station has been very busy during the last few months and among numerous detachments, they have found time to organise a charity event, in which **Sgt Boris Wade**, **Sgt Steve Roche** and **Cpl Adam Nelson** will run their age - about 30 miles each. **CPO Jed Dymond** was interested in taking part, but at 38 years, he decided the odds weren't really in his favour.

1 SQUADRON

OC **Maj Steve Graley** Int Corps
2IC **Flt Lt Sammi McConnell** RAF

There have been numerous inter-Sqn postings, mostly RAF. We welcome the new 2IC, **Flt Lt McConnell**; the new Sqn Co-ord, **WO2 Paul Rowlands** and also **SSgt Andy Ball**. Other new additions to the watches are **LCpl Browne**, from Brawdy; **LCpls Bourner**, **Middleton** and **Wheal**, straight from the farm. As summer fast approaches we can all look forward to plenty of sports and adventure training (and the odd brewery trip too).

2 SQUADRON

OC **Sqn Ldr Neil Lamont** RAF
2IC **Capt Lindsey Roberts** Int Corps

We welcome 6 new members who have recently transferred from 1 Sqn: **SSgt (Supvr R) Steve Trump**, **Cpl Kelly McIlkenny**, **LCpl Ben Cowley**, **LCpl Mathew Paintain**, **LCpl Mark Chester** and **LCpl Wayne Cundal**. This highly-trained and motivated section will be a great asset to 2 Sqn.

The Sqn are always running sweepstakes, splitting the winnings between various charities. So far this year, we have raised a total of £300 for Aspire, National Deaf Children Society, Bluebell Wool Children's Hospice and Brittle Bones Society.

Several Sqn members are due to participate in a sponsored Coast-to-Coast bike ride, being planned for 2 June, an event that will run over two and a half days, covering 140 miles.

Proceeds will also go to the Station Charities Fund. The boxing team are also under strict trg for a charity event, taking place in August.

The Sqn is also helping out with the 60th Anniversary of D Day celebrations and Army Benevolent Fund, by volunteering for the Flag Day in Lincoln alongside the Lincolnshire ACF and their band on 5 June. A celebration concert will be held in the City of Lincoln Community College on 6 June.

3 SQUADRON

OC **Sqn Ldr R Walker** RAF
2IC **Flt Lt T Parker** RAF

During the past few months a large number of Royal Signals personnel have left us, including **Cpl Jason Perry**, posted to 15 Sigs Regt; **Cpl John Wadsworth**, posted to JSG; **Cpl Paul Tonge**, posted to JCUNI; **Cpl Ritchie Payne** and **Sgt George Lawson**, both leaving the Army. New arrivals include **Sgt Bob Dryden**, from 7 Sig Regt, and **Cpl Becky Lincoln**, from 243 Sig Sqn.

Headed by **Flt Lt Parker**, our Nijmegen Team continues its trg for the march in July. The team has representatives from all 3 Services, and all involved are looking forward to the event. The Royal Signals contingent include **Sgt G Norris**, **Sgt Bob Dryden**, **Sgt Lee Stafford**, **Cpl R Lincoln** and **Cpl Sangster**.

3 Sqn continue to dominate the CO's Cup competition, aided by a surprise win in the Basketball. The Americans put up a good fight, but were beaten in this, one of their national sports!

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

OC **Maj MJ Emslie**
USM **WO2 (USM) RJ Ayling**

As well as maintaining a host of different comms systems, the soldiers of JCUFI have been very busy over the last couple of months, taking advantage of the awesome terrain and opportunities on offer in the South Atlantic. Below are reports about a physically demanding EX COMMANDO CHALLENGE and an equally challenging March and Shoot competition.

EXERCISE COMMANDO CHALLENGE - *by LCpl Michell*

EX COMMANDO CHALLENGE was created to commemorate the yomp of 45 Commando from Port San Carlos to Stanley that eventually brought the Falklands War to a conclusion.

The Falkland Islands Defence Force (FIDF) and their resident Trg SNCO, **WO2 Nick Watson** RM, hosted the event and provided an impressive support element of Landrovers and quadbikes to keep us supplied with water and medical support.

The start of the challenge: a 1.5-mile log race

There were seven teams of six, representing all three Services. Each person was required to carry three days' rations, and the minimum outdoor survival kit. Safety equipt was distributed throughout each team.

The starting point for the challenge was Hope Cottage in the north of East Falkland. The teams were flown there by Chinook from MPA, and given a full brief before settling down for what promised to be a very wet night.

The Challenge started with a 1.5-mile log race, with each team carrying two logs. The logs were then exchanged for Bergens and the 44-mile yomp began. During each stage of the yomp, there were CPs, where water could be topped up and medical attention received. The Falklands terrain – endless fields of 'babies heads' – caused a lot of blisters and a few lower limb injuries. Sunburn was also a major consideration, due to the thin ozone layer above the Falkland Islands.

The first day's yomp concluded with a combined river crossing and timed Land Rover push. A number of comd tasks were added to test teamwork and to reflect the possible problems that the Marines may have encountered during OP CORPORATE in 1982.

The teams continued the yomp on the second day, heading off at staggered intervals. By now injuries were rife, and two depleted teams had to combine to make a viable number. Although the wet weather to failed to dampen spirits, it soaked the Bergens, making them even heavier. But by midday, the weather improved and we soon dried out. Most of the teams were now visible moving over the vast plain below Mt Kent. The teams picked up pace and headed down into the valley in the shadow of the Two Sisters. A rope-assisted river crossing comd task concluded the second day's yomp.

The third day saw the final yomp into Stanley, following a route straight up the Two Sisters, where at the first CP, we met two ex Royal Marines who had taken part in the attack on the Two Sisters in 1982. Continuing from this CP, the teams headed down into the valley and followed the track all the way into Stanley. At the finishing point, we were encountered another log race, this time against the clock. After this, we continued to the range for a quick 100-metre dash and a falling plate shoot. Each team was given 60 rounds, twelve plates and 30 seconds to complete this final comd task.

Presentations and speeches were given at the FIDF complex, after which the competitors enjoyed a beer and a curry.

MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION - *by Sgt Scott Tomblin*

After last year's terrible result of dead last, JCUFI had a lot to prove on this year's March And Shoot Competition, organised by the RIC. Interest was high, as people realised that their end of tour inserts were about to be written, and were going to be a little lacking in content. JCUFI managed to enter a total of three teams of six from all three Services.

The competition included an 11km march carrying 35lbs, weapon and water, with an assault course and accuracy shoot to finish.

The 'B' Team, headed up by **Sgt Scott Tomblin**, was the first team to cross the start line, with the RAF Regt in hot pursuit. But they saw off RAF Regt's fast pace to cross the finish line first. The assault course proved to be a lot more difficult than it looked. JCUFI 'B' team showed a serious lack of finesse under the scramble net.

LCpl Stephenson and team mates pushing an FIDF Land Rover over tough terrain.

Sleeping rough before the competition

SSgt Flynn working hard

The 'A' Team, commanded by **Lt Ben Stone**, were the next JCUFI team to head off into the distance. With an impressive start they set a fast pace but picked up an injury or two, and slowed towards the end of the march phase. But on the assault course, aggression pulled them through in a very respectable fashion.

Team 'C', with **Flt Lt Justin Salmon** as their leader, set a quick pace, but as they came over the hill at the end of the march, the pain and effort was showing. But they reached the assault course with their heads held high. They were able to learn from the other two teams' mistakes and set a lightening time.

With all three teams having good shoots, it was a quick shower and change, then to the RIC bar for the prize giving. It came as no surprise that the first 5 teams were from RIC. But with all their three teams finishing in the middle third of the 21 strong field, JCUFI can once again hold their heads high around Mount Pleasant Complex.

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

Service with 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn offers soldiers an opportunity to use their comms and specialist skills in the most challenging of circumstances.

The Assessment Course The Assessment Course aims to identify those students suitable to work in a diverse and challenging environment. There is no pass or fail on the Assessment Course; students are deemed either suitable or unsuitable. Students who are deemed unsuitable are still likely to benefit from the experience gained from the Assessment Course. Successful Assessment Course candidates will begin the DV clearance process before starting the Special Communications Course.

Special Communications (SC) Course The Sqn currently runs one SC Course per year, beginning each November. The course lasts 21 weeks including a 3-week overseas confirmatory exercise. The course has a high work content and includes some late working. The course is broken into 3 phases and there are formal performance reviews at the end of each phase. Soldiers are posted to 1 Sig Sqn on successful completion of the SC course for, on average, a 5-year tour.

Rewards The rewards for SC service can be considerable. SC operators also receive additional pay, currently at £7.20 per day for Cpls and below and £9.77 per day for Sgts to WOs. The Sqn also has 12 slots for parachute-trained personnel, who will receive an additional £4.54 per day. The accommodation for single soldiers is outstanding and all single soldiers receive £14.80 per day living expenses per day. Above all, the work is interesting, challenging and immensely rewarding.

The Sqn will be touring the Corps later in the year. Details on how to apply for employment with the Sqn are contained in SOinC(A) PD No 206, which is held in all sqn offices. Alternatively, information can be obtained by phoning Bletchley 94240 8517/8535.

NEWS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH

2 SIGNAL SQUADRON ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SIGNALS

AN EX-ROYAL SIGNALS OFFICER'S VIEW OF THE NEW ZEALAND ARMY AND ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SIGNALS– *by Lt Rob Hamilton RNZSigs*

***Capt Rob Hamilton** left Royal Signals in December 02 and dropped rank to join RNZSigs in February 03. Since writing this, he has re-gained his third pip. New Zealand's Army being quite small, there are often temporary inter-corps postings to meet short term needs. **Capt Hamilton** is currently serving as RSO, 1st Bn, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (1 RNZIR). At one time in my own career, I held the very same appointment – Bernard Redshaw, Editor*

In 2002, when I announced my decision to leave Royal Signals, move 19,000kms to the other side of the world, revert to Lieutenant and drop two-thirds in salary, my fellow Officers' comments ranged from: 'Wish I was going to New Zealand' to the more common: 'Are you quite mad?' With hindsight, I was thinking along both these sets of lines. My career seemed to be going in the right direction, but here I was, about to drop it all and take up a commission in RNZSigs, about which I knew very, very little.

Capt Rob Hamilton RNZSigs poses at HQ 2 NZ Sig Sqn

I didn't move because I wanted to join RNZSigs. I was enjoying my time in the Royal Corps, but I could see UK becoming increasingly overpopulated, expensive and unpleasant. When the opportunity arose to enjoy a better lifestyle in New Zealand, doing the equivalent job but in a country boasting the wild outdoors and a complete contrast in scenery, it seemed I was being offered the best of both worlds. So, in January 03, I packed my bags and the following month signed on the dotted line, pledged allegiance to the same Queen, and began my career in the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).

In much the same way that the population of barely four million inhabitants find themselves clattering around the large expanse of Kiwi territory, the NZ Army of only 4,442 personnel finds itself with a huge operational remit to maintain a credible force, capable of operating alongside its far larger coalition partners. The Regular Army has an F Echelon of two Light Inf Bns and an Armd Recce Sqn; a Combat Spt element of a Light Gun Regt, an Engr Regt and two Sig Sqns; and a CSS element comprising a Log Bn (and elements of another), an MP Pl and a Med Sqn. Despite its size, it has an Engr Sqn Gp in Iraq, an Inf Coy(-) Gp in the Solomon Islands and a Coy-sized Joint Force Gp in Afghanistan, as well as personnel on UN and other coalition deployments, including East Timor, Sinai, Sierra Leone, the Balkans and (in a non-military role) Antarctica.

Fortunately, the NZ Army has, over the last few years (and due in part to eqpt failures highlighted on operations in East Timor 2000-02), received a large financial investment to replace its Vietnam era equipt. The NZ Army is currently undergoing its biggest transition since WW2, and is on the road to becoming a motorised force, having procured 105 Light Armoured Vehicles (LAV III) for the F Echelon. Additionally, the aging Landrover V8 fleet is to be replaced with Pinzgauers, including an armoured variant for the family of inf spt wpns.

Comms (for once) have not been forgotten, and a new package of radios known as the Tactical Mobile Communications System (TMCS) has been procured, comprising the Harris AN/PRC-117 and AN/PRC-150, the IIT SINCGARS AN/PRC-119F and the Racal MBITR AN/PRC-148. 2 Sig Sqn has received its first of four 256kb C-Band Satellite systems and, with new field LANs awaiting delivery, RNZSigs will most certainly rank alongside its allies, so long as they realise the full potential of the various systems.

The Corps, however, is small and hard-pushed to deliver both tactical and strategic comms. RNZSigs is approximately 255 strong - 25 offrs and 230 ORs. It comprises two Sig Sqns, the School of Signals and a small element supporting NZSAS. 3 Sig Sqn is based in Burnham, near Christchurch and consists of 31 Radio Tp, 32 IS Tp and 33 EW Tp. 2 Sig Sqn in Linton, Palmerston North, is home to 21 Radio Tp, 22 Messaging Tp and 23 Medium Capacity Communications (MCC) Tp, the latter operating the C-Band systems. Neither Sqn have trunk comms, but this is currently being addressed. Its remit is massive, but the Sqn has the highest morale of all the units in the Formation, the troops are always keen to enhance their knowledge and they are adapting to change in a very professional manner.

My first impressions of the Kiwi Army? Overall, I think the soldiers are a lot fitter, have a greater depth of trade knowledge and are more tenacious in character. But they lack the understanding of the battlefield 'big picture', having had little experience of working at Bde level and as part of a Joint massed effect. The NZ Army works on a very structured training year, with individual training being run for the first four months of the year, collective training thereafter, and culminating in a Formation level exercise. However, given current operational commitments, the Formation exercise will constitute less than a third of the manpower and equipt found in a conventional Brigade, and thus the high level of notional play makes it difficult for the soldiers to understand where they fit into the picture.

As for my first year, I have spent the majority of my time on the promotion courses qualifying to get my third pip back! The

promotion scalings are very different here, particularly in the Officer Corps, where (for example) Lieutenants are not promoted to Captain until they have passed the equivalent of JCSC and the Special-to-Arm course pertinent to them. Thus, I started my year with the two month CIS Managers' Course at the School of Signals, doing plenty of comms planning, configuring multiplexers (I take back all the abuse I used to give to Foremen) and trying to get to grips with where RNZSigs fits in to the ANZAC Force. It was a steep learning curve, particularly when learning the Kiwi lingo where (for example) rebros and relays don't exist, but retrans and repeaters do. But it was certainly a course well worth doing.

'JCSC' is split into two courses, a one month Junior Staff Officers' (JSO) Course and a two-month Grade 3 Tactics Course. The JSO Course is a fairly relaxed affair and focuses on military law, budgeting (which seems to dominate everything in the NZ Army) and staff work. The Grade 3 Tac Course, on the other hand, is a flat-out learning fest, with two weeks of solid lectures, followed by 21 TEWTs (including four CSS TEWTs), staff planning and staff tables and a myriad of other surprises - all compressed into six weeks. The course is extremely intensive but very worthwhile, with the emphasis being on learning rather than assessment (though there are confirmatory TEWTs for the advance, attack, withdrawal, defence and CSS, as well as assessed staff work). What made it all the more challenging being the only non-NZ commissioned officer, was coming to terms with NZ doctrine. The NZ Army does not have the manpower to justify having Staff Officers working solely on doctrine and therefore 'borrows' from others to create their own. As a consequence, the doctrine is predominately American, but with a healthy British component; a smattering of Canadian; and in the eventuality that the aforementioned do not have doctrine that fits the bill, they will, as a last resort, revert to Australian (it's a pride thing). As a consequence, I now have a sound knowledge of (US doctrine) Battlefield Operating Systems (BOS) and can deliver CONOPS pretty well. I am however quickly forgetting how to find my way around a set of TAMs!

So, has it been a good move? For certain, it has been an eye-opener. Because there are so few officers in the Corps, comms taskings requiring resolution come in thick and fast from all levels of command, and the solutions for these are staffed through for actioning in very little time. I ended up being seconded to the School of Signals for three months to write a couple of Staff papers on TMCS, which at that point, I knew close to nothing about. As a result, I now head the Formation TMCS Working Group (TWG) and speak to the likes of Logistics Executive, Army General Staff and HQ Joint Force New Zealand (JFNZ) nigh on a daily basis. There are plenty of issues to contend with, both at a tactical and strategic level, though sometimes one is left wondering how on earth these things progressed so far without the problems being addressed at an earlier stage!

And the real reason for moving, the lifestyle, has been worth it. Though the weather is not much better than what I'm used to, the opportunities to get out into the big outdoors are second to none. How many countries can offer tropical regions in the north, active volcanoes in the middle and glaciers in the south - all in an area not much larger than the UK? For the meantime, I am more than happy with my life in Middle Earth, but like with any big decision, there will always be the pros and cons for my actions. If anything, it's made me appreciate the training opportunities and facilities that exist within the British Army and Royal Signals that I used to take for granted, and realise as an armed entity, how respected UK forces are. But do not rest, United Kingdom. As I keep reminding everyone here, New Zealand is on the bounce back and we'll soon be back up there, leading the way, both on the battlefield and on the rugby pitch!

Capt Hamilton (far right) thinks it looks rather like Senneybridge

NEWS FROM OTHER UNITS

FIRST AID NURSING YEOMANRY (PRINCESS ROYAL'S VOLUNTEER CORPS)

CO **Comdt Linda Rose**
Adjt **Capt Joan Drummond**

Having the Deputy Commander of 2 (NC) Signal Brigade on your stand during a visit from the Commandant-in-Chief highlights how seriously our Corps takes signals training, and **Ensign Lisa Goddard** had the support of **Col Nigel Beacom** as she demonstrated the new Airwave radio system to **HRH, The Princess Royal.**

WO2 (YofS) Jason Cade of 71 Sig Regt (V) had made a special trip to FANY HQ at Horseferry Rd, Westminster, a few days beforehand to brief **Ensign Goddard** on the new system, and he was on call in Bexleyheath for her to demonstrate use of the sets over a range of a few miles. **Lt Judy Kunkler** was otherwise

Kate Brazier discusses the signals equipt with Col Beacom while Ensign Lisa Goddard keeps a watchful eye

engaged in the shooting range, busy with weapon handling as assistant to the FANY Range Manager, **Lt Beryl Pendley.**

Back in the Hall (and right next to Signals) was the stand dedicated to the Corps' CCRF commitment, and the Corps' role alongside the City of London Police during major incidents. For thirty years, FANYs have attended every major incident in the City, giving them experience in disaster management that should prove of value in the event of terrorist attack on London.

The Royal visit over, **Yeoman Cade** was soon present at HQ again. Pronto was testing Voice Procedure on training night with a team of 25 members going to Longmoor in March to run the comms for the Courage Trophy competition – a FANY tradition for many years now. **Jason** was teaching the team all about Airwave, and the Courage Trophy was to be its trial run in Hampshire.

On the ground, the sets proved light, easy to handle and reasonably waterproof in the driving rain. There was a dead spot by the NBC stand, down in the dip (where mobiles got no signal either) on the borderline of the Airwave area, but generally comms were satisfactory.

At EXCON, **Ensign Goddard**, remarked that the constant beeping of the sets was annoying, and that the desk-mounted microphone made her feel like a mini-cab controller, but scores were passed and points were totalled successfully. Some of the girls were out on their first major TA ex since being recruited – and they loved it. They are looking forward to a long weekend at Blandford in May when they will get another opportunity for signals training.

News of our activities can always be found on our website –

NATO ACE CONTINGENCY ASSETS POOL BATTALION

– by SSgt (YofS) MA Jones

May 2003 saw NATO agree to its first out of area deployment. To those readers unaware, there are Royal Signals personnel in both NATO Sig Bns. One of them is DCM (Deployable Command Post) Bn, to which 280 (UK) Sig Sqn belongs. The other is ACCAP Bn (ACE Contingency Assets Pool). After a meeting at SHAPE it was decided that ACCAP Bn would be the lead for this deployment. Its CO, **Lt Col Keith Whitehead**, suddenly had the unenviable task of bringing together soldiers of nine separate nations on a mission that nobody in NATO had ever planned for, and with a 7-week lead-time to deployment. The CO drew in key personnel for his planning teams. From 280 (UK) Signal Sqn came **Maj Russ Edwards** and from AFNORTH came myself, **SSgt (YofS) MA Jones**.

When NATO plans a deployment, a process is initiated where the 21 member nations are canvassed for contributions in personnel and equipment. On this occasion, none of the other nations could provide comms, so it was over to the Brits. Normally, it is a matter of months until deployment, but here it was to be weeks. For **Maj Edwards** and myself, it was a very steep learning curve. Not only did we have only one nationality to deploy, but there would be another 8 separate nations' troops deploying as part of the Bn. The red tape you might find in one nation's requirements for a deployment now felt more like rope.

The CO and I departed to Kabul for a recce to assess NATO's requirements and how we could achieve them, taking into account any infrastructure that would be left by the GE/NL Corps, who were currently undertaking ISAF III. It wasn't a typical national handover, where equipt could be signed over between rotating HQs. The task we had would almost be a clean sheet, and NATO requirements would be quite dynamic. It was planned to take a CGS (Communications Gateway Shelter) and 2 TSGTs (Tactical Ground Satellite Terminal). These would provide our reach-back capability. However, the core network would be a COT's solution, to be procured, configured and tested prior to deployment. In Kabul we would be responsible for extending a NATO comms package to KMNB (Kabul Multinational Brigade) and KIA (Kabul International Airport), which meant our troops would be split between 3 locs, installing simultaneously. There were numerous problems encountered, but by 10 July the deployment phase began.

11 July saw 44 members of the Bn deploy via a staging area in Germany. The Airbus A320 flight landed in Uzbekistan and we would be transferred to C160 the next day to fly into KIA. The passengers would be split up into 5 chalks, but the chalks would be done in alphabetical order. The CO was more than a little disappointed when he found that he be on the last flight and not with his troops who were going to be dispersed through the day, but after negotiation and copious pampering, the German movers allowed the CO to travel on the first flight.

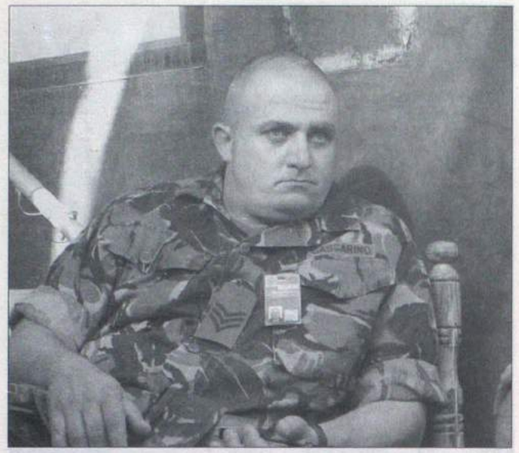
Over the next two weeks, the equipt all arrived on Ilyushin and Antonov aircraft, and work began in earnest to meet the NATO

Changing Rooms Afghan style

handover, scheduled in 4 weeks' time. **WO1(FofS) Phil Holland** had deployed earlier than the rest of us and had made plans for different areas of the Camp CIS Infrastructure. After further discussion between the FofS and **Sgt Dave Cascarino**, work begun. My task was the implementation of the IOC. This was done by converting the gymnasium into an all-purpose Staff HQ, without any engineer support. Meanwhile the red team led by **FofS Steve Moore** would install the JOIC complex. NATO brought in civilian contractors (Bravida) to do the complete cable build. Around this time we had a few soldiers going down with D and V. As a result, the cookhouse was closed and we lived off Dutch/German 24hr ration packs.

After a few weeks of Herculean effort by the Bn, we could see that the requirements for IOC would be met. Then **Capt Jason Nichols** arrived in theatre to take over comd of the SSG (Signal Support Group) from the surge installation team. 11 August saw the TOA (Transition of Authority) to NATO and a well-deserved pat on the back for the CIS team from Comd ISAF. 19 August saw the first elements of the Bn departing back to the Netherlands.

The deployment to ISAF was a resounding success for NATO and for those in the CIS community, it is clear that the contribution by ACCAP Bn played a key role in its success.



Sgt Cascarino learns of a tour extension

SPORT

SAILING

ROYAL SIGNALS WINDSURFING

If you want to:
learn to windsurf, improve your windsurfing technique, be involved in racing, be RYA qualified, or become an RYA windsurfing instructor;
Get in touch.

Rear Commodore: **Maj (Retd) Bowles** -
email: peter.bowles@lycos.co.uk
Tel: 01258 861552

Secretary: **WO1 (FofS) Curtin** -
email: bert@kpcurtin.freeserve.co.uk
Tel: Blandford Mil 2282

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB DINGHY EVENTS 2004

10 May	Inter Corps Team Racing Event 1
4 – 7 May	Blandford Garrison Dinghy and Windsurfing Regatta
16 – 23 April	RYA Senior Instructors Course
22 - 23 May	Joint Services Asymmetric Championships
1 – 2 June	Royal Signals Seaview Regatta
3 – 4 June	Triangular Regatta
7 – 8 June	Inter-Corps Team Racing Event 2
21 – 25 June	Royal Signals Dinghy STW and Dinghy Regatta
1 – 2 July	Inter-Corps Team Racing (Lagos Trophy)
26 – 30 July	RS Euro Cup Lake Garda
9 – 13 August	RS200 and RS400 Nationals
6 September	ASA Individual Championships
18 -19 September	Southport 24 Hr Race
22 – 24 September	Inter-Services Team Racing
2 – 3 October	Services Single-Handed Championships

For further details, call **Capt Owens** on 94371 2182

ROYAL SIGNALS DINGHY REGATTA
(EXERCISE MERCURY SAIL)
NOTICE OF RACE

1. The Royal Signals Sail Training Week and Dinghy Regatta will take place at Netley Sailing Club (Army Sailing Association) over the period 21 – 25 June 2004.
2. The Regatta will be open to all serving members of the Royal Corps of Signals.
3. All racing will be governed by the *rules* as defined in *The Racing Rules of Sailing* and the *Sailing Instructions* issued.
4. The Regatta will take the following format:
   a. Novice Sail training from 21 until 24 June 2004.
   b. Advanced Sail Training for those holding RYA Level 2 qualifications and appropriate experience over 21 until - 23 June 2004.
   c. Novice Racing on 25 June 2004.
   d. Advanced Racing on 24 and 25 June 2004.
5. Classes to be raced will be:
   a. Novices in Laser Pico.
   b. Advanced/Intermediate in Laser 2000 asymmetric dinghies. Note: depending on numbers of entries and dinghy availability this may become handicap racing.
6. Entry forms for racing will be attached to the Sailing Instructions.
7. Those wishing to undergo sail training prior to racing are to call **Capt Owens** on 94371 2182. Qualifications available for sail training are:
   a. RYA Level Start Sailing (Level 2) - £50 (including entry fees for racing).
   b. Asymmetric Spinnaker/Start Racing - £50 (including entry fees for racing).
8. Entry cost is £10 per boat to race if not taking part in courses.

OFFSHORE SAILING – ATLANTIC RALLY FOR CRUISERS, 17 NOVEMBER – 17 DECEMBER 04

Introduction

The Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) is a race from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria to St Lucia in the Caribbean. Royal Signals is entering a 67-foot Challenge yacht in the ARC, and requires soldiers and officers of all abilities to crew it.

Eligibility

Any serving member of Royal Signals may apply to take part in the ARC. Regular members of Corps must be members of the Army Sports Lottery to qualify for funding from them. The event is also open to Reserve members of Royal Signals, but they are not eligible for Sports Lottery funding.

Applicants must be medically fit and able bodied. The physical demands of sailing and the limited medical resources available would bar pregnant women from applying.

Those applying must discuss the exercise with their Unit chain of command to ensure their availability for the duration of the whole race. There are no stops to get off!

Manning Requirements

The minimum manning requirement and qualifications for the Challenge 67 are:

Skipper:	Challenge 67 Skipper, RYA Yachtmaster Ocean.
Mate:	RYA Yachtmaster Offshore.
Second Mate:	RYA Coastal Skipper.
Two Crew:	RYA Day Skipper.
Nine Crew:	Non-qualified or RYA Competent Crew.

Timings

The planned timings are:

17 November 04	Depart London Heathrow
21 November 04	ARC Starts
11 November 04	ETA St Lucia
17 December 04	Return to UK from Antigua

Costs

The cost of the ARC is £650 per person. A grant of £200 per qualifying person from the Army Sports Lottery, and any additional funding will be used to reduce the personal contribution to near £450. The rough breakdown of the costs is as follows:

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Personal Contribution	450	Flights	550
Army Sports Lottery	200	Individual Race entry fee	50
Other funds	TBC	Boat Entry Fee	50
Total	**650**	**Total**	**650**

Successful applicants will be requested to pay a deposit of £100. Once joining instructions are issued, participants will be requested to pay the full amount. In the event of any withdrawals, refund of any money is subject to the Project Officer finding a replacement. It is therefore recommended that individuals take out travel insurance. Details will be forwarded on application.

All participants taking part will be deemed to be on duty. Field Conditions will be granted for the duration of the race, therefore a rebate of Food and Accommodation can be applied for. For further advice, talk to your unit pay staff.

Individuals may wish to approach their Unit PRI and chain of command for further grants to offset their costs. It should be noted that the ARC is considered Sport, and not Adventurous Training when applying for grants.

In order to become a member of the Army Sports Lottery, you should complete a Lottery Application Form (AF 09666), available from Garrison and Regimental Admin Officers, or by calling 01252 348550. Once completed, they are to be sent via your RAO to the Lottery Manager.

The costs include return airfares from London Heathrow to Gran Canaria and entry fees for the event. Funding of UK travel to and from Heathrow is the responsibility of individuals and is subject to Service regulations.

Applications

An Application Form and further information can be found on the Internet at www.rsignalsyc.info.

Project Officer

The project Officer for the ARC is:

Capt CD Roberts
35 Sig Regt
Cateswell House
Sir Henry Parkes Road
Warwickshire CV5 6TA
Tel: (Civ) 02476 854903
(Mil) 94423 8903
Email: charles.roberts@orange.net

The preferred method of contact is by email.

RHQ ROYAL SIGNALS

The three old faithfuls at the RHQ Command Post

RHQ FAREWELLS

Sadly, at the end of May, we said farewell to three old faithfuls at RHQ: Regimental Secretary, **Col Andrew Carter MBE**, Corps Property Officer, **Maj (Retd) Pat Lafferty** and Museum Attendant, **Dave Walker BEM**. Each one was unique in character and will be sadly missed.

After 32 years' Regular service, **Col Andrew** took post in 1996, and had been our anchorman ever since, with his unhurried approach and dry wit. **Pat**, our 'Father of the House' seemed to have been here forever. We celebrated his 60 years in the Corps in 2002, and he still didn't go! Apparently, it was something to do with tracking down the Corps silver. **Dave**, the sartorial dresser, had been with us since November 1993 – before he had even left the Army! You always knew when **Dave** was about. The sound of his mellow tenor voice reached you at least 3 minutes before he did.

- Bernard Redshaw, Editor

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

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A F Carter MBE
Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C P Conlon
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr P J Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

BRANCH NEWS **Jane Wright** was elected Secretary at the AGM of the Newark Branch. **Jane** can be contacted at: 9 Tedburn Drive, Mansfield, Notts NG18 4QE; Tel: 01623 465812. At the Liverpool Branch AGM, **Chris Dennis** was elected as the new Secretary. **Chris** can be contacted at: Hillsdene, Plex Lane, Halsall, Lancs L39 7JY; Tel: 01704 840049. **Arthur** and **Marjorie Cropp** have stood down as Chairman and Secretary respectively of the Cotswolds Branch. **Mrs Jean Woolley** was elected as the new Secretary and can be contacted at: 1 Merriville Gdns, Cheltenham, Glos GL51 8JD; Tel: 01242 231086. **Col (Retd) Ray Bell** has been elected as Chairman of 3 Div Sigs Reunion Club. **Chrissie Meikle** has stood down as Secretary of the Newcastle Branch. The new secretary is **Jim Nelson**, 1 Marsham Close, South West Denton, Newcastle on Tyne NE15 7QL; Tel: 0191 2676904. Our gratitude goes to **Fred Dixon** (Newark), **Jim Mayne** (Liverpool), **Majorie Cropp** and **Chrissie Meikle** for their hard work and support whilst serving as Secretary of their respective Branches.

APPOINTMENTS Following a ballot held within the Branches in the respective Areas, **Barry Moody** (Scarborough) succeeds **Bob Cook** as Area 1 Rep, and **Steve James** (Reading) succeeds **Chris Deadman** as Area 4 Rep on the Central Committee.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 119 members, representing 40 Branches attended the AGM at the Victory Services Club on 27 March 2004. The meeting included a presentation by RSA Chairman, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB**, on the results and recommendations resulting from his paper on the way ahead for the RSA. SOinC(A), **Brig D McDowall MBE ADC**, gave an interesting and well received update on the current state of the Corps and its achievements.

The salient points from the meeting may be seen on the Assn's web page. Minutes of the meeting have been sent to all Branch Secretaries. If any secretary has not received his/her copy, please get in contact with Assn HQ.

MEMBERS' POSTINGS Several Members had an unexpected and pleasant surprise recently when the Government of Gibraltar offered a free holiday to those who had served there. We were able to trawl the Assn database for those Members who had provided their posting details to ascertain those who had served in Gibraltar. We then contacted as many as we could to give them the good news.

Another unexpected benefit of having Members' postings was when a TV company rang to say that they were making a programme about a particular Division and wanted input from those who served there. A search of the database revealed several Members who have been able to help.

If you haven't yet submitted your postings to Assn HQ, do please send them in, either by e-mail or letter.

LOST CONTACT WITH AN OLD PAL? The RSA web site has a Lost Contact page and Members are welcome to place their search on this page, without charge. You can do this in addition to advertising in the Lost Comms section of *The WIRE*.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS: Life Members enrolled since the last issue of *The WIRE* are:

Rank/Name	*Service*	*Branch*
Cpl David Murphy	1971-89	
Sig David Kellett	1960-69	Huddersfield
Sig Ray Rich	1953-55	
LCpl Susan Logan (Wright)	1963-66	
Sig Denis Danson	1955-57	
Sig Ray Grinyer	1943-47	AFSR Assn
LCpl Brian Hardy	1959-61	
WO2 Ron Groves	1955-77	
Sig Gordon Thompson	1990-96	
Sgt Mick Peace	1991-date	
Sig Rob Day	1982-88	
LCpl David Tidwell	1984-89	
Cpl Ray Beck	1977-86	
Capt John Fisher	1948-67	BEBA
Sig Jeff Moon	1966-70	
LCpl Dennis Hill	1948-50	
SSgt Chris Cheesman	1980-03	
Lt Col Andy Whiddett MBE	1969-97	
SSgt Mike Wood	1973-92	
Maj Patrick Dickinson	1963-87	
Sgt Edgar Stanton	1940-46	Rotherham
Sig John MacCormac	1949-50	Rotherham
Sgt Stanley Henderson	1948-50	
Sig Keith Sutton	1958-60	
Col David Miller	1957-91	

Sgt Gareth Thomas	1970-85	
Cpl Derek Emley OBE	1939-76	
Sgt John Walder	1961-70	
WO2 Terry Parle MBE	1982-04	
Sig Alf Button	1950-52	AFSR Assn
LCpl Ron Lee	1940-46	AFSR Assn
Clive Williams	1951-57	AFSR Assn
Sig Trevor Harl	1943-47	AFSR Assn
Cpl Ron Mattison	1949-51	AFSR Assn
LCpl Ian Fowler	1974-82	
LCpl Sheila Chalmers	1991-97	
Sgt Tony Jewell	1962-87	
Sgt Keith Harris	1972-84	
Capt Nick Tomkins	1991-96	
Capt Eric Miles	1938-46	
Maj Steve Hudson	1976-date	
Sig Denis Gulliver	1940-45	AFSR Assn
Cpl Thomas Place	1940-47	AFSR Assn
Dvr David Murray	1943-46	AFSR Assn
Sig Jack Rice	1940-46	AFSR Assn
SSgt Steve Holloway	1983-date	
Sgt Rex Williams-Yeagers	1951-57	BEBA
Maj Bruce Adams	1950-67	
Sig Maurice Skinner	1941-46	
Capt George Schreiber	1939-48	
WO2 Sam Rollings	1950-74	BEBA
SSgt Trevor McCarthy	1950-74	BEBA
SSgt Paddy Hyde	1953-77	BEBA
WO1 Gerry French	1953-77	BEBA
Cpl Mark Warrington	1993-03	Hull
Sgt Jim Brown	1944-47	Hull
Dvr John Young	1958-60	
Lt Col David Gruncell	1965-04	
Cpl Steve Kemble	1975-97	
SSgt Steve Gerrish	1974-95	
Capt Jamie Noble	1991-04	
Cpl Niall Hall	1977-88	
Sig Miles Davies	1984-98	
Capt Peter Neale	1961-76	
Cpl Nigel Thomas	1980-02	
Sgt Martin Sutcliffe	1978-93	
Dvr L G Rodie	1942-47	
Sig Paul Gordon	1971-77	
Cpl Eric Swann	1944-47	Norfolk
Sig Mark Watson	1975-81	
Sig Daniel Mathis	1988-97	
SSgt Arthur Warren	1939-46	AFSR Assn
Dvr Thomas Thornhill	1950-63	AFSR Assn
Cpl Geoff Cullerton	1959-61	AFSR Assn
Sig David Campbell	1971-77	
Cpl Steve Wall	1990-04	
Sig Ken Radestock	1967-73	Darlington
LCpl Jim Fitzpatrick	1954-56	Tayside Fife
LCpl Stan Wray	1954-56	
WO2 Steve Barwis	1976-83	
Cpl Phillip Kendall	1972-78	
LCpl Gordon Weir	1964-73	

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman — **Brig Noel Moss**
Secretary — **Capt Jane Knight**

Sunday 18 April was a very significant day in the history of the Branch, for this was when the old Branch Standard, dating back to the 1950s, was laid up and the new Standard dedicated. The combined ceremony took place in the splendid setting of the Royal Garrison Church of All Saints in Aldershot.

A congregation of well over 100 attended the impressive and moving service, conducted by the senior chaplain of the garrison, **Rev Christopher Cook CF**. Among those attending were the Mayor and Mayoress of Rushmoor, the Aldershot Garrison Commander, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** and **Mrs Boyle** and **Maj Gen Peter Bradley CB CBE DSO** and **Mrs Bradley**, former Master of Signals. Also present were representatives of the serving Corps, other Branches of the Association and exService organisations. 12 other Branch Standards were on parade.

Standard Bearer Fred Bridges hands the old Standard to Branch Chairman, Brig Noel Moss to be laid up in the Royal Garrison Church

In the first part of the service the Branch Standard Bearer, **Fred Bridges**, handed the old Standard to the Branch Chairman who, in turn, invited the Chaplain to take charge of it for safe keeping. The Standard Bearer then received the new Standard, still furled, from the Branch Deputy Chairman, **Maj Mike Wilson**. The core of the service was then the dedication of the new Standard, after which it was unfurled by the Chaplain and placed alongside the altar for the duration of the sermon. In this, **Rev Cook** referred to the symbolic part that Standards have played in military affairs throughout history from biblical times right up until the present day.

After this uplifting service of dedication, Members and guests adjourned to the Garrison WOs and Sts Mess, courtesy of GSM **Joe Fairbirn MBE**, for a fine curry lunch. At the end of lunch, **Maj Gen Boyle** presented the Association's Honour Badge to **Lt Col Ian Ronald OBE** as recognition of 10 years outstanding service to the Branch. Finally, at the end of a successful and historic event, Members retired to the anteroom for the branch AGM.

The Aldershot Branch expresses its warm appreciation for the support of other Branches, especially those that kindly paraded their Standards, thus adding to the dignity and colour of the occasion.

Bearing the new Standard, Standard Bearer Fred Bridges leads the other Branch Standards and Bearers from the Garrison Church

CARDIFF BRANCH

Chairman **Eric Powell**
Secretary **Billy Davies**

The Annual Dinner

Tuesday 10 February saw us gather at the Fairwater Conservative Club, Cardiff, for what was to be a most enjoyable evening. Nothing of course, is ever achieved without a great deal of preparatory work, and for a great part of the day, there was much to-ing and fro-ing on the part of our Hon Treasurer, **Daphne Powell**, to make sure the event would be a success. Our principal guest, **Mr Peter Cuckow**, and his wife were met at their hotel by the Chairman, **Eric Powell**, and briefed about the arrangements. This year's venue turned out to be the most suitable for many years. The chef and her assistants had adhered strictly to the requirements, and the tables, with floral decorations (clear evidence of a feminine touch), were spaced out in a very spacious and orderly fashion.

The preprandial sojourn for aperitifs at the wellstocked bar enabled guests to greet friends and set the seal on new acquaintanceships. Thus the Chairman was able to introduce **Peter Cuckow** and his wife, **Sheila**, to the officers and various members. One of the surprises among the arrivals was to find that that our Branch Chaplain, **Rev Lionel Fanthorpe**, had recently been created an Archbishop of a Canadian branch of the Anglican community. What is more, he was suitably attired in the costume of his new rank!

It often happens that when a dinner is set to commence at a particular time, the gong can sound at any time at all, but this time the pangs of hunger were not given time to mature and, sure enough, at 7.30 pm, we saw the President, **Jimmy Lister**, signal with his gavel, 'Dinner is served.'

To those without esoteric knowledge it must always seem remarkable how a most acceptable multicourse dinner can be served to sixty-plus diners, ensuring that not only does the main course match the individual choice, but that everything is hot when served. It is a tribute to the chef, **Cat**, and her colleagues that the table service was so efficient and unobtrusive. Of course there is always the lighter side, as witness the surprise on **Brian Goode's** face when he received the addition of a potato to his wine.

During the dinner, the discreet music of our entertainer, **Bob Harding**, provided a soothing accompaniment to the meal, and gave much enjoyment throughout the evening. Guests expressed their pleasure that the musical entertainment was so suitable and enjoyable both during the dinner and afterwards.

At the conclusion of the meal, port was served individually to the guests. This was a departure from previous practice, but has some precedence with similar provision for other regimental dinners held at the Club. The usual Toasts, traditionally introduced by the Chairman, were then drunk.

Our principal guest, **Peter Cuckow**, responded to the Toast, 'The Royal Corps of Signals and the RSA.' In an address that was well received, he emphasised the need for strong bonding between RHQ and the Branches. At the conclusion of his address the President presented **Peter** with a miniature Miner's Lamp as a memento of his visit. **Mrs Sheila Cuckow** received a bouquet from **Mrs Mary Lister**. The final presentation was made by **Mr Cuckow**, who presented **Carol Richards** with a valedictory token of appreciation for her years of service as Entertainments Officer.

A new feature this year was the present of a free raffle ticket to each guest. Vice Chairman, **Bernard Gigg**, and President, **Jimmy Lister**, then proceeded to make the Draw. A mouth watering galaxy of prizes was on display and a free choice made to each winner. All in all, a most successful evening was held. As **Peter Cuckow** later wrote, 'I believe you have struck the right balance between an informal and formal format for your Dinner.'

CORNWALL BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (retd) Vic Prees**
Secretary **Tom Davies**

March bought us into our second meeting of the New Year, with a couple of our regular Members hospitalised through ill health, but nothing serious. At the end of the meeting, Members and wives

Branch Chairman, Vic Prees (L) presenting Bob with his Long service badge

gathered for the presentation of his Fifty Year Badge to our stalwart Member, **Bob Chitty**. This had been postponed from January, because **Bob** had had a stroke, but eight weeks later found him in his usual self of smiles, jokes and cheerfulness. Visitors to Cornwall during the summer are most welcome to pay us a visit at the Royal British Legion Club, (rear of the cathedral) at 11:OOhrs on 10 July and/or 18 September. Members can also be met on our Association Benevolent collection days at Trago Mills, near Liskeard on 16/17 July.

COTSWOLDS BRANCH

Chairman **Mr R Woolley**
Secretary **Mrs JEE Woolley**

The best attended Annual General Meeting of the Branch for many years took place at The Victory Club, Cheltenham on Tuesday 9 March 2004. At this meeting our Chairman for more than twenty years, **Maj Arthur Crop**, resigned, together with his wife **Marjorie** who had been our Secretary for the same period. They have worked hard for the Branch during their tenures of Office and there is no doubt that it was their efforts that kept the Branch going. Fortunately for the Branch, **Maj Crop** was duly elected President, and with his wife being reelected Treasurer, we shall be graced with their presence in the future.

Another husband and wife team have taken over, **Mr Ray** and **Mrs Jean Woolley** were warmly welcomed into their new offices as Chairman and Secretary respectively. The Committee was re-elected en bloc, with the addition of one new Member, **Mr Michael Walker**.

After the formal matters of the evening had been dealt with, those present enjoyed an excellent buffet supper prepared by The Victory Club.

DORSET BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) Ken Hadfield**
Secretary **Dave Walker BEM**

ANNUAL DINNER DANCE 2004

Our annual dinner dance was held in the Crown Hotel Blandford on the 2 April. The venue was well attended by Members and guests, and all had a very enjoyable time.
There was a change to this year's format, because the Corps Band was unavailable. Instead, we had a 12 piece band called the *Stour Valley Stompers*, who, under their leader **Tim Stankus** (the Corps Archivist), provided a fine evening of music including various marches, almost equal to that of the Corps Band itself.

Once again, the staff of the Crown Hotel demonstrated their expertise in running fine events. The food served was delicious and the wine just kept flowing, much to the delight of many members.

After the meal, the Chairman **Maj (Retd) Ken Hadfield** welcomed all Members and guests. Then **Brig Paddy Evans CBE** presented our President, **Maj Gen Alan Yeomans CB** with his RSA 50 Year Badge.

The formalities over, all retired to the bar so that the floor could be cleared for all who wished to, to boogie the night away to a four-piece group.

Thanks go to **Walt** and **Sandy Disney** for organising such an enjoyable evening. Hopefully we shall do the same again with maximum attendance in 2005.

Don't forget to log onto the website, www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa which directs you to the home page of the RSA web page. You then select 'South West Branches,' then 'Dorset,' to view photos of the evening's entertainment. Any member wishing to include their own photos on the site, should contact **Dave Walker**, whose address can be found on our website under 'Contacts.'

Brig Paddy Evans CBE presents Maj Gen Alan Yeomans CB with his RSA 50 Year Badge

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) Paul Burton**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) Barry Greenwood**

On the last Sunday in February, a large number of our membership attended the SSAFA concert at the Queen's Theatre in Hornchurch, where the RAF Squadronaires Band entertained us. It is encouraging that these SSAFA concerts are always completely sold out, which is obviously good news, as SSAFA funds get the maximum benefit.

At our meeting at the end of February, **Malcolm Langwith**, gave a presentation on the History of London Bridge from the Roman times. This was a very enlightening talk, with **Malcolm** having props to show the width of the bridge, lots of photos and diagrams showing how crowded the bridge got throughout the centuries, with traffic (both animal and human), shops, accommodation and tradespeople. It seems that mediaeval London would have benefited from a congestion charge. **Malcolm** has a great depth of knowledge about the history of London, and we may well ask him to give another presentation on a different aspect in the future.

On Saturday 13 March, we had our premier event of the year, the Dinner Dance, with 150 Members and Guests attending. The guest of honour was SOinC(A), **Brig David McDowall MBE ADC** and his wife, **Valerie**. Other guests included **Lt Col PN Willmott TD** and **W01(RSM) MA Giles** of 36 Sig Regt (V), with whom we have a close relationship. After the meal and loyal toasts, proposed by **David Dunn**, there were short speeches by our Chairman, the CO of 36 Sig Regt and SOinC(A). This was followed by a presentation of the trophy for the Best Troop, which was won this year by the REME (LAD). The SOinC(A) then presented **Sgt Tex Bennett** with a Comd's Commendation (full

details in 36 Sig Regt's report). After this the floor was quickly cleared for dancing. Music for the evening was provided by *Two's Company,* and was enjoyed by all. The evening was concluded in the in the traditional way, as **Roy Bilby**, our Standard Bearer paraded off the Standard.

Standard Bearer Roy Bilby and the SOinC(A)

Congratulations to all the Social Committee, for another well-organised event, and particularly to **Anita Keen**, whose organisational skills were recognised on the night with a presentation of a bouquet of flowers.

The following day, **Paul Burton**, **Les Woods** and **Barry Greenwood** headed off up the A12 to the Colchester Garrison Church to attend the Dedication ceremony of the Standard of the Colchester RSA branch. This was followed by a curry lunch at 16 Air Asslt Bde Sgts Mess.

Paul Burton presenting Anita Keen with a bouquet of flowers

On Sunday 21 March, our Chairman and his wife represented us at 36 Sig Regt (V) Families Day, when the Padre, **David Eaton**, had organised a Service of Thanksgiving for the personnel serving in Iraq and the Balkans.

On 27 March, **Paul Burton**, **Barry Greenwood**, **Alan Turner** and **Ted Head** represented the Branch at the RSA AGM at the Victory Services Club. Here we not only got first hand the details of the new initiatives by Central Committee but also had a chance to renew acquaintances with the representatives of the other Branches present.

For details of our future events, please see our web page at the following address www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/eastlondon (This has changed slightly recently and you should update this if you have it stored it in your favourites.)

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. We are aiming to be inclusive and would welcome, as Associate Members, serving or ex-service men and women from other Arms, Regts and Corps. Our meetings are held in the Sgts Mess of 36 (E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 8pm on the fourth Tuesday of each month, except December.

LINCOLN BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Fred Patman**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) Derek Wood MBE**

We are struggling as Branch to keep our heads above water in terms of members attending branch meetings. It is very frustrating as a secretary to send out letters to each and every member asking for some response to either a social evening or an important meeting, and getting a hand full of replies.

We have had another sad occasion, with the passing of **Geoff Moralee MBE**. **Geoff** was a Member for many years, but was limited in his attendance at meetings and functions, as he was Musical Director of the Beevor Band in Lincoln. The Beevor Band is a brass band made up predominantly of young people, and was set up to allow any youngster, irrespective of age, ability or wealth, the opportunity to learn to play a brass instrument.

For many years **Geoff** was an avid supporter of young people and music, and he worked tirelessly towards maintaining the aims of the Beevor Band. In 1998 he was honoured by the award of the MBE for his services to the Band. He also received the Mayor's Medal in recognition of his services to youth and music.

We feel proud as a Branch that **Geoff** was a Corps member and member of the Lincoln Branch. Our President, **Maj Frank Philp**

Treasurer, Jim Banks, President, Maj Frank Philip, and Standard Bearer, Bill Doyle after being presented with Honour Membership Badges

and Chairman, **Fred Patman** attended the funeral and passed on to his relatives the Membership's deep sympathy. We will remember him.

There have been changes within the TAVR management team here in Sobraon Barracks, the home of the East Lincs Regt, which has resulted in a change of meeting evening, and it has been difficult getting our social events off the ground, but we shall press on regardless.

Recently, our President, **Maj Frank Philip**, Treasurer, **Jim Banks** and Standard Bearer, **Bill Doyle** were presented with Honour Membership Badges. They are, of course where very proud and honoured to receive the Award. We too, are proud of them. They have all held Committee positions, or have been actively involved in supporting the Branch, putting in a lot of hard work behind the scenes. We at the grass roots level, appreciate and thank them for the work they do.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Secretary **WO2 I Wolfe**

At the time of writing, we sadly have to report that our oldest Founder Member and 50 Year Badge holder, **Harry Stanley** passed away on 19 April. We had visited him only a week before and found him his usual cheery self, and it seemed that he was on the way to recovery. He had just made his ninety-first birthday. **Harry** will be sadly missed, and we send his family our deepest condolences.

The Branch AGM was held on 18 February with the election of Officers providing few changes.

Our new Branch tie looks very well. The design was chosen by the Branch committee from a number of designs submitted by Members. They are good value at £10 each.

Our Secretary, **Ian Wolfe** and NI Area Rep, **Lt Col (Retd) CN Lightfoot**, attended the RSA AGM in London on 27 March. We expect their report shortly.

The Blandford reunion on 26/27 June will see a change in our Branch Reunion Organiser. The thanks of the Branch go to **Edgar McCall** for his work over the last few years, and we wish his successor, **Glen Greer**, well in his new post.

A welcome awaits any serving or ex-Signaller at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the 3rd Wednesday of each Month. Why not check out our web site for what's on?

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Pauline Tennant**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Hugh Nealon**

Although Reading Branch has not made an appearance in *The WIRE* for a couple of editions, we are still active, and the Branch continues to thrive.

BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On 20 March we held a very successful AGM in the WOs and Sgts Mess of ATFC, Arborfield. This was by kind permission of the PMC, and we were hosted by **WO2(SSM) Chris Coates** Royal Signals, CSM of A Coy. We are very grateful to **Chris** (and his OC, **Maj John Healey**, who was able to join us for lunch) for looking after us so well. The post-meeting lunch was excellent, and quite a few Members had to show their appreciation by going back for 'seconds!' This is the third time we have held our AGM at Arborfield, but sadly it will also be the last. The ATFC is to move and the site to be redeveloped. A great pity.

LAYING UP OF THE OLD AND THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW BRANCH STANDARD

On Saturday 24 April 2004 our Branch Standard for the past 50 years was honourably retired and handed over to the care of The Church of St George, Tylehurst, for safe keeping. The same ceremony witnessed the Dedication of our new Branch Standard – ready for the next 50 years.

Before a congregation that included the Chairman of the RSA, **Maj Gen AH Boyle CB**, Representatives and Standards of neighbouring Branches and our own Branch Members, the old and new Standards were borne into and from the church by our Branch Standard Bearer **John Mumford**.

In a moving ceremony the valiant Old Standard was first handed to our President, **Maj Gen Bill Macfarlane**, who then committed it to the Officiating Chaplain, **Rev Adam Carlill**, 'For safe keeping in this Holy Church for evermore.'

The New Standard was then introduced and presented to the Standard Bearer by our Chairman, **Mrs Pauline Tennant**, before being passed to the Chaplain for Dedication as 'a sign of our duty towards Queen and Country and as a symbol of the service The Royal Signals Association is called upon to render.' At the end of the Service, the Padre handed the New Standard back to our Standard Bearer, **John Mumford**.

On completion of the ceremony the Guests, Chaplains and the assembled congregation were invited to take tea with the Branch Committee and Members in a local hotel.

The President, Committee and Branch Members would like to thank **Pauline Tennant** for the very generous donation she

Chairman Pauline Tennant hands the new standard to Standard Bearer, John Mumford

made towards the purchase of the new Standard. It will be a fitting memory for the very considerable contribution she has made, and continues to make, to the Branch.

The new Standard is marched out

FUTURE EVENTS

Other events in our calendar include our annual pilgrimage to Aldershot Branch for their quiz night in May, a skittles evening also in May, a day out in June at the home of **Brig Martin** and **Mrs Hannelore Roberts** for a garden party, followed shortly after by a trip to Kneller Hall for a special concert evening. By then, we shall be ready for the Annual Reunion at Blandford, and the start of the Branch programme for the second half of the year.

If you would like more information about the Reading Branch, our Information Officer, **Col Paddy Verdon** has done an excellent job with the creation of the Branch Website. Much information concerning the Branch can be found by logging on to the RSA Website (if you have the technology!!).

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Chairman **Sid Smith**
Secretary **Tony Dear**

Our AGM was held on Tuesday the 6 April. All Branch Officers and Committee members were re-elected unanimously. Chairman, **Sidney Smith** gave a warm welcome to new members: **George** and **Joan Horne**, **Eric** and **Vera Miles**. He thanked all Branch Officers, Committee and Lady Helpers for their work throughout the year. **Maj Peter Loveless** said the Branch was looking good, with more social activities, a lot due to **Norman Davies** for his Newsletters. Over the past year we have recruited 15 new members and sadly lost 5. Our strength now stands at 59 Life Members and 23 Associate Members.

At the RSA AGM in March, the Branch was represented by **Sid Smith**, **Tony** and **Ruth Dear**, **Tony** and **Beryl Hull**, **Claire Littlecott** and **Norman Davies**. All agreed it was a very successful meeting, with a positive and enlightening speech from the SOinC(A). The free drinks and an excellent buffet and congenial company ensured the success of the 2004 meeting.

Branch representatives (including our Standard Bearer, **Bryan Littlecott** with Standard), attended the dedication of the new Standards of both Aldershot and Reading Branches in April. The Branch Annual Reunion Lunch took place on 25 April. Lunch and a tour of Southampton Football Stadium and a lunch at the Southampton City College Restaurant took place in May. Then, of course, we will be well represented at the RSA Reunion in June.

ANNUAL REUNION LUNCH

This took place on Sunday 25 April at the Kings Court Masonic Lodge, Chandlers Ford. Fifty five Members and guests, including three from Reading, three from Winchester, seven from Salisbury and one from Aldershot Branches, sat down to an excellent lunch, preceded by Grace offered by **George Packer**, our Vice Chairman. Efficiently organised by our Treasurer, **Claire Littlecott**, aided by other members of the Committee, the event took off with a swing from the minute the bar opened for business.

Chief guests were **Lt Col (Rtd) Carl Conlon** and his wife, **Jan**; and **Peter Cuckow** and his wife, **Sheila**. Toasts were offered by Chairman, **Sid Smith**, President, **Brig Johnny Clinch** and **Norman Davies**. In his response to **Johnny's** speech, **Carl Conlon** reiterated the report made at the Annual AGM with regard to the Corps and the RSA, and future and plans, which are already in progress. He congratulated our Branch on its Website, which he said, was currently the best on line. This was backed by **Peter Cuckow**.

Chairman, **Sid Smith**, handed over a cheque for £50 to **Carl** for the Corps Benevolent Fund. The usual raffle, organised by **Ruth Dear** and **Vera Packer** was a great success. **Jan Conlon** won eight prizes but like a good sports person, handed four back. She was assured that her luck would not bar her from being asked back again. We raised £132 for Branch Funds.

Norman Davies, the Branch Newsletter Editor, expresses his thanks to **Sheila Cuckow** for being such an entertaining and amusing lunch companion, and for saying that he had very nice hands. Make of that what you will!

The Reunion was overshadowed by the death of one of our members, **Mr Richard Percy**, who had been ill for a long time. An obituary and report on his funeral will appear in the August issue of *The WIRE*.

CONGRATULATIONS

One of our staunchest members, **Tom Chapman** reaches the grand old age of 90 on 23 June, and **Douglas** and **Jean Hibbs** celebrate their 57th Wedding Anniversary on 24 June. Congratulations from the President, Committee and all Branch members.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

As our Treasurer, **Arthur Cotillard**, is emigrating to Australia, his job has been transferred to **Peter Smith**. So a meeting was arranged at the Fleet Service Area on the M3 for the official handover. We will be saying a final farewell to **Arthur Cotillard** at the RSA Annual Reunion at Blandford on the evening of Saturday, 26 June. Would members of the Beverley Ex-Boys Association please make a note of this date and try to attend.

VISIT TO GUERNSEY

On Monday, 19 April, eleven ex-boys and their wives gathered at Poole Ferry Terminal for the trip to Guernsey, taking their own cars on the Condor Ferry.

The crossing was very rough with the majority of the passengers being seasick. We had called **Dave Bichard** and **Eric Le Quesne**, who had very kindly offered to meet us from the ferry and escort us to our hotel. On our arrival, **Eric** marshalled the ten cars into line, and we set off in convoy, with **Eric** leading the way and **Dave** bringing up the rear. We arrived at Hotel Hougue du Pommier at approximately 20.45hrs and went straight into the

Peter Smith, Tony Hull and Arthur Cotillard at the handover

restaurant for a very welcome dinner. **Dave** and **Eric** stayed to have a drink with us, and **Rex William-Yeagers** and **Victor Jinks** also called in to see us.

It was decided that everyone would do their own thing during the day, so people set off in different directions to explore the Island, which was looking very beautiful with all the blossom and spring flowers in bloom. Castle Cornet was very well worth seeing, but you needed several hours to explore the whole of it. The Occupation Museum brought home to everyone just how badly the people of Guernsey had suffered at the hands of the Germans. There were other very interesting exhibits at the Shipwreck Museum at Fort Grey, the Underground Military Museum, the Guernsey Museum and the Guernsey Tapestry, each panel of which had been stitched by the ten different parishes.

On the evening of Wednesday, 21 April, a dinner had been arranged with the Guernsey Branch of the RSA at the Bella Luce Hotel. It was decided to hire a bus to get the 20 visitors there on time and in one piece, as some of the Island's roads are very narrow and driving can be quite hair-raising. We were welcomed by the Chairman of the Guernsey Branch, **Alec Forty**, who said how nice it was to see so many members of 6 (Boys) Trg Regt. In reply BEBA ViceChairman, **Tony Bermingham**, thanked the Guernsey people for their welcome and said how enjoyable it was to be able to spread goodwill between the two Branches. Among the Guernsey people present, the following are also members of the Beverley Ex-Boys: **Eric Le Quesne**, **Dave Bichard**, **Alf Lain**, **George Stewart**, **Rex WilliamYeagers** and **John Souplet**.

Taking it easy in Guernsey

On our last evening we had dinner together in our hotel, and during the evening, **George Bennett**, **Alf** and **Christine Laine**, and **Dave** and **Cathy Bichard** visited us to say goodbye.

SWINDON BRANCH

Chairman **Derek Dowdswell**
Secretary **Peter Howells**

Capt (Retd) Maurice Mathews, an ex Japanese POW, recently presented a superb display cabinet to the Swindon Branch.

Now proudly on show in the cabinet are a Jimmy and Jerboa belonging to **Rod Mansfield**, a tankard and plaque belonging to **Peter Howells**, a Chindit hat belonging to **Jim Halling**, and the officer's sword presented to **Maurice Mathews** by the Japanese CO of the POW Camp when the Japanese surrendered at the end of WW2.

Maurice Mathews with the cabinet taken during the dedication ceremony

254 OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mr GT Stevens**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) W Weir**

On Friday, 26 March, 48 exboys with their wives and invited guests assembled at the Upland Park Hotel, Droxford, for their spring mini-reunion and dinner. Although intended initially forthose living in the Portsmouth area, this event has proven so popular that members regularly travel from as far afield as Warrington, Perranporth and Clacton to attend; but this year the distance record was taken by **Derek** and **Joan Cropper**, who travelled from Leeds in their VW Campervan.

This was the first 254 Reunion that **Danny Jones** had planned to attend, but his daughter later reported that he had failed to escape from hospital in time. **Ken Wood**, who initiated these dinners, was not escorted by his charming daughter, **Carol**, this year, as she was also ill. Get well soon, both of you, you were missed.

Among those attending Droxford for the first time were ex cadre members **Norman** and **Caryl Baker**, and **Derek** and **Joan Cropper**. **John** and **Catherine Boiling**, and **Douggie** and **Lilian Bower** also attended for the first time, as did **Peter Brunsdon** and **Philip Sherman**.

Our host, ex-RSM Boy **Brian Lay**, had extended, refurbished, modernised and improved the entrance hall/bar area since our last Dinner. He has taken our example to heart and has arranged two ex-Harrogate Boys' Dinners in the near future.

The next 'Droxford Dinner' has been pencilled in for Friday, 18 March, 2005.

254 OBA MEETS BOYS FROM BOYS COMPANY GHQ TROOPS EGYPT - *by Lt Col (Retd) DP Herring*

After publishing the first edition of *Jimmy's Apprentices*, I was made aware of the existence of the existence of *Boys Company GHQ Troops* by **Mr Nick Kharitou**, who quite rightly pointed out that he and his associates were also Jimmy's Apprentices; and so I started to research their history, which was included in the second edition of *Jimmy's Apprentices*.

In 1942, UK restarted apprenticeships for of boys aged 14 years in UK and in India. These two units amalgamated in 1947 when India gained its independence. I wonder if they still have apprenticeships in Mhow today? However, the apprenticeships in the Middle East started at age 16 years, and were specifically designed to release older soldiers from L of C duties to fight at the front. Moreover, they were trained as Morse operators and as DRs. **Jimmy Wilds**, a founder member of the Dorset Branch of the RSA, remembers them well from his time at GHQ in Cairo, and he spoke highly of them. So began my association with this little known but not forgotten group.

The Royal Signals Museum has some of their unit magazines, and details of yet another group of Polish boys and girls, who were released by the Russians after the Germans attacked the USSR. They formed the Polish army of the East to assist in the defence of the Egypt and the Suez Canal. These young boys and girls were trained alongside the Boys Company, GHQ Troops, later rejoining Polish Units till the end of the war. I wonder how many of those are still around?

Jim Perides, Bazil Kazanis, Barbara and Nick Kharitou

During my recent round the world air tour, **Norman Webb** and I met up with three lads, now living in Australia, who are a part of the group of ex-boys from GHQ Troops who operated the comms from Cairo throughout the Libyan Campaign and into Italy. They are **Jim Perides**, **Bazil Kazanis**, and **Nick Kharitou.**

They were all Morse operators and had successful careers after demobilisation. There are 9 of them living on the eastern part of Australia. Their leader is **Nick Khartou**, and it was he who wrote to me with the information concerning this group of ex boys. **Nick** asked me to convey their greetings to all members of the Royal Corps of Signals and in particular to all ex-boys of the Corps. They are very proud of their service with us. **Jim Peredes** says that he is still champion at shot put in Australia. Another member is **Aristide Philippidis** who lives in Stonehouse, Glocestershire.

NEW ZEALAND - NORTHERN SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **George Liddell**
Secretary **Ross Muir**

CORPS DAY DOWN UNDER

In a break from tradition, we celebrated RNZSigs Corps Day on Sunday 28 March instead of the normal 24 March. This was to enable the younger members of our Association, who work full time to attend, and of course the children and grandchildren of our more senior members. It's wonderful to see the younger ones taking an active interest in what was probably the most significant part of our lives. Not only was it significant in that we helped shape the destiny of our nation, but it also engendered a lasting respect for comradeship and true values, which is evident at every Corps function.

The day started with a one-hour mix-and-mingle in the Papakura Returned Services Association (RSA) clubrooms, during which we all caught up on the latest news, sorted out the government's policies and put the world to rights.

We then had a short formal session with the Corps Prayer, and our Secretary reading the Last Call for the 37 Kiwi ex-Signallers who had passed away during the last twelve months. This was followed by the Last Post, a minute's silence and Reveille. The Wreath was laid by our Australian guest and the grandson of one of our members, signifying the Commonwealth bonds and the continuance of service through the generations.

The meal was up to the usual standard of the RSA – a carvery of roast beef, lamb and ham with a huge selection of vegetables and salads, followed by a large assortment of very decadent desserts and a selection of teas and coffees. Table talk was assisted by carafes of wine etc on the tables... For those of you with a pecuniary bent, the cost was approximately five pounds. The meal was of course preceded by the Corps Grace and followed by toasts to the Corps, the Colonel-in-Chief and the Queen.

As an aside, the Signals Association had a history of the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals published recently (*Swift and Sure* by Laurie Barber and Cliff Lord). This had enjoyed good sales around the world.

Two other members of our Association brought along copies of books they have recently had published which look as though they deserve a place on any Signaller's library shelf, They are *From a Postie to a Signalman* by George Baird (initially many of the WW2 signallers were recruited from the telecommunications sections of the New Zealand Post Office) and *Brothers at War* by

The Gathering

Jim Rolfe – a collection of reminiscences of a Signaller who served in WW2 as told to his grandson.

We were pleased to have as guests a retired Australian ex-Sigs couple who have been holidaying in NZ and just happened to meet up with our Chairman before our celebration. This highlights the bond between all Signallers throughout the world. No matter where you are, if you can contact a Signaller, you will be made welcome and accepted as part of the Corps family.

The Chairman's wife, Janet Liddell makes a presentation to our Australian guests

The Northern Signals Association holds four functions every year, which are always well-attended by all those who are able. It is a sad fact of life that each year we see a depletion in our numbers as those from the WW2 days drop off the perch. And it is also a sad fact of life that the current reduction of our Armed Forces is reducing the numbers of new recruits to the Association. However, those remaining have a fierce pride in our Corps, which will assure our future. In November we will be having a national get-together (held every three years) in Palmerston North, so if any readers happen to be in New Zealand at the time, they can be assured of a very warm welcome. The contact is:

Ross Muir
Tel/Fax: 00 64 9 267 3061
Email: rmuir@ihug.co.nz

WESTERN AUSTRALIA, ANZAC DAY 2004 IN PERTH

– by Bob Shaw

As with the Services held in most suburbs, Perth's main one again had the most people, with over 40,000 attending. Some had arrived in Kings Park at 04.00hrs for the 06.00hrs Service. As usual, the format was a Dawn Service at the State's War Memorial in Kings Park, followed by a parade to Langley Park for a Commemorative Service.

The day started fine and slightly cloudy, which made a great sight as dawn broke with wonderful red sky. But it got hotter towards the time of the Service, reaching 31° C, making it rather uncomfortable for the ex-service personnel in their jackets - but we stuck it out.

Because of earthworks for the new railway line to Mandurah, there was a change to the familiar the route for the Parade, but it was well marked and we didn't get lost! The Reviewing Officer was the Governor of WA, **HE Lt Gen John Sanderson AC**. Our last remaining WW1 veteran (106 years old) led the parade in a car, followed by the Defence Forces and then the Ex-Service contingents. Numbers parading this year were up again, and it was hard to fit them all in on Langley Park for the Commemorative Service.

The Signals contingent marched as one body, and after the Service, most of them retired to 109 Sig Sqn for lunch and refreshments. With a monster draw with about 40 prizes to be won, a great day was had by all. ANZAC Day always turns out as a good day out. I arrived home at 15.45hrs tired out after a very enjoyable day.

ANZAC DAY 2004, LONDON

– by Bernard Redshaw

ANZAC Day, 25 April 2004 was well commemorated in London. I was privileged to accompany the NZ High Commissioner, **HE Hon Russell Marshall** in attending five events, and I was amazed at the numbers attending each. It was also impressive to see so much youth involvement. At all of the main events, young people from Australian secondary schools and New Zealand's Nelson College (my own school) were to read lessons or quotations.

At 05.00hrs a moving Dawn Service was held at the Australian War Memorial at Hyde Park Corner. Some 4,500 attended, completely filling the area. Many were veterans, but the majority were young people with an average age of around 25 years - visiting Australians and New Zealanders who had risen early to travel into the Capital for this special event. At the end of the Service, most remained to chat with each other, enjoying welcome refreshments provided by the Salvation Army.

At 09.00hrs a short wreath laying Service was held in the Crypt of St Paul's Cathedral. The very small area was packed to capacity.

Then at 10.50hrs, to the accompaniment of the Band of the Irish Guards, I marched with a large group of ex-Servicemen onto Whitehall to assemble for a larger Service at the Cenotaph. Here I laid a wreath on behalf of the Royal New Zealand Returned Servicemen's Association. There was much more space for the public on Whitehall, but it was full to capacity. As we marched off, the Band played *Waltzing Matilda* and *Maori Battalion*. It put a spring in our steps.

The whole of Westminster Abbey was full for the ANZAC Service at 12.00hrs. When all the dignitaries had been received and conducted to their seats by the Dean, the flags of Australia and New Zealand were led in by that of Turkey and followed by the Union Flag, all borne by serving soldiers of their respective nations. Among many highlights, for me, two stood out: a Maori choir singing *How Great Thou Art* in Maori, and the great ring of bells at the end of the Service. Again, many remained outside the Abbey to mingle chat. I was whisked off to the RAF Club for a splendid ANZAC lunch.

And the Signals connection? At every event I was approached by veteran and serving signallers who recognised my Corps tie and stopped for a chat. I lost count of how many, but there must have been more than 30 of them. It is great to know that the Corps family thrives all over ANZAC land.

WHY A DAWN SERVICE ON ANZAC DAY?

– by Bob Shaw

I have often wondered when and who started the custom of a dawn service, so I surfed the Internet and found the following information:

The Dawn Service on ANZAC Day has become a solemn Australian and New Zealand tradition. It is taken for granted as part of the ANZAC ethos and few wonder how it all started.

Its story is buried in a small cemetery carved out of the bush some kilometres outside the northern Queensland town of Herberton. Almost paradoxically, one grave stands out by its simplicity. It is covered by a whitewashed concrete slab with plain cement cross at its top end. The name of the deceased is not indicated. The inscription on the cross is merely, 'A Priest.' No one could know is was the grave of the dedicated clergyman who created the Dawn Service, but for the simple marker placed next to the grave only in recent times. It reads:

> *Adjacent to, and on the right of this marker, lies the grave of the late **Reverend Arthur Ernest White**, a Church of England clergyman and padre, 44th Battalion, First Australian Imperial Force (AIF). On the 25th April 1923, at Albany in Western Australia, the **Reverend White** led a party of friends in what was the first ever observance of a Dawn Parade on ANZAC Day, thus establishing a tradition which had endured, Australia wide.*

Rev White served as a padre with the first ANZACs to leave Australia in November 1914. The convoy assembled in the Princess Royal Harbour and King George Sound at Albany WA. Before embarkation at 04.00hrs, he conducted a service for the men of his Battalion. When **White** returned to Australia in 1919, he was appointed relieving Rector of St John's Church in Albany. It was strange coincidence that the starting point of the AIF convoys should become his parish.

On ANZAC Day 1923 he came to hold the first Commemorative Dawn Service. As the sun was rising, a man in a small dinghy cast a wreath into King George Sound while **White**, with a band of about 20 men gathered around him on the summit of nearby Mount Clarence, silently watched the wreath floating out to sea. He then quietly recited the words: 'As the sun rises and goeth down, we will remember them.'

All present were deeply moved, and news of the Ceremony spread throughout the country. Soon the various Returned Service communities Australia-wide were to emulate the Ceremony.

Eventually, **White** was transferred from Albany to serve other congregations, firstly in South Australia; then in Broken Hill, where he built a church; then later at Forbes, NSW. On his retirement from Parish life, he moved to Herberton, where he became Chaplain of the Anglican convent. However, soon after his arrival on 26 September 1954, he died, to be buried so modestly and anonymously as 'A Priest.'

White's memory is honoured by a stained glass window in All Soul's Church at Wirrinya, a small farming community near Forbes, NSW. Members of the parish have built the church with their own hands, and have put up what they refer to as 'The Dawn Service Window' as their tribute to **White's** service to Australia.

A very moving story. To me the Dawn Service has always had another significance, in that its timing emulates 'Stand To' known and experienced by all soldiers. Bernard Redshaw, Editor

DONATIONS

Collection at the funeral of **Lt Col (Retd) AC Earl**	£1,012.09
Estate of **Malcolm John Tecter**	£250.00
Mr WW Lee	£10.00
Mr P Holcombe	£750.00
Tayside and Fife Branch	£40.00
Sheffield Branch	£50.00
Reading Branch in memory of **Capt Geoffrey Lewis**	£10.00
Collection at the funeral of **Maj (Retd) TJ Friend MBE**	£150.00
Mr B Fagin in memory of **Maj (Retd) TJ Friend MBE**	£10.00
Mr and **Mrs P Bailey** in memory of **Maj (Retd) TJ Friend MBE**	£10.00
Mr and **Mrs M Webb** in memory of **Maj (Retd) T J Friend MBE**	£15.00
Mr and **Mrs TWF Butler** in memory of **Maj (Retd) TJ Friend MBE**	£20.00
RSA AGM Raffle on 27 March 04	£193.35
Mr J Jarman in memory of **Maj (Retd) DJ Roberts**	£20.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of **Mr NT Snow**	£10.00
John Fryett	£5.00
Ron Lee	£10.00
F Pedley in memory of **Lt Col (Retd) AC Earl**	£20.00
Bedford Branch	£50.00
South London Branch	£50.00
Darlington Branch in memory of **Mrs Timmi Rees**	£25.00
Darlington Branch in memory of **George E Dean MM**	£25.00
Mr P Drummond	£10.00
Southampton Branch	£50.00
Huddersfield Branch	£100.00
Maj (Retd) DJ Chetwynd in memory of **Lt Col (Retd) B Beattie**	£25.00

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

DONALD MCDONALD

From:

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DDB 2GB
Tel: 01307 819107
Email:Diand31152@aol.com

Dear Sir

My sister, **Wendy Rees** was in the Army and serving in N Ireland in the early 1960's where she met **Dave Lelo** from Fiji also serving in the Army.

They married on 3 August 1963 in Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire, our hometown, and their best man was **Donald McDonald**.

We know that **Donald** was Scottish but not where he came from in Scotland. They were both in Royal Signals, attached to 39 Inf Bde (Airborne) 1962-1964 Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn. My brothe -in-law also served with **Donald** in Aden, and we know that Donald later married someone called **Carol**.

We would very much like to find **Donald**, as my sister and brother -in-law from New Zealand would like to meet up with him while they are over here in August and September.

I enclose a photograph of **Dave** and **Donald** taken while in Aden. **Dave** is on the left of the photo and **Donald** is in the middle.

Thank you for your help.

Yours ...

A DUTCH FAMILY SEEKS AN UNKNOWN WW2 SOLDIER

Christmas 1944 brought a bitter winter. Several units from 4 and 7 Armd Bdes were stationed around Stramproy, between the Belgian border and the River Maas. Maaseik was the nearest Belgian city. Soldiers from Royal Signals, RA and the Queens Regt were billeted at the farm of the **Petit** family in Stramproy.

One of these soldiers (most likely Royal Signals) still very young at the time, became a friend of the family. He often spoke of his mother and his sister, **Barbara**, of whom he was very fond. But unfortunately, no one from the **Petit** family remembers the soldier's name.

One day they had to leave the farm suddenly, but before he left, the soldier gave the **Petit** family, pictures of his mother and sister and a leather purse. The leather purse contained religious items, suggesting that he was a Roman Catholic. It is also thought that he could have been Irish.

Although he promised to pick these up after the War, the soldier never returned. Now the surviving members of the **Petit** family would like to find this unknown soldier or his family to return these personal items.

The following description from the family may also help to identify him:- 'The soldier, whose family we are looking for, was stationed in the neighbourhood of a farm, located at the Horsterweg in Stramproy. In the barn at the right of the farm, a kitchen for officers had been set up.

The soldier's mother

Opposite the farm, a kitchen for subordinates, stationed in the area had been set up. In a small room above the cellar of the farm, a radio-communication station was operated. The children of the family were prohibited to enter this room. However, they could hear the sound of Morse signals being used. The biggest room in the farm was used as an office. In this office different military people worked on typewriters or were writing papers.

The soldier's sister

The office was visited the whole day by military people. Beside the farm and in other places in the area, tanks were parked. It is known that these tanks arrived in Stramproy at the end of October or the beginning of November

The farm at Stramproy

1944. It is hoped that some Royal Signals veteran who was in the triangle Maaseik - Neeritter - Stramproy in December 1944, possibly attached to 4 and 7 Armd Bdes might remember him.

Anyone who can help is kindly requested to contact **Mrs Marjo Janssen**, either through *The WIRE* office, or directly by email to: marjo.huijskens@home.nl

DAVID SHORTER

John Fryett is seeking his old pal, **David Shorter** (Sig, OWL, 1945-52). They served together in Egypt, January -August 1946, and in Japan, 1946-48.

Anyone with information of **David** is asked to call **John** on 01473 463563.

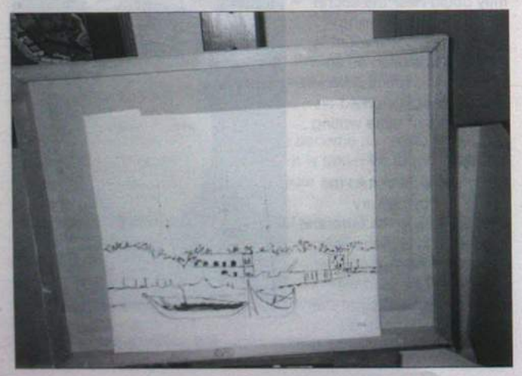
CORRESPONDENCE

THE WIRELESS STATION AT BASRAH

From: **Harry Orton**
43 Greno View Road
Highgreen
Sheffield
S35 4GX

Dear Sir

Reference the front cover of February edition and your comment, 'Has anyone on OP TELIC seen it?' Seen it, Sir? I've painted it. At least stage one and two of a near replica. The third stage is when I slap on a bit more oil and varnish.



I wonder if there are any of my ex-comrades who would like to purchase the finished picture, mounted and framed for £50. All proceeds will go to Corps Funds.

I served some time in Iraq at a place called Zubair as NCO IC Signal Office on the aid to Russia route. The nearest I got to seeing the Officers Mess and Wireless Station at Basrah (spelt Basra in my days of being there) was the Army-run brothel in the area of Basrah. I wonder could this have been a converted Officers Mess?

Yours.....

LIEUTENANT COLONEL AC EARL

From: **Capt (Retd) VLR Dugdale**
306 Hardaker Court
319-323 Clifton Drive South
Lytham St Annes
FY8 1HJ

Dear Sir

I enclose a cheque for £25.00 as a donation in memory of **Lt Col AC Earl (Olly)** who has died recently. He was with me when we joined as boys in the Royal Corps of Signals in July 1939. We were both 14 years old.

I was from the Duke of York Regt Military School. I had passed the Second Army Education Certificate, and **Earl** was Number 16 on the first page of the Civilian certificates, (which was a large number of boys - in hundreds) for all British Army Corps or Regiments.

As we were in the same barrack room and in the small group of eight Electrical Signals, **Olly Earl** would help me with the year of learning, and I, being a 'Dukie', polished his boots and his buttons.

I left Catterick for 11 Armd Div, and did not see **Olly** until I was sent home from Germany to spend eight months as an Officer Cadet. I was a full Lieutenant, and when walking up to the mess would meet several ex-boys who were on the Foremen School, including **Olly Earl**, who used to salute me smartly with a 'Good morning, Sir.' And I used to smile back with a smart salute. I left Royal Signals as a Captain in 1947, and spent twelve years in the Nigerian Police Force, leaving as a Chief Superintendent in 1962. I then joined Shell HQ until I was 60.

After a year or two, I joined the London Royal Signals HQ with a pay of one shilling a day for lunch and the tickets to and from Camberley, by train. I only left there when the HQ went down to Blandford, and missed the happy year there in London.

Please forgive my awful handwriting, but when driving up here from Camberley on 5 September 2003, three cars on the M6 around Birmingham smashed into my car, and I have only slowly improved. My brain is taking life quietly.

Yours.....

M62 COACH BOMB DISASTER

From: **Martin Skipworth**
9 Assata Mews
London
N1 2LE
Tel: 0207 688 3688

Dear Sir

The article on the inside back cover of the April edition of *The WIRE* recalling the M62 Bomb Disaster in 1974 takes me back 30

years to when, as a very young soldier, I was serving with 4 Guards Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in Munster in the early 70's.

Michael Waugh, who was killed in the M62 coach bomb disaster was in fact serving with the Sqn at the time of his death and only attached to 8 Sig Regt for the duration of a trade qualification upgrading course.

I well remember the Sqn Comd, **Maj** (later Brig) **Noel Moss** breaking the news of **Michael's** tragic death to the Sqn, and the sense of shock and dismay felt by everyone present. **Michael** had been a cheerful and popular member of a happy and close-knit community, and his loss was felt keenly by everyone who knew him. I believe at the time, **Michael** had a German girlfriend who lived in the Munster area.

Fatalities on exercise and on operations were not unknown at the time, but this senseless killing was something quite new. It is well worth remembering that the victims of such atrocities are just as much the casualties of war as those killed and injured elsewhere.

Each Remembrance Day I still pause to remember and reflect on a young life so tragically and pointlessly lost.

Yours sincerely...

UNIT PHOTOGRAPH - SCU12, INDIA, 1945

From: **Mr C Liles**
'Beryton'
Hooke Hill
Freshwater
Isle of Wight
PO40 9BH

Dear Sir

Do any of the ex-members of SCU12, India, 1945 have a copy of the Unit photograph? If it is possible to have a copy sent to me I will be happy to pay any expenses incurred.

Yours.....

257 SIGNAL SQUADRON, PADDY KENRICK AND 'THE DROP BACKS'

From: **Maj (Retd) RJ Savage**
26340 Rimon Et Savel
France
Tel 00 33 475 21 70 94
Email: thesavages@free.fr

Dear Sir

I was delighted to read a report from 257 Sig Sqn in 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt's contribution in the October 2003 Wire, as I had feared that this Sqn might no longer be in the ORBAT.

Capt Paddy Kenrick, whose obituary you sadly published last year, joined 257 Sig Sqn on his first Royal Signals appointment in Dortmund, just before in me March 1965. **Paddy**, a raconteur of great renown, always strengthened his slight brogue at critical points of his tales, e.g. '...on D-Day we landed at the jonshon uv foive mups.'

257 Sqn provided 1 Arty Bde's comms for the NORTHAG nuclear missile regts, one Bundeswehr (firing SERGEANT, which worked) and two Royal Artillery (firing CORPORAL, which did not). The gunners, so rudely renamed 'the Drop Shorts' due to some painful infantry experiences, became known to us as 'the Drop Backs' after what was nearly a very painful experience at the last Hebridian practice camp in 1966.

CORPORALS were launched vertically, many hundreds of yards in front of spectators, and they changed course towards their target. On the last day of the camp there was a thick cloud ceiling at 600 feet, well below the launch norm. But the gunners are a bold lot and after all, it was the very last CORPORAL launch. So up it went through the cloud base with usual thunderous roar, westwards we thought, on its way to a patch of sea near Rockall.

However, once through the cloud, it cut out, invisible to all we spectators and the firing battery. There then followed what seemed a very long silence. Seldom have so many stared at a low cloud with such intense personal interest. Crump! Although it carried no warhead, it was 60 feet of metal filled with nitrous oxide – rather deadly. It had landed about half a mile *behind* us, close to a cottage where the wife of a REME SSgt was doing her washing, somewhat unimpressed but strangely undisturbed – luckily the impact was downwind. Hence 'the Drop Backs'.

After the demise of CORPORAL – a direct descendant of von Braun's WW2 V2 – 1 Arty Bde went to Hildersheim in 1967 to join 1 (BR) Corps. Here, allegedly, they were to command and control the two heavy gun (175mm) regts that had managed quite well without them before. Nevertheless the gunners kept a Brigadier and 257 Sig Sqn was still in the ORBAT. That is where I left them and **Paddy Kenrick**. Perhaps it was in Hildersheim that he became **Gus**. A great guy. No doubt my successors could paint the picture of what followed. I will certainly watch this space.

Yours.....

Editor's Note: 257 Sig Sqn was re-formed only briefly as 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt's rear party Sqn in Bulford whilst the rest of the Regt was deployed in Iraq in 2003. The Sqn number has now gone 'back into the box' again.

AIR FORMATION SIGNAL UNITS

From: **J Gatehouse**
Peile Court
Shotley Bridge
Co. Durham
DH8 0SH

Dear Sir

Reference **RH Maxfield's** letter re the location or 11 AFS published in your February issue.

For the Normandy Campaign onwards 2TAF was served at HQ by 12 AFS, who joined them in November 1943. 11 and 13 AFS joined 83 and 84 Groups in August and November 1943 and 15 AFS started with 2 Group in January 1944.

These units served their allocated RAF units throughout the Campaign. I happened to do a short stint as OC 1 coy 11 AFS when they were at Schleswig about the time of the Japanese surrender, before I joined 2 TAF staff.

Yours.....

LAST POST

Bamber - Maj LS Bamber	Served 1939/72	Died 22/02/03
Baugh - Sig C Baugh	Served ????/??	Died 20/03/04
Bloomfield - Sgt WM Bloomfield	Served 1942/47	Died ??/11/03
Brooker - DP Brooker	Served 1951/53	Died ??/03/04

Bruce - Sig S Bruce	Served 1946/??	Died ??/??/??
Carman - Sig P Carmen	Served 1986/96	Died ??/02/04
Crowther - Cpl RL Crowther	Served 1963/77	Died 07/04/04
Dean - Sig GE Dean	Served 1939/46	Died 18/03/04
Evans - JH Evans	Served 1946/48	Died ??/01/04
Flannagan - WO2 MA Flanagan	Served 1964/86	Died 23/02/04
Hallam - Dvr C Hallam	Served 1942/46	Died 01/04/04
Harbott - Sig MW Harbott	Served 1946/48	Died 23/12/03
Haw - Lt Col BD Haw	Served 1950/84	Died 19/04/04
Hawksworth - Col AH Hawksworth	Served 1962/??	Died 14/04/04
Hawtin - Capt D Hawtin	Served 1942/47	Died 17/03/03
Howker - Sig D Howker	Served ????/??	Died 27/09/03
Hughes - Sgt WI Hughes	Served 1940/45	Died 20/03/04
Hughes - WI Hughes	Served 1939/46	Died ??/03/04
Ince - Sig H Ince	Served 1942/47	Died 12/04/04
Johnstone - Lt Col PH Johnstone	Served 1938/74	Died 03/02/04
Lewis - W Lewis	Served 1920/45	Died ??/??/??
Lovett - Capt EJW Lovett	Served 1943/47	Died 14/04/04
Macadam - L CPL HR Macadam	Served 1946/48	Died ??/??/03
Millard - Sgt L Maillard	Served 1952/62	Died 09/04/04
Newbold - Maj C Newbold	Served 1939/60	Died 19/02/04
Parker - Sgt W Parker	Served 1963/83	Died ??/09/03
Parker - WO1 D Parker	Served 1962/87	Died 26/03/04
Percy - Sig RS Percy	Served 1943/47	Died 17/04/04
Pettener - DVR J Pettener	Served 1938/40	Died ??/??/??
Rhodes - WO2 DW Rhodes	Served 1973/93	Died 08/03/04
Roberts - Maj DJ Roberts	Served 1948/71	Died 19/01/04
Sanders - Col JES Sanders OBE	Served 1928/60	Died 01/04/04
Shirreffs - Sig G Shirreffs	Served 1939/50	Died ??/??/03
Smee - Maj SB Smee	Served 1938/46	Died ??/12/99
Smith - HG Smith	Served 1940/46	Died 16/03/04
Thorpe - Lt Col LE Thorpe	Served 1934/58	Died 29/02/04
Turner - Sig VF Turner	Served ????/04	Died 13/04/04
Weston - P Weston	Served 1946/48	Died ??/??/04

OBITUARIES

BEATTIE – Lt Col Bruce Albert Beattie died on 19 April 2004 aged 82.

Bruce was born in Sussex in 1921 into a Royal Signals family. He himself joined the Corps in January 1937, and was commissioned in November 1941. His service was both distinguished and colourful. He trained and served as a Commando and participated in the D Day landings on 6 June 1944. Shortly afterwards he was promoted in the field to Captain.

After the War he served in Palestine, India (where he forged a lifetime friendship with the Indian Signals), Egypt, Korea, Singapore, Kenya, Edinburgh and Rheindahlen. He was serving at the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall when he retired in 1975, and continued on as a Retired Officer. After his second retirement, he worked with the RSA for several years, where he consolidated many old friendships and made new ones.

Bruce married **Gloria Margaret Austin** in 1943. After her death, he married **Jeanne Aquilina** in 1980.

Bruce had a mischievous sense of humour and a life-long love of sport. He took up golf in his Roehampton Club, where he was a member for many years. His Scottish country dancing career lasted into his late 70's and was cut short only by failing health. His charm, however, never diminished, even in his final difficult months.

He will be sorely missed by **Jeanne**, his daughters, **Elisabeth** and **Sarah**, and grandchildren, **Natasha**, **Alex**, **Ross** and **Max**.

ROBERTS - Maj Derek John Roberts (Derek) died on 19 January 2004.

Derek was born into a Corps family in Portsmouth in 1930. His father was one of the first Foremen of Signals, and was later commissioned as an Inspector of Permanent Communications, stationed in Belfast. After his father's early death, **Derek** won a scholarship to Bancroft's School. He joined the Corps in 1948 for his period of National Service, followed by a Regular Commissioning Course at RMA Sandhurst, where he won the Agar and Mathematic Prizes. He was also a member of RMA Rugby and Athletics teams.

On commissioning in 1951, **Derek's** first posting was with 3 Div Sig Regt in the Canal Zone, where there was a widespread misconception amongst guard commanders that his appointment was as permanent Orderly Officer, rather than OC Charlie (Cable) Troop.

He returned to UK in 1952 to undertake a two-year course in Mechanical Sciences at St. John's College, Cambridge. During this period of study, he also enjoyed socialising with his fellow Royal Signals and Army officers, a group of RN Officers, and his teammates in the St. Johns College and Sussex County Rugby teams. Despite being fully engaged in these activities, **Derek** gained a wife, **Pam** (at the time a nurse at Addenbrookes Hospital) and a 1st Class Honours degree. He was also invited to spend a third year at Cambridge, studying Electronic Engineering.

A short tour to BAOR was followed by a tour in the War Office, developing an all-arms radio set, and then by a three-year posting to 3 Div Sig Regt at an interesting time of organisational change, when the Div HQ was being re-organised for internal security operations. **Derek** gained a technical staff qualification at RMCS, Shrivenham, and was posted to the MOD in Arty 9, dealing with a range of non-comms electronics, such as forward area detection sensors and studies into the feasibility of the use of computers in field HQs. A welcome change from staff roles was provided by a memorable 30-month period as Exchange Officer at the Royal Canadian School of Signals in Kingston, Ontario. On return from Canada, his final posting was to DOAE at West Byfleet, working on the early stages of the Ptarmigan programme.

Having decided that civilian life was the place to be if he was going to be a boffin, **Derek** retired from the Corps in 1971. He then had a second, 19-year career as an Electronics and Systems Manager within the Marconi group of GEC. During this period, he worked with the Royal Navy, developing the capability of the Mk 24 torpedo, and then transferred his skills to the development of Electronic Warfare equipment for the RAF's Tornado aircraft, the effectiveness of which has been proven in recent operational deployments.

His retirement from full-time employment in 1990 to the beautiful Gower Peninsular in South Wales, allowed **Derek** to continue and develop his close links with aspects of Corps life, with the Royal Signals Association, Royal British Legion and, in particular, the 3 Div Sigs Reunion Club, with which he was associated for over 50 years. The highlights of this period were visits to the Normandy beaches with Corps Veterans and the visit of **Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal**, to the 50th Anniversary of the Club. At the time of his death, he was Chairman of the 3 Div Sigs Reunion Club and President of the West Wales Branch of the Royal Signals Association.

The service of Thanksgiving for **Derek's** life, held in Swansea on 29 January 2004, was attended by over 200 military and civilian friends, and was a fitting tribute to the high esteem in which **Derek** was held by all those who came into contact with him. He is survived by his wife, **Pam**, and son, **Stephen**.

BLACKMAN – WO1 E Blackman (Eddie) died on 26 April 2004.

Eddie was born near Kingston-upon-Hull on 25 September 1916. Because of the scarcity of jobs following the economic slump of the 1920's, he sat the Army Apprentice Tradesman's Exam and was accepted by the Royal Corps of Signals. He learned various trades, including that of Wireless Operator, and joined the ranks in 1934 at the tender age of 18 yrs.

He served first in Tidworth, then did two months in the Saar when the plebiscite was being held, and a year in Egypt when, as he puts it, 'Mussolini took a fancy to Abyssinia.' In the last months of 1937, he set sail for north China, to spend three years in Peking and Tientsin 'on the Ambassador's wireless station.'

Eddie's next posting was to Ankara but he never actually got there. On arrival in Singapore he was told to disembark because the Suez Canal was closed. It was whilst in Singapore that he met **Elaine**, whom he married in June 1941. Singapore fell to the Japanese in February the following year, and both were held prisoner (in separate prison camps) until 1945. Conditions in Changi prison have been well documented, and **Eddie** obviously suffered horribly. He certainly never forgot his fellow POWs, and took an active interest in the efforts made by **Arthur Tetherington** and others to obtain at least an apology from the Japanese for their treatment, not only of POWs but of civilians, such as **Elaine**.

After the war, he was posted to India, serving in Bangalore, Bombay and Delhi before he returned to Singapore until 1952. To quote **Eddie**, 'They then decided that 15 years in the Far East was enough for anyone, and so I landed in Ripon until promotion to RSM and a posting to Manchester.'

Eddie left the Army in 1956, mainly because **Elaine's** health was deteriorating (she suffered from Parkinson's disease and died in 1993). He took the Civil Service Open Exam and became a tax officer. He worked for the IR until his retirement in 1981. Remarkably, for a man who had travelled so widely, **Eddie** lived in the same house in Denton for nearly 50 years.

As his God-daughter, **Mary Lawson**, says, '**Eddie** struck me as an extremely rare sort of person - a man of his word, who always did what he believed to be the right thing, no matter how difficult it made things for him. He single-handedly looked after **Elaine** during her long and difficult illness, and, despite his troubles and disappointments, never complained, but just got on with his life of gardening, crosswords, bread baking (he made fantastic bread!), and the odd pint of bitter. He looked after himself until he was admitted to Tameside General Hospital, Ashton-under-Lyne, just four weeks before his death.'

HUGHES - WI Hughes BEM (Iorwerth) died on 20 March 2004.

It was with great regret that the Air Formation Signal Regiment Association advises the passing of **Iorwerth Hughes**, who died in hospital after suffering ill health for the past few months.

He was a comparatively new member of the Association, attending his first Reunion in May last year at Stoke-on-Trent. Sadly, it was to be his last.

Iorwerth served from 1939 to 1946 with various Signals units, including 4 and 9 AFS Regts, in Palestine, Libya, the Western Desert, Italy, Greece and Persia.

His funeral took place in North Wales on Friday 26 March 04.

Our sympathy goes to his children, **John**, **Sue** and **Clair**.

DEAN - Sig George Edwin Dean MM died on 31 March 2004.

George was a very modest man and it was only at his funeral that much of his service life was revealed. He joined 50 Div Sig Regt (TA) in Darlington at the age of 18. On the outbreak of WW2, he went to France with the BEF, only to be caught up in the withdrawal at Dunkirk. Here, his unit was heavily engaged in delaying action against enemy forces, and during this operation, **George** won the Military Medal for bravery. At the age of 19, he was the first man from Darlington to receive a decoration in WW2. He served with the Regt throughout the war, and on being discharged, was still a Signalman.

On his return to Darlington, he, along with **Lt Col William A Lee**, Royal Signals, and a few others, was responsible for the re-forming of Darlington Branch of the Old Comrades Association. In his time with the Darlington RSA Branch, **George** has carried out the duties of Secretary and Chairman, always giving his full support.

With the kind assistance of **Lt Col G Hearn**, CO 34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V), the Branch was able to have the Collect of the Royal Corps of Signals read at the funeral service by **Maj JD Bailey**, OC 50 (Northumbrian) Sig Sqn (V). A trumpeter was supplied by the Royal Signals Band to play the Last Post. A Guard of Honour of 18 members of the Branch, together with the Standard Bearer, **Mr Donna Marks**, was also in attendance on this, **George's** last parade. A large number of civilian friends and associates were also at St Cuthbert's Church, Darlington, to pay their last respects. A fitting, and appropriate, epitaph on his funeral order of service was: 'Lived respected. Died regretted.'

EARL - James Patrick Earl (Pat) died 20th February 2004, aged 84 years.

Pat was born in London in 1920, and after leaving school joined the London Coal, Coke and Lighting Company as an apprentice. On 20 March 1937, he enlisted in the Royal Signals and after training, was posted to Palestine. It was in Jerusalem that he met **Nancy**, who was living there with her parents, her father working for the British Government in Jerusalem. They were married in 1941 in Jerusalem.

In 1943, **Pat** joined the Airborne Forces and, landed in Normandy with the first wave of Allied troops on the early morning of 6th June 1944.

After the War, **Pat** was posted to Germany, where he served at HQ BAOR Signals in Bad Oyenhousen as Acting RSM. Later he was appointed as OC 2SST for over one year. Returning to UK, **Pat** went to 23 Corps Sig Regt TA as SSM Permanent Staff and later was appointed Acting RSM.

Unfortunately, **Pat** became ill and after a year in hospital, was discharged with 100% disability in June 1957.

His many interests included the Scout Movement, where for many years he was a Scout Leader and, of course, the Royal Signals, an interest in which he maintained through his membership of the RSA, and for the last 10 years or so the Colchester Branch.

Pat was laid to rest 10 March 2004 after a Requiem Mass at St James' Catholic Church in Colchester. He is survived by **Nancy**, his beloved wife, and three sons, who all live in the Colchester area.

A dear and respected friend who will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

EARL - Lt Col AC Earl (Alan) died peacefully at home on 20 January 2004 aged 79 years.

Alan Earl was held in high regard by all who came to know him. He was truly proud to be a soldier and to wear the insignia of the Royal Corps of Signals. Never one to dwell on the sadder and more traumatic aspects of life in the Army; difficult or tricky situations, or the loss of friends, he had instead a fund of stories and amusing anecdotes, which would very quickly have his listeners convulsed with laughter.

Alan was born on 11 July 1924 in Cologne, where his father, **CQMS William Earl**, 1st Bn Northumberland Fusiliers, was serving. 1926 saw the family en route to India, the Northwest Frontier and then to Rangoon, before returning to Newcastleupon Tyne on his father's retirement in 1929. As both his brothers had joined the Army (one in RE and the other in Royal Signals) it seemed natural for **Alan** to join too. So on 5 July 1939 he enlisted in 'F' Boys Company, Royal Signals in Catterick. After a first posting to War Office Signals in 1942, he was sent to the Signal Training Centre in Mhow, India and from there to join 14 Army Signals in Burma.

At the end of the Burma campaign, **Alan** was once again in Rangoon, this time embarking on a troopship as part of the task force for OPERATION ZIPPER, designated to retake Singapore and Malaya. Fortunately, the Atomic Bomb brought the war to an end while the ships were still in the Indian Ocean. On arriving at Singapore, the job that faced the soldiers was organising squads of Japanese prisoners to clear up the city, bulling up for the Victory Parade and liberating radiograms for the Cpls' Mess.

In 1946 he was posted home to UK to No 1 F of S Course in Catterick, and on his promotion to SSgt, was sent to 1 Armd Div BAOR. In 1952 he was commissioned Lt (TOT) and posted to 19 Air Formation Sig Regt in Singapore. It was here that he met and married **Connie**, who was teaching at the school at RAF Changi. The next move in 1955 was to the Royal Signals Installation Team in Colchester, and then in 1958 to the Rocket Range in Benbecula and promotion to Capt. A posting to the Army Apprentices College followed, and then in 1963, a 3-year secondment to the Federation Signals in Malaysia and promotion to Maj.

On his return from the Far East in 1966, he was posted to 224 Sig Sqn in Woodhouse Eaves, Leicestershire, and the usual 3 years was extended for 2 further years when he was promoted Lt Col in 1969. In 1971, his next posting, was as Royal Signals LO to HQ 90 Sig Gp RAF, an appointment he really enjoyed, as he managed to log 248 flying hours with the RAF Inspectorate of Radio Services. Having spent so much time in the Far East, **Alan** was happy to be offered a posting to 27 Sig Regt in Hong Kong in 1974, and then in 1977 on his final posting to ACE Comsec Activity in SHAPE.

He retired from the Army in July 1979, having served in the Royal Signals for 40 years and 5 days. Not one to sit around, **Alan** looked for further employment. He considered several possibilities, including an appointment as the Telecomms Officer to the Gilbert and Ellis Islands. At the time, he wondered why one of the qualifications was to be a strong swimmer! However, he was recruited to return to SHAPE, in virtually the same appointment he had filled before his retirement, and remained in post until his final retirement in 1989.

Alan was hard working and conscientious in all the appointments he held, and always very aware of the need for security. When asked what he actually did, he would turn aside any curious questioning by saying, 'I think we'd better close the curtains and turn off the lights!' **Alan** had a very full, happy and active life. He represented the Royal Signals at shooting, football and hockey. He was a founder member of the Royal Signals Amateur Radio Society, and had operated under 7 National callsigns. He was always very keen to keep in touch with the remaining members of 'F' Boys Company, and attended the reunions that were held annually in London over a number of years.

Over the last few years of his life, Parkinson's Disease was affecting his mobility, and later complications resulted in his losing the fight. **Alan** was well liked, admired and respected by his colleagues, who spoke gratefully of his expertise, his wise counsel and his wonderful sense of humour. He will be sadly missed by his wife, his two sons and their families, and all his many friends.

PARKER – Capt D Parker (Dennis) died on 26 March 2004 aged 56 years.

Dennis Parker enlisted into the Corps in December 1962 and left after 25 years service in December 1987. Amongst his many postings was a tour as RQMS, 9 Sig Regt from 1983 to 1985. He was then posted as WO1 (RSM) to Manchester and Salford UOTC.

After leaving the Regular service, **Dennis** was commissioned into the TA, where he served as QM to Manchester and Salford UOTC. During his service, he was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal, the GSM (Clasp for Borneo and Northern Ireland) and the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Following retirement, he and his wife moved to live near Ayios Nikolaos in Cyprus.

Dennis was buried in Dhekelia Military Cemetery and leaves a widow, **Margaret** and children **Gary** (who also served in the Corps) and **Gail**.

HARGREAVES - Capt JH Hargreaves MBE (Jack) died 9 March 2004.

John Henry Hargreaves was born in Hull 21 January 1914. He attended Hymers College, Hull, moving to Bridlington School when his family moved in 1928. On leaving school, he went into the family coal merchant business, which included a trip down the mines to 'learn the trade.'

Whilst living on Kingsgate he became friendly with a neighbouring radio amateur, who helped him to gain his amateur radio licence in 1931 at the age of 17.

The outbreak of WW2 saw **Jack** volunteer for Fire Service in Hull. It did not take him long to equip his fire engine with a wireless transmitter to contact the Station when reinforcements were needed. The Fire Service soon realised the advantages of this, and Jack quickly equipped other engines with his home-built radios. **Jack** also offered his radio expertise to the Hull City Police Force, and enjoyed telling of the letter of reply he received from the Chief Constable saying: 'In my opinion, wireless communications are of no use to the Police Force.'

He then joined the Army and, as a LCpl, was sent on a wireless course at the Military College of Science, Shrivenham. Because of the war, the normal 3-year course was crammed into 6 months. On completing the course he was immediately promoted WO2.

In 1940 he married **Marie** (a Land Army girl from Leeds) at Emmanuel Church in Bridlington.

Jack was posted to REME and operated a mobile radar unit, initially in Holderness and then Norfolk. He took part in the Normandy landings, saying he never got his feet wet as he drove his radar truck up Sword Beach in June 1944. He was Mentioned in Despatches in this campaign.

On being demobbed in 1946, he began work as the laboratory technician at Bridlington School, a post he held until retirement in 1979. Many of the school's science masters owe **Jack** a debt of gratitude. When a demonstration or experiment failed to work, **Jack** would be summoned and after a few pensive puffs on his pipe, he would turn the power on and quietly walk off.

The school had an OTC, founded in1910, which became a CCF in 1949. **Jack** was soon enrolled and commissioned in 1957. He was promoted Capt and became head of the Army Section. He encouraged many cadets in the art of radio communication, especially in Morse. He helped found the ACF/CCF National Radio Network in the late 1940s, becoming the Senior Net Monitor in 1959, a post he held until his retirement in 1984. In recognition of his long service to the Cadet Force movement he was awarded the MBE.

Jack's voice became known to many radio amateurs around the country as the reader of the Radio Society of Great Britain's Sunday morning news bulletin. These broadcasts continued for 35 years until he was forced to give them up, following a stroke in 1997.

After **Marie** died, **Jack** busied himself on the amateur radio bands, his last contact being on the day he went into hospital.

RENDER - Lt Col AV Render (Vic) died on 16 November 03.

Born in London in 1921, **Alfred Victor Render**, known as **Vic**, joined 18 Sig Regt in 1936, at the age of 14.

His Army career took him all over the world, with wartime service in Australia and New Zealand. Postings included Singapore, Bahrain, Borneo and Germany. **Vic** retired from active service in 1976 in the rank of Lt Col. He then joined the Royal Army Medical College at Milbank, London, where he served as QM until his retirement in 1986.

He and his wife, **Kaye** divorced in 1994, and he lived happily in Deal in Kent with his partner, **Doreen**, until ill health necessitated his move to a nursing home two years ago.

His son, **Michael,** chose to follow his father into the Armed Forces and is a Wing Commander in the RAF.

All who knew **Vic** will remember him with affection as a kind, witty man with a great zest for life, who gave a lifetime of service to the Army.

LEWIS - William Lewis MBE died on 7 March 2004 at the age of 102.

William Lewis was just 15½ years old when he joined the Royal Engineers in 1917 as a boy soldier. He was posted to the Telegraphy Department, three years before the Royal Corps Signals was formed, and went on to serve with the Corps for 28 years.

After the First World War he was sent to Turkey in the Army of occupation for two years, and later had several postings around UK before going to Germanywith the occupying forces there.

William married **Doris** in 1930, and two years later was posted to India, where **Doris** subsequently joined him. They returned after six years, when **William** was to serve his country once again in WW2. He went out to France to the Maginot Line, but was sent back to UK on promotion. A lucky escape, as most of his unit were later to be captured at Dunkirk.

He took part in the African and Italian campaigns, and was awarded the MBE for his bravery and initiative whilst maintaining supplies for the Regt, often coming under fire and having to cross enemy lines.

Because he and his wife had been apart too often, **William** retired from the Army in 1945, joining an engineering firm as assistant production manager. He later moved to Crawley with this firm. Approaching retirement, the couple settled in Keymer, where **William** became an enthusiastic member of a local bowls club, winning several trophies.

Sadly, **Doris** died after a serious illness in 1996, leaving **William** courageously to cope alone, doing everything in the home and tending his garden, his great joy. At the age of 99, he wrote his life story.

William celebrated his Centenary in October 2001, a grand and much-reported event held at Paxhill Golf Club, Lindfield. He celebrated it again a few days later at Hilgay Residential Home, Burgess Hill, where he had lived for nearly two years.

THORPE – Lt Col LE Thorpe (Leofric) died on 29 February 2004.

Leofric Thorpe was born 1 June 1914. He was educated at Bigshotte School, and Wrekin College, and enlisted in the Corps at Catterick in February 1934.

His first posting was to 5 Div Sig Regt at Scarborough, providing comms for 24 Bde RA. Before being mechanised, his Section consisted of '26 horses, a lot of limbers, 3 Morris Cars with No 1 Wireless Sets, and 2 Motor Cycles.' Faced with a lack of radio equipment, **Leofric** made a pair of sets himself. Each set used a 2-volt cell from a miner's lamp, an HT battery from Marks and Spencer, and a dipole made from a Woolworths sliding curtain rail.

In September 1936, he set sail for Karachi, where he had quickly to learn Urdu to work with his troops. For a while he 'ran a small Signal Office', then 'was given a Bde Sig Section to command because someone was ill.' After various other jobs and many adventures in the area, **Leofric** was posted to Singapore the day that WW2 started. Here he lived in an air conditioned flat above the best restaurant in the town, and 'the standard of living was unbelievably high.'

Initially, there was little or no work to do. They had buried cables all over the island and once they had been tested, they needed no further attention. Assessing that the civilian drivers 'would do a bunk as soon as any trouble started with the Japanese,' he used the spare time for his men to learn to drive.

On the fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942, he was interned in Changi for six months, before being sent to work on the infamous Siam-Burma railway. Like other prisoners, he suffered terribly from disease and privations, but he survived until the Japanese surrender in May 1945. One thing that may have helped him was his growing interest in the theatre. Despite desperate conditions, he was constantly putting on plays to entertain his colleagues.

During his rehabilitation in UK, he organised a few friends to put together a small theatre company, during which time he met **Iris**, the sister of one of the leading players. They were married on 30 September 1946.

Leofric's first posting after the war was 4 Training Regt, at Catterick Camp. Since it was impossible to get an affordable living quarter, he bought a luxury caravan, which he parked at a farm quite close the Unit. This was 1947, the coldest year, with the most snow in living memory.

The next posting was to 5 Training Regt at Barnard Castle, followed by an eighteen-month electronics course at Catterick. During these three years, he kept a pig in an outbuilding of The Black Lion pub in Richmond, feeding it on boiled pigswill from the Unit. As he said, 'one could get a pig properly cured in those days.'

Leofric was then posted as 2IC 4 Air Formation Sig Regt in Egypt. Here he had to bring **Iris** out at his own expense, and find local accommodation himself. Soon **Iris** joined the Forces Broadcasting Company as a newsreader and as 'Auntie Marion' in Children's Hour.

Leofric was then promoted Lt Col, to command 3 GHQ Sig Regt, which provided comms for the Army from the Canal Zone to the rest of the forces of the Commonwealth. Their links were to London, Singapore, Malta, Cyprus, and Aqaba.

About half way through this tour, the Regt was split in two, one half remaining in Egypt, and **Leofric** and his HQ going to Cyprus. It was not long before his transmitter site was attacked. The enemies were **Grivas** and **Archbishop Makarios**.

His last tour was as SO1 Telecomms in NATO and BAOR. Here they bought another large caravan to live in until they could get a quarter.

On his retirement from the Army, **Leofric** joined de Haviland Propellers, who were then developing Blue Streak. He was a Coordination Engineer, involved in everything electric, electronic, hydraulic, or to do with gyroscopes. After three years, the Government decided that they did not want a missile after all, so he left to join GCHQ. He spent the next fourteen years there, until at the age of sixty-two, it was suddenly decreed that all employees over sixty had to retire.

Leofric Thorpe was quite a forward thinking individual. This obituary was compiled from 10 pages of notes written by him entitled 'Notes from which an Obituary can be Written' – Bernard Redshaw, Editor

CALLING ALL DECEIVERS!

Tiger Aspect Productions is making a film for ITV1 about the role of deception in the Second World War. The programme will examine the various operations undertaken by the Allied forces to fool the enemy, from efforts in North Africa to D-Day and beyond, featuring deception methods ranging from camouflage, dummy weapons and vehicles, to double agents, false radio transmissions and sonic deception.

We are keen to find out more about the role of the Royal Signals in these deception plans, such as 5 Wireless Group, who created false radio traffic as part of OPERATION FORTITUDE, and those who may have been involved in other kinds of electronic deception.

If you were involved in this area during WW2 we'd love to speak to you about your experiences. Please contact **Bernie** on 0207 544 1645 (we can call back to save you any expense) or email her at bernadetteross@tigeraspect.co.uk

ADVERTISEMENTS

England's Last Hope

- *by Louis Samuels*, is a lighthearted 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 packaging 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 7663 761.

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TOP STITCH DESIGNS

THE CHELSEA MARATHON MAN

Readers will recall that in the February 04 edition of *The WIRE*, we reported on former **WO2 Jim McGovern's** plans to take part in this year's London Marathon. **Jim**, an In-Pensioner in the Royal Hospital Chelsea since January 2001, served in the Corps for 22 years followed by 10 years service as a NRPS RQMS with 39 Sig Regt (V).

The weather forecast for Marathon Day, 18 April, was not good, and sure enough, the Met Office had got it right. On the day, it was bucketing down. As usual, with 100,000 runners competing, the start from Greenwich was a slow affair. Whilst the most other competitors were shivering in normal athletics kit, **Jim**, in his serge uniform, was at least warm, but by the time he crossed the line, he was soaked.

Whilst the younger athletes, aiming for a sub-four hour time, darted off, **Jim** took it easy. He knew that he could not compete with them – his aim was to complete the course intact. So, instead of running, he marched. For a while, others in various forms of cumbersome fancy dress kept him company, but eventually, the field thinned out. But there was no lack of support from the spectating crowd. Everyone cheered as he came into view, urging him on towards the finish.

By mid afternoon, things had slowed down at the finish line. The numbers crossing it had dwindled to a trickle. Then, out of the murk, and to the cheering of a small band of faithful supporters, **Jim**, wearing his distinctive scarlet tunic and navy cap, marched briskly across the line in the time of 6 hours 30 minutes and 39 seconds, raising £4,000 for the Royal British Legion in the process. This was a highly commendable feat, achieved in the most atrocious weather conditions.

Well done, Jim! Will we see you in the New York Marathon next? **Jim** wishes to pass on his sincere thanks to all of you who sponsored him so generously.

There is still time to sponsor Jim for his efforts and cheques made payable to the Royal British Legion should be sent to Matt Taylor, 48 Pall Mall, London, SW1Y 5JY. - Editor.

Quote Reference TG1

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THE Wire

August 2004

The Royal Corps of Signals

20 YEARS OF COOPERATION WITH THE SWANAGE RAILWAY

As described in the April edition of *The WIRE*, the close link between the Corps and the Swanage Railway passed its twenty-year point on 19 March this year. During this anniversary year, many events have taken place to mark the event. The culmination of all of these events was the opening of a new set of steps and a disabled ramp at Herston Halt on Saturday, 19 June by **Brig John Terrington**, Comd DCCIS.

The Herston Halt project, was started by Southampton UOTC and Kohima Tp, 11 Sig Regt in 1997. The work continued with the installation of lighting and the re-build of the foot crossing across the running track by 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt in1999. Since then, dozens of soldiers have grafted long and hard picking up tons of stone from a local quarry, filling metre-cubed baskets with stone and muck, and mixing tons of concrete. And it was all a close run thing to be finished on time. At 03.00hrs on the Saturday morning **Sgt Graeme Firth** (238 Sig Sqn) was still mixing concrete, and **Cpl Arnie** was still tightening up the handrails.

The all-important steps go in...

...they get topped out with just a few hours to go...

At last, all was ready, and in the presence of many military members of the Swanage Railway, the Mayor of Swanage **Mr Tony Miller**, and **Lt Col GJ Caplin**, current CO of 11 Sig Regt, **Brig John Terrington** performed the opening ceremony. It was not by cutting some issue white mine tape, but by unveiling a large engraved piece of Purbeck stone commemorating 20 years of hard work. Some 1,229 soldiers from the Corps have worked on this project over the past 20 years, giving 5,412 man-days of support for this Dorset registered charity.

Following an opening address by Chairman of the Swanage Railway Mercury Group, **WO1 Frank Roberts**, **Brig Terrington**, in his address, praised all the soldiers who had supported the venture over the years. He highlighted how much effort and sheer determination had gone into the many projects, particularly the construction being unveiled this Saturday at Herston Halt. Chairman of the Swanage Railway Trust, **Mr Bill Trite**, replied, thanking the soldiers of the Royal Corps of Signals. He went on to recall the pioneering spirit of the early exercises, in particular those that had installed most of the telecomms infrastructure in the 1990s, and two of the three Strowger telephone exchanges that are still in use today.

The construction team, Sgt Graham Firth, WO1 Frank Roberts, Cpls Ginge Birkbeck, Danny Shovelton, Si Hogg, Arnie Arnott and Vickie Charnock assemble at the commemorative stone with Brig John Terrington

...whilst the rails go up

Probably the most important task in the Herston Halt project (and one that should result in an increase in passenger revenue at the facility) was the installation of a new set of steps and a disabled access, built to meet the Disabled Discrimination Act, which comes into force in October this year.

See the 20th Anniversary group photo on the back cover.

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Established in 1920

The Wire

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Deputy Editor Miss D S Haselden

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FRONT COVER

Despite their heavy comms workload, Baghdad Tp of 16 Sig Regt found time to raise $7,100 for air conditioning units and a minibus for the local orphanage they have adopted. Here, the orphanage's residents show their delight for the donation.

BACK COVER

Royal Signals long-running connection with the Swanage Railway was marked with the 20th Anniversary Celebrations on 19 June 04. Here members of the Corps pose with local dignitaries on Swanage Station.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

SIGNALLING BY MORSE

Royal Signals gave up the use of Morse some years ago. Or did it? JCU IMATT in Sierra Leone are still using it to train local signallers. Against all odds, they managed to find the trg kit and the instructors to do it, but we wonder how old each was! Read JCU IMATT's story on page 360.

COAST TO COAST LOG RACE

Would you carry a telegraph pole from one side of UK to the other? Lima Tp of 10 Sig Regt did. A whole 190 miles from St Bees on the west coast to Robin Hood Bay on the east coast, in some of the worst weather that UK could throw at them – all to raise £4,000 for NSPCC. See their story on page 318.

THE ULTIMATE MARATHON

Not your usual 42 kms; not even 84 kms – but 237 kms across the Sahara Desert and in blistering heat! Who would be daft enough to do that? A team of four from 21 Sig Regt (AS) were. They tackled the infamous *Marathon des Sables* in Morocco, said to be the toughest foot race in the world. And they all completed it, raising over £3,000 for the Army Benevolent Fund. See just how tough it was in 21 Sig Regt (AS)'s report on page 322.

D DAY COMMEMORATIONS

The Corps were well represented in the D Day Commemorations in Normandy on 6 June. 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt sent a large contingent across to join up with 8 former members of their forbears, 3 Inf Div HQ and Sig Regt; and 11 Sig Regt's **Sgt Nige Brewin** parachuted in wearing WW2 kit with a WW2 parachute from a WW2 C47 aircraft. See their stories on pages 324 and 323.

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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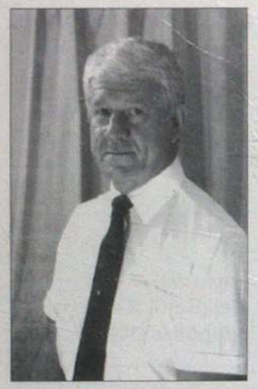


EDITORIAL

The front cover of this issue features an orphanage in Baghdad for whom one of 16 Sig Regt's Tps raised $7,100 for by arranging a Swimathon. On page 327 the Tp in question reports this quite modestly, in an almost throw-away line. From my own visits to Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo and Northern Ireland, I know that this is only the tip of the iceberg. I am immensely proud of how our girls and guys find the time, under such difficult operational conditions, to do this good work whilst still meeting their operational commitments. And they are so modest about it. Often they don't even report it. With the current tendency of the general media to report only the bad news, and with the political mud-slinging, particularly about Iraq, I see the need to correct the balance, to show just what a good job our soldiers are doing. So I say to all units, particularly those in operational theatres, please let me have more stories about the good news of what our people are doing.

It was my privilege to visit all the Royal Signals units in Northern Ireland in June. I received a very warm reception everywhere I went, and everyone was keen to tell me about what they did. It had been my intention to write a big spread on them, but because of security considerations, there is very little I can publish about their activities. I now understand why their contributions are mainly about sport and adventure training. But despite the lack of reportage in the general media, NI is still an operational theatre and a difficult and dangerous place to be. Sadly, the efforts and achievements of our troops there are grossly under-reported. It is a great pity that the general public do not realise this. In particular, the variety and complexity of the tasks being done by Royal Signallers in the Province is huge. Enormous responsibilities are being placed on and accepted by very junior ranks, who meet them with great skill and professionalism. Trust and teamwork between teams and individuals is highly evident. Despite difficult and dangerous conditions, a high esprit de corps and dedication to duty shown by our troops can be seen at all levels. It was indeed a privilege for me to have shared time with them. I thank them all for the opportunity.

The White Helmets are undoubtedly the best motorcycle display team going. When we see them perform, we are always impressed by their skill, dedication and professionalism, particularly when we learn that a large proportion of them have been riding for only a few months. There are some in the Corps who may believe that a posting to the Team would be a doddle, that they have a great time there in the limelight, basking in all the glamour. But there is much more to their role than that. Few realise what goes on behind the scenes to bring about such brilliant displays. Even in the arena, we are usually so focussed in the individual rides that we lose sight of the complex logistical operation going on at the edge of the ring to ensure that everything is in place to ensure a fully joined up performance. To help us all to better understand the extent of their work, I have been on the road with the White Helmets to gather more information on them. The result is *On The Road with the White Helmets* on page 336.

Looking at the lists we publish of new Life Members in the RSA, it is interesting and heartening to note how, little by little, the gap between their leaving the Serving Corps and joining the RSA is closing. Indeed, in this issue there are 11 new members who left the Serving Corps only this year, and 4 who are still serving. The era when it took our people 20 years to realise what the RSA could offer seems to be fast disappearing. This reflects great credit on all the hard work that has been put in by RSA office holders and members, from **Maj Gen Tony Boyle** and **Peter Cuckow** downwards. It now behoves the Branches to pick up the ball and run with it. Running interesting and appealing Branch activities, involving members of all age groups and promoting these activities through *The WIRE* offers great potential for this. I am only too willing to help you in this. You have only to ask...

BOOK REVIEW

THE FIGHT FOR IRAQ

In March 2003, some 46,000 British servicemen and women went to war in Iraq. Six British Army photographers went with them. Their work has resulted in *The Fight for Iraq*, the official British Army pictorial account of OPERATION TELIC.

The book covers the first six months of OPERATION TELIC, commencing with the build up and preparation for it, and focussing mainly on the liberation of Basrah and the subsequent stabilisation of southern Iraq.

The style of reporting is very different from that of the 500 or more 'embedded reporters' who accompanied UK units during the war-fighting stage. It is more balanced, extending its focus to the humanitarian considerations of the commanders, both during and after the operation, and the winning of hearts and minds so successfully achieved by British troops.

The Fight for Iraq is a balanced pictorial record, containing over 170 colour photos, well linked with easy to follow narrative.

For those who were there, this book will bring back vivid memories of OPERATION TELIC. For those who weren't, it will give you a clear picture of the role of British forces played in that operation and the conditions in which they were deployed.

Priced at £14.99 (+ p&p) *The Fight for Iraq* is available from ABF Enterprises, phone 0870 7743820. Proceeds from the sale of this book go to the Army Benevolent Fund.

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE 2004

Rollestone Camp and SORLS again played host to the annual undergraduate Royal Signals competition, EX LIGHTNING STRIKE. Seventeen University teams travelled from far and wide with the prospect of enjoying some spring sunshine whilst pitting their wits and physique against each other. With ten Royal Signals Units providing stands and 11 Sig Regt/RSS providing huge support, including organisation of the Final Race, the Competition looked set to be a great success.

The teams started arriving early on Friday afternoon, and kept on coming well into the night, with the Scottish fun bus taking the scenic route via Exeter! Fortunately the SORLS shop was well stocked, and everyone managed some important pre-competition preparation in the form of a few beers and some weighing up of the opposition. At this point, **Cpl Jon Shepherd** and **LCpl Thrower** began their weekend of appearing in different guises, with excellent early performances as bartenders. The two-day event saw them acting as drivers, tea and yoghurt delivery boys, tent erectors, equipt distributors, admin co-ordinators and competition advisers!

Saturday morning began with a very early breakfast and team captains' brief – the teams up until then had been kept very much in the dark as to stand content. There were some clearly distraught teams, when they discovered that a log race with 216 Sig Sqn was to be early on their agenda. The lack of ability of one OCdt to find the briefing room in the particularly small camp did not bode well for his team once exposed to the wilds of Salisbury Plain.

By some small miracle, all teams made the start point in time for **WO1(RSM) Bell** (Birmingham UOTC) to do his bit and **Maj Mel Rayner** (SORLS) to wish them all good luck. The enthusiasm shown by all teams throughout the day as they attempted the unit stands, was superb and unwavering - even those who struggled to come last! Getting caked in mud, thrown about in the back of armour, and becoming experts in survival techniques, were all part and parcel of the competition. After a long and gruelling day, the teams gathered for a Final Race, which involved the passage of messages using various comms techniques, before various clothing items were hoisted up masts, all to adrenaline pumping music. Unfortunately, marks were not awarded for the dancing efforts of the various teams! Well done to **Cpl Robson** of MLG' who was the brains behind the concept and execution of the Final Race.

The Thunderer/Trojan Team relaxing under the eye of SOinC(A)

The SOinC(A), **Brig David McDowall MBE ADC**, spent the afternoon at the competition visiting the stands, taking the opportunity to speak with soldiers, young officers and competitors alike. SORLS would like to thank him for taking time out of his busy schedule, not only to visit the competition, but also to present the prizes. A close run competition saw Leeds 'A' Team emerge as winners of the Final Race and the overall competition. The support for the competition shown by Leeds UOTC, with 24 competitors, definitely warranted recognition, and the two major prizes were well deserved. Edinburgh second in the Final Race saw, closely followed by East Midlands. The fight for second and third place in the overall competition was a closely fought battle, with Liverpool edging ahead of Tayforth by just one point. The Speckled Jim prize for the team showing the best morale (but not necessarily the best scores) was awarded to Glasgow and Strathclyde UOTC. This was awarded primarily for some all-in mud wrestling by some of the female OCdts whilst supposedly participating in the 216 Sig Sqn Log Race. Thunderer and Trojan Sqns must be congratulated on the consistency of performance by their amalgamated team. Last in both main events is impressive. It must have been due to the lack of combined team training!

Partying after the competition, was done in style this year in the Blandford HQ Officers' Mess for a Black Tie and Mess Kit dinner night. The Regtl Col, **Col John Ewbank**, obviously felt suitably relaxed in the Mess to partake in the mandatory post-dinner profiterole passing! Either that, or he was led astray by his top table neighbours - winning team Leeds 'A' with their more than fair share of females! The disco that followed allowed some of the junior officers of the Corps (many of whom had appeared at the dinner as if by magic) the chance to impress the students with their mess kits and funky moves. The chance was firmly grabbed, but the amount of impressing done was limited! A sleeping bus journey back to Rollestone Camp and departure the following morning, saw the end of what was a thoroughly enjoyable officer recruiting event.

Overall winners, Leeds UOTC enjoying a group moment

EX LIGHTNING STRIKE is the largest single officer recruiting event in the SORLS annual calendar, and as such, is our primary focus in terms of generating interest in the Corps at the UOTCs. The ex cannot take place without significant support from external Units and various Blandford Garrison Depts. The ten field Units listed below supported this year's event. The young officers and soldiers who represented these Units are all thanked for the huge effort that they put into preparing and running excellent stands.

2 Sig Regt
3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
14 Sig Regt (EW)
21 Sig Regt (AS)
30 Sig Regt
19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209)
39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213)

16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216)
101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (261)
264 (SAS) Sig Sqn

Blandford Garrison is also thanked for the large level of support provided, specifically in the form of a guard force and an SQMS team. Appreciation is also extended to Military Leadership Group for organising the Final Race.

The whole event was pulled together by **Capt Steve Knight**, with **Capt Catherine Jardine** responsible for organising all aspects of the dinner night. Both did a cracking job and have set the standard for their successors next year.

The Regt Col and the SORLS Team look forward to enjoying the same level of Garrison and Corps support for EX LIGHTNING STRIKE 2005.

COMMISSIONING FROM THE RANKS - *by Lt Paul Gudonis ATR (Lichfield)*

If I had been asked in October 1997, as I reported for Phase One soldier trg at ATR (Bassingbourne), where I saw myself in seven years time, I would never have guessed that it would be commanding a troop at an ATR. Applying for a commission was something that I had not previously considered. It was therefore to my great surprise that in the summer of 1999, shortly after starting at my first unit, 3(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, that I was offered the opportunity to be selected for commissioning.

Why I had been selected as a potential officer is something about which I am still unclear; perhaps it resulted from my performance on a live firing ex when I successfully held a number of comd appointments. Initially, I was hesitant in accepting the offer, and asked for time to consider my career options. I had previously applied for the Royal Signals Leadership Course in order to improve my fieldcraft, leadership skills and credibility as a LCpl technician. The course proved to be extremely beneficial and informative. It enabled me to consider my role as a future leader, and it inspired me to accept the offer to be selected for a commission.

The next step was a Unit Selection Board (USB). Fortunately, the majority of the questions posed to me by my USB and the Regular Commissions Board (RCB) had been addressed during the leadership course, so I felt quite prepared. **Capt Richard Todd**, the OC Leadership Tp had also recommended various books to help me get my head round the officer/leadership concept. This literature included *18 Platoon* by **Sidney Jarey** and *Serve To Lead* produced by RMA. It was very useful that **Capt Todd** had also been commissioned from the ranks, because talking at length to him helped settle many of my personal concerns. I would certainly recommend that any soldier thinking of trying for a commission should seek out an ex-ranker, and pick their brains on the subject first.

One of my main concerns was commanding a troop that contained soldiers with whom I had previously served with. However, I was given constructive advice by a number of people, who had themselves been in this situation. It is simply a matter of professionalism; real friends would respect that there is a job to be done.

The process, from the time when the subject of commissioning was raised, to my first day at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS), took nine months. These nine months were very frustrating because my Regt was sent on ops to Kosovo and later deployed on EX LION SUN. Meanwhile, I had interviews to attend and a number of different selection boards. I had to keep reminding myself of my goal, RMAS, and this helped me to remain focused.

On arrival at RMAS, the nine months wait seemed worthwhile. My initial impression was that there was a significant number of ex-rankers in my company, ranging from Pte to Sgt. Out of approximately ninety OCdts, roughly ten had served in the Regular Army before RMAS. Another interesting factor was the amount of military experience amongst my peers, whether from UOTC or the TA. I certainly found my own previous experience very useful, and so did the DS, as they generally assigned the overseas students to be looked after by one of the ex-rankers in the Platoon. In my case, this meant that I was helping to sort out the admin of a Kuwaiti Prince and a Ukrainian OCdt! It is advisable to remember however, that even though you have completed your soldier trg and have spent time in the field Army, you do not know it all. RMAS has an awful lot to teach you. I certainly found that you get out of Sandhurst what you put into it. Some people seemed content with doing just enough, but I think that meant that they dipped out on many of the positive aspects of trg and the opportunities that Sandhurst offers.

Whilst at RMAS one must decide which Corps or Regt to join when eventually commissioned. Four choices must initially be made, which are then whittled down to two. You then attend various visits before going to the final Choice of Arm interviews. I made only 3 initial choices, RA, RE and Royal Signals. At first, I was convinced that I wanted to commission into RA, but as time went by, my mind was rapidly changing.

The first option to be dismissed was RE, due to their seemingly sole interest in university graduates. Then, during a visit to Larkhill, I felt unable to fit in with the RA Junior Officers on the Tp Comds Course, and therefore decided against the Gunners. A few weeks later, I visited the Royal School of Signals and immediately decided that I wanted to remain a part of my Corps, because I felt a strong sense of comradeship with both the officers and soldiers. This was important to me, because I felt that if I didn't fit in with my fellow Officers, then my life in the Officers' Mess would be miserable, and my work would eventually suffer. Fortunately, I was able to get through the interview boards with the SOinC(A), Regimental Colonel and Colonel MCM Div, and was offered a commission in the Corps.

Since commissioning and my posting to 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216), I have successfully completed P Company and deployed to Kabul in Afghanistan to command the Tp that provided the Multi-National Bde HQ. I have completed the Military Parachutists Course, deployed on OP TELIC to provide the Bde Main HQ, and more recently been posted to ATR (Lichfield).

It is just over three years since I was commissioned, and my feet have hardly touched the ground. It has not been easy, but it has been immensely rewarding. If I had the opportunity to go back to 222 Sig Sqn and make my decisions again, I would not change a single one. My advice to anyone thinking about commissioning would be, if you have thought about it for more than ten minutes, then go for it because if you don't you will always wonder 'What if...'

Lt Paul Gudonis mixing with the great and good

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF THE TEAM CAPTAIN OF THE WHITE HELMETS

- by Capt Jon Malcolm and Capt Alistair Youngman

Like most soldiers who volunteer to join the White Helmets, I had never ridden a motorcycle in my life, and having seen the Team perform only once or twice when I was very young, I really had very little idea what I was letting myself in for. Despite all this, I knew one thing. I was going to command a Tp of 30 volunteers, in a unique environment that was going to test my moral courage and leadership on a daily basis. And I was going to get paid to ride motorbikes!

The first challenge looming on the horizon is the Induction Course. This is run every year over the first two weeks of November. The first week is spent on Bovington Trg Area, learning basic skills and developing confidence on two wheels. It tests fitness, courage and determination and is one of the best things I have done in the Army. After the first five days of trg, you are convinced that you are an off-road legend and your confidence is at record level. To look at us by the end of that first week, you would assume we had all been riding for years. The pace changes for the second week, when the inductees are introduced to the Triumph display bikes. Perseverance is now the order of each day, practising the same basic tricks again and again until a suitable standard is reached. In this phase, the time pressure is on, as the course culminates in a short display by the inductees to an invited audience. Everyone on the course (even the unsuccessful candidates) have a fantastic time.

Once the induction course is over, time is taken to service the bikes and grab some leave over Christmas and New Year (the only leave that Team Members get during the season!) As soon as we return from leave, I take nearly half the Team to South Africa on a charity outreach trip. This is another annual event, where the Team visits Forest Town School; a special needs school in Johannesburg that relies entirely on charitable donations to continue its work. Three weeks of painting, building, repairing, lifting and carrying follow, as we complete a year's worth of maintenance in one visit. It's an incredibly rewarding trip, and one I shall remember forever.

The group returns from South Africa just in time to deploy with the rest of the Team to RAF Sealand for our Trg Camp. It is here that the Team spends most of the winter. RAF Sealand boasts approximately one hundred acres of flat, grassy airfield. Perfect for learning tricks involving riding backwards, up ladders, upside down - or indeed, any method of riding that involves falling off a lot. Day in day out, the Team trains here to perfect their individual tricks, team rides and eventually put the whole display together. It can be a gruelling period as limbs tire and bruises harden, but slowly the many different aspects of a display come together.

RAF Sealand has become the Team's second home, and each year, we are cared for wonderfully by all the Station staff. On one of our last days there, the team puts on a final display - our opportunity to give a little something back to all the staff and their families. When we return from Sealand, not only will the display be put together for the following year, but the Team ORBAT will also be finalised. A number of extra responsibilities has to be filled. These will be the NCOs who assist with the bulk of the admin for the season. Each of these positions bring its own challenges, as soldiers find themselves doing everything, from running the garages and a team of mechanics, to planning and organising the Team's accn plot, sometimes up to six months in advance.

At the start of April, the final preparation begins for the SOinC(A)'s Opening Display and for the start of the season. Trg starts all over again converting to tarmac on Blandford airfield. The finishing touches are put on the Team motorbikes and equipt, with all of the motorcycles dressed in show trim, including re-sprayed fuel tanks and chromed mudguards. The props are all powder-coated and repainted where necessary, and the blues are collected from the tailors. With all this is going on, the work of a Team Captain is never done. I have been tasked with organising the after-Show reception for the Opening Display, a chance for the Team to meet with and entertain some of its many sponsors. This function is held every year in the *Semaphore Arms*, but it falls to me to arrange the use of the bar, and a buffet lunch and wine for two hundred people. I am fortunate that there is a wealth of experience and prior knowledge in the Team that I can call upon.

The Opening Display is by far the biggest event in the Team's calendar. Performing on Hawke Square in front of assembled friends and family is a prestigious event for everyone - even those who have done it all before. As the day draws closer, the Team

Look! That's me!

rehearses in the evening, so we can make use of the Square itself. All is dependent on the weather being dry enough, and as the day draws near, it's not looking promising.

More wet weather, we're rapidly losing practice time, and I still haven't had the chance to practise the all-important Fire Jump. This jump is the one thing every Team member must complete to qualify for their white helmet. Not everyone will do it on the Opening Display, but the Team Captain must jump it first on that day. All other Team members have done the jump in rehearsals, but I have been sat on the sidelines, either injured or commentating. I have been over the ramp hundreds of times, but not through the fire. The weather clears enough on the day of the dress rehearsal for me to get my first go.

From where I start, I can just see the first half of a ramp and a wall of bellowing fire with a small hole in the centre leading away from me. I set off, first gear, second gear; I stand up and lock my legs as I close on the ramp, accelerating hard. The motorcycle lunges forward lifting weight off the front wheel and catapulting me through the wall of fire in a fraction of a second. The back wheel of the motorcycle falls away from me, touching down first. Blinking hard to clear the smoke from my eyes, I gently brake and ride towards the pits, my very first fire jump complete. What a brilliant experience! But it's over far too quickly.

The day of the Opening Display arrives and brings with it overcast, but dry weather. The White Helmets display is the climax of a show that includes the Royal Signals Parachute Display Team, The Band of the Royal Corps of Signals - and in 2004 we have also re-launched another event, The Motorcycle Experience. As we complete our final pre-show brief, everyone is nervous. But as the opening riders roar into action, signifying the start of the display, nerves quickly dissolve into excitement and a burning desire to make this one of the best displays of the year. All goes well, and when the display approaches its half way point with the 3-bike fan, I and the other first years dismount and march forwards to receive our white helmets from SOinC(A).

This is a truly proud moment, and something that you can only understand if you have been there. Everyone has worked day in day out to for 4 months to get this far, and to have successfully earned their helmets is a fantastic personal achievement.

A very proud moment

The bikes are unloaded...

The display kicks off again, with every team member now sporting their white helmets. The show rockets through to its finale, including a repeat of my thrilling Fire Jump. The display had all gone perfectly, but in the closing ride **Sig Cumberland** and **Sgt Sizeland** collide - a stark reminder to everyone that what the team does is very dangerous.

With the Opening Display over, the Team starts its summer season - a non-stop round of travelling to show grounds and Military bases, displaying to a huge range of audiences all over the country. Days off are few and far between. No two shows will ever be the same, but a typical road trip consists of a day's travelling, staying wherever possible at a local military base. The Team car arrives first, with myself, the Team Sgt and the accn NCO. We sign for the accn and prepare for the arrival of the Team's coach and truck. We're up early the following morning to clear out of the accn and move to the showground. The Team car leaves first to recce the route and entrance to the showground. With such large vehs, access can sometimes be very difficult, so it's essential for me to get there early enough to change the entry point if required. When show organisers plan access to show grounds, they often forget the simplest of things, such allowing for the turning circle of large vehs, trees growing over roads limiting access for tall vehicles, or the state of the arena surface after if has rained and had many people walk over it.

As soon as all the vehs are safely in, there begins a long process of checking the site and liasing with a large number of staff on the show ground. The arena must be checked for size, surface quality, access points for vehs, location of the commentary system and the safety barrier. Whilst this is going, on the Team members are unloading the bikes and props, setting up the static display whilst the Team's Senior Instructor is marking out the arena. The Team medic liases with the medical services on site. The PR NCO locates any media outlets on site, and gets as much publicity as he can for the Team.

... and the Fire Jump is built

At this stage, I am identifying myself to the show organisers, and it's now that I raise any problems we have. Being diplomatic is essential. Most of the shows we attend are very big events, and the organisers have a lot of money invested in them. The most common problems we encounter are wet weather, a poor quality arena, or an insufficient safety barrier. Any one of these things can stop our display - and that is something few show organisers take well. As the Team Captain, I have to be robust enough to stand my ground, doing so without aggravating the situation. Diplomacy is paramount. Organisers must be brought around to understand the risks involved and my priorities. And my main priority is always to go home at the end of the day not having hurt anybody. What we do is dangerous enough. It doesn't need to be made worse by taking unnecessary risks.

Any bent bikes have to be fixed – quickly!

At the end of each day, everything is packed away again. And if that is our last day on the show ground, we depart en masse for our next show, and the cycle begins again. We can be on the road for weeks at a time touring between locations. This summer, we will travel as far as Scotland, Northern Ireland and hopefully to Germany in September and October. This will mark the end of the 2004 season and the start of the next Team Captain's watch, with the next Induction course.

The White Helmets are an incredible organisation. Our working year is very cyclic, but with little or no time off, it needs to be. Much of what we do remains a black art to the rest of the Corps, fuelled by rumours and misconceptions. In reality the Team is a modern, forward thinking and challenging Unit. And the Team is still run as a military Unit. Everyone is required to give 100%, and daily they face challenges that would never be dreamed of in the field Army. I am thoroughly enjoying my time with the Team, and I am looking forward to the rest of the season.

I commend the White Helmets to anyone who might be interested. If you think you have got what it takes, then either check out SOinC(A) PD 204, or give us a call on 01258 482356 to find out how to join.

HEROES' RETURN

Heroes' Return is a UK Lottery funded scheme to help veterans of WW2 to return to areas in which they saw active service. The details of the scheme are as follows:

Dates

The programme runs from 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2005. Applications must be in by 31 March 2005.

Eligibility

The scheme is open to veterans who served from September 1939 to August 1945 (i.e. the start of the War to VJ Day).

All Allied WW2 veterans are eligible for the scheme, regardless of nationality, but as this is UK Lottery funded, they must have a UK residential address.

Each veteran's application can include up to 3 people: the veteran, his spouse/partner, and a carer (who can be anyone friend, relative, etc).

Widows and widowers of veterans can apply. Each application could then be 2 people: the widow/widower and a carer.

Applications can be for individuals or organised groups. If groups (of 11 or more total names) apply, then a £250 admin assistance fee (to help with phone calls and paperwork) may also be available.

The definition of a carer is a loose one and does not imply the need for a registered carer, or that the veteran needs constant physical help. In practical terms, all veterans are eligible to take a carer (i.e. someone to provide practical support during the visit).

Locations

There are 4 theatres of war in the programme:

NW Europe;
Mediterranean/North Africa (includes Italy);
Libya/Egypt/Middle East; and
Rest of World (includes Far East/Pacific)

A veteran can apply for any theatre in which he/she served, or with which he/she has a tangible connection. Only one visit is allowed during the period (not one each year). If a veteran served in more than one theatre, he/she should apply for the one they most wish to return to. However, we try whenever possible to maximise the benefits for the individual or group so if in doubt give us a call.

Payment Rates

Travel assistance costs are based on the theatre visited and number of people:

	Veteran	Spouse	Carer	Total
NW Europe	£300	£225	£255	£780
Med/N Africa	£500	£375	£425	£1300
Libya/Egypt/ME	£700	£525	£625	£1850
Far East/RoW	£1200	£900	£1050	£3150

Examples

Veteran + spouse + carer to Normandy (NW Europe) -3 people, total payment £780. Widow + carer to Egypt-2 people, total payment £1225. Veteran + carer to Burma (Far East)-2 people, £2100.

Payment is only made once a travel document (photocopy of booking confirmation from travel agent showing that travel has or will take place) is sent to the Heroes' Return office. Payment is made direct to bank/building society for which details are required on the application form. These are fixed figures, and intended as grant towards your trip.

Insurance

Applicants are strongly recommended to take out insurance to cover for their visit. The set payment levels include provision for this, based on an average premium.

Passport

A free one year passport is available to veterans during this period. This is not handled by Heroes' Return, but the details for it are in the application pack.

Travel Companies

A number of travel companies are arranging visits to specific battle/campaign areas, and a list of these is available on request. Heroes' Return cannot recommend any particular group organiser, but we can help guide individual veterans towards appropriate veteran groups.

How To Apply

A Heroes' Return application pack can obtained from Veterans' Agency, Tel: 0800 169 2277. Questions about completing the form can be answered by calling 0845 0000 121.

Education

There is an optional educational tieup being handled by the Imperial War Museum. This is voluntary, so your application for funding will be unaffected if you do not want to participate in this aspect of the tour. However, it is a wonderful opportunity to keep your memories alive for future generations, so please give it some thought.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS WOS' AND SGTS' MESSES FUND

WO1(RSM) Marsh (next page) of 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) is proudly displaying a sample of the new crockery and cutlery purchased recently by his Mess with the help of a £6,000 grant from the Royal Signals WOs' and Sgts' Messes Fund.

The Fund, which was established in 1997, was set up to pay, in whole or in part, for improvements to Royal Signals WOs' and Sgts' Messes that cannot be financed from public funds, and to help fund improvements in other Messes where Royal Signals WOs and SNCOs are members. Income to the Fund comes from voluntary contributions of/of a day's pay, which all Royal Signals SNCOs and WOs are asked to make under the Day's Pay Scheme. Currently about 65% of Royal Signals WOs and SNCOs contribute to the Fund, but this figure is steadily increasing as more mess members find out about the benefits of membership.

Requests for assistance from the Fund are considered every six months, and since its inauguration, more than £100,000 has been paid out in grants to Messes. Full details of the scheme are contained in Annex C to SOInC(A)/COS/15/16/1, which was sent to all units on 6 June 2003, or they can be obtained by phoning or writing to RHQ Royal Signals.

All RSMs and senior Mess members are strongly encouraged to consider how their Mess might benefit from the Fund, and those WOs and SNCOs who are not yet contributing to the Fund, should ask their FSA for information about how to start their subscription.

K,F and S complete, Sir! (Thanks to the WOs' and Sgts' Messes Fund)

POSITION VACANT - MESS SECRETARY, HQ OFFICERS MESS BLANDFORD

The post of Mess Secretary, HQ Officers Mess Blandford, will become vacant from early August 04 and applications are currently sought. This is a Grade D Military Support function (MSF) post.

Working to the President of the Mess Committee (PMC), the successful applicant will have responsibility for the management and development of the Mess, including function and event organising and fund management.

The successful applicant should ideally have a good working knowledge of the regimental system, particularly Royal Signals.

For further information and an application pack, contact the AG MSF/RO Cell, Mail Point 575, PO Box 15253, Glasgow, GU2 8EU. Tel: 0141 224 2524. Alternatively, additional information can be obtained from the PMC, **Lt Col Matt Fensom**, Tel: 01258 482290.

THE CHEMRING PAINTING COMPETITION 2004

This competition will be run by The Army Arts Society, and is open to all serving members of the Regular Army.

The closing date for entries is 30 October 04 and paintings will be exhibited in Salisbury from 19 – 21 November 04.

Entrants may submit up to 4 paintings on any subject, although abstract work will not be accepted.

For more information and entry forms please contact:

The Secretary
Army Arts Society
Long Cottage
Longstreet
Enford
Pewsey
SN9 6DD, or email: armyartssociety@tiscali.co.uk

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, JUNE 2004

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
A/Col RA Sharp	Camp Comdt (AD)
Lt Col MA Coupar	LSP OMAN
Lt Col RJR West	DCSA Enterprise Management
Maj JA Compston	Royal Signals / Int Div
Maj JA Kennedy	248 (Gurkha)Sig Sqn 21 Sig Regt
Maj RA Mulholland	37 Sig Regt (V)
Maj JE Sutton	HQ 1 Sig Bde
A/Maj DA Deegan	15 Sig Regt
Capt PA Anderson	HQ BFFI
Capt D Briers	DEI Info Sys Bch Blandford
Capt PJ Cooper	Customer Relations Management
Capt JM Dawes	16 Sig Regt
Capt JG Evans	HS HQ Northern Ireland
Capt DA Haslewood	202 Sig Sqn 3(UK)Div
Capt AK Herbert	7 Sig Regt
Capt SR Holt	32 Sig Regt
Capt J Howell-Walmsley	OCE HQ Land
Capt AJ Lawson	15 PSY OPS Group (Land CMD)
Capt GA Lewendon	252 Sig Sqn DCSA(G)
Capt MC Milne	HQ ARRC
Capt CM Moye	LOG Div HQ Land
Capt DD Petty	SANGCOM
Capt I Rutherford	600 Sig Troop
Capt MA Schofield	16 Sig Regt
Capt CP Smith	BMATT (Freetown) Sierra Leone
Capt PE Stockell	HS HQ UKSC (G)
Lt AOH Biggs	7 Sig Regt
Lt PM Hodson	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Lt SR Lord	16 Sig Regt
Lt RF Plested	ATR Lichfield
Lt GA Stanger	1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) (V)

OFFICERS, JULY 2004

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col CR Owen	HQ MND (OP **Telic**)
Maj PR Abbott	39 Sig Regt
Maj NE Baugh	Royal School of Signals
Maj P Bosher	16 Sig Regt
Maj ND Fraser	G6 Land
Maj L Golley	244 Sig Sqn 21 Sig Regt (AS)
Maj CR Lawrence	IMATT (Freetown) Sierra Leone
Maj AE Percival	7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Maj GL Richards	JSU Corsham
A/Maj S Brant	G6 HQ Land
Capt ND Baker	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt NJ Bartlett	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt LJ Courage	2 Sig Bde
Capt JC Higginson	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Capt A Jenkins	JSSU (CYP)

Capt RC Manning ... ... 16 Sig Regt
Capt RC Quinsel ... ... 7 Sig Regt
Capt R Rutherford ... ... HQ Northern Ireland
Lt JR Keith ... ... ATR Lichfield
Lt FD Loxton ... ... HQ Sig Sqn 7 Armd Bde
Lt IJ Scaife ... ... 16 Sig Regt
Lt IG Thompson ... ... 30 Sig Regt

WOS AND SNCOS, JUNE 2004

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
A/WO 1 YofS AS Campbell	16 Sig Regt
A/WO 1 YofS JM Kilburn	1 Sig Bde
A/WO 1 YofS J Nixon	2 Sig Regt
A/WO 1 FofS SD Metcalfe	Royal School of Signals
A/WO 1 FofS JF Ross	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO 1 FofS SA Ruxton	HQ NI
WO 2 YofS RM Dilnot	30 Sig Regt
WO 2 YofS DJ Thomas	238 Sig Sqn
WO 2 FofS MD Arundel	JCUFI
WO 2 FofS D Clarke	1 (RBY) Sig Sqn
WO 2 FofS DM Cook	DISC SU
WO 2 FofS M Frangleton	JSSU Cyprus
Wo 2 FofS PA Leach	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
WO 2 FofS OD Leyland	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO 2 FofS GJ Pearson	33 Sig Regt (V)
WO 2 FofS CM Wilson	JSSU Oakley
A/WO 2 YofS RB Davies	7 Sig Regt
A/WO 2 YofS MJ Farley	HAC
A/WO 2 YofS AP Nichols	36 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 2 FofS MC Claxton	15 Sig Regt
A/WO 2 FofS DR Crowther	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO 2 FofS MHK Lingard	NATO F17 Balado Bridge
A/WO 2 D Oneill	JSSU Oakley
SSgt YofS GJ Cochran	94 (BY) Sig Sqn (V)
SSgt SH Ayres	Army School of Ammo
SSgt NA Baines	Royal School of Signals
SSgt PM Brannon	Royal School of Signals
SSgt MD Buffery	Royal School of Signals
SSgt SK Campbell	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt RL Canale	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt GL Christie	Royal School of Signals
SSgt DP Churchward	30 Sig Regt
SSgt CJ Dunn	HQ DSSS
SSgt WL Fagan	Royal School of Signals
SSgt DP Harris	Royal School of Signals
SSgt JM Hoyle	ARRC Sp Bn
SSgt N Kenyon	30 Sig Regt
SSgt MC Laughton	252 Sig Sqn
SSgt MS Mattacola	HQ DSSS
SSgt GE Middleton	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt G Sinclair	JSSU Cyprus
SSgt WM Wardrope	Royal School of Signals
SSgt JAM Watt	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt G West	1 (RBY) Sig Sqn
A/SSgt NM Beresford	JSSU Digby
A/SSgt AJ Carnegie	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/SSgt NA Coombs	Royal School of Signals
A/SSgt DG Leach	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
Sgt DB Heath	Flying Wing SAAVN
Sgt CR Pagett	15 Sig Regt
Sgt DJ Bailes	SC&IC (GIBRALTAR)
Sgt L Banks	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt AJ Carnegie	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt V Critchley	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt T Evans	Royal School of Signals
Sgt KT Jukes	Royal School of Signals
Sgt JA Kelly	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Sgt DG Leach	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
Sgt PJ Marchant	71 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt MJ Peace	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt G Revell	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt SG Rowbottom	ATR Litchfield
Sgt CL Samuel	Royal School of Signals
Sgt J Shuttlewoth	Royal School of Signals
Sgt FM Struthers	NATO F17 Balado Bridge
Sgt RGV Venables	JSSU Cyprus
Sgt DT Whitfield	Royal School of Signals
Sgt DJ Windsor	7 Sig Regt
Sgt MC Wood	32 Sig Regt (V)
A/Sgt CK Challand	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn

WOS AND SNCOS, JULY 2004

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO 1 FofS KP Curtin	DEI Blandford
A/WO 1 YofS TF Parkins	32 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 1 YofS S Rouse	Project Airwave
A/WO 1 FofS RL Clifford	DCSA SC&IS Northwood
A/WO 1 FofS RE Paterson	16 Sig Regt
A/WO 1 FofS NJ Trengove	7 Sig Regt
A/WO 1 IR Piears	JSSU Digby
A/WO 1 D Winfield	JSSU Cyprus
WO 2 YofS IJ Hughes	Sierra Leone
WO 2 YofS MP Murray	DEI Test & Ref Branch
WO 2 YofS JS Skimins	21 Sig Regt (AS)
A/WO 2 FofS MJ Cooper	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 JP Blyth	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO 2 PJ Burns	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO 2 LJ Mason	HQ NI
SSgt S Arundel	7 Sig Regt
SSgt JW Brady	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt MR Brooksbank	AFCO London
SSgt AJ Cannadine	38 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt DE Cox	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt RT Lee	AFCO Norwich
SSgt A Morris	16 Sig Regt
SSgt SJ Munro	15 Sig Regt
SSgt MJJ Nowosielski	7 Sig Regt
SSgt A Paling	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt MJ Stebbing	238 Sig Sqn
A/SSgt MJB Cameron	252 Sig Sqn
Sgt KJ Betts	DISC HQ
Sgt CS Brooksbank	238 Sig Sqn
Sgt DA Catlett	D11 Convergence - UNICOM
Sgt SA Cooper	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt MP Hatton	Royal School of Signals
Sgt JR Holmes	HQ DSSS
Sgt RA Howe	40 Sig Regt
Sgt GP MacDonald	SHAPE Regional Sp Gp
Sgt DS Mahoney	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt JG Manley	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt BD Mclean	7 Sig Regt
Sgt MG Murcott	252 Sig Sqn
Sgt P Newell	HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt JW Powell	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt DJ Taylor	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt CT Vickers	15 Sig Regt
A/Sgt KJ Choules	16 Sig Regt

RETIREMENTS

JUNE 2004

Name and Rank	*Date*
Avison - Lt Col BP Avison	04/Jun/04
Ellis - Lt Col DCA Ellis	20/Jun/04
Johnstone - A/Maj SC Johnstone	01/Jun/04
Noble - Capt JD Noble	01/Jun/04
Turner - Lt Col AD Turner	21/Jun/04

JULY 2004

Name and Rank	*Date*
Barnett - Maj D Barnett	19/Jul/04
Sherry - Capt D Sherry	05/Jul/04
Thatcher - Maj VJ Thatcher	05/Jul/04

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt **Capt A Youngman**

6 May 04, was the day for the Royal Signals White Helmets to perform the SOinC(A)'s Opening Display. The Opening Display is always one of the biggest events in the Team's calendar, and it means a lot to everyone who is involved. It is the result of 4 months of hard training. For the new riders, not only are they being presented with their White Helmets, but also it is the first chance many will have to perform to their friends and family, and to the Team's sponsors.

We need to be nice to the SOinC(A), so we escort him in style on to the arena

There were 7 new team members to be presented with their White Helmets: **Capt Youngman**, **Cpl Charlton**, **LCpl Mooney**, **Sig Burrows**, **Sig Dixon**, **Sig Poole** and **Sig Hall**. **Sig Hall** had also won the Lucas Trophy, which is given to the best new rider. It was also the first display for **Sgt Bob Sizeland**, who has returned as our Team Sgt.

We occasionally run across a friend or two

The weather was overcast, but the rain held off, and the display went extremely well. That is, apart from **Sig Cumberland** and **Sgt Sizeland**, who decided to add their own bit by colliding in the closing ride. Both riders were left bruised and shaken, but with no serious injuries. This collision brought it home that although it may look easy, it isn't. The display completed, there followed a function for the Team's family, friends and sponsors, which lasted until the early afternoon.

The new riders try to impress The WIRE editor, by showing how they read the magazine

The Display marked the beginning of the Team's display season. We will now tour right through until the end of September. There will be few, if any free weekends for us from now on.

So far, the Team has performed at the Oxford Balloon festival, the Wessex Show, the Sheffield Mayfest, The Star and Garter Military Tattoo, The Royal Bath and West Show (where we were accompanied by *The WIRE's* illustrious editor! See his bit about us on page 336), The South of England Show, and most recently, Stevenage Day. Stevenage Day was the Team Captain's local show, so he 'volunteered' to take part in as many tricks as possible (including lying under the jump boards), so that his local follower could see what he is now up to. Special thanks must go **Mary Youngman**, the Team Captain's mother, who turned up complete with sewing machine to repair some sets of blues from the previous day, and also provided a mass of cakes, tea and coffee for the hungry riders.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN THE WHITE HELMETS?

Membership of the White Helmets is demanding and exciting, with great job satisfaction. Have you got the bottle to try for a place?

We are now starting to take names of volunteers who would like to join the team for the next season. The Induction Course will be taking place 1-14 November 04, with successful applicants joining the team in January 05.

Anyone interested in joining the team should check out SOinC(A) PD 204, or phone 01258 482365.

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj Don Macaulay**

EXERCISE TRIDENT VENTURE - A DS VIEW - *by SSgt Green*

Wednesday 28 April 04 saw the DS convoy deploy to STANTA to set up our first Battle Camp for ASG, albeit a scaled down one. Not disheartened at the numbers, **Capt Si Smith** (OC), **SSgt Iain Green** (SQMS/Camp SSM) and the rest of the DS were determined to make it challenging for the hardened band remaining. Three stands would form the bulk of the teaching/assessing element, with a variety of other ITDs, comd tasks, night manoeuvres and physical activities included. The NBC battle run was by **SSgt(YofS) Eddie Cochrane** and **Sgt John McDonnell**, whose views on NBC were quite sick.

First Aid and Mine Clearance stand were respectively run by **Sgt Joe Walton** and **Cpl Mark Anderson**. The crème de la crème was **Sgt MJ Holt** on the survival stand - it needed all of the 4 days, and the assistance of a couple of 11 Sig Regt recruits to set up the improvised shelters, traps etc. Certainly the survival stand proved to be most interesting, with a number of students (vegetarians?) trying not to faint as chickens were killed, skinned and gutted. In all it was a very successful week, spoilt only by a day of torrential rain. Plans have now been drawn up for next year's repeat, which we are looking forward to ..... and the leave passes are in already.

THE 'GRUNTS' VIEW – *by Cpl Paul Bungay and Cpl Allen*

Oh what a joy, it's Battle Camp time again! 'It'll be fun,' I'm told. Never mind, I think, it's nice weather and we've got only one river crossing planned, so I'm going to get only one set of clothes wet. How wrong could I be?

It's the last week of April, and the sun is beaming down for our journey to West Tofts Camp. There are smiley, clean faces all round, and a high state of morale. On arrival we are split into sections; I end up in 3 Sec, which looks like sideline leftovers. The generous DS allows our first night in barracks, where the joys of the bar help everyone stay positive.

The first day sees **Sgt 'MJ' Holt** demonstrate various survival techniques, including how to kill and prepare chickens and rabbits, building improvised shelters and weapons. Some of the latter more deadly to the user than the prey, particularly that from **Capt Mahendra**. **LCpl Milan** shows us the Ghurkha way of doing it, despatching the chicken in seconds with his kukri, and smiling throughout!

A quiet night is spent in the pinewood harbour loc (who says techs can't live under ponchos?) and then on to a very hot NBC day. Here we meet an unusual DS character, who seems to have lost touch with reality. Completing various tasks, in a variety of dress categories, ending with the Battle/Sweat run. Everything goes OK until we came across a casualty - our featherweight (17 stone!) **Sgt Fred Hazard**. **Sgt Mac Maclachlan** and two other people die that day, valiantly attempting to carry the casualty to safety.

The next day has us learning mine awareness and methods of mine detection. Then we put our new skills, and First Aid, to the test in a simulated RTA in a minefield. Using an RE detector device and a probe, we make it through to help the screaming and silent casualties. **Cpl Meadows'** talents are clearly wasted in the military, as she proved to be a convincing extra from an asylum movie.

Midweek, the weather turns and we start to get wet, wet, wet. Happily, both the night ambush (shed loads of blank and pyro lighting up the trg area) the Night Nav Ex are dry. For the Navex I am teamed with **SSgt(YofS) Tommy Tucker** and **Capt Mahendra**. We thought it would be a breeze, but somehow we are geographically challenged and take a few hours to get back to the final RV.

We move into a barn complex for the final two nights. A day of rain soaked comd tasks and a dry (?) practice of the assault course is topped off by the enemy assault on the barn complex.

Morale stays high for the rest of the week, apart from a few times when we are told to take our Bergens off the back of the 4-tonner. No, wait, put them back on. No, wait... With Friday comes the long awaited assault course. After our heroic display on the dry run...and the helpful comments we receive on the monkey bars, we desperately tried to hang on, and the cameraman manages to snap a couple of muddy fallers! The rest of the jumps, walls and scrambles are a blur of dirt and sweat.

Getting into the coach at end of the Battle Camp, the majority of people reluctantly agree that they have enjoyed it much more than they had believed possible. The activities have all been scored for the presentation of a crate of lager to the top section, but end up being a 3-way tie! Hang on a second: 3 Sections of 8 and 24 cans of lager. I smell a rat! **Capt Smith** has a lot to answer for - but that's a different story all together.

Well done Colonel, you've passed!

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Capt John Lyons**

Congratulations to **Sgt Henson** and **Sgt Morton** for passing the Sgt to SSgt board - even though **Sgt Morton** is no longer in the Corps, having transferred to the RAF.

Congratulations also to **Sgt Gordon** and **Sgt Paddy Ferguson** on their selection for FofS.

Op Sec is as busy as ever, with the turnover of students and courses still relentless. The last course through was RSBR 03/016, and congratulations go to **Pte Henderson** (formerly of the KOSB, until he saw the light) who picked up the Outstanding Student Award, which was presented to him by our Division CI, **Lt Col MJ Fensom**.

In Comd Sect the new, upgraded Comms Simulator has just been installed to take us into the 21st century and as prep for the BOWMAN era. Who better to put it through its paces than Tp Comds' Course 58. We will never know, Sirs/Ma'ams, if it was the simulator or your plans. But as they say 'always trust your equipment,' so there is only one direction in which I am looking. Remember, in your darkest hour things can only get better.

After the simulator phase, we deployed on EX SEARCHING GLANCE, where that old cliché of officers and maps came to the fore again when, returning to Blandford from Burnham on Sea, the Course was heard to comment 'We must be going the right way because the coast is on our right... Is that the helter skelter at Minehead Butlins I can see?' The coast was on the right-hand side, pity it was the wrong county. However besides all that, good luck to you all.

Over the bank holiday weekend, we said hello to the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY to you and me) for a full weekend of serious trg and little fun to round it all off. Thirty FANYs, ten instructors and some great weather all conspired to make us declare, 'Sounds like Pimms o'clock to us.' Radex Tp is busier than ever, but we managed to liberate a little time away from the coalface for some AT in Bavaria.

Leaving Blandford at dark o' clock, we ferried from Dover to Calais and then in a direct drive, alternating drivers, fourteen hours later we hit Wertach. We then prepared to have our leadership, courage and above all, teamwork tested to new levels. A few people to note: **Bob Butler** from the Gym - you would think a necessary prerequisite for trekking would be a sound knowledge of map reading, not to mention knowing your left from your right!

Well you would be wrong. As long as you look good and have a big 'R' and 'L' on your appropriate hands, any thing is possible! Down in the valleys it was like being extras in *The Sound of Music*, so shorts were the order of the day. It was just a pity that there was a metre of snow on the peaks!

The next day we experienced white water rafting. A good day was had by all, with **Cpl Tony Gallagher** and **LCpl Kerry Hopkinson** taking that much-predicted plunge into the rapids. **Jo Owens** had one of those moments. The yell of 'Paddle!' could be heard clear across 2 valleys.

A big thanks must go to **John** and **Dave** for organising a great fortnight and also **Bdr McCulloch**, whose knowledge of the area and instruction in anything adventurous was greatly appreciated.

Haven't we got this frothy enough for now?

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col GJ Complin**
RSM **WO1(RSM) SA Hadley**

The past two months have seen a change of both the CO and RSM. The Regt would like to say farewell to **Lt Col AP Hudson MBE**, and thank him for his leadership over the past two years, and in the same breath, give a warm welcome to **Lt Col GJ Complin**, who joins us from HQ SOinC(A). **WO1 (RSM) Forrester** has handed over to **WO1 (RSM) SA Hadley**, who joins us from 31 (City of London) Sig Regt.

Lt Col Complin signs for the Regt under the watchful eye of a relieved Lt Col Hudson

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JC Boisvert**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) C Overton**

24-HOUR CHARITY CYCLE RIDE - *by Cpl Jon Marshall*

It was that time of year again when 1 Sqn put something back into the local community by conducting a 24-hr Charity Cycle Ride in aid of Blandford Opportunity Group. This charity helps support children under the age of five with motor functions and other problems. They also support the children's parents by helping to find placements for the children at regular schools when a little older.

After months of meticulous planning by **WO1 Taff Furnival**, OIC of the event, the day had arrived. At 12.00hrs on 6 May 2004, there was a mass start on eight mountain bikes from the front of RHQ Royal Signals and the 24-hr countdown had started. With the ten-minute cycle completed to Blandford town centre, the uncomfortable razor-like saddles were already beginning to let us know how sore we would be by midday the following day. An 'all hands to the pump' mentality ensued, with soldiers taking it in turns to pedal for hours, from the youngest Sig to the OC, **Maj 'JC' Boisvert**. As one collecting team was set up in Blandford market place, the donations were already starting to come in, with some generous members of the public throwing in as much as £10 each. Another team set up outside the local Somerfield also provided a continuous stream of donations. We were hoping to beat last year's total. Later, they set up outside the entrance to the Camp's cookhouse to catch everyone for a donation as they went to their evening meal. This proved to be very effective.

After much cycling and sweat, the cycle ride moved into the night time phase, which was conducted on the static cycles in the Gymnasium. Boredom became the main problem, as the fatigue of the day started to hit the cyclists and an extra effort was found by all to keep on going.

As the next day approached, we all moved en masse to the front and back gates of the Camp to collect donations from everyone driving into work, and all but a few put their hands in their pockets. Then it was time to send the collecting teams around the office blocks to increase further our chances of surpassing last years total.

The finish was watched by **Mr John Paulley MBE**, president of the Blandford Opportunity Group, who went on to watch everyone as the money was counted. A final total of £2,100 was raised, and although slightly less than last year, it is still an outstanding achievement, and one that will help out Blandford Opportunity Group an awful lot. It just remains to thank everyone who participated in this very successful event, and we look forward to next year and beating this year's total.

Members of 1 Sqn who took part in the 24-hour charity bike ride

MORRISON CUP 2004 – ATHLETICS
- by Sig 'Smudge' Galloway

Once again the Regt organised another exceptionally well run Morrison Cup. Unfortunately with most of the soldiers in trade trg, it was left to the gladiators of 11 Sig Regt. What we lacked in the number of available competitors was made up by the enthusiasm and spirit of those who did compete. Good performances were made by **Sig Hewitson**, who although she did not receive a medal, managed nine events - nearly as many as **Daley Thompson** did in the Olympics. A mention should also go to **Capt Rip Wilson** and **Capt Cath Jardine** (SORLS) who were roped in by their so-called friends. **Capt Wilson** did well in the high hurdles (the first time he had done this event) and the Javelin, and **Capt Jardine** proved she should really be called Helga, gaining a top third place performance in the Shot Put.

The overall support for the event on the day was down to 1 Sqn, with responsibility for the build placed on **SSgt Morley's** shoulders. This year, he had hoped to pass it over to the Rhino Tp SSgt, but when this post was found to be gapped, he enthusiastically took on the task again! Once again he managed to pull off a really good demonstration of what the Regt is capable, of and ensured that the day ran smoothly and efficiently. The best praise is that there were no complaints, so well done to Staff and his team of merry helpers. It was an excellent day, with the weather holding out, and everyone getting a chance to meet up with friends old and new.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SSM Youngson**
SSM	**WO2 EC Williams**

It has been a busy time for the Sqn, with EX CATTERICK SUN, AT and inter-Sqn sports events. We welcome **WO1 Paul Duke**, arriving from 30 Sig Regt to take over as OC Beaufighter Tp; and **Sgt Craig Richardson** and **Cpl Mitchell**, who have also taken up posts in Beaufighter Tp.

EXERCISE CATTERICK SUN - *by Sig Greenwood*

On the weekend of 8/9 May, 2 Sqn cadre held a charity event for the local Round Table Children's Wish Fund. It was an inter-tp event between Iron Tp and Beaufighter Tp, with a strong emphasis on physical stamina and the will to win.

The first event of the day was the log run; the teams had to battle it round a 400m course for an hour, completing as many laps as possible. Iron Tp won by an impressive 3 laps, making the final score 23-20. This was followed by the stretcher and tyre races, which followed the same principles as the log run. Beaufighter fought back successfully, winning both events. Next on the event list was the mountain bike race, which was won by Iron Tp. Two of the hardest events followed - the Bergen race and running race. Both teams did their best, giving their respective Tps a point each. The rowing event, won by Beaufighter by just 100m, was the last outside event.

After 20 minutes they were beginning to feel the start may have run too fast

The day came to an end with a test of physical and mental endurance in the Garrison gym. Competitors were to complete a succession of sit-ups, squats and press-ups for 1 hr. The team that completed the most would win. This proved to be one of the toughest events of the day, and was eventually won by Beaufighter Tp.

The day was a huge success, with 100% effort shown by all participants and the motivation provided by the Tps' support. But most importantly, it raised money for a worthwhile cause.

SQUADRON ADVENTUROUS TRAINING - *by Sig Priestly*

On the weekend of 21 - 23 May, members of 2 Sqn took time out to enjoy some AT at Castle Martin in Wales. We left Blandford on the Friday afternoon, and with nothing but **Cpl Bonney's** *Guns 'n' Roses* tapes and a quick McDonalds stop, the journey was long and endless. When we finally arrived at Castlemartin excitement hit the roof as we stepped of the bus and looked around at all we could see. Trees, fields, and sheep. After a late night and early morning, and a rumour about quad biking, we headed off to the different activities that awaited us. This started with a coastal walk in uncharacteristically beautiful sunshine. The walk was long and hot with every temptation to jump into the blue sea to escape the heat, but finally at the end of the walk, we had time to stop for ice cream. Later there was rock climbing, with many laughs as we watched fellow students freeze in terror at the 3 metres of rock that they had to climb. Time to cool down had arrived, and we went canoeing. We had the opportunity to complete a 1 star award if you dared to face capsizing in the muddy water. Our weekend finally came to a close, and with another long journey home, we arrived back late on Sunday, having a thoroughly challenging and rewarding weekend.

Members of 2 Squadron make the most of freak weather conditions in Pembrokeshire

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj R Jones**
SSM	**WO2 T Ward**

The Sqn has been busy as ever. The Harrogate Cup has taken a great deal of our time, with the Cricket, Hockey, Athletics and Swimming competitions. We are now training hard for the RSA Weekend, which will be soon upon us.

BLANDFORD SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Mackay**
SSM	**WO2 N Roberts**

We say farewell to the 2IC and GWO **Capt Colin Milne**, leaving us for 7 Sig Regt, and welcome his replacement, **Capt Andy Burdge**. We also say farewell to **WO2 (SSM) Davies**, and welcome his replacement, **WO2 (SSM) Roberts**.

MT TROOP

MTO	**WO2 L Crossing**
MTWO	**WO2 M Dolan RLC**

We farewell **Cpl Noble**, who leaves us for 16 Sig Regt; and **LCpl Reeve**, who will be driving the CO of 39 Sig Regt. We welcome **Sigs Daniels** and **Chadwick**, and hope they have a nice tour with the Tp.

The MT here in Blandford has been busy as usual helping to support the ever-increasing demands of fuel and transport requests from the rest of the School and the Garrison. The Tp's responsibilities and workload has expanded since taking on the servicing and inspections from the Trg Delivery Divisions - so much so that **Sgt Billy Blackmore**, who moved from AS Gp MT, is unable to spend as much time on the golf course as he used to enjoy. **Cpl Christian** is enjoying all the daily pressures of trying to achieve more with less on the details desk, and keeping the civilian drivers happy. **LCpl Rodgers**, our computer geek, is busy helping set up the new electronic speeding signs, whist still maintaining the whole Garrison's POL demands. Well Done to **Sig Carl Potter**, white fleet, and **Sig Dott**, our store man, who both recently successfully completed the MT Docs and accounting course.

ENTENTE CORDIALE? A FRENCH LIEUTENANT'S VIEW OF THE TROOP COMMANDERS' COURSE – *by Lt Martine Balland-Weimer*

I am from the École Supérieure et d'Application des Transmissions, the French equivalent of the Defence College of Communication and Information Systems, and I have been participating in the annual exchange between our two schools.

During my two-month-sojourn, I have been attached to Troop Commanders' Course TC58. I have benefited enormously from this exchange. Firstly, because it was a unique opportunity to meet my British counterparts. I shall always remember the tremendously warm welcome offered to me, and the constant care they showed throughout. Taking part in all their activities, during and after working hours, I have been able to discover and appreciate the way of life of British Signals Officers, while making progress in English.

The French Lieutenant lights up the British PTARMIGAN

The linguistic aspect of this exchange seemed deeply relevant to me, because language skills are decisive in achieving effective inter-operability on multinational deployments.

Another key element of our inter-operability is the mutual knowledge and understanding of our CIS equipments. While attending the lessons on area systems, I have been able to draw interesting comparisons between your PTARMIGAN system and our French equivalent, RITA second generation (RITA2G).

Moreover, I have discovered your different way of training officers. The British Troop Commanders' Course lasts five and a half months in UK, whereas in France we spend nine months at the Signals School to learn how to be a signals troop commander. You have more equipment dedicated to training, but when we go on exercise we are often in command of troops belonging to the Signals Brigade regiments on major exercises.

All of our instructors.are either officers or civilians, whereas yours are mainly NCOs. And even if the technical aspect of the troop commander's job is more emphasised in the British Signals than in France, I believe that the job remains essentially the same.

So I am just about to leave and go back to France with many happy memories and a lot of new ideas to share with my French colleagues. And I am definitely looking forward to meeting my friends of TC58 again, on operations or during another fruitful exchange between our two nations.

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT LICHFIELD

ARMY

OC **Maj PC Baker**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) AD Fadzilah**

Although many courses have been cancelled at ATR, life is still busy, as those without recruits in are busily completing long awaited projects and finally managing to get some courses in and do some AT. We farewell **Capt Steve Dickson**, as he and his family depart for Cyprus - where no doubt, plenty of diving will be had. Congratulations to **Cpls Rose** and **Roderick** on their performances on their Class 1.

COOK TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt JM Savage** PARA
Tp Sgt **Sgt CW Kama**

MY REFLECTIONS OF COOK TROOP CMSR 8
- by Sig Kimber (Winner of Best Recruit)

On 8 March 04, we entered ATR(L), our home for two periods of six weeks. The first week was the worst, as we didn't know anyone, didn't know what to expect and it went really slowly. But by the end of the second week, we were all pretty much settled in and getting into the daily routine. We were marched about to different lessons, practising drill movements learned previously, in preparation for our Week 6 drill test.

The drill test consisted of an inspection by the Adjt and RSM, a personalities test and a drill test. We marched onto the Parade Square, where we halted in the centre and were put into the open order. From here, the Adjt and RSM inspected us individually and asked questions on Sqn and ATR personalities and also on our Regts. After this, we marched about carrying out drill movements whilst the RSM inspected. We then formed up in threes and marched past the Adjt with a salute. Then we formed up again, and the Adjt announced who had failed. Those who passed went home for the long weekend. The whole test had been very nerve-racking.

Straight after the long weekend, we went on mid ex, which was one of the worst parts about the CMSR - but necessary. On mid ex we were taught about judging distances, observation and fire and movement. Throughout the ex, we were tested on admin and what we had been taught on observation. This was the most tiring time of all, and the hardest work.

The best time on CMSR as from Week 9 on. Week 9 was our APWT. We started the week practising and zeroing our rifles, and on Wednesday night and Thursday we did the APWT. Week 10 was the best week. We did AT on the first three days, with hill walking in Leek and had the option of mountain biking, climbing or kayaking. I chose biking and kayaking. Both were great, especially kayaking, as I had never done it before; it was a good new experience. We were also able to have our regulation two pints at the local pub and get to know the Tp staff. We did skits on each other, which were so funny. They were mick-takes of the Tp staff and recruits. On the Thursday of Week 10, we went on battlefield tour to France and Belgium. We saw places where many men fell, fighting a long hard battle for future generations to have the life we have now. We had a tour of the Somme, which was good and made us think about how our trg is compared with how theirs was. We did a parade at Mennen Gate, which takes place daily. We all felt really proud to be parading there, and proud of the soldiers who fought for us.

Straight after battlefield tour, we were on a final fling in Week 11. Remembering what mid ex was like, I was nervous about this ex. We went to Sennybridge, which is renowned for four-season weather in one day. But for us it was sunny the whole time! At night, we did stag, an OP, an ambush and a recce. During the day, we mounted standing patrols, received orders, carried out rehearsals and had to deal with friendly forces casualties and an NBC attack. Outside of this, we did our admin and could get our heads down. I reckon this was the most sleep we had on the whole of the CMSR! The final night was awesome. We carried out our final attack, with each section taking out a position. I was also on the assault team that had to clear the buildings. This was great; the whole lot was pure adrenaline. As soon as it was over, I wanted to go again. The CMSR has been hard, but fun. It started off slow, but it soon flew by. We have made great friends, experienced and learned new things. And best of all, we had been paid to do it. Many thanks to the trg staff of Cook Tp.

Cpl Rose ensuring that recruits have their IPE fully fitted

WATERS TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Matt Jones**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Kev Cosgrove** PARA

THE TRAINING TEAM'S VIEW *- by Cpl Andy Williams*

The day was Monday 19 April 2004, and the latest intake of recruits to undergo CMS(R) trg were starting to arrive. They came from far and wide, all bound for Waters Tp, ably commanded by **Capt M Jones** with a little help from **Sgt K Cosgrove** PARA.

Once rounded up at the railway station, it was then only a short drive to ATR(L), where the majority would undergo 12 weeks rigorous trg; where the seemingly impossible would be achieved: to turn 29 unmotivated, ill-disciplined civilians into fully trained British soldiers, ready for Special to Arms trg and deployment to the field Army.

As usual, the first week entailed documentation, medicals and the issue of all clothing and equipt. Also briefings from the Sec Comds, **Cpls Williams**, **Rose** and **Howie** were underway. At this stage, the recruits were suffering from 'battle shock', having been successfully removed from their comfort zones into a situation over which they had no control. They did have the occasional respite: the CO's welcoming brief and an audience with the Padre. But for the rest of the time, they belonged to the Trg Team, and they knew it - or if they didn't know it, they soon would.

Amongst other subjects, Skill at Arms, Drill, Fieldcraft and PT were now being steadily hurled at the recruits. 'Sink or swim' is the phrase that springs to mind. Mid Week 2, EX NEW ADVENTURE beckons. Combat camping, with a few lessons thrown in for good measure - no great dramas. By the end of the second week, the majority of the recruits were settling in nicely. If they weren't, paint balling would surely do the trick. 2 minibuses deployed to Bassetts Pole, home of the National Paintballing Fields. 3 of the training team, **Sgt Cosgrove**, **Cpls Williams** and **Howie** accompanied the recruits in a classic team-building ex. The day was a stunning success.

Week 3, and EX FIRST NIGHT looming. A bit like *New Adventure*, but like the rest of the course, more demanding. Shell Scrapes, track plans, clearance patrols, weapons and morning routine are all to be observed. Get the basics right first time, and there'll be no need to re-teach or re-educate. Weeks 4 and 5 seemed to gel into one. The Dismounted Close Combat Trainer (the re-vamped SAT) is now introduced. Marksmanship principles are being hammered into the recruits. It's OK to spout them off parrot fashion, but they must be put into practice. Practice, practice, practice.

Week 6 is now upon us. This is a milestone for the recruits and trg team alike. During the Week 6 Drill Test, the recruits get marked on their abilities to remember and state the ATR's personalities, the Corps history, and most of all, their ability to march around the drill square in a smart, soldier-like and uniformed manner. For the recruits, pass this and they get to leave the confines of the camp for the first time in 6 long hard weeks. For the Trg Team, a chance to unwind, relax, take off our military heads and spend some quality time with our families. Who deserves it most? Without question, the Trg Team!!

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col NP Metcalfe MBE QGM**
RSM	**WO1 D Mitchell**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MA Wright-Jones**
SSM	**WO2 AV Gill**

FRIENDLY FOOTBALL MATCH AGAINST THE DANISH NAVY
- by LCpl Mark Irwin

On 23 May 2004, HQ Sqn amassed its footballing legends for a friendly game of football against the Danish crew of the *HDMS Triton*. Although it was seen as a friendly and a fun day out for the ship's crew, we soon felt differently when we collected them from Belfast Harbour. The ship had a full complement of players and supporters including several female cheerleaders. Once the teams arrived and were changed, the Danish team showed off their athleticism by allowing **Sig Bickerton** to take them through a full warm up.

Prior to the kick-off our Captain **Sig Glen Watt** conducted all the usual formalities, with each team having their photographs taken and the exchange of Regtl plaques. After a slow start, both teams had acclimatised to the heat of the day, and we broke the deadlock with a goal from **Sig** Bickerton. Shortly after that, and with a great run down the right wing by **LCpl Mark Irwin** crossed the ball for **Sig Bickerton** to score his second of the match.

The Teams Exchange Plaques

After numerous attempts at goal, **Cpl Billy Merrick** finally scored in the top right corner. **LCpl Scotty Cameron** seemed to be taking things very easy during the match, until the arrival of the naval female supporters. From then on, he turned up the heat and showed the crowd his 'magic'. He opened his scoring with a superb dribble around the keeper. Later, he managed a second, when the keeper fumbled a shot and left the goal wide open.

At the final whistle, the final score was HQ Sqn 7, Danish Navy 0. Both teams had given an excellent account of themselves, and both teams were exhausted from the vigorous pace of the game and the heat of the day. They then all met in the *Peake Inn* for a BBQ, arranged by **Cpl Billy Merrick** and **Sig Baz Webster**. Players and supporters alike enjoyed the day immensely, and it was a great success.

Many thanks go to the crew of *HMDS Triton*, all the organisers, including **Lt Cdr Archdale RN**. Special thanks go to **PO (RS) Griff Griffiths** for making the day possible.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SJ McConnell**
SSM	**WO2 TJ Lappin**

EXERCISE BOWDEN FINN *- by LCpl Grove*

It was advertised as a challenging opportunity for poor men to live the life of rich men - a fortnight sailing around the Baltic with thirteen other like-minded people. My geography has never been good, so you can imagine my disappointment when I found out that Ibiza wasn't in the Baltic.

Heads down below the spray dodgers

The voyage began from the British Yacht Club, Kiel in two brand new 35 ft Comfortina Yachts that were positively palatial. As we cast off into the Kiel Fjord, the sun shone, a long way from the NI weather we were used to. However, our sense of serene security was short-lived as the high winds came in, the waves picked up and fish started to be fed by both crews. The yachts spent the next three days almost on their sides. We called at a number of ports including Soby, Damp and Aeroskobing. But eventually, the sun finally came out and the winds died down. This lasted for several days, allowing us to hoist our bright spinnakers and race against each other. For the remainder of the two weeks, both crews were put through their paces by being drilled, practised and tested in all their sailing skills.

Sorting out the knitting at the mast head

Both crews spend a day conducting EX BALTIC DIP, practising man overboard drills. The involved one of the crew going into the Baltic (which was more like Artic), for the remainder of the crew to rescue. We also took the opportunity to water-ski at the same time. The previous evening we had been talking about sharks, so the highlight was watching **Cpl Matt Shey's** face when entering the icy water to be confronted by nine sets of fins. His heart, testicles and anything else below the water appeared to leap out of his head. Luckily for him, the fins were only a bunch of inquisitive porpoises. All the novices achieved Competent Crew awards and the remainder gained more experience towards their day skipper.

McKELVIE CUP CRICKET *– by Cpl Taylor*

On a sunny day in May, the four Tps of 233 Sqn met to do battle for the latest edition of the McKelvie cup. The chosen weapons were willow and leather, the battlefield was the cricket pitch.

The first game consisted of runs a-plenty, stumps getting smashed, and even blood being drawn to a member of Romeo Tp, courtesy of an evil delivery of NCC's **Cpl Al Taylor**. At the end of the first match, Romeo Tp left the field of play bloodied, battered, bruised and well-beaten. NCC off to yet another flyer! The next contest consisted of India Tp vs TM Tp. Runs a-plenty for both sides due to extremely good batting or very poor bowling, and TM Tp finally edging a well-fought victory.

Round 2 started with TM Tp going into a game with the NCC over-confident after their win over India Tp. The game started well for TM Troop as **Sgt Goundsell** (NCC) acting as the extra man for TM Tp, ran out two of his own, including a golden duck for **Cpl Dave McGuiness**. With NCC staring defeat in the face, they somehow managed to pull out some of the best bowling and fielding ever witnessed in Lisburn, to clinch victory by 14 runs. The next game was Romeo Tp vs India, with Romeo putting up more of a fight on the batting front compared with their first game, but still ending up the losers as India Tp scoring enough runs to secure victory with three overs to spare.

The final round saw NCC vs India Tp. India Tp was sent in to bat first, with **Cpl Booth** and **Sgt Angus** producing lucky edges time after time to add up the runs, which led to a healthy 95 total against the favourites. NCC responded immediately, with a quick fire maximum 35 from **Cpl Taylor**, including some huge boundaries. After his departure, the run rate slowed down, bringing an exciting finale, with NCC requiring 2 runs from the final delivery. But it wasn't to be as **Cpl Parker** scored only one.

The final game brought yet another upset, with Romeo Tp finally getting a much-needed morale boosting victory against TM Troop. The final positions were India Tp 1st, NCC 2nd, TM Troop 3rd, with Romeo Tp propping up the rest. All in all, an excellent day of cricket with excellent weather to match! Special thanks goes to **Cpls Abbott** and **Slade** for organising and umpiring the event.

ROMEO TROOP TRAINING EXERCISE *- by Cpl Jimmy Smith*

With the recent arrival of a number of new people in Romeo Tp, it was time for another Tp trg ex. This took place in Magilligan, and was an excellent opportunity to complete all ITDs, conduct some special-to-role training, and enjoy some quality banter between the ops and techs in the Tp.

The first phase consisted of a 9mm range package. With a little expert coaching, standards quickly improved. A number of lessons were interspersed amongst the ranges, completing the ITD requirements for the Tp. This led nicely onto an intra-Tp competition.

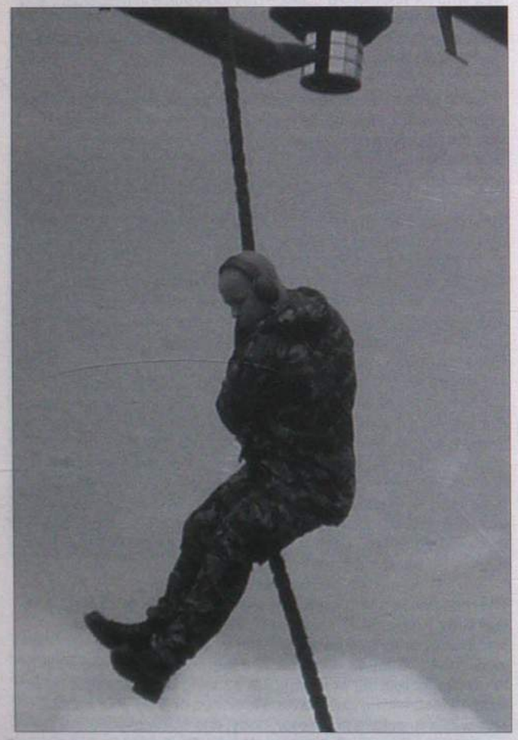
The Tp was split into teams of four, with a spread of ranks, trade and NI experience in each team. The competition took the form of an orientation ex around the trg area, with teams navigating between stands. The weapons stand required team members to assemble 9mm weapons from a large pile of weapon parts, followed by a grouping shoot, all timed. **Sgt John Martin** impressed his team with a very quick weapon assembly. However, it didn't do much to improve his team score, as he stood proudly holding an SA80 looking for 5.56mm rounds! All teams showed a flair for navigating. Of particular note, one team even managed to find one of the stands early, before being given the grid reference! Other teams complained that there was cheating involved, but this was strenuously denied by the team in question! There were good examples of initiative throughout the competition. The MT stand required individuals to change a flat tyre, and one team found that valuable seconds could be saved by zip-tying the jack back into the vehicles. Where would Royal Signals be without techies?

The next phase of the exercise involved support from 5 Regt AAC. **Sgt Billy King**, the Tp's very own fast rope instructor, had previously completed gantry trg with a number of brave individuals. Those who had passed this now had the opportunity to do this for real out of a Lynx, (i.e. jumping out of the helicopter from 40 feet, sliding down a rope attached only by your hands). This was a rush for almost everybody, and some exceptional skill was shown. Of note, **Sgt Adam Wright-McCarthy** invented a new version known as slow roping, and it looked like **WO2 (YofS)**

Loaded and waiting to shoot

Tom Talbot jumped out without bothering with the rope. Apparently that's how it's supposed to be done - or so he tells anybody who will listen!

Following this, the ops went for some nav trg in a Gazelle, the techs sneaked off for a NAAFI break, and the AAC guys went to



Exiting, the serious way

practise some door gunning. Regrettably, they had some rounds left, and offered us the chance to use them up. This was the prize for the competition winners. With the fast and agile Lynx being flown by some adrenaline-seeking pilots, this was not for the feint-hearted! After firing at targets from the hover, the Lynx broke contact. A roller-coaster ride of evasive manoeuvres followed, before the targets were engaged once again, but this time on the move. Some individuals were more courageous than others, and not all were comfortable hanging out of the door while the Lynx was banking at 90°, particularly **Cpl Wozniak** and **Cpl Nicky Harrison**.

Many thanks go to **SSgt Paul Parks** and **Sgt Billy King** for all their hard work and imaginative thinking that gave us, yet again, an excellent trg ex.

TUG OF WAR - EXERCISE HARD PULL 2

– by SSgt Mason and Cpl Caddy

HQNI and 15 Sig Regt Tug of War teams deployed on EX HARD PULL 2 from 19 May – 02 Jun 04 under the watchful eye of **WO2(SSM) Tom Lapin** and **SSgt(SQMS) Jim Mason**. The ex consisted of the Morrison Cup at Blandford on 21 May, The Hertfordshire County Show on 29 May and the Princess Royal Open at Windsor on 30 May 04.

The Team departed Belfast on 19 May and then proceeded to Bulford, where we were kindly accommodated by 3 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, there being no accn at Blandford Camp. There was to be no acclimatisation period. As soon as we were settled in our accn, it was kit on, and a trg session was underway. This was followed by an early night in prep for the Morrison Cup the following day.

Morrison Cup

The Regt entered teams in the male competition and for the first time, the female competition. First up was the male 680kg category, with 9 teams in 2 leagues. After a vast improvement on last year's last place, we found ourselves qualifying for the final, where we came runners up to 7 Sig Regt (current Army Champions). The same format was in place for the 640kg category, where again we qualified for the final, only to be beaten by 7 Sig Regt.

The female team entered their first competition since forming only a short time ago under **Cpl Sam Clarke**, and they were to discover that they still had a lot of trg to do for future events. In the 560kg weight category 5 teams entered with our team coming 4th. This was to improve dramatically in the coming week.

Hertfordshire Show

After a short weekend break, the team left Bulford on the morning of 23 May, headed for Brunswick Trg Camp in Pirbright. Ahead of us was a week's gruelling trg, which consisted of early morning runs followed by morning and afternoon sessions on the rope. We were fortunate enough to be able to use the excellent facilities at Princess Royal Bks, Deepcut.

This competition was to be our biggest test to date, with all the best teams in the Army present. We got off to a great start, with the male 600kg team coming a respectable 4th behind 7 Sig Regt, 40 Fd Regt RA and 4 Royal Irish. This was then capped by a fantastic performance by the female team, when they ran out winners of both the 520kg and 560kg weight categories, not losing an end. Next up was the male 640kg, where all our hard work from the previous week paid off as we were narrowly beaten 2-1 by 4 Royal Irish (Army runners up) in the semi-final.

Princess Royal Open

There was no time to enjoy our success from the Hertfordshire Show, as it was straight back to Pirbright and an early night in prep for the next day. The same teams as the day before had

Cpl Sam Clarke receiving a winner's medal at the Princess Royal Open from HRH the Princess Royal herself

gathered for what is one of the biggest events of the season, so we knew what we were up against. It started again with the male 600kg, where we went 1 stage further than the previous day, coming 3rd behind 7 Sig Regt and 40 Fd Regt RA. The female team again took no prisoners on their way to winning the female 560kg with yet another outstanding performance, losing no ends. The male 640kg team thought their day had come after beating 7 Sig Regt B and 4 Royal Irish on their way to the semi-final, only to loose narrowly 2-1 to 7 Sig Regt A after taking a shock 1 end to nil lead in the pull. Inevitably, 7 Sig Regt A went on to win against 7 Sig Regt B in the final, a team we had previously beaten in the group stages.

The Regt team is now looking forward to future events, and hopefully we can keep our steady progression going, and be even better and stronger for the Army Championships.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj G Inglis**
SSM	**WO2 B Hogg**

NI SERVICES ORIENTEERING SEASON 2003 - 2004

The 2003/2004 season has been extremely successful for the Team. For those of you who don't know, we join forces with HQNI and have a joint team.

his year, HQNI have had some strong orienteers posted in, hence our results for the season. Orienteering inevitably draws the old men to come along, but this season, we have had some young blood as well. We have also been supported by a strong female element, which is encouraging for the future.

In the NI League, we made League Champions, with **Maj Maxwell R Irish** (HQNI) taking Male Champion/M40 Champion, and **WO2 (RQMS) Griffiths** taking Male Runner-up/M35 Champion Awards in the individuals.

In the NI Championships, held at Magilligan Ranges on 18 Apr 2004, the Male Team were Championship Runners Up, with **Cpl George** taking B Cse Runner-up Awards in the individuals. The Female Team were Regular Army Winners, with **Cpl Murphy** taking the B Cse Runner Up; **Capt Hilton RLC** (HQNI) the C Cse Winner; and **Capt Jeffery** (HQNI) the C Cse Runner Up Awards in the individuals.

We are now all looking forward to coming across in May for the Army Championships

Cpl Green leaving his mark

3rd INFANTRY BRIGADE HEAQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

OC **Maj TJ Carmichael**
RSM **WOI (RSM) D Buckingham**

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt F Loxton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt K Mcintosh**

A number of major comms projects in the Bde area have kept comms ops and the Tp busy. Well done to everyone for their hard work there. Now we have the Marching Season to look forward to! We say a sad farewell to a few parts of the Syscon furniture - **Cpl Jackson**, **Cpl Dickenson**, **LCpl Cooper** and **LCpl Robinson** from the Crypto Cell. TM says goodbye to the super glue king, **LCpl Coy**, who is off to 7 Sig Regt. We welcome **Cpl Hamilton** and **LCpl Harvey**, who join us just in time to start practising for the disbandment parade. Congratulations to **Cpl Wallace** and **LCpl Brock** on their promotions — very well deserved.

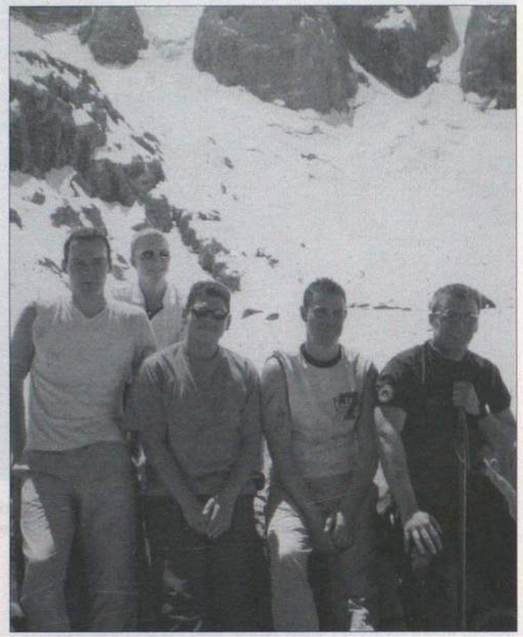
ADVENTURE TRAINING - *by LCpl Street*

This year the Unit splashed out on AT, and around sixty people benefited, with a week spent in the Pyrenees. I was on the second of the three one-week packages, each with around twenty people on. We left Portadown at 05.15 hrs and flew to Nottingham, where we experienced our first hiccup when **LCpl Rob Port** and his damaged passport failed to make it through passport control. Just four hours into the journey, and we were already a man down! From Nottingham the remainder flew to Toulouse and jumped on the minibuses headed for Luz St Savour, our base for the week. After dinner, prepared by our excellent chef **Cpl Leye**, we headed into town for a few authentic French beers.

Reveille was at O7.00hrs, and everyone woke with a spring in their step (sort of). We were split into three groups. Our group's first activity was to be hill walking led by **Jim Burnham**. The two other groups headed off to do kayaking and climbing. The 'hill' we walked up was certainly more of a mountain, and felt like Everest by the time we reached the top - through snow up to our waists, but with the sun still shining. The return journey was, unsurprisingly, a lot faster and we relaxed with an ice cream at the bottom.

The next day we were onto kayaking, led by **Sgt Jeff Hirst**. A few sore heads from the night before weren't helped by the freezing water (fresh from the glacier). **LCpl Gav Davies** clearly felt right at home on the water - graceful as a swan, but fierce as a duck when moving around. Once we had all got our sea legs, we moved onto the salmon run that ran parallel to the main river. On the treacherous journey down, only one of us capsized - the instructor **Sgt Hirst**! When we arrived back at camp, we discovered our lost man, **LCpl Port** had arrived. A barbecue finished off the day nicely, with top-notch wine, selected by the campsite connoisseur, **Maj Carmichael**.

Friday brought rock climbing, and we started on a handy face right by the café where we had lunch. The climbs became progressively more tricky and, at the highest, the views were spectacular. On return to Luz, we headed out into town and the bowling alley, where we wowed the locals with our unique bowling style (enough said). After a few more lemonades, we joined in the local tradition and hopped on board Fat Eric's bus to *La Discotheque*. Once again, the locals were impressed with the mix of dance styles appearing, from pole dancing to break dancing.



Team Ace doing 'hill walking'

Saturday was our opportunity to do one of the activities again. Most went climbing, two went walking and six kayaking again. On Sunday, we headed to Biarritz for a day of R and R. Most people chilled on the beach, with **Sig Tony Scriven** failing to understand how to apply sunscreen properly (the instructions were in French!) - the resulting shade of pink was, no doubt, as painful as it looked.

Throughout the day, we had been looking forward to the evening's cheese and wine extravaganza at the castle overlooking the campsite - part of our D-Day commemorations. There, after the OC's tribute, we sampled an array of local foods and wines. After an enjoyable evening at the castle, we descended from the hill and soaked up even more local culture.

On Monday, we had an opportunity to try a different activity. **Cpls Quinn** and **Leye** both tried paragliding for the first time. **Cpl Quinn's** take off was as graceful as his landing. On the other hand, there was **Cpl Leye**, who took off like a cruise missile and headed to earth like a possessed dart. When he got up and spat the grass from his mouth, he just managed a disorientated smile before a gust of wind caught his sail and dragged him another 40m. Meanwhile, the rest of the group were horse riding up a mountain in the morning, and visiting Lourdes in the afternoon.

On our last night, some of us headed to town for one (or maybe more) farewell drink. We were not the only ones sad to be leaving. The bar staff would miss us, and to demonstrate this, they kept on giving us free drinks in a last ditch attempt to make us stay. Unfortunately, this could not be; after all our country needs us, and so the following day off we went. Au revoir and à bientôt. Many thanks to everyone involved in making the AT the success it was. No doubt, a lot of hard work, but very much appreciated.

SUPPORT TROOP

QM **Maj J Williams**
RQMS(A) **W02 A Buckle**
RQMS(M) **W02 T Priestly**
MTWO **SSgt E Coles**

The Tp has seen a big influx recently, and would like to welcome **Cpl Hullond** and **LCpl Hurford** from 2 CS and NICSS respectively. Welcomes also to **LCpl Scott** from 2 Sig Regt, **LCpl Batemen** from 3 CS, **Pte Bell** from 9 Supply Regt, **Pte Woodhouse** straight from trg and **Sig Shirley** from 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. Best of luck to **Cpl Hepworth** and **Sig Nicholson**, who both go to 7 Sig Regt. Brüggen won't know what's hit it!

THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE - *by Sgt Steele*

One typical March morning saw **WO2(RQMS) Andy Buckle** received an invitation to enter a team in the Three Peaks Challenge. Due to the fact that many of the junior ranks were away on AT in the Pyrenees at the time of the competition, there was a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess (anything for a few days away!).

To be able to enter, the team had to raise £1,100 for Shelter, a charity for the homeless (25% of those who benefit from the charity's work are ex-servicemen). The challenge itself was simple - to run, walk, climb or crawl up the highest peaks in Great Britain: Ben Nevis in Scotland, Scarfell Pike in England and Snowdonia in Wales. Following several fundraisers, quiz nights, raffles and sponsorship contributions, we reached our £1,100 target.

The team, now known as the Mahon Marauders, consisted of **WO2 (RQMS) Andy Buckle**, **WO2(FofS) John Walsh**, **WO2 Jim Leonard** RAMC (its always good to have a medic!), **SSgt Howard Skidmore**, **Sgt Shaun Jackson** and **Sgt Dan Steele**. Lets not forget our over-qualified Admin team of **WO1(BCWO) Rob O'Dowd** and **SSgt Kenny McIntosh**.

On Thursday 3 June, the Marauders arrived in Fort William and had an early night in our hotel - well some of us did! At noon the next day, **WO2 Buckle** registered the team and by 16.00hrs hrs we were tackling Ben Nevis. **Sgt Jackson** and **Sgt Steele** set

The victorious Mahon Marauders

the pace - we went straight up and down in four and a half hours. Then it was straight down to Cumbria with a compulsory two-hour stop at Gretna Green. We arrived at Scarfell Pike at 05.00hrs, only to discover we were the second team to set off just one hour later. After a night of no sleep, and with no time for breakfast, we decided to pull out all the stops for a quick climb and descent. It's amazing what an incentive the admin team's famous breakfast is!

After we had completed Scarfell, the organisers told us that our team was in the lead, so we headed down to Snowdonia, and decided to put in a big effort for the final peak. We finished Snowdonia, and after a serious nail-biting wait, we were told that the Mahon Marauders had won the Three Peaks Challenge! To add to this, we also won the Saturday evening challenge and quiz night. For this, all credit there must go to **SSgt Skidmore**. After the prize giving, we all enjoyed our well-deserved pasta party, with celebrations continuing late into the night.

8th INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC **Maj DC Gaul**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KJ O'Neill**

EX D-DAY FINN - *by Cpl Walker*

The Ballykelly Ten left camp at 07.30hrs on Wednesday 02 June 04, and made their way via Larne, Cairnryan and on to Portsmouth, arriving at HMS Nelson at 23.00hrs. The following day, we were up nice and early and on our way to catch the Le Havre ferry.

Whilst waiting to get on the ferry, we found ourselves surrounded by a large array of WW2 vehs and costumed enthusiasts who were also bound for France for the D-Day anniversary. At Le Havre, we were met with a similar sight, WW2 vehs as far as the eye could see, some parked at the side of the road, some being towed (oh memories of modern day exercises) others parked up with stalls selling WW2 memorabilia.

At our accn, we were greeted with the beautiful sight of OMAHA beach, which stretches for miles, joining up with UTAH and GOLD beaches. Once we had sorted ourselves out, we headed in to Grandchamps Maisy, to buy some wine and snacks for the forthcoming week.

Friday morning saw us all up early and ready for the day ahead. We soon arrived at the Merville Battery, where **WO1(RSM) O'Neill** gave us an insight to the events that happened there 60 years ago. The brief was so good, it seemed that the RSM had actually been there on the day. We then explored the Merville War Memorial and the small museum that was located on site. After a grey start, the weather looked up and the sun began to shine.

We then went off to SWORD beach, where the 3 Div memorial is located. **Sig Aaron Creighton** briefed the group about the events that took place there. We moved on to Juno beach and visitors centre, where **LCpl Andy Hawkes** gave us an in depth view to the action that took place with the Canadian Regts. Despite an exhausting day, the group still had enough energy to pay an evening visit to Caen for some quality socialising, giving **Sgt Matthews** another opportunity to try out his dodgy French.

The Saturday saw the group arriving early at Pegasus Bridge and the Café Gondrée.

Media teams from UK had already set up their array of antennas and satellite dishes, and were busy preparing for the day's events. **WO2 (YofS) Muz Murray** and **Sgt Billy Matthews** managed to

muscle in and get on telly, **Sgt Matthews** putting in extra effort with his dodgy shades.

From the back row, Cpl Walker and WO2 Murray look on as Sgt Matthews keeps an eye on the Prince.

The bridge soon started to fill up, with hundreds of people from many nations, including some of the re-enactors we had seen in the previous days. A Veterans' march past followed, with very high security.

We then made our way to the Airborne Museum with visitors passes in hand, confident that we would just sail on through the security. In the end had to resort to our MOD 90s and a lot of persuasion to get in.

As the day wore on the sun got brighter. We were all suited and booted and sweating like mad. Then, to the sound of the Army Air Corps Band, **HRH Prince Charles** arrived to unveil a reconstructed Horsa Glider. Later, a small group of us managed to gain entry to the VIP area to look around the Horsa. Our day at the Airborne Museum finished with a large-scale parachute descent by members of 1 Para using both modern day C130s and WW2 C47 Dakotas.

Our programme for Sunday morning was thrown into disarray as we found ourselves prisoners in our own accn during the visit to the American Cemetery by **President George W Bush**. We were eventually freed in the afternoon to go to GOLD beach and the town of Arromanches. **Pte Pike** (AGC) briefed on the events that had happened in the area. On the beach itself, we were saw a landing craft display by the Royal Marines, who were centre of attention for the lovely French ladies. We just had time to see the Battle of Britain Flight and a small display from the Red Arrows, before heading to Grandchamps Maisy to grab a bite to eat.

Monday morning started off with a visit to La Cambe and the German Cemetery. Through out the day we visited other sites, including St Mère Eglise and the American Airborne Museum, Carentan, and Pont du Hoc, where **Sgt Doyle** gave us an insight into the actions of the US Rangers; and finally back to OMAHA beach. Our evening was finished off with a few beers in the bar chatting with some of the veterans who were staying there.

We man the gun at Longues Battery

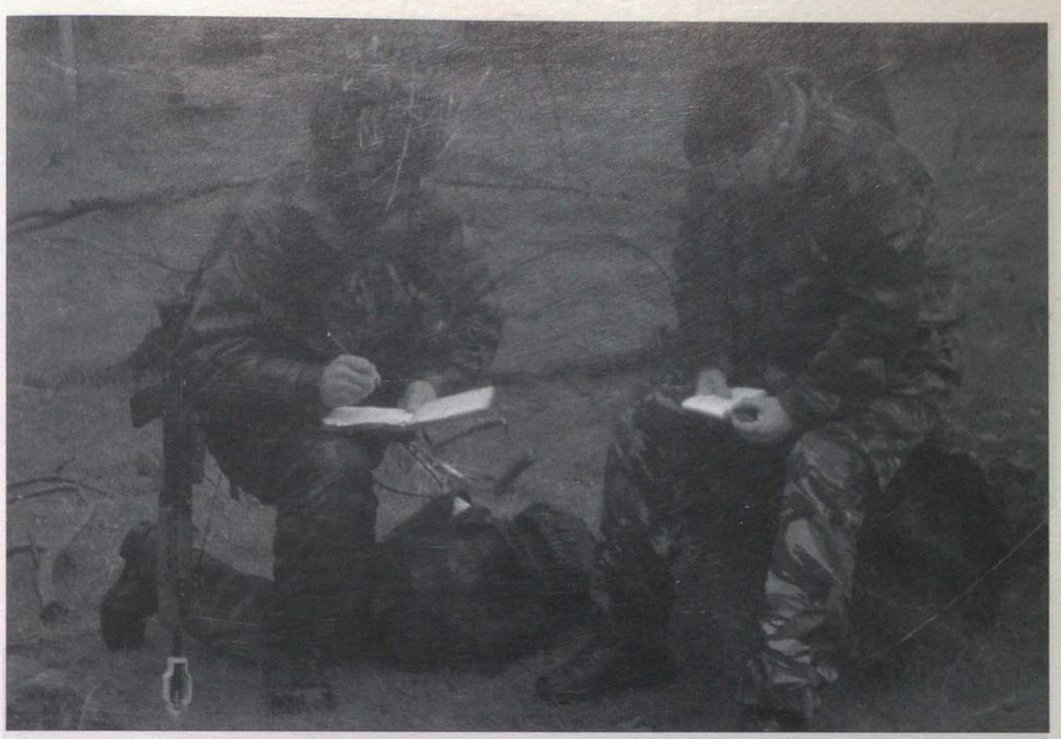
Tuesday, our final day in France, was spent visiting Bayeux Cemetery where **LCpl Mo Morrison** laid a wreath on behalf of 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. Our last visit of the trip was to the Arromanches 360 cinema, which used past and present footage to tell the story of the D-Day landings. With this in mind, we headed back to the ferry to celebrate **Andy Hawkes'** birthday and look through the 500 or so digital photos the group had taken through out the trip. Thanks to **Sgt Billy Matthews** for this well-organised trip. An excellent time was had by all.

EXERCISE CATTERICK FINN *- by Sgt Gilmour*

Once a year the Bdes in NI make time and manpower available to organise and attend a Sqn Battle Camp, so for everyone involved EX CATTERICK FINN was a special treat! For many of the younger soldiers, this was their first experience of an ex on this scale since basic trg, so there were a lot of worried faces, with most unsure of what to expect. The run up to deployment, saw the troops having remedial lessons on basic soldiering skills and kit checks galore.

The inevitable came, and 1 Platoon deployed for the first week, closely replaced by 2 Platoon on the second week. 1 Platoon had the advantage of spreading horror stories to 2 Platoon before they deployed.

Both weeks began with a long journey to Wathgill Camp in Catterick. Morale was still high, and the troops were expecting to get their heads down before the ex proper began. But not so! As they stepped off the bus, they were told to get into uniform and



SSgt Love issues instructions for the next phase...

prep for battle. They quickly realised that sleep was going to be a rare thing during the week ahead.

Early morning of the first day saw the troops head off to the trg area, where they were given refresher lessons in battle drills and section attacks. By midday, they had got into the spirit, and were confident that they could take on anything the enemy had to throw at them. The day continued with more lessons, with subjects including: first aid, fire control orders, target indication, and a cheeky confidence course to get the blood flowing. There was nothing too arduous, but the troops were relieved to see their harbour area where they began to basha up (**Billy Smarts** would have been proud of some of the poncho arrangements). Just as they got comfortable, they were sent off on a night nav ex before they were finally allowed to settle down for the night.

The second day was filled up with sections putting their military skills into practice. First up, was an attack on a lone enemy position, with a few casualties being taken by the extremely deep marsh that most sections found. Some like **Pte Wiltshire**, found the same piece twice! They then had to deal with casualties in a veh accident, before moving off to a veh ambush stand. The night saw the platoon sending out fire team size patrols for a replen before the next day's activities commenced.

The third day saw us move onto a FIBUA phase. This began with the sections competing in a race across the confidence course, which included climbing up buildings, ducking and diving through mouse holes and crawling through what appeared to be a genuine sewer system. Lessons on taking a building and defending a building were demonstrated, before the sections practised the drill themselves. That night the platoon was given their mission. They had to recce a particular house in the village, and take it the following morning. The recce teams proved to be very handy as **Pte Hughes** and **Cpl Tarry** managed to get so close to the enemy, they could see and hear them ordering a KFC. As the int got back to the harbour area, which had also come under attack, the plan for the morning attack was hatched.

As the platoon neared the village, flares went up and smoke and suppressive fire went down. The platoon advanced to their objective. Room by room the fire teams cleared the houses taking minimal casualties. As the last shout of 'Room Clear!' went up, everyone felt huge satisfaction.

Sig Rambo Wilkie looks disappointed to hear that bayonets won't be needed...

The second phase of the exercise was filled with a live firing package. Everyone completed an APWT, and then moved on to pairs and fire team live fire and manoeuvre - really interesting and exhilarating stuff.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt JD Landreth**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Love**

We have had a large turnover of manpower over the last few months. We welcome **Sgt Gilmour**, **Cpls Sherratt**, **O'Neill**, **Page**, **LCpls Linton**, **Skinner**, **Murray**, **Jones**, **Girling**, **Huber** and **Sig Jones**. We have had a similar number of soldiers leaving. We say goodbye to **Sgts Flanighan**, **Marchant** and **Critchley**, who are off to 15 Sig Regt, 71 Sig Regt and 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt respectively. **LCpl Baxter** is off to 7 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and is joined in Germany by **Sig Vaughan** who is off to 1 Div HQ and Sig Regt and **LCpl Beazley**. **Cpls Bridger**, **McMahon** and **Edwards** have all departed to Blandford to attend their T1 courses. **Cpl Haworth** has moved on to 238 Sig Sqn, and LCpl **Anderton** is off to 21 Sig Regt (AS).

RQMS DEPT

RQMS	**SSgt Kielty**
SQMS	**SSgt Maw**

The RQMS Dept has been extremely busy over the last month. We have had a series of managerial checks, a Board of Officers, a Logistic Stores Inspection and an Equipment Care Inspection. The team has worked very hard, and have produced results that they can all be proud of. Well done to all the guys.

A farewell to the outgoing RQMS, **WO2 Dave Inman**, who has moved on to Civvy Street as a Health and Safety advisor to a large grocery chain. We wish both **Dave** and **Kathy** all the best for the future. We have also said goodbye to **Cpl Badger O'Rielly** and his family, who are off to Osnabruck. And we welcome **Cpl Jeanne** and family.

MT DEPARTMENT

MTWO	**WO2 Stronach**
MT Sgt	**Sgt Williams**

After a busy start to this year, the Dept has finally had time to focus on other things. We ran a Wive's Day, which included activities such as Hyster driving, a skidpan, cross country driving and a confidence course.

It was a most successful event and enjoyed by all who participated. With the help of Comms Tp, members of MT have also begun to re vamp the Sqn's Junior Ranks' bar.

We have had to say goodbye to **Pte Coultas** and **LCpl Morrison** and wish them luck in their new units. We welcome **Cpls Pullen** and **Clancy**, and congratulate **Pte Kay**, who is due to be married in the near future.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

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

CO	**Lt Col AP Bristow**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) C Bruce BEM**

As always the Premier Regt has found a whole host of things to keep ourselves busy. Even the CO, **Lt Col Bristow** and the 2IC, **Maj Simon Purser**, managed to get away for some AT - not at the same time though!!

EX PINK RHINO *- by 2Lt Bell*

The weekend of the 15 May 04 will be firmly etched on the memories of those gallant wives and girlfriends of the Regt who endured a weekend of soldiering and living in the field during EX PINK RHINO. Under the comd of **WO2 Phil Joyce**, the girls took part in a variety of military tasks and exs, experiencing at first hand how their better halves earn their crust.

On Friday evening, the girls were organised into three sections and placed under the watchful eyes of **LCpl Leslie Kelly-Vernon**, **Sig Jodie Matthews** and **LCpl Kelly Berry**. The task of these soldiers from was to mould this bunch of 30 disobedient, unruly and undisciplined civvies into a lean mean fighting outfit - in 48 hrs. Each section would be marked and ranked against the high standards set by **WO2 Phil Joyce**.

All participants rose to the challenge admirably, and from the outset, fierce competitiveness was evident. Friday night saw the girls visit a number of stands designed to improve their military knowledge and equip them with the skills needed to survive the weekend. **Sig Dunwell's** First Aid stand was particularly informative, allowing the girls to get to grips with Dave the dummy, to contort him into the three-quarter prone position, and practise their mouth-to-mouth skills. Husbands beware!

On Saturday, the group all left for Sennelager Trg Area, where the girls took part in Land Rover driving, section battle drills, navigation, camouflage and concealment (where is **Sig Watson**?), cooking in the field and basha building.

3 Section were caught standing on the blocks and **Sig Matthews** considered giving them a good old fashioned ragging. On the other hand, 1 Section got off to a racing start. In fact **LCpl Berry** struggled to keep them in tow. **Emma Preece**, in particular, took to the driving course with zeal. Crashing the Sqn OC's Land Rover into possibly the thinnest tree on the trg area, destroying the wing, and posing a few problems for **LCpl Hopkinson** in MT Dept.

As night fell, the girls were getting tired but there was a lot more to come. On the close target recce, the girls stealthily attempted to poach bottles of wine from under the noses of the insurgent enemy force. Quite how **Laura X** from 1 Section escaped detection whilst wearing a white tea cosy hat is remarkable. Once again, it must have been down to the excellent tuition from **Cpl Yates**, their section DS and the diligence of the girls.

A night nav ex followed, and thankfully at this time of year in Germany, it doesn't get dark until extremely late. However, all did extremely well, and were able to stumble upon the Night Manoeuvre course. Full of booby traps, swinging dummies, man-made spider's webs, and a trip flare attached to Dave the dummy, the intention was for the girls to make it around as quietly as possible. Panic, delirium and comedy all ensued, and everybody

Home Sweet Home – The girls seemed quite at home in the field

was relieved to make it into the course troop shelter for a sit down and a bottle of wine.

The girls bedded down for the night in the superb bashas that they had made earlier in the day. They must have been extremely comfortable as the DS in their warm cots, dozing on a stomach full of hotpot and beer didn't hear a peep from them all night!

Sunday morning PT got the girls wide awake and it was on to driving armoured vehicles, a CQB range and a medically inspired comd task, where **Cpl Fox** was gunning for an Oscar. So much so, that his asylum-like behaviour distracted his wife, **Amy**, who fell into the pseudo-mine field with tragic consequences.

As the day's activities drew to a close, the girls sat in the sunshine and agreed that they had changed their opinion of their husbands' work. They all promised to give them more TLC and sympathy when they return off ex. All insisted that they would do it again, but would need at least year to recover.

In the end, the competition didn't really matter, as everybody had such a good time. However, just so I can walk safely around Herford, 1 Section did win, with **Emma Preece** picking up the award for best driver, and **Judith** for the most aggressive performance on the CQB.

LS AND GC MEDAL PRESENTATION

On the 23 March, the Regt was honoured by the visit of **Maj Gen DR Bill**. The day was a complete success and concluded with an LS and GC Presentation in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess. In recognition for 37 years exemplary service a bar was added to **WO2 Des Bloom's** LS and GC medal; a 25 years of exemplary service award was presented to **Mr Peter Wood**; and a 12 years

The winning section: Back row L-R Laura Stein, Claire Liddell, Emma Dunwoody, Dawn Searles. Front Row Sarah Fidler, Lucy Nolan and Sarah Carley

The medal presentation. WO1(RSM) C Bruce BEM, WO2 D Bloom, Mr C Thompson, Mr P Wood, Lt Col A P Bristow. Mrs Bloom, Maj Gen DR Bill, Mrs Wood

of exemplary service was awarded to **Mr Callum Thompson**. The General then said a few words about the awards before presenting bouquets to **Mrs Bloom** and **Mrs Wood**. The day was rounded off with lunch in the Mess.

LOURDES - *by Sig Patterson*

On 12 May 2004, a group of ten soldiers from the Regt were sent on a Pilgrimage to Lourdes for crimes they had probably committed. The International Military Pilgrimage is held each year at Lourdes, in the South West of France, and includes of 25,000 soldiers from about 40 nations. The underlying theme behind the pilgrimage is one of reconciliation.

The pilgrimage started at Bielefeld railway station, in one of the four specially chartered trains laid on by the German Army. On our train were Dutch, Belgians, Norwegians, Germans and we British. The train journey would take us 24 hrs, stopping once in Aachen, West Germany, for a joint church service of remembrance between the British and German contingents. We then continued on our journey to Lourdes. Once we got our bearings in Lourdes and were booked in to our hotels, we had a look around the town, which is nestled in the foothills of the Pyrenees. Dominated by a 14th Century castle, it is absolutely beautiful. The next day we attended several church services and had the story of the miracle of Lourdes told to us by our Padre, **Fr Alker**.

We all had to be up early the next day for the opening ceremony at the Basilica, a huge underground church that can hold up to 25,000 people. Security was tight and the atmosphere was more like a football match than a church, there were so many different nations represented there.

On Saturday morning, we attended Mass at The Grotto, the actual site of the miracle. In the evening, we attended a candlelit procession through the streets of Lourdes. It was a sobering affair watching so many people from so many nations coming together, and a sight which none of us will ever forget.

Every night there are thousands of people in uniform celebrating and socialising, it is a great insight in to other cultures and armed forces. You don't have to be a religious person to go on the Lourdes pilgrimage. In fact many of the Regt's contingent were not even Catholic. I would urge everyone to go to Lourdes. It is a once in a lifetime experience and everyone should witness it. It can safely be said that everyone who attended was moved in some way by the experience.

EXERCISE ATLANTIS DIAMOND - *by 2Lt Paul Keating*

EX ATLANTIS DIAMOND was an AT exped for seven members of the Regt to sail across the Atlantic, starting from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and finishing up in Keil, North Germany. The exped ran from 8 April 04 to 23 May 04.

After 18 hours' travelling we arrived at Miami International Airport, and on to what was to be our home for the next 6 weeks, the fifty-foot yacht *Atlantis*.

It took a total of 4 days in the gorgeous, warm Florida weather to prep the boat for the huge voyage we were about to embark upon. On Tuesday 13 April we took our last steps on land, boarded the yacht and set out into the big blue unknown. This just happened to be **Lt Col Bristow's** 13th crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, so the superstitious of those on board might have had a few worried thoughts crossing their minds. After the fine weather

The good ship Atlantis, ready to sail

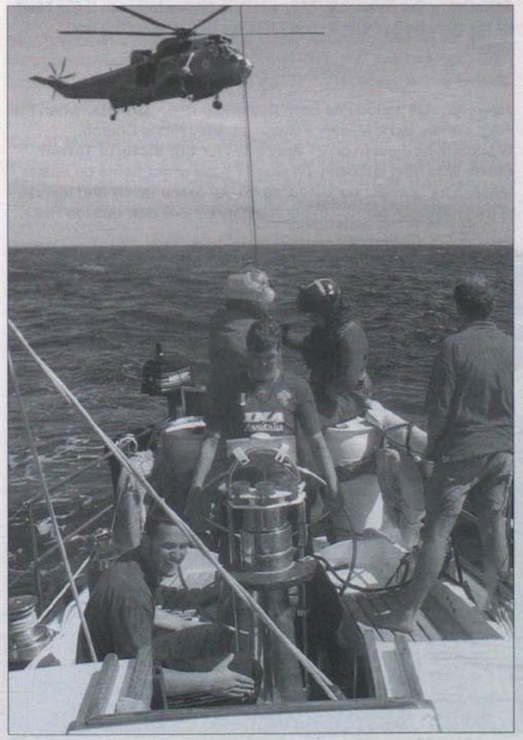
of Fort Lauderdale, by nightfall it was thunderclouds and rainstorms.

It took the crew a few days to get into the new routine, the sleep patterns and the watch system, but once they did, life on board became a little easier and we began to realise how simple life on board a yacht, in the middle of the ocean, actually is. You sleep, you get up, you eat, you go on watch, you finish your watch, you sleep. Simple as that! Obviously in between, you have the changing of the sails, the cooking, the cleaning, your own admin, etc, etc - but you get the idea.

After 4 days at sea, the changing winds forced us to put in our first tack and change direction. On some days, we found ourselves with absolutely no wind, a perfectly flat sea, but we were moving vaguely in the right direction. Then on the fifth day, the engine gave up the ghost. Despite attempts to fix it, we were, for the next 31 days totally at Mother Nature's mercy.

Being over 300 miles from the nearest land for the majority of the trip, it was always a treat to see anything other than blue sea and clouds. The wildlife at sea was the best thing to look forward to. We got saw plenty of flying fish. They would find it great fun to actually fly on to the boat. Dolphins would often come up and swim along side or at the front of the boat for up to half an hour at a time. Whales were quite popular, as well as the occasional sea turtle.

The highlight of the trip was Monday 10 May, a day that the crew won't be forgetting for a long time to come. The day started off so normally, the sun rising in the east, a little wind coming over the stern. **Lt Col Bristow** and **Sgt Reynolds** were a little concerned about a problem **Sgt Reynolds** was having. **Lt Col Bristow** called Falmouth MRCC (Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre) for guidance and advice. The decision was made to put a call out to any ship in the area that could assist. The nearest ship just happened to be *HMS Invincible*, which was less than 100nm to the north of us. After establishing comms with them, we arranged



A Sea King arrives to pick up Sgt Reynolds....

for **Sgt Reynolds** to be airlifted from the yacht. It was an excellent experience with a Navy Sea King helicopter hovering above the boat as they pulled **Sgt Reynolds** away from us. They then gave him a complimentary dunk in the sea before pulling him aboard. We found it funny anyway. As the Sea King flew off into the distance, we were all concerned that we had lost a crew member, particularly the skipper, **Lt Col Bristow**, because it meant that he had to do **Sgt Reynolds'** night shifts. However, within the a couple of hours when we got a call from *HMS Invincible* saying that, after a doctor's examination, **Sgt Reynolds** was well enough to return to the boat. So, instead of flying him back, *HMS Invincible* (or 'Warship Invincible' as it was on the radio) altered course slightly and came to drop him off personally. After a couple of hours getting ready and quite excited about this awesome experience, we could see her on the horizon. From that point on she just got bigger, and bigger until she was right beside us - and she was massive! As she sat there, **Sgt Reynolds** was returned to us in a small speedboat lowered from the side. He was extremely pleased to be back on board, as were we to have him. And he didn't come back empty handed, but bearing gifts of cigarettes, chocolate, newspapers and potatoes. Simple items, but all well appreciated. Once **Sgt Reynolds** was safely aboard *Atlantis* again we bid *HMS Invincible* farewell and headed on our course once again.

After that day, nothing seemed quite so impressive. Come to think of it, there wasn't a lot that did happen. We had **Lt Col Bristow** and **Sgt Miller's** birthdays. **Cpl Lord's** had been a couple of weeks earlier. After this, 18 May was the next milestone day, when we saw land for the first time in almost exactly 5 weeks. Cornwall never looked so good. We were now scheduled to stop off in Falmouth, to get the engine fixed. Having taken longer to cross the Ocean than anticipated, Keil was no longer an option. But despite all efforts, the engine couldn't be fixed in time to take *Atlantis* back to Germany and so Falmouth was to be our last port of call. 36 days at sea, good suntans, excellent memories and some cracking photos. A good time had by all!

....HMS Invincible brings our man back

EXERCISE HARDANGER DIAMOND - *by 2Lt Colin Northridge*

EX HARDANGER DIAMOND was a level 3 AT exped, led by the 2IC, **Major Purser**, and consisted of **2Lt Northridge**, **Cpl Cogram**, **Sig Owen**, **Sig Henderson** and **Sig Reed**. The aim of the exped was to ski from north to south across Europe's largest upland plateau, the Hardanger Viade, in five days.

The team departed Germany on 17 March and travelled north through Denmark, before catching the ferry to Kristiansand. We arrived in Norway on the morning of 18 March, and resumed our journey north to Hovden, where we were to conduct our build up trg and exped prep.

The build up trg consisted of an introduction to skiing for the novices whilst the more experienced members began to get used to skiing long distances with weight on. After three days, the team was deemed fit for a three-day mini exped to confirm skiing techniques and survival lessons learned. It proved to be extremely tiring, but we persevered and arrived at our objective at the end of the third day. We then travelled via Voss to Finse, where we

stayed overnight. Here that we made our last prep prior to the main exped, leaving all forms of civilisation behind for the next five days. The exped pushed everyone to their limit, but the build up trg and experience of the members proved its worth. We skied on average 25km each day, stopping only for brief snacks. In order to maintain our energy levels, each person was consuming in the region of 5,000 calories a day - and still feeling hungry.

The nights were spent in the self-catering huts that dot the Norwegian countryside. They were rather bare, but after a long day's skiing, they seemed like five star hotels, and it was always a relief to see one at the end of the day's skiing. The weather for the exped was unusually fine, and there were long periods where we skied in tee-shirts, despite it being minus 10°.

The hard slog to the next rest point

By the fifth day everyone was thoroughly exhausted, and looking forward to a shower, hot meal and a good kip. But we still had to negotiate a near vertical slope, which was no mean feat on skis and carrying up to 20 kg each.

Despite the hardships, we all made it safely, and enjoyed a nice hot meal before departing for Hovden. The remainder of our time was spent sorting out individual and group kit, and a day was spent on the slopes catching up on some R and R. The exped proved to be challenging yet enjoyable experience, with everyone being tested in one way or the other.

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col Stuart MacRostie MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Dick**

The year continues to be busy, with the Regt preparing to deploy a sqn to Iraq on OP TELIC 4, 219 Sig Sqn deploying on EX CENTAURS CHARGE and 214 Sig Sqn continuing to train and prepare for the introduction of CORMORANT. The past two months have seen a hectic schedule between these taskings, including Race The Sun, Regtl Athletics, and victory in the Signallers Football Cup, the 2 Div Football League, the 2 Div Cross Country Champs, the 2 Div Skill-at-Arms Meet, and last but not least, the Corps Skill-at-Arms-Meet.

The Regt's efforts during last year were rewarded at the SOinC(A)'s Conference in May with the presentation to 2 Sig Regt of the Birtwhistle Pennants of Merit for both Recruiting and Sports.

However, this period has been marred by deep sadness, when the Regt conducted a Military Funeral, at Arley Kings Church, Stourport-on-Severn on 21 April 2004 for **Sig Victoria Turner (Tori)**, who died suddenly on Good Friday whilst home on Easter leave. Our deepest condolences go out to her family and friends. A tree has been planted in her memory by 219 Sqn outside RHQ.

Race the Sun mountain biking

Race the Sun stretcher race

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SA Clarke GM QGM***
SSM	**WO2(SSM) P Haughton**

MT DEPARTMENT

MTO	**Capt M Nuttall**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt H Baker**

We congratulate **Cpl Pierrpont** for completing his RMQ 1–3 course, and to **Cpl Cote** in passing his CLM course. We farewell **Sig Alcock**, who leaves on promotion to 7 Sig Regt. We welcome back **Sgt Beswick**, **LCpl Garbutt** and **Sig Middelton**, who have had extensive time off playing football. The team has won The Signaller Cup and The League Cup, so maybe there was a shred of truth in their stories.

TM TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1(FofS) R Batley**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D Cartledge**

Our main effort during the period, has been geared towards prepping vehs for disposal, and decommissioning all the Unit's FFRs. Things have now settled down, but the Regtl Foreman is all ready talking about 1st and 2nd line inspections. It never ends!

The Sqn deployed to the athletics track on Monday 10 May with ten members from the Tp taking part. Congratulations go to **Cpls Vicky Lomax** and **Louise Hallsworth**, who took part in all the ladies' events, as they were the only female members of the Sqn to take part.

Finally, farewell to **Cpl Bradley**, who has joined 216 Sig Sqn and **Cpl Drewry**, who has joined the Regtl Recruiting Team.

REGIMENTAL GENERATOR BAY - *by Sig Kemp*

May has been a busy month the Regtl Gene Bay. The AT recce was undertaken in the Lake District, putting the final touches together prior to EX NORTHERN EXPOSURE, which is due to take place in September.

Cpl Al MacKay did well in the first leg of the Race the Sun, coming 4th in the 6-mile canoe race. Congratulations to **Cpl Bob Barn**, who recently married **Sarah**. We farewell **Cpl Trotman**, who his about to leave the Army. He leaves on a real high, having been awarded the Joint Comd's Commendation for his efforts during OP TELIC. We wish him all the best for the future.

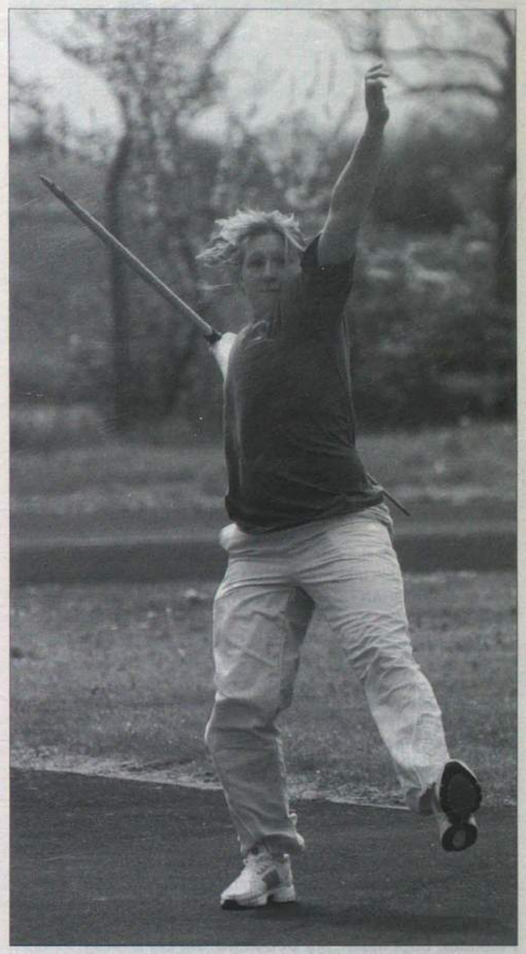
QM DEPARTMENT

It was out with the old and in with the new this month, as we said a fond farewell to **Capt McKenna**, who leaves us for Sierra Leone. In comes **Capt Tom Smith**, whose first action was to check all the staff were correct on parade, then watch the Dept burn down. We all agree that that a baptism of fire is the best way to start your new tour of duty, Sir. We are now located in the old Garrison pay office building. Also leaving is **Sig Crawford Scott**, on promotion to 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. Lastly, congratulations to **LCpl Mat Judge** and **Sig Danny Haley** on lifting the Signaller Cup and the League Cup within weeks of each other.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Stu Gillespie**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Neil Cooper**

The last few months have been busy, with the Sqn continuing to divide its time and manpower between the on-going CORMORANT commitments, op deployments and a number of key sporting events, including Lanyard Trophy trg, Race the Sun, Sqn Athletics and the 2 Div Swimming Champs. We welcome our new 2IC, **Capt King**, apparently in exchange for the Sqn Clerk, **LCpl Whyman**, who departs on a 6-month posting in the Falklands. We also welcome **LCpl Reta Lee,** straight from the factory and **Sgt Mick Pryce** from 21 Sig Regt (AS).



Sig Duncan throws a mean javelin

Viking Tp farewells **Sig Coole**, who is off to Cyprus, and **Sig Davies**, who has gone to 7 Sig Regt. With OP TELIC 4 looming, Saxon Tp will be losing **2Lt Panting**, **Sgt Rob Bird**, **Cpl Malcolm**, **Sigs Clark**, **Noble**, **Bates** and **Symington**. Support Tp loses **LCpl Paul Gowdy** and **Sig Herring** to 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; and **Sig Snape** to ARRC. Finally, congratulations to **Cpl Chris Kelly** on the birth of his daughter **Paige Louise**, on Sunday 16 May, weighing 2 pounds 10 ounces. And similar congratulations to **Sig Martin** on the birth of her new baby daughter.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

At the inter-Sqn athletics both the male and female teams from 219 Sqn won their categories, gaining the overall winners' trophy. **Sig Parr** proved once again that he is an outstanding distance runner. In winning the steeplechase, he lapped many of his

opponents. He did this only four days after a phenomenal run in the Race the Sun. More strong performances came from **Capt Bridie Henderson**, **Sig Emma Anderson** and **Sig Jenny Dinsdale**, who demonstrated devastating speed in the 100m relay, and **Sig Emma Anderson**, who won the 800m.

Recent arrivals include a new Sqn Ops Offr, **Capt Gladwin**; **Cpl Joey Deacon**, from Cyprus; **Cpl Bain**, back in from Civvy street; **LCpl Jean Pierre Felicien**, straight from the factory; **Sigs Santander** and **Mattison** from HQ Sqn; **LCpl Matt Ashley**, from JCUNI and **Sig Louise Ronay**. We say goodbye to **LCpl Dave Smith**, posted to 7 Sig Regt; **Sig John Jones** to 1 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt; **Sig Kaan Turgut**, to 14 Sig Regt; **Cpl Holland**, who deploys to Afghanistan; **LCpl Rose**, **Cpl Brett Doyle** and **LCpl Joe Malugu** to OP TELIC. Final farewells go to **Cpl Clark** and **Sig Tucker**, who are leaving the Army for greener pastures.

We congratulate **SSgt Reg Gutteridge** and his wife **Karen** for safely delivering their baby boy, **George**; **LCpl Dave Smith** and **Sig Marie Stoddart** who were married on the 10 May 2004 and are expecting a baby in mid September; newly-promoted **LCpl Jay Martin** and his wife **Louise**, who safely delivered their baby boy earlier this month; and **Cpl Dinsdale** and **Sig Dinsdale** who were married this year. **Sig Harris** also married his girlfriend, **Melissa**; and **Cpl McGeorge** married his girlfriend, **Rachel**.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Ade Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Tarabahadur Pun**

The main focus for the Sqn has been the prep for the back loading of PTARMIGAN Trunk assets and getting prepared to receive CORMORANT installations. We have also prepared our Wolfe Land Rovers to be given away to other BOWMANISED units; our VRC 352/353s are now in the stores as we await Defender series 110 vehs for replacement.

A Tp deployed to Iraq in the middle of April as part of our OP TELIC 4 commitment. The remainder are undergoing various skills related trg, with the main body deploying early July. Because of this, the Sqn has grown up with 7 Tps, including a TA Tp under command **Capt Denning**, in which soldiers from TA units across the country are represented. And yes, we have quite a few female soldiers in the Sqn now!

We say goodbye to **Lt(QGO) Narayan Bhandari** and his family who are posted to Brunei and welcome **Lt(QGO) Laxman Pun** as his replacement. **SSgt Arkumar**, **Sgt Tej** and their families have left us on retirement and Nepal long leave respectively, and **LCpl Pikendra**, **LCpl Mekh**, **Sig Debendra**, **Sig Lal** and **Sig Bhaikumar** leave us on posting.

Colonel Bde of Gurkhas, Col WF Shuttlewood OBE being introduced to Lts Buddhi and Narayan

Brig SMA Lee OBE, Colonel QG Signals, being welcomed with a traditional garland by the youngest Gurkha, Sig Tekbahadur Pun

We have been privileged with two VIP visits in the month, firstly by the Colonel Brigade of Gurkhas, **Col W F Shuttlewood OBE**. He was received by **Maj A J Clewlow** and **Capt(QGO) Krishna** and briefed him on Sqn achievements and future commitments, including the role of lead Sqn on OP TELIC 4. We also had a visit by **Brig SMA Lee OBE** in his capacity as Colonel of the Regt, QG Signals.

Twenty one 246 Sqn personnel took part on the Race the Sun challenge, we competed in the Inter-Sqn Athletics and assisted **Miss Judy Woolfenden's** Trans-Pennine Trail Wheelchair Push for charity.

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col D Hudson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) DJ Kelly**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj KB Bailie** R Irish
SSM	**WO2(SSM) M Evans**

THE MITSUBISHI BRÜGGEN 10 *- by Sig Gibson*

I organised a team of ten to participate on 27 March in the Brüggen 10 Mile Road Race in aid of Cancer Research UK. The charity sent me information and fundraising equipt, along with t-shirts, which we wore on the race day. Fund raising took part in working hours, thanks to the support of the Regt and local police. A total of £1,158.54 was collected over a period of about a month.

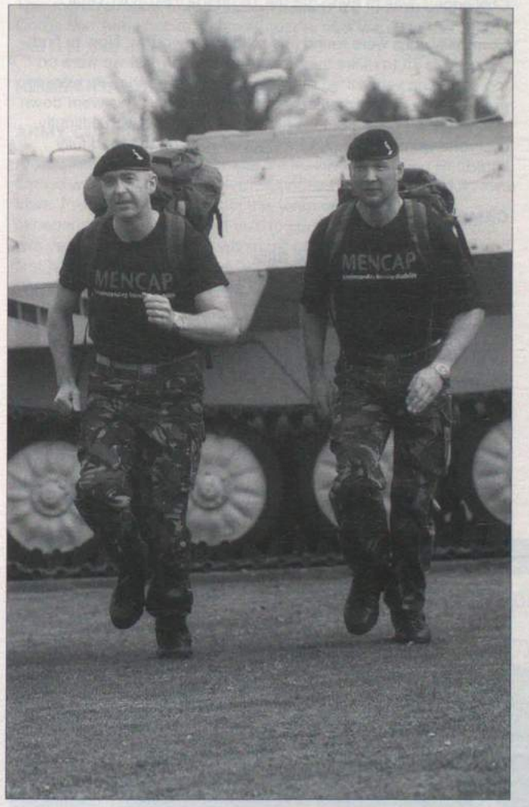
We arrived at Brüggen at 18.00hrs on the Friday of the race weekend. At 14.00hrs on Saturday, we were at the start point, where we received our numbers, warmed up and made are way to the starting line. We all started off together in the mass crowds of runners, but after a few miles the fitter members took the lead.

The course seemed to go on forever, but the whole team finished within 1hr 33mins, some people in better order than others. **Cfn Chandler** got within 900 metres of the line when he cramped up in considerable pain, but showed great courage crossing the line in a creditable time.

After the race, and with photos taken with our t-shirts and medals, we relaxed with a cold beer. The rest of the weekend was spent sampling the local restaurants and bars. We arrived back at camp safely at 18.20hrs on Sunday, everyone happy to be back and ready to do it all again next year.

LONDON MARATHON

In April and **WO2 Andrew Lothian** and **WO2 Ollie Reed** ran the London Marathon in full military kit, carrying 40lb Bergens. It was the Bergens and boots that made the difference in their timings. In a previous London Marathon, running in normal kit **Ollie Reed** had turned in a time of 3 hrs 20 mins. With Bergens and boots, **Ollie Reed** did it in 5 hrs 20 mins, and **Andy Lothian**, after developing blisters after 8 miles, came in in 6 hrs 10 mins. However, in doing so, they raised £1,200 for Mencap, which brought the total that **Ollie Reed** has already accumulated for that charity to over £12,000.



WO2 Andrew Lothian and WO2 Ollie Reed trying really hard to impress the donors before the London Marathon

MEDAL PRESENTATION *- by Sgt Andy Allen*

On Monday 15 March, four members of the Regt were presented with the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal by GOC 3 (UK) Div, **Maj Gen Lamb CMG OBE**. The recipients were **SSgt Harris**, **Sgt Allen**, **Sgt Robson** and **Cpl Meighan** REME. Also present were the recipients' wives and partners. After the presentations, everyone adjourned to the mess bar for a few drinks, where in time-honoured tradition, the medals were dunked in lager!

Maj Gen Lamb CMG OBE with the medal recipients and their families

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj S Meadowcroft MBE**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Reed**

INKERMAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Laura Clark**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Andy Dawson**

We have lost **Cpl Loz Clegg** to 19 Mech; **LCpl Adie Barrow** to Belize; and **Cpl Andy Munns** and **Sig Gibson,** who have decided to leave the Army; and **LCpl Jo Murphy**, who disappears a lot to go and play with the rugby lads. There has been a change of Tp Comd, with **Lt Laura Clark** taking over from **2Lt John Walton**. We welcome **LCpl Matt Hebdon**, from Overloon Tp; and **Sigs Dan Carter** and **Jay Howe**, from the factory.

OVERLOON TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Marcus Speed**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Paddy Bickerstaff**

It has been a busy few months for Overloon Tp in the build up for the summer ex season, but after some long days and hard work, the overhaul of our fleet of FFRs (post OP TELIC) is nearing completion. With the dets ready for ex, the Tp has had time to worry about other things, such as well awaited Helicopter Dunking Course, which approaches all too quickly!

Congratulations to **Sgt Barringer**, on his selection for promotion to SSgt; and to **Sig Holden**, who recently became a father to his first-born baby, **Thomas**. We welcome **Sig Heaney**, from RSS Blandford; and **LCpl Frater,** who joins us from 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. Farewell to **LCpl Scott**, who has left to work in the Regtl Sportsman's Bar before his departure from the Army in July.

WATERLOO TROOP *- by LCpl Hannam*

Tp Comd	**Lt Lee Chamberlain**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Kev Cooney**

The busy times in Waterloo Tp are fast becoming a regular part of the daily routine, with the main effort currently focussed on the Regtl exe period, which takes place throughout June. This will be the first time that the Sqn has exercised in over a year.

Congratulations to **SSgt Kev Cooney**, who completed the London Marathon in 3 hrs 23 mins. Sounds impressive until you learn that **Nell McAndrew** beat him. He managed to raise over £1,500 in aid of Shelter, the charity for homeless families. Congratulations also to **Sgt Andy Allen** and **Sgt Dave Berry**, who both came off the SSgts Board in April and are waiting for their postings on promotion. Soon to be leaving the Tp is **LCpl John Lee**, who is moving to Civvy Street.

FRENCH TROOP COMMANDERS' COURSE
- by Lt Laura Clark

I arrived in Cesson Sevigne, Rennes, bright and early on Sunday 23 Feb 04, a little weary after a rocky crossing, to start my attachment to the Tp Comds' Course. Naturally, it took some time for me to click into French mode, and most of my early conversations were met with blank looks. I suspect speaking French with a Northern English accent did not help matters!

The course is split neatly into three phases, and I joined the course in Phase 2. Here the Tp Comds assimilate all the knowledge gained in the first phase and are tested by a series of 3-hr exams. In fact my first afternoon was spent in one such exam, and despite never previously having seen any French comms, I muddled through.

The second phase also sees the Tp Comds tested in the field, as part of their Trunk/CNR EX BOCAGE. There is also a great deal of English taught, as France takes its role in NATO Ops extremely seriously. The level of English taught was very high, and I have to admit feeling a little ashamed that we in the British Army do not in turn study French or German.

The EX BOCAGE takes place over ten days, and is structured so that the first phase is a series of visits of dets and a HQ, giving a fascinating insight into how the French deploy their comms system. Out on the ground, I was attached with another Tp Comd to a CART, which in many ways is like a scaled down version of a Trunk Node, with a Node home and 2 RR dets. Once the det was set up, it pretty much ran itself, giving the French ample time to focus on one of their main hobbies, cooking!

The food was superb. Never have I eaten so well on ex, and never will again, no doubt. How bizarre it felt to be semi-tactical, sat in the Admin Tent drinking wine and enjoying a three-course meal, cooked on an issue cook set that **Anthony Worrall Thompson** would have been proud of. It also made sleeping that night all the more easy, as the temperature had dropped dramatically just in time for the start of the ex.

Locally, there was a vast variety of places to visit, and my weekends were busy visiting the Normandy Beaches, St Malo, Nantes and Caen to name but a few. The area is one of the nicest in France, with the Brittany and Normandy coastlines nearby. From that aspect alone I would recommend the course to any budding French speakers in the future.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Roy Freeman**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Wakeling**

During the last few months, 206 Sig Sqn has been reformed into three Tps, Normandy, Mons and Cambrai. Normandy Tp has the role of Main Tp and has the task of setting up the Div Main HQ and all the comms assets that go with it.

NORMANDY TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Rachel Thompson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Loz Sharp**

We welcome **2Lt Thompson**, **SSgt Sharp** and **LCpl Lindsey Kemp**, from 15 Sig Regt; and **Sig Kim Hemmings** and **Sig Paula Walker**, from the factory. We also say goodbye and good luck to **Sig Goatley** who is leaving us for Civ Div.

In preparation for EX IRON TRIANGLE, the Tp has been concentrating on the new HQ layout of DRASH (Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter). DRASH is a much larger and complex HQ than the BFT ever was. It is a busy but interesting time for us, as the Regt is the first unit to get the DRASH system, and if the concept works well, it may be adopted by other units throughout the Army. After the ex, Normandy Tp will be busy with a week of AT in Capel Curig, Wales, followed by BOWMAN courses for the RS Ops towards the end of this year.

MONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Ewan Watson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Neil Watt**

After a very successful Battle camp, moral among the troops was high. They had already proven themselves to be among the Corps best, but more challenges were to be thrown their way. Challenge 1 was to try to get the Tp on the road post TELIC.

Eventually vehs were found and made roadworthy. Now to find the comms kit to make them battle-worthy. Whilst we were on top of getting vehs kitted out, we were informed that we were to prepare for a board of officers at the same time. This went down well with the troops! But, as always, when faced with difficulty, everyone went to work, and we got all vehs on the road fully kitted.

CAMBRAI TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Jane Ellis**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Stebbing**

Cambrai Tp has been reformed to become support tp for Div Main HQ Sqn. Since reforming, we have been very busy preparing for ex by erecting and outfitting the new DRASH HQ. We have had the task of making cables, laying power and setting up internal comms for the HQ. This has been no small task, due to the sheer size of the HQ and the complexity of the cabling from tent to tent.

On a lighter note, we have been celebrating the posting of **SSgt Stebbing** and **Sgt Leach**, with a troop BBQ organised by **LCpl Steward** - a very well organised event. Finally we say goodbye to **Sig Pete Hill** and all wish him best wishes and good look as a civilian.

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Nick Range**
SSM	**WO2 Mark Fitz-Patrick**

ADEN TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt James Caveen**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Phil Jenkinson**

After the reformation of 222 Sqn from 257 Sqn post OP TELIC, Aden Tp has been uncontrollably busy. We successfully completed EX ACE HIGH 1 in March and now planning for EX IRON TRIANGLE in June. We have members of the Tp away shooting, playing hockey and training for the worlds greatest team challenge, Trailwalker UK 2004. All in, business as usual!

MASIRAH TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Ian Thompson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Steve Foord**

LCpl Bird has gone left us to become an instructor at Blandford, **Cpl Pickles** has been posted over the water, and **Sig Palmer** is away on OP TELIC 3. New arrivals are **LCpl Louden** from 15 Sig Regt and **LCpl Craddock** from 2 Sig Regt.

OMAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Nic Berry**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Wayne Dunbar**

After EX ACE HIGH it has still been a busy time for the Tp, with the normal ex turn around, swiftly followed by the Regtl Board of Officers. We say well done and welcome back **Sigs Allen** and **Ashmore** who have been away to Leconfield to complete their driver trg. We also welcome **2Lt Berry**, **Cpl Ben Walker**, **LCpls Richardson** and **Breach**, **Sigs Andy Duncan** and **Hogan**. We congratulate **Cpl Anderson** on promotion to Sgt and wish him and his wife all the best in his new post in Glasgow.

SHARJAH TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Sophie Howe**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Paul Baker**

This month's report from Sharjah Tp takes the form of the Regt, Corps and Army hockey teams' reports, as it would appear that that is all they do. Lucky for some.

REGIMENTAL HOCKEY REPORT

ARMY CUP

After winning the 5 Div Champs, 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt Ladies went forward to the Army Cup final where they met 4 Royal Irish. Previous battles against this team reminded the experienced players of what was to come, and bruises received two years ago reappeared within minutes. After a very physical first half, we found ourselves 3-1 in the lead, with goals from **Sig Wardlaw**, **2Lt Berry**, and **Sig Hughes**.

The second half saw the Royal Irish pile on the pressure, bombarding the defence and equalling the score. However, we saved the best for last, when **Cpl Fairbairn** drove up the wing and after a quick one two with **Sig Pheasey**, swept the winning goal past the goalkeeper. Champions again!

INTER CORPS HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Royal Signals Ladies' Hockey Team arrived at Aldershot for the Inter-Corps with a relatively new squad and only one trg session under their belt. The team came up against Infantry in their first pool match. With a strong contingent from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, Signals were able to neutralise their strongest players. **2Lt Berry**, **Lt Howe** and **Sig Hughes** all scored, to make it a convincing 3-0 win and securing qualification for the semi-finals. First we had to first face a strong AGC team in the second pool match. Hampered by injuries, we lost 4-0.

Next morning, we faced the favourites, the AMS in the semis. A fantastic match ensued, and outstanding performances by the whole team kept the game close. At the end of normal time, the score was 3-3, with goals from **2Lt Berry** and **Sig Hughes**. The match went to penalty flicks, and unfortunately we lost 4-3 in an agonising contest. However, we showed the rest of the Corps teams that the Signals Ladies team is back on track, and are a force to be reckoned with in the future. The team honours went to **Capt Downes**, for best newcomer; **2Lt Berry**, for best player; and **Cpl Fairbairn**, for most improved player.

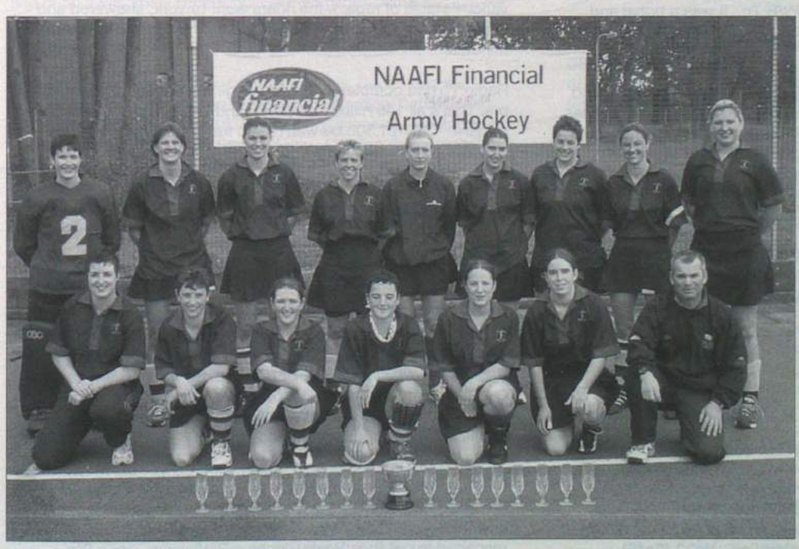
TRI-SERVICES CUP

After winning the Army Cup, the Regt went on to represent the Army in the Tri-Services Cup, where the best of the Army, Navy and RAF meet and play for the Gadd Trophy. The first match was against RAF Lynham. Despite completely dominating the game after a first half goal from **2Lt Berry**, we struggled to increase the lead. RAF Lynham soon equalised in the second half. With a second goal proving elusive, we were cruelly denied the points when in the dying seconds RAF Lynham scored with a lucky deflection from a penalty corner.

Picking ourselves up after such a disappointing loss was hard, but after a good talking to and a thorough warm-up, we were raring to go against HMS Drake! A hamstring injury sustained by **Capt Downes** meant a team reshuffle, but the team adapted easily, soon finding themselves 3-1 up at the end of the first half, courtesy of a hat trick by **Sig Hughes**. After the goal drought of the previous game we couldn't stop scoring. Another 3 goals in the second half from **Sig Hughes**, **2Lt Berry** and **Cpl Fairbairn** took the final score to 6-1. This cheered the team up immensely after such a disappointing first game, and meant we came second overall, finishing the season on a convincing win.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Jim Barber**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Dave Alderson**



3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt Ladies Hockey Team, Army Cup

In preparation for the imminent Lanyard Trophy Competition the 3(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt team departed to Sennybridge trg area for the team to become acquainted with the terrain and familiarise themselves with the route. During the week, the team suffered a few minor injuries due to the undulating terrain, but this did not deter anybody from enjoying in the sights that Brecon was able to offer (especially at night)!

The saying 'work hard, play hard' remained throughout the week, with the younger members of the team gaining invaluable experience in how to conduct themselves. Team admin was down to **SSgt Alderson** and **Sgt Carter**, who were responsible for ensuring everybody was fed and watered. Special thanks to Sennybridge Camp staff, who were more than helpful for the duration of our stay.

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col GR Norton**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Manktelow**

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj David Hay RASigs**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Welch**

ANZAC DAY 2004 - *By Sig Whitehead*

In April this year, as every year, 7 Sig Regt hosted ANZAC Remembrance Day in honour of the Australian and New Zealand volunteers who died so gallantly in WW1, most notably at Gallipoli, where over 50,000 men lost their lives in a vain assault on the coast of Turkey. The day was organised by 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn, with a special effort from Charlottenburg Tp, led by **SSgt Johnston** in setting up the activities at *Archie's*.

In accordance with tradition, the day began with an all-too-early morning call at 04.30hrs. The Regt's Offrs and SNCOs, bearing rock-like ANZAC biscuits and gunfire (a cup of coffee laced with a generous portion of rum), roused us from our beds. Following this, the Regt walked (in a fashion), and yawned its way to Anzac Cove for the Dawn Service. Candles were given out, and the troops bowed their heads in silence as they remembered the stories of the ANZACs. From there, it was on to *Archie's* for one of our own special traditions - a full English breakfast.

Following a presentation about the ANZACs by OC 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn, **Maj David Hay**, Royal Australian Signals, the Regt was treated to an enthralling display of Aussie Rules footie by 229 Sqn.

The teams consisted of C/SHQ Tp, captained by **LCpl Redpath** and W/B Tp, captained by **LCpl Tuck** - with a special (not to mention brave) appearance by **Lt Col Graham Norton**, CO 7 Sig Regt. **Sig Dan Brown** tried to even the odds by taking out the CO at the earliest opportunity, but it was no good. Despite their best efforts, Charlottenburg Tp just couldn't carry SHQ Tp, and in the end, had to concede victory to W/B Tp. It was a brave and bloody match, which provided gladiatorial like entertainment for all.

Once the wounded were stuck back together with tube-grips and Brufen, it was off back to *Archie's* for the main event. The masses were overawed by the artistic decorations provided by the talents of **Sigs Ed Tam**, **Gav Nicholls** and **Andy O'Neill**. Australian culture was enjoyed by all who partook in a game of 'two up', the BBQ, and a few wets. There was further entertainment in the form of horse racing, a pugilistic competition, and a Kiwi comedian, who delighted the crowd with such old favourites as *Libyan on a jet plane* and *I think I'm dancing with a man*.

The day was a great success and a befittingly memorable occasion. Our special thanks go to **LCpl Lee Lester**, who was MC for the afternoon's events.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Fallows**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Dixon**

Change is in the air for the Sqn hierarchy, with moves in the Sqn Ops Team. It's goodbye to **WO2 (SSM) Kev Read**, who takes over as the RQMS (Admin) and hello to **WO2 (SSM) Gaz Dixon**. In addition we welcome to the new Sqn FofS, **WO2 (FofS) Fletcher**.

RADIO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Mark McNelis**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Gaz Chapman**

We welcome **Sigs Atherton**, **Brent** and **Talbot**, from RSS; and farewell **Cpls Al Curless**, **Matty Baxter** and **Sig Claire Fielding**.

COAST TO COAST CYCLE RIDE - *by Cpl Spearpoint*

Organised by **LCpl Brown**, we set off on a 17-hr mini bus ride to Windermere, to collect our bikes for the journey. They turned out to be really heavy machines, and the saddles were the original racer saddles – like razor blades.

Two teams, led by **Sig Davies** and **Sig Swingler** were up against it from the start, requiring some gentle persuasion from **Cpl Spearpoint**. The first day was a killer, as we left the Lake District and headed into the Pennines. There were lots of ups and very few downs. **Sig Fuller** made the most of the downs, overtaking the admin mini bus at 80kph, scaring an old lady to death as he passed her!

The second day saw pain in our posteriors and aches in our limbs! Still behind schedule, we had to complete it all this day, or the entire journey would be a waste of time.

There were 61 miles and very little time to do it in. We were up and peddling as soon as the sun was up. By 09.00hrs we had banged out 30 miles and moaning for a break. Lunchtime seemed to take ages to arrive, but when it did, in good military fashion, it was right outside a pub! Surprisingly, after refreshments had hit the spot, the teams opted to push on to the finish, only another 10-15 miles away. We piled on the energy, wrapping it all up by 14.30 hrs.

Whilst the admin team returned to Windermere with the bikes (in various states of repair), the riders went to York, showered and changed in record time, and were out of the camp in less than 30 minutes!

Radio Tp had completed the challenge from coast to coast in 23 hrs. That's all 146 miles in 2 days - and we've got the T-shirts to prove it! Over £1,500.00 was raised for Great Ormond Street Hospital, and we all had a good laugh on the way!

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Wartemberg**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Kidd**

We welcome **Sigs Knowles**, **Davis** and **Williams**, from Blandford; **LCpl Butler** and **Sig Robertson**, from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt; and **LCpl Cooper** from 1 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. We farewell to **Sig Robert Roberts**, who has left us to 30 Sig Regt. We congratulate **LCpl Quow**, who has just been promoted; and **Sgt Dean Wilkinson**, who came off the board and is awaiting his promotion to SSgt.

Lastly, a selected few managed to get away for 2 weeks' AT in Bavaria. Unfortunately the weather was terrible, so it restricted us in what we could do. **Sigs Dave Burn** and **Rich Sorby** managed to get their Rock-Climbing Proficiency, while **Sig Andrew Latusek** got his Kayaking Foundation Course.

QUEBEC TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Cooper**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Kinsey**

EXERCISE WONDERBOOM BACKSTOP

EX WONDERBOOM BACKSTOP was a Tp AT ex held at Wertach, Bavaria from 4-13 May 04. The activities were hill walking, kayaking and climbing. The group were mainly Quebec Tp personnel, but a few banjo players from Oscar Tp tagged along to make up the numbers. The instructors were **Sgt Robertson** (kayaking), **Cpl Lloyd** (climbing) and **Lt Cooper** as an MLT. The lodge kindly lent us a JSMEL instructor to lead the hill walking.

The weather during our stay was absolutely miserable! If it wasn't raining, it was snowing. The walking group got soaked and cold, the canoeing group got wet and very cold and the climbers, well they just went to an indoor climbing wall and monged around in there all day! The weather stayed the same for the next two days, and again the walkers and canoeists got wet and cold, whilst the climbers obliviously stuck with the indoor climbing wall.

Because of the poor weather, we decided to bring the R and R day forward. Typically, this turned out to be the only good day we had! We spent the day in Garmisch, enjoying a May Day celebration with live music and beer - except for **Cpl Trev Taylor**, who spent the entire day in an Internet café!

For the rest of the time, the rain was worse than ever. However, everyone who took part in the ex received proficiencies for his or her particular activities. This was one of the main aims of the ex, since our Regt is desperately short of instructors, making weeks like this a nightmare to organise.

EXERCISE CEREBRAL JAVELIN, 27 – 30 APRIL 04
- By Lt McNelis

EX CEREBRAL JAVELIN IS 1 Sig Bde's annual battlefield tour, and this year's theme was 'Continuity and change over 70 years of conflict between France and Germany'. With 16 Sig Regt deployed in Iraq, the party consisted of personnel from 7 Sig Regt, ARRC Sp Bn and Bde Staff, including the recently appointed Bde Comd, **Brig Couch**.

Beginning at the impressive fortress of Eban Emael in Belgium, site of an awesomely successful German glider-borne assault, we followed the River Meuse into France to the main area of focus, the town of Sedan.

As peaceful and tranquil as it may seem now, Sedan and it's surrounding countryside has proven to be a critical battlefield in three campaigns between 1870 and 1940, ultimately leading to a catastrophic defeat for the French Army. Guiding us through proceedings was **Padre Paul Wright**, whose knowledge of military history provided an excellent insight into the ethos and strategy of both the German and French Armies, whilst highlighting the social and cultural impacts of war in France.

Participating syndicates discussed the practicalities of the battles and their inherent application to the military profession, and were able to compare and contrast different ideas and actions to the current manoeuvrist approach to warfare. As always, the most poignant moments came when visiting the enormous cemeteries and ossuaries - in particular those at Bazeilles, Douaumont and Pont Maugis. The terrible cost to human life becomes brutally apparent at the sight of acres of crosses, representing the normal people who fell for their cause. And it never fails to touch the soul.

The whole ex was thoroughly entertaining and informative, and made more worthwhile with some excellent syndicate work, including some notable acoustics by **Lt Serge Wartemberg**! Many thanks to **Maj Andy Fallows**, for his hard work in organising the ex, and again to **Padre Paul Wright**, for tying everything together so succinctly.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Ingram**
SSM **WO2(SSM) S Littlefield**

EXERCISE ARRCADE DEPLOYEX 04 - *by Sig Jo Lee*

We departed Javelin Bks on 15 May for an ARRC ex in Southern Italy. The following day we were given a tour of the camp and informed of the dos and don'ts. One request was that we stood to attention whilst the Italian National Anthem was played and the flag was raised. **SSM (WO2) Littlefield** took note of this, and ensured his troops were stood to attention. Unfortunately this turned out to be at reveille!

We had a comfortable few days testing our equipt whilst 170 Pioneer Sqn were completing the HQ build. Two days ahead of schedule, we moved in to earn our money. Under the watchful direction of **Cpl Pursglove**, the line was expertly laid.

Thanks go to Tac Tp, including their OC, **Lt Lucy Webster** and the Tp SSgt, **SSgt Tench**, who followed around the lineys, taping and zip-tying loose cables. Rather confused in the heat, **Sgt Tony Watmuff** mis-read a tent layout, and put 5 phones on the wrong tables.

Not the only senior to loose his head, **SSM (WO2) Littlefield** threw a salute to **Sig Nambekeke** (the only Fijian on the site) mistaking him for a Brigadier! It would be unfair not to mention the wonderful food prepared by the Italian chefs. For those unusual rabbit-like people among us, the diet of lettuce, solid bread roll and plain pasta was pure bliss.

EXERCISE ETIQUETTE ENHANCER - *by Cpl Stu Welton*

Some time back in March, the now **SSM (WO2) Bath** came up with the idea for a formal Sqn dinner night. 'A little taste for the junior ranks of what life is like in the Mess,' were the words said to me, as he volunteered me for the committee.

On 6 May, the committee and a band of helpers set about turning the Junior Ranks Mess into the venue for the dinner night. After a few hours' hard work and a fair bit of silver borrowed from the Offrs' and Sgts' Messes, the cookhouse started to look quite smart.

Dress for the evening was No 2 Dress, less belt for the junior ranks, and Mess Dress for the grown ups. The night started with **SSgt Bath** giving his mess etiquette brief, explaining the dos and don'ts of the evening. We were then shown to our seats, and the top table was piped in to start the evening's events.

The four-course meal was interspersed with odes from each rank, Signaller through to Officer. A tag team of **Maj Graham Ingram** and **Lt Lorna Giddings** delivered the Officers' ode; the Sgts' ode was read by newly-promoted **Sgt Tony Watmuff**; and the Cpls' by **Cpl Christian Perry**. **Sig Craig Bottoms** had the entire Sqn in stitches, when he delivered the funniest ode of the evening, the Signallers' ode.

After the meal, the troops performed their skits. Papa Tp used the old favourite, *Blind Date*, for their skit. Delta Tp used *Blankety Blank*, with **Sig Stevie Durham** giving an excellent performance of the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Matt Freemantle** and **Sigs Amy Trebilcock** and **Zoë Edmonson** playing the parts of his lovely assistants, **Lts Lucy Webster** and **Lorna Giddings**.

Tac Tp decided on a one-man show, which came in the form of **LCpl Jase Brown**. Those of you who are *Jackass* fans will understand what this involved!

When all was over, the committee set to cleaning after of the evening. Many thanks to **SSM (WO2) Bath** and the committee, for ensuring a fantastic evening.

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col PW Glibbery**

Life in 10 Sig Regt is extremely busy and we continue to sustain an impressive range of outputs. A recent successful ISIS delamination pilot at Brecon has set the standard for the rollout of the Land Comd DII Convergence, ISIS delamination Project, across GB. Delamination is a significant undertaking, which will place us at the cutting edge of ICS provision within the MOD. Work to restructure the Regt, post the transfer of ISIS into DCSA next year, is ongoing and extremely challenging. Nonetheless, the CO's visits to the regional Sig Sqns and the Div HQ they provide close ICS support to, continues at a pace. A recent CO's conference in London, ably hosted by 238 (London) Sig Sqn, was very successful and a number of workshops took place to progress ongoing Regtl issues.

LIMA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Graham Clarke**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Watts**

WHO IS LIMA TROOP?

Originally part of 220 Sig Sqn in Laarbruch and briefly tolerated by 30 Sig Regt, Lima Tp now provides the R2 spearhead of 10 Sig Regt. As a largely independent tp of Inst Techs, our primary function is the provision of fixed ICS infrastructures in support of LAND and Joint OPs around the spectrum of conflict. In the current operational climate, no unit is left unscathed, however, we feel the pinch more than most. Since our 'rebirth' into 10 Signal Regiment, we have deployed to OP TELIC, OP TARROCK, OP FINGAL, OP AGRICOLA, OP PALATINE, OP OCULUS, JCUFI, ASCENSION, BRUNEI, KENYA, and NARO Ops. We also provide close support to 10 Sig Regt and 2 (NC) Sig Bde exs.

EXERCISE CABLE DRAGON - *by Lt Graham Clarke*

On Friday 2 April 4, 23 members of Lima Tp embarked upon the unenviable task of carrying a half-length telegraph pole across the width of the country, from St Bees on the West coast, to Robin Hood's Bay on the East coast. The total distance was nearly 190 miles. The exercise was organised by **Cpl John Blowes** and **LCpl Brian Clarke**. Sponsored by Auriga Europe PLC, 3M and TYCO Electronics, we set out to raise upwards of £3,000 for the NSPCC. The plan was simple: a Support Team, who would look after all admin and 2 Log Teams that would work day-on, day-off.

In line with Coast-to-Coast tradition, we christened our boots in the sea and set off on our first leg from St Bees to Ellerdale. We were stalked by the same rain-cloud all day, and 25 km later, nobody was particularly chuffed to be returning to a tented encampment and a river of mud. The second day started with clear blue skies and moderate temperatures, but steadily declined to the point where we were forced from the mountain by driving hailstones and fierce sub-zero winds. Morale was rock bottom, but a small café, serving great local food and hot brews, soon raised our spirits.

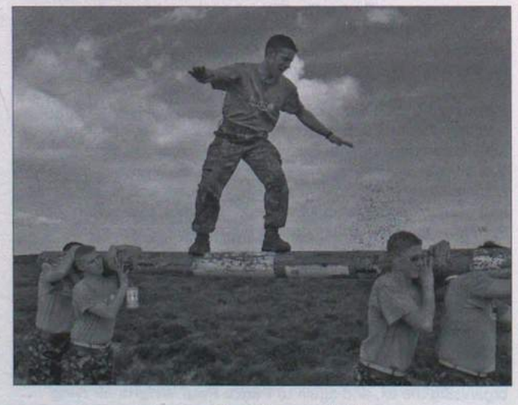
The next day flew by, and we arrived in Glenridding on the edge of Ullswater, bathed in sunshine and very much looking forward to a few beers. Shortly after leaving for Shap on the fourth day, we befriended a group of Aussies who were clearly confused and kept asking the way to Aires Rock. They did however, kindly take a photo of us.

The fifth day, from Shap to Kirkby Stephen, was one of the longest days. It was also our first day out of the Lake District and we were thankful for the easier terrain. The rolling dales and an abundance of public houses were just what the doctor ordered!

Sometimes it was hard work...

Days 6 and 7 were a bit of a blur, as everyone had their heads down and just wanted to get through the day. With heavy legs and sore shoulders, we arrived at Richmond's Swaleview Caravan Park, only to find that they had double booked and couldn't fit us in. A frantic hour later, we were welcomed into a great little camping barn at Village Farm in Brompton on Swale. Disaster averted, we headed into Richmond for a couple of beers. Day 8 was another long day, and the fatigue was starting to show. In addition to the log, we had carried sponsorship collection boxes and buckets with us, and by now we had raised over £500 by talking passing walkers out of their lunch money.

Day 9 was from Ingleby Cross to Clay Bank and was broken up by an ice-cream stop. Facing a long day and not going anywhere quick, **Lts Clements** and **Clarke** decided that it would be a good idea to get the log and run.....for several miles! This self-induced twist of fate nearly choked what little morale was left, and had to be saved by an impromptu pub lunch. Well fed and



... sometimes it was a doddle

partially recovered from our 'sprint' session, we cracked on to our finish at Glaisdale.

With bloody feet, knackered knees and tender shoulders, we stepped off for the last time on our Coast-to-Coast extravaganza. By this point, we were local celebrities, as BBC Radio Cleveland and BBC Radio Yorkshire had been advertising our plight for a few days. Every second car would pip its horn and people would approach us to donate money. As we came into Robin Hood's Bay, we were greeted by a crowd of about 100 locals, including media and representatives from the NSPCC. Having marched right into the sea, just as we had started, we looked forward to a hot shower and a cold beer.

It was over! 190 miles, over several mountains, with more than our fair share of weather and all whilst carrying a half-length telegraph pole. The final total is still rising as individual sponsorship is collected, but we are already approaching £4,000. In my book, a job well done! A special thanks also goes to Mike Moore from Auriga Europe PLC, whose assistance and support ensured that the ex was financially supported by Auriga, 3M and TYCO Electronics, contributing £1,500 towards the final total.

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON CEREMONIALS - *by Cpl Paddy Ensor*

Once again the time of year has come for 238 Sig Sqn to don their best bib and tucker, working evenings and weekends for the various ceremonial events that the Sqn supports - the ceremonial season, which lasts from June through to November. Having just completed the All Arms Basic Drill Cse, I was set the task of putting the Sqn through their paces on the drill square, which was greatly enjoyed by all who participated.

The first major event was the State Visit of the President of Poland, which almost went off without a hitch. Unfortunately, **Sig Emma Watson** nearly suffered a court martial and firing squad for deserting her post in front of Buckingham Palace. She claims the stampeding horse would have killed her had she not moved, but the Sqn have their doubts.

Saluting the colours at Wellington Bks

The highlight of the season is the Queens Birthday Parade, better known as Trooping of the Colour. This is carried out over a three-week period, and takes the form of two reviews and finally the parade itself. This is where the Sqn strut their stuff in front of all the lady tourists and although the Guards look very smart, we do stand out in our blues.

ARMY ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS 19-20 MAY 2004
- by Sig Emma Watson

When the Sqn asked for volunteers for an Orienteering Competition, there was a shortage of willing participants. That

Strolling down The Mall

was until it was mentioned that it was smack bang in the middle of the ITD training week at Longmoor Camp – then suddenly the whole Sqn wanted to take part! However, we weren't to dodge the ITD week. It was brought forward a few days. Eventually 10 of us set off on the 5 hr journey to Braunton Burrows for the Army Orienteering Championship Competition.

After a night out in Barnstable, it was up bright and early for a morning of map reading trg, which didn't exactly leave the group full of confidence! After lunch there was just enough time for a quick dip in the sea, before heading off to the first event. We were split down into 3 teams, a female team and 2 male teams and given our maps. Each team had individual controls to be made or else disqualification was the punishment. By the end of the day 2 out of the 3 teams had been disqualified, so we hoped for a better second day.

On the second day, we were ready to show what we were really capable of in the relay event. It started well for all 3 teams, but inevitably we began coming apart and when **Sig Dunkin** came in an hour after everyone else minus 2 of the controls, we knew it was all over - even **Sgt Powells** impressive time couldn't rescue us!

The end result was that even though we didn't win, it was an enjoyable few days and the decision was made that the Sqn will participate in future events, especially if involves getting another decent sun tan!

CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEET

This year at the Corps SAAM, competition pressure was high and affected everyone but the 243 Sig Sqn Pistol Tile team, comprising **SSgt Jim Robertson**, **Cpl Jase Sheehan** and **LCpl Sooty Sutcliffe**. The Pistol Tile win came as a pleasant surprise, considering the very high standard of shooting from all the teams in the Pistol Cup. **Sig Wilksey Wilks** also managed to keep up his hard-routine athletics trg by sprinting the 100 metres to beat everyone to the firing point. **Sig Carl Demwell** was our unsung hero, spending most of his week behind the scenes manning the butts. He was duly rewarded on the Thursday night celebrations, which made it all the more worthwhile. The team's spare time was spent zeroing and firing the variety of foreign weapons that were on display, particularly enjoyed by **Cpl Andy Weight**.

The next competition was the DIVSAAM, where **LCpl Craig Gardner** gained a commendable second place in the LMG Match, beaten at the post by a single point. Coming overall 4th in the DIVSAAM has qualified the team for the CENTSAAM, the British Army's premiere shooting competition. Congratulations to everyone in the team and the supporting staff for an excellent achievement, considering the novice element and the limited trg. This year, the competition was a good learning experience and preparation for future events.

The 243 Sig Sqn Pistol Team looking dangerous

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Tom Hall**
SSM **WO2(SSM) N Jennings**

It's been a busy year so far at 243 Sig Sqn in work and at play. The Sqn continues to work towards the delamination of ISIS and LCSS(R) at HQ Land Comd and lead on the Business Process Review model for transfer to DCSA and DII in 2005. There have been a number of changes at the top of the Sqn, namely **Capt Andy Garrett**, who has taken up post as the new 2IC and **Capt (Retd) Bob Wright**, who is the new UAO. Welcome to **Capt John Heaton** (OC Sp Tp), **WO2 (SSM) Neil Jennings**, who has just arrived from Cyprus and **WO2 (FofS) Bho Pradhan**.

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO **Lt Col DG Halstead**
RSM **WO1(RSM) G Smith**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj SJ Morgan**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A Burdus**

Aside from proving that experience counts by winning the Regtl Athletics Competition, we are keeping ourselves very busy completing our ITDs. An all-out effort has seen the vast majority of the Sqn's personnel brought fully up to date and ready to take part in the continuation trg ex planned to take place during July.

Our QM (G) **Maj Derek Deegan** is leaving us to command HQ Sqn, 15 Sig Regt.

We welcome **Cpls Beedon**, **Lynn**, **Grigsby** and **Vinton**, LCpls Thurston, **Gyamfi**, **Woodworth**, **Legg** and **Sig St Piere**. And we congratulate a newly promoted **Cpl Bates**.

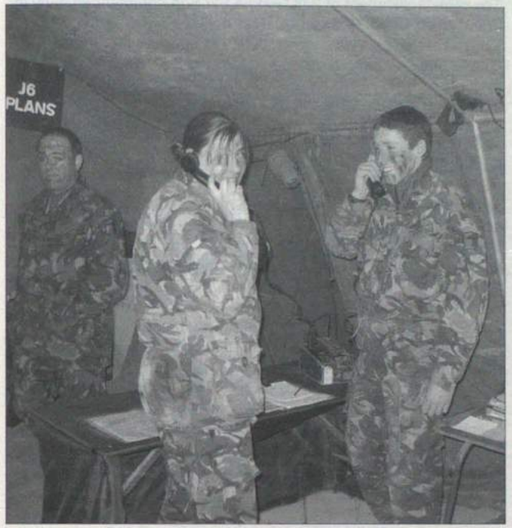
220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj RJ Lovett**
SSM **WO2(SSM) D Taylor**

A period of great change in the Sqn has seen a move to a new hangar and a total reorganisation of the Tps, both manpower and

equipt. We are now emerging from the other side, and can begin to concentrate on other more enjoyable activities, such as ITDs and AT in Weymouth.

4 May was a highlight for Golf Tp, as they welcomed **HRH the Prince of Wales** to the JHF HQ at RAF Odiham. As part of a visit to commemorate the unveiling on a new standard for the SF element at Odiham, **His Royal Highness** had a chance to speak to eight members of Golf Tp in their normal operational environment of the LFOT. The day was highly enjoyable, and left the Prince worrying about the fact we'd set up the HQ just for him.



LCpl Smith and Sig Bowden training for their new jobs as 118118 operators

As this is being written, G Tp is midway through a Combat Survival ex with the likes of **Cpl Heathcote**, **LCpl Raceovic** and **LCpl Reeves** whining about the lack of cigarettes: 'Sir we don't care if we don't receive any food all week; all we want is a packet of fags.'

220 Sig Sqn Happy Campers...

For H Tp it has been a transitional period with the Tp's name changing from Charlie to Hotel. The new Tp's first task was to win an inter-tp sports day. With everyone taking part, this task was completed successfully, by winning the football and table tennis competitions. This certainly impressed the new Tp Comd, **2Lt Katherine Allt**, who has taken over from **Capt Kate Hannaford** who leaves us for ATR Pirbright.

In addition to the hectic in-bks schedule, H Tp have taken part in a number of recent exs, including EX RED BEAUFIGHTER I, EX 4* VENTURE, a tp mil skills week, and the Sqn live firing ex in Wales.

I Tp has just formed in 220 Sig Sqn, after an emotional move around. The new Tp now provides the Logistic Support Site (LSS), Flying Site (FS) and Forward Operating Base (FOB), as well as a few other outdets. The new members of the Tp have settled in well, and we are now well on our way to being a well trained and well equipped fighting force. In May the Tp deployed to Crowborough Trg Camp on EX NEW INDIA to work on team building and a range of other activities. Unfortunately, the Tp has had to say good-bye to our well-liked Staffy, **SSgt Dan Burdus**, who has been promoted and posted to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt Trg Wing.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SO France**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) MA Brown**

The Sqn has enjoyed a period of consolidation over the past few months, with the opportunity to conduct some mil trg. ITD trg, battle camp and sport have been the focus and following an imminent package of AT, the Sqn will be preparing to return to high-readiness.

244 SIG SQN BATTLECAMP - *by Cpl Drabwell*

The Sqn's two-week battle camp on STANTA was the brainchild of the **Maj Steve France** and **WO2(SSM) Mick Brown**. The **SSM** and **SSgt(SQMS) Mark Morgan** were responsible for development and implementation of a progressive live firing and OBUA package.

The first week of Battle Camp consisted mainly of battle lessons and live firing on the ranges. The troops became proficient at four man anti-ambush drills and casualty evacuation, not an easy task if the casualty happens to be twice your size as **2Lt Bruce Scott** found carrying an injured **Sig Horne**. The courses selected by **Lt Chris Hill** for the navigation competitions managed to challenge most of the Sqn's map reading ability. **Sgt McIntosh** professed himself well and truly lost looking for a checkpoint in a wood that hadn't been graced by man nor beast for over a hundred years.

The live field firing progressed from individual CQB ranges through to a tp defensive shoot, employing GPMG gunners and LAWs - definitely a high point of the two weeks. Week one also encompassed a progressive PT programme that encompassed

Molotov Cocktail training

Assaulting one of the buildings

running in boots and working with weight, culminating in 1.5 mile stretcher race that saw Alpha Tp prevail. A BCFT marked the completion of the early morning PT.

We then moved onto the OBUA phase of the training in Eastmere village. Once the fine art of urban warfare had been mastered by all, we deployed on the final field phase. At first light on Wednesday morning the Sqn assaulted Eastmere village with the armd support of three Scimitars, provided by the Light Dragoons. Special thanks go to those in the enemy forces for putting up some stern, if ultimately doomed, resistance for a long hard three hours. It was certainly a valuable lesson for those who had not experienced OBUA previously, as they learned that above all, chaos rules in urban warfare.

The next phase consisted of Tp-level defence of a comms site, so the rest of the day was spent digging. With the fire trenches and shell scrapes complete, it was a case of watching and waiting for the inevitable attack, which arrived the following morning. With the Posenian forces in STANTA finally repulsed, there were many a tired and happy faces when ENDEX was called. It had been an extremely successful and enjoyable two weeks, and we now look forward to performing well on regimental Battle Camp in July.

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC (des)	**Maj J Kennedy**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) G Gurung**

On 5 May 2004 a parade was held in Azimghur Bks, Colerne to commemorate a special event. On this day 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn was officially welcomed and integrated into 21 Sig Regt (AS).

After the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997, Queen's Gurkha Signals, was reduced from five sqns to just one sqn, 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn in 30 Sig Regt. Then, no one would have believed there would ever be any more Gurkha sig sqns than this. But over the years, QG Signals improved and strengthened itself, and with great determination. In December 2001, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn was reformed in 2 Sig Regt. Soon afterwards, a plan for reforming yet another Gurkha Sqn was drafted. This new Sqn was to be named after one of the Sqns that was disbanded in Hong Kong, and it was decided that it would be formed in 21 Signal Regiment (AS), with the name of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn.

The re-establishment of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn commenced early in 2003, when **Capt Yamkumar Gurung** led a small team of 15 in Colerne. This team was named Juliet Tp and was integrated initially into 244 Sig Sqn, then into 220 Sig Sqn. Slowly it grew in strength to 61 GURTAM and 31 UKTAP personnel along with **Lt Tolbahadur Khamcha** and **2Lt Palmer** as the two Tp Comds. Currently the Sqn has two Trunk Nodes and a Single Channel Radio Access (Switching Central) (SCRA(SC)) Tps. A third TN will be received by April next year to complete the Sqn.

And so the proud day finally arrived on Wednesday 5 May 2004, when 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn was formally recognised as one of the five sqns of 21 Sig Regt (AS) and as the third sqn of Queen's Gurkha Signals. The welcome parade formed up under Union Jack and the flags of 21 Sig Regt (AS) and QG Signals. CO 21 Sig Regt (AS), **Lt Col DG Halstead** took the parade. He welcomed 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn into 21 Sig Regt (AS), highlighted the achievements by Juliet Tp over the past year, and wished the newly formed Sqn well for the future. The parade ended with a march past to the sound of pipes and drums. A quick photograph session and a curry lunch for the whole Regt then followed. All the Officers and the members of 21 Signal Regt (AS) were present to witness this historic moment. This day certainly has been a great inspiration for all ranks of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn and will be remembered for long time.

EXERCISE SAHARA BEAUFIGHTER - *by Capt Tom Day*

EX SAHARA BEAUFIGHTER was participation in this year's 19th Marathon des Sables by 21 Sig Regt (AS). The infamous 'Marathon of the Sands' is an annual ultra-marathon across the Southern Moroccan Sahara and is considered to be the toughest footrace in the world, during which competitors maintain self-sufficiency in every aspect except shelter and water. This year's 237km route comprised six separate stages ranging from 20km to 77km, over a diverse terrain of sand, stones, mountains, dried lakes, riverbeds and dunes. The three-man team consisted of **Capt Tom Day**, **SSgt (SQMS) Mark Morgan** and **Sgt Sean McIlroy**.

Floating soldiers on parade

continued on page 339

THE NORMANDY COMMEMORATIONS

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT'S EXERCISE NORMANDY SALUTE

An Invited Jumper's Perspective- *by SSgt J Gray*

It was with a sense of pride that I walked off DZ 'N' at Ranville, having completed a commemoration jump from a Dakota on the 60th Anniversary of D Day.

My journey to that DZ started in April 2004, when I stumbled on an advert on the Internet inviting people to jump 'military style' in Holland. As a sport parachutist, I was looking to do something different whilst on leave, so I contacted the Pathfinder Parachute Group, who were running the show and got myself on a military round canopy parachute course

Being a qualified sports parachutist, I was struck by the very low altitude I jumped on the course. Compared with the heights I was used to, this was like stepping off the kerb! Once I had completed the course, **Sgt Nige Brewin** invited me to jump in Normandy on 5 June from a DC3 Dakota.

The Pathfinder Parachute Group is made up mainly of serving and ex-members of British Commonwealth forces. With a few non-colonials thrown in for good measure, some good humoured banter naturally passed back and forth, earning me the moniker 'the jumping hat'. So on the 60th anniversary of D Day, I joined a stick of paras from France, UK, US and Holland, to honour the memory of not only the men who had jumped into France that summer in 1944, but also those who came in gliders, planes and on beach landing craft.

I watched as **Sgt Brewin** and his stick, all in full WW2 para uniform, boarded their Dakota, with the Para Bn COs boarding the other Dakota. It was impressive to watch the two Dakota's taxi and then take off together. My turn would come an hour and a half later.

As **Sgt Brewin** disappeared in the Dakota, the Battle of Britain

The Dakotas load up...

Memorial Flight of two Spitfires and a Lancaster bomber landed, adding to the event. Eventually, I was in the air, we climbed to the jump height of 800ft, and made our way to the DZ over Ouisterham. The jumpmasters busied themselves with their tasks, and as much as we could, we took in the view from the Dakota's windows. The order to stand up came, and we lurched to our feet, hooked up and checked our kit. Jumpmasters did the double-

...and prepare to taxi

check, and we started the run-in to the DZ, an area used in the early hours of 6 June 1944, next to the now-famous Pegasus Bridge. To see the bridge on the run-in was a memorable sight, and no sooner had we seen it, we were despatched out of the door in short order. I sorted out a couple of twists, checked around for other jumpers, and the ground was suddenly there. The landing was good, I PLF'd into a field of peas, and as I gathered in my collapsed canopy, I thought how easy this was - in daylight, with no one shooting at me... A lot different from 60 years ago!

Later in the evening I had the opportunity to meet and speak with some of the veterans of D Day, some of whom had watched our group jump from their chairs with their drinks outside the Café Gondrée beside Pegasus Bridge, or at the DZ itself. As I was camping near the Pegasus Bridge area, I bumped into mainly the surviving veterans of the Ox and Bucks Light Infantry, who landed under the command of **Maj John Howard**, capturing the bridge in less than 15 mins of fighting. To hear them tell the story, with humour, emotion and humility, of what they did, was a humbling experience. To have them thank me for what our group did, was even more so.

THE ORGANISER'S PERSPECTIVE - *by Sgt Nige Brewin*

3 June found **SSgt Jim Gray** and myself deploying to Normandy by ferry to take part in the official UK parachute drop on 5 June 2004, at DZ 'N' at Ranville, near Pegasus Bridge. Since February 2003, I had been working on arranging this drop from an authentic WW2 DC3 Dakota. 95 men in total were to jump in four lifts.

The First drop was from the two Dakotas, with just 16 men in each aircraft for one pass. The parachutes used in both aircraft were PX1 Mk IV mains and PR7 reserves. Everyone in my stick was kitted out in full WW2 para uniform. As organiser, I had reserved the right to first out of the second Dakota. It was supposed to be only a short flight of 25 mins, so we stood up and hooked up with 20 minutes to P hour. A nice easy ride, or so we thought.

Ready to jump...

... and finally away

Both aircraft taxied together at Le Havre before taking off and heading out to sea for the flight to Ranville. There were plenty of unusual sights on the way. Having another Dakota in formation was awe-inspiring. Passing over the landing craft as they approached the beaches was another sight. At one point, I noticed someone had written in huge letters in the sand 'Vote NO on 10 June'. A reference to the up-coming UK elections, this caused a bit of a giggle.

We eventually passed over Ouisterham at 800ft, only to be told that we had to hold off for another 15 minutes, so visions of being stood up ready to go for a short period started to fade. Eventually, after 35 minutes, I was stood in the door, weighed down with 70lbs of med kit, radio kit and commemorative coins secured in an original 1944 leg bag. Another delay, and we went round again. I looked of the Dakota and noticed the C130 stream, who were supposed to be 10 miles behind but had caught up with us. Eventually it came. 'Red On!' A short pause. I saw the first canopy come into view below. Then it was my turn. 'Green On, Go!' Out I went, one hand gripping the leg bag.

I did my checks, operated the quick release on the leg bag and came down in a large maize field, about as far from the RV as you could possibly get. I watched the two Dakotas fly off as the C130's came in over us. It should have been easy extracting from the DZ to the RV, but, because all of my stick were in WW2 kit, everyone who had a camera wanted their picture taken with us. So it was stop-start, stop-start all the way to the RV.

Once at the RV, it was a case of 'hurry up and wait.' I was due to be handed the DZ by the RAF OC, so that I could bring in my further three Dakota lifts. But this did not go smoothly, because it took for ever to clear 1 Para. But once I had been handed control, we got all three of our lifts in.

It had been hard work making this event happen. Getting the French to allow a civilian registered Dakota to take part in an official military exercise took over 6 weeks of anxiety, faxing, phoning, translating and pleading to get it sorted. We eventually won the argument, and the day itself was perfect. Of interest is that the daughter and nephew of **Cpl Thomas Waters MM** were both present on the DZ watching the event. **Cpl Waters MM**, 5 Para Bde Sig Sec is immortalised in the Corps painting *Go to It!* for his gallantry on Pegasus Bridge on 6 June 1944. Meeting up with various veterans in the evening brought everything into perspective. In sweltering heat, they refused to shed their blazers and ties - proud men who came to remember and at the same time appreciated what had been done for them that day.

D DAY 60th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS - JUNE 2004

- by Cpl Sarah Riches and Sig Amy Jelf,
3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt

You can read all the books and watch all of the documentaries about the Normandy Landings, but you will never really appreciate what happened in Northern France 60 years ago. We were given an insight when we had the chance to meet some of those ex-soldiers who were there.

A team of 50 members of 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt were tasked to deploy to Normandy to take part in the celebrations and parades to mark the 60th Anniversary. This included a drill squad, commanded by **WO2 (SSM) Matt Wakeling**, an admin party, led by **SSgt (SQMS) Lou Plested** and a transport section run by **Cpl Trigger Mark**. Also tagging along were the CO and the RSM (some people will do anything to get off a Regtl ex!)

On Saturday 5 June, our first parade was in front of **HRH The Prince of Wales**, when he opened the Veterans Memorial Garden in Caen. The majority of the Regt was involved in crowd control, and looking after the 4,000 veterans and their families who were present. However, we did have some other key players, namely **LCpls Jamie Smith** and **Lee Pearce**, the Lance Orderlies either side of the Royal Box, and our Flag Orderlies, **Cpls Helen Lee**, **Tracie Fairbairn** and **Michelle Black**. In the garden itself were 15 stones, one to commemorate each of the Divisions that took part in the invasion. Next to each stone stood one of our soldiers who had memorised the history of that particular Division

On the Sunday 6 June, D Day, there were many parades occurring simultaneously all over the region. Our squad managed to fit three parades in before lunch. Two were around the magnificent surroundings of Caen Chateau and the other a small village ceremony of Herouville St Claire. That evening, all 3 Div units took part in a parade at the Queen's sector of Sword beach at

The 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt contingent and their ex-Regt veterans

Hermanville La Breche. 3 Div were the first British Division ashore, and members of the Regt and Div celebrate this event every year. After the parade, all the troops and veterans march about 2km to the British Military Cemetery at La Breche to take part in an Act of Remembrance.

Parading all over Normandy in our No. 2 Dress with rifles during the hottest days of the year so far may have given us reason to complain. But it really hit us after each parade when the veterans came up to us with tears in their eyes and told us how proud they were of us. This brought home to us what D Day was all about. It was an amazing but humbling experience.

During the week we had the opportunity to chat to many veterans, including the eight former members of the (then) 3 Inf Div HQ and Sig Regt who accompanied us. This is when we realised exactly what these men did 60 years ago.

Free time was at a premium, but we did have one memorable night out in Caen, when **Sig Beaton**, our piper from 32 Sig Regt (V), led us and the veterans on an impromptu parade through the city centre, entertaining the locals and other visiting soldiers alike.

To sum up our time in Normandy, it was an experience that none of us will ever forget, an event we shall remember every year.

NEWS FROM THE GULF

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT HEADQUARTERS MND(SE)

CO **Lt Col Kevan Thornber**
RSM **WO1 Renshaw**

A successful tour so far. May has seen the Regt's major effort through to completion – the new Div HQ now resides in the newly refurbished hotel building. Apart from ongoing life support issues, all is well and the Staff are happy. This month also saw a change of command of the Regt. **Lt Col CJ Thackray** has moved on promotion to HQAG. Good luck and best wishes to him from the Regt. **Lt Col Thornber** assumes comd of the Regt for the remainder of the tour.

THE COMMANDING OFFICER'S FAREWELL SUPPER

On the evening of Thursday 6 May 04, the deployed Regtl Offrs, WOs and SNCOs gathered in the TFA cookhouse to say farewell to **Lt Col CJ Thackray**. You may think the venue somewhat inappropriate, but after some hard work and the re-allocation of some resources, a section of the cookhouse was transformed into an area befitting the occasion.

With the scene set, the evening's festivities began, following the format of a traditional dining out, but without the silver service!

The CO's leaving present goes down well

Once again, the chefs didn't disappoint: the food was of the highest quality. But just we had finished our main course, an impromptu interlude occurred in the form of a mortar attack. On leaving the table, the RSM was heard to say, 'Those inconsiderate fellows,' or words to that effect! After some 45 minutes or so whilst post attack procedures were being conducted, the decision was taken that 'we are British and things will carry on.' The diners returned to the table for the speeches and presentations. The evening drew to a close, and all those who attended agreed it had been a most memorable occasion. The war stories off the back of the evening will be told for some time to come. The Colonel will return to the Regt in August to be officially dined out by the respective messes. Dress for both evenings will be formal with ECBA and helmet immediately to hand.

CIS SQUADRON

OC	**Maj T Cooper**
SSM	**WO2 P Storey**

The past month in OSCA Mgt has been a fairly busy one. A large part of the time and manpower has been spent preparing for the move to the hotel complex. OSCA Mgt are responsible for setting up and orchestrating VTCs, fixing phone faults and any other general problems reported by Div HQ Staff. It runs 24/7 and acts as a theatre-wide mgt desk for OSCA Nodes. Its personalities are **Cpl Lyon**, **Cpl Forsyth**, **Cpl Abram**, **LCpl Greenwood**, **LCpl Hand** and **Sig Glass**.

Mobile Tp comprises two deployable VSAT dets – MOSCA and DAGGER. These dets are run up periodically to make sure they are operational to work on new capabilities (I-Net, etc). The mobile det is also responsible for the deployment of Light Weight Recce Nodes (LWRNs), which offer an interface through the PJHQ watchkeeper to JOCS, I-Net and X-Net. Some of these nodes are currently deployed. There are also a number of other remote JOCS terminals and various sat phones.

The det also has personnel trained on PMRs (Personal Mobile Radios). Its personalities are **Lt Griffiths**, **Sgt Parkinson**, **Sgt Renshaw**, **LCpl Daniel**, **LCpl Wilson**, **LCpl Hayes** and **LCpl Tucker**

The move of the Div HQ went ahead without any problems; JOCS was quickly up and running. The only concerning point was to see the OC laying fibre.

Life in the new HQ has settled down, and things are falling into place, quite literally in the case of the toilet roof! There are some impressive design features, including a non-auto starting generator and no UPS - a real bonus when the town power is dodgy. In true military form, the contract for the cleaners proved to be too expensive for Civsec to fund, so we have opted for the cheaper military solution, putting on our Marigolds.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

QM(A) DEPARTMENT

QM	**Maj W Drain**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) Greaves**

A few people have been and gone. **WO2(RQMS) Yates** has gone back to Germany, **WO2(RQMS) Gaz Greaves** has just arrived.

The *Staffies' response to a mortar attack during the CO's dining out*

SSgt Pringle replaced **SSgt Kirk** at the terminal. **Sgt Rickard** replaced **SSgt Pringle**. **LCpl Tetley** has been posted to 21 Sig Regt (AS). **Sig Burke** has now since joined the fold. **LCpl Elgee** has remained.

The Dept remains the same, apart the surge team who joined us for the move from TDA to the new TFA, and have since moved on to their next project, the new Div HQ building. The Dept is looking forward to the handover/takeover of new guys coming in that will form the new Joint Support Unit Basra.

QM(T) DEPARTMENT

At the time of writing, we have just completed the LSI and are heaving a sigh of relief, having gained a satisfactory report. This has been mainly due to the efforts of the boys, namely: **Sgt Moreton** (RLC), **Sgt Cavanagh**, **Cpl Boswell** and **Sigs Bates** and **Anderson**. Well done all!

The Dept focus now switches firmly onto the business of picking up the bits that other Units have left behind around Basrah Airport. It's amazing what you can find when you prise open a few ISO containers/boxes/dodgy storerooms! The Log Support Sqn at Shaibah is getting fed up with the volume of defence stores being recovered by the boys from around the APOD.

We have bid a fond farewell to the old QM, **Maj Richards** and welcome the Regtl 2IC, **Maj Drain**, who as well as being QM(A) and QM(T), is also the designated CO of the Joint Support Unit Basrah – only one head and three hats; welcome Sir! We also say a fond farewell to **LCpl Bates**, who disappears to clear from the Regt in Germany, only to return to Basrah with 215 Sig Sqn in a months time!

LAD

The LAD and GRS have busily continued maintaining the equipt availability for the Regt, the MND HQ and all the affiliated sub-units. After moving out of the mud and the tents of TDA 116, the LAD has found a new home in the maintenance complex, which conveniently is as far from the MND HQ as possible!

Between building bus shelters, bicycle racks, volley-ball courts, shelves, doors, defence screens, cheese-wire cutters, and signs, there have been charity drives, running and manning the Baz Bar facility, and of course, Regtl and CO's PT. The LAD has worked hard, and have also developed their tans where possible. With the successful ECI and the back of the tour broken, the LAD is now working towards a smooth unit transition and having all the equipts ready for the exs as soon as we get back.

MT DEPARTMENT

MTWO	**SSgt JW Pritchard**

Four months into the tour, and it's getting hotter, but the work rate seems to have decreased only slightly. The MTWO, **SSGT Pritchard** and the Tp storeman, **LCpl Evans** left us for the first 2 weeks of the month for R and R. We say goodbye to **LCpl Vint**, **Sig Stoker** and a few of the augmented lads, **SAC Bush**, **SAC Harvey**, **SAC Gerahtey**, **SAC Guest**, **Bdr Bryson**, **Pte Mark Rampton** and **Pte Sean Howlett**. They have been replaced by **JT Tobutt**, **SAC Coombe**, **SAC Fletcher**, **LCpl McAulay**, **Cpl Bowmar** and **Sig Drysdale**.

BAGHDAD TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Lee Keily**

Now two thirds the way through our tour, Baghdad Tp are looking forward to the continuation of the service we have been providing the four HQs we currently support. Life at Baghdad has changed considerably for us during the last 4 months, with April seeing the most upheaval in terms of the threat and re-organisation of comms. With the advent of a UK 3 Star to support in a new HQ,

A glimpse of life at the Orphanage

and a 2 Star move of loc, 3 new JOCS RDs at various locs, the installation of Cougar and PMRs, life has been fairly hectic.

SBMR-I – CENTRAL BAGHDAD

Morale here is exceptionally high. A few new faces have arrived at the Tp over the last month, each with a vital role to play. We have a new Tp Comd, **Lt Clifford** and into the COMMCEN we welcome **Sig Webster** from UKNSE Shaibah. Unfortunately, we lost **LCpl Mulligan** recently, due to quite a serious injury that resulted in him being casevaced. We hope to see him back with us shortly. He was quickly replaced by **LCpl Hepworth**, who is currently in direct support to the new 2 Star at Camp Victory. We farewell **Sig Cunington**, back to MND(SE) in Basrah for the rest of her tour, and **Sig Randall**, who will be returning to Elmpt along with the rest of 230 Sig Sqn, who have just finished their 6-month stint.

The Swimathon, organised by **Sig Cunington**, was held on 8 May to raise money for a local orphanage. The event was televised by the BBC and aired on BFBS radio. We swam 740 lengths in 6 hrs in full combats, and we managed to raise $7,100. It was all worth it to see the children's faces when they saw the minibus and air conditioning units we bought with the sponsor money.

CAMP VICTORY DETACHMENT – SW BAGHDAD

We have had a few additions and subtractions over the last couple of months. We currently have **SSgt(YofS) Fawcett** from 7 Sig Regt, **LCpl Welburn** the JOCS administrator, and **LCpl**

The main gift from Baghdad Tp, the minibus

Hepworth, who provides close support to the 2 Star. We have had a few lodgers: **WO1(YofS) Dennis** (now Capt Tfc Offr) and **SSgt Kitchener** from MND(SE) and **WO2 Laverie** from 10 Sig Regt. **Sig Whitaker** is still in high demand by the Americans, as the 3 and 4 Star staff migrate to the Al Faw Palace. He's the only one small enough to crawl through the palace vents which double as cable ducts. Finally, congratulations to **LCpl Welburn**, who was recently successful on the IS Engr conversion board.

ISG DETACHMENT – SW BAGHDAD

By March the mortars were getting too close every night, so it was time to move out of our tiny tin cabin that had housed two previous sigs dets and into some hard cover. One quick installation later, and we were safe from the incoming and the weather, and we are now much better off, and confident that the equipt will survive another summer. The question of welfare to the Brits at ISG now came our way and we rose to the challenge. Using guile, stealth and brass-neck, we managed to negotiate the use of an old toilet block, which we converted into 3 Internet cubicles.

The PCs came courtesy of **Maj Cooper** (our Sqn OC) and the Internet feeds from the US-provided NiprNet along with DSN telephones for use with ATandT cards. Now the complete UK contingent has constant access to the Internet café and welfare telephones, which have proved very popular.

Given the environment, the facilities at Camp Slayer are first class, and there is plenty of scope for running and a good gym. Fishing in Saddam's lake is a well-exercised pastime and the American Welfare Facility shows nightly films.

Oh yes, we also provide an OSCA Node worth of comms to the Brigadier and his staff at ISG, who thought they'd found that 'smoking gun' last week, but on investigation they found it was **Sig Scott** grilling the carp he'd just caught.

1st MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC **Maj PEJ Drew**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PA Buckley**

On the morning of 8 April 2004 the sun was shinning brightly over Tidworth, which of course would normally be reason enough for the soldiers of 215 Sig Sqn to mark it in their diaries! However, this 8 April bore even more significance than that; it was the momentous day that **Maj Pete Drew** and his OP TELIC 4 advance party set off for Brize Norton, where their long-awaited Iraq adventures were to begin. The mood was a mix of anticipation, excitement and an impatience just to get on with the job. This general sense of urgency served them well though, as they sailed through the first operational challenge laid down by the RLC at South Cerney, who had given them just 10 hrs to put their Bergens on a conveyor belt and listen to a movements brief!

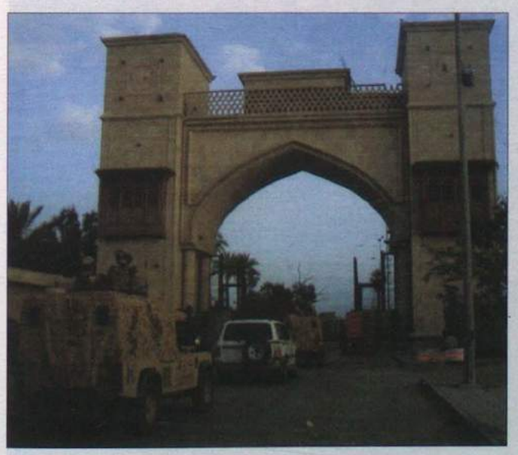
The first half of their journey involved a very comfortable, 6fi-hour flight on a 747 to Qatar, during which the stewards were taken aback by requests from a number of soldiers for second helpings of the in-flight meal! Following a very hot but brief wait, the party were treated to a couple of hours on a C130 Hercules that touched them down at Basrah International Airport (BIA), some 24 hrs after leaving Tidworth. I will dispense with any lengthy description of their first impressions and the sights and sounds that met them when they finally left BIA, as I realise the vast majority of readers in the Corps have already been there.

The first few days were spent at the RSOI camp at Shaibah Logistics Base, where everybody conducted a period of acclimatisation and trg. We also endured a recap of the OPTAG package – lessons on driving, ROE, mine awareness, etc. Those who have been to Shaibah Log base will appreciate that one of the most important lessons was the health and hygiene or 'how to avoid D and V' lesson, which can be quickly summarised by saying 'wash your hands, wash your hands, wash your hands!' It seemed to work though, as the group endured only a couple of

The OC and QM ready to spring into action

sickies – most notably **Lt Cat Yarroll**, who suffered a case of D and, er, more D! After a day on the ranges, zeroing and conducting Top Cover shoots and familiarisation shoots with the Minimi and UGL, some people left at skill at arms instructor level. We were then finally free to move into the new home for the next few months – Basrah Palace.

There were no arrival parties, but instead a stark indication of some of the difficult and challenging times that may lie ahead. On 21 April, just a few days before flag change, 5 VBIEDs were detonated by suicide bombers; 3 at police stations just outside the Palace and 2 at Camp Chindit. The consequent damage and massive loss of life was a sobering reminder of the importance of a presence in Basrah. Over the following couple of weeks, during which the main body arrived, the Sqns calm but thorough prep was rewarded as the transition of HQ staff took place with no loss of capability. In fact, all was looking well as the Comd arrived and the final 20 Bde stragglers jetted off.



An escort patrol departs Basrah Palace

In no time at all the guys were well and truly into the swing of things. Tigris Tp, led by **Lt Yarroll**, was very busy performing one of their primary tasks - escorting convoys and staff offrs using

A patrol returning from a detail

Wolfs and snatch vehicles, complete with top cover. Another, even more interesting Tigris Tp task was the provision of an Immediate Response Operator (IRO), who was on call to provide comms for other agencies when conducting ops. For example, **LCpl Douggie Douglas** deployed with his trusty TACSAT on a number of riverine patrols along the Shatt al Arab with RM and some RN personnel. These proved to be quite exciting and, at times, pretty hairy tasks. Indeed, on one patrol, the team sailed a bit too close to the Iranian border and were fired upon by some trigger-happy border guards. An Iraqi policeman on board was wounded when a ricocheting round hit him on the arm. That night there were audible sighs of relief coming from the Sqn as the news broke that the TACSAT escaped without so much as a scratch!

Euphrates Tp also got a bit of the action whilst running Bde Main HQ in their spare time! They benefited from a healthy balance of mil skills, developing their trade skills and learning new ones, such as operating AMSCERP, two types of VTC equipt, Lightweight Recce Networks and JOCS.

Support Tp simply had to accommodate all of the incoming and outgoing soldiers and Staff Offrs, feed the masses, run the MT, the LAD and take over all of the accounts for the camp. All in a

LCpl King receives his Commendation from the Bde Comd

days work for **Capt Terry Crane**, **WO2 (RQMS) Wayne Hayes** and their faithful team. It should be mentioned that they were also assisted by a number of Iraqi Locally Employed Civilians (LECs), who did some sterling work in between raiding the skips for pretty much anything, including the odd mattress!

We welcome all the OP TELIC 4 augmentees that have joined us from across the Corps. Welcome also to the more permanent additions to the Sqn, **Capt Herring**, **Sgt Young**, **Sgt Welsh**, **Cpl Lewis**, **LCpl Athey**, **LCpl Roberts** and **LCpl Squires**. And we farewell to the Sqn's 2IC, **Capt Chris Smith** and QM, **Capt Terry Crane**, who are moving to sunshine posts in Sierra Leone and Cyprus respectively.

Everybody at the Sqn wishes them all the very best for the future. Finally, congratulations to **LCpl King** on his recent notification of receiving a Certificate of Commendation awarded by the Chief of Joint Ops for Distinguished Service in the support of OP TELIC.

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

MULTI NATIONAL TASK FORCE SIGNALS UNIT (97th SIGNAL SQUADRON)

OC **Maj Sarah Streete**
SSM **WO M Prowse** CA

HANDOVER

After months of preparation, 97 Sig Sqn finally arrived in theatre at the end of April to take over as the first fully Multi National Task Force Signals Unit in the Balkans (MNTFSU - try saying that in a hurry). With the advance party already in theatre, the rest of the Sqn reformed at Rollestone Camp on Salisbury Plain on Saturday 24 April ready to report to South Cerney at the sociable time of 23.00hrs. The two cider-lolly rule was adhered to as we all acclimatised in 70° temperatures in preparation for the heat of the Balkans. So far, we are still waiting for the warmth.

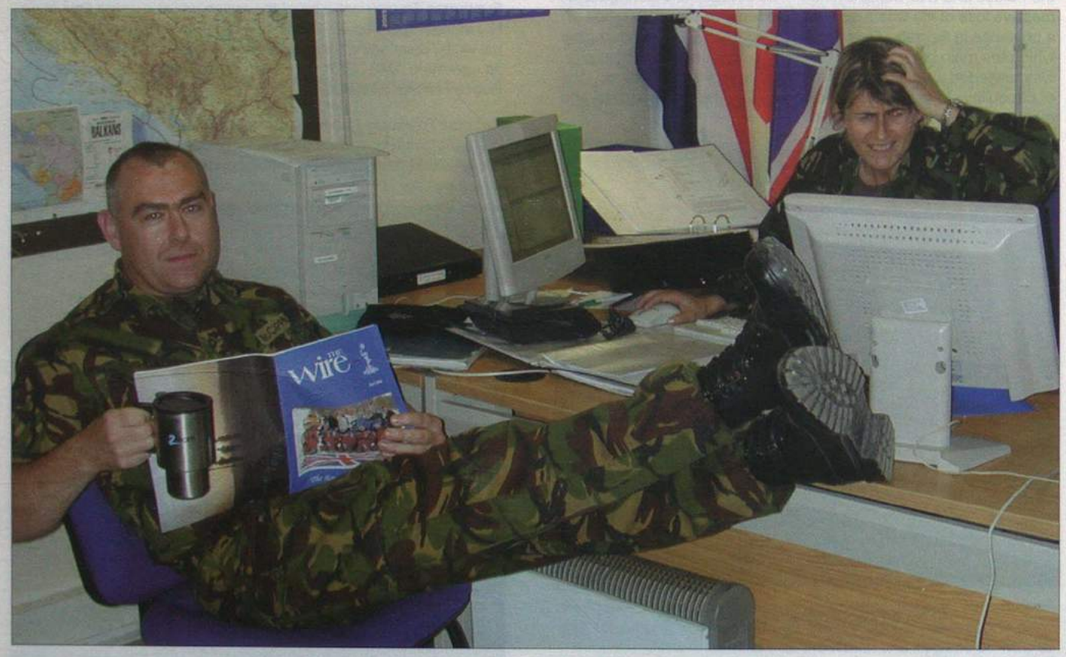
We received a good handover from **Maj Tom McCappin** and his team, and following a Handover Parade, took over as MNTFSU on 30 April. By this time, we had been joined by our Dutch 2IC, **Capt Rene Zevering** and Canadian SSM, **WO Mike Prowse**. With our three Tps headed up by officers from three different nationalities, and dets in Kosovo and Corsham, we are truly Multi-National as well as Pan-Balkan.

The FofS, **WO2 Chris Usher** and the YofS, **WO2 Jim Skimins** are a good match for each other. On returning from his 96-h-r pass, the Foreman did not notice that his C95 shirt in his wardrobe was not as he left it, but was clean and pressed. He also did not notice that his nametape had been re-sewn on upside down until he had been to breakfast and spent some time in the Sqn. This was in response to the Yeoman finding that his end of the Corimec had been mine-taped off so that he could not get to his bed. Children!

UK SIGNALS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Laura Fernand**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Small**

Many thanks to the outgoing UK Sig Tp, who left a fine legacy for us to continue. They held up well through structural changes toward the end of their tour, which put us in a strong position for the transition on 01 June to the MNTF. The Tp's numbers increased slightly with the changeover in personnel. The Forward Repair Team (FRT) moved across from Services Tp, adding to the Theatre Systems Control Point (TSCP), COMMCEN, ODA, ISIS and ISM Teams.



During the handover, Maj Sarah Streete tries to get to grips with her new job, whilst Maj Tom McCappin breathes a huge sigh of relief

Sig Cole in the COMMCEN

The TSCP are the individuals who have the most contact with the entire camp. For any operational trip off-camp, you have to collect a phone from them, and they are also the first contact for any IT related problems. If you need to find a telephone number or be transferred to another number - they are your guys. With four phones and two door bells that are constantly ringing, **Sgt Alex Brown** and his team are constantly kept on their toes. They have, however, managed to stamp their authority in other areas. **LCpl Jones** has proven to be worth nearly his weight in gold with his technical background, **Sig Tracy Cook** is organising a competition to redesign the décor on the back deck and **Sgt Dave Hineson**, as well as working in his daily job, contributes a great deal to the Sqn driver trg, which has proven to be a pinch-point and in some cases desperately needed.

The ISIS team have settled perfectly under the steady influence of **SSgt Lynne Camm**. **LCpl Chris Morledge** and **Sig Maggie Kelly** have been taking the opportunity to use their jobs to get around theatre with work-related trips to Sarajevo and Kosovo - a little different from Corsham, Donnington and the intensive trg package that all the IS Ops endured in the UK. **Sig Ebele Muorah** organised the most immense surprise Birthday Party for **SSgt Buzz Small** and **SSgt Cindy Meller** as they both celebrated their birthdays in the same week. With the OC, 2IC and SSM visiting Kosovo, an especially good time was had by all! Thanks must be conveyed to **SSgt Small's** chums from the UK. I can assure you he wore his presents with pride, but as you can imagine, in the XXL maroon Y-fronts and fi orange football hat, he had neither style nor panache.

Sgt Jules Moulson and **Sgt Jamo Jameson** have taken over in the ODA, a huge task for just two individuals, in that they have two separate accounts to distribute across theatre on a weekly basis. Both have also been invaluable in trg up the teams for surrounding areas in the equipt they will have to use. So far, trg has been delivered to the New Zealand teams, but we all look forward to more of a language challenge in the future.

The ISM Team consists of **SSgt Mike Dowds**, **Cpl Lewis Newell**, **Jake** and **Milka** (two locally employed civilians). These intrepid travellers have a huge responsibility, amongst other tasks, to keep all stand-alone computers in the AOR virus-free. This means they meet a broad spectrum of personnel, all of whom are charmed by their friendly and approachable style. Although this in turn makes it difficult for them to keep their workload down.

SSgt Buzz Small wears two hats out here (that is, other than his fi orange football hat!) As well as being the Tp SSgt, he also heads up the COMMCEN, a team bursting with youth and enthusiasm. This has given **Cpl Steph Robinson** a chance really to get her teeth into the job, having been mobilised on TELIC to work in a COMMCEN. **Sig Christina Cole** has thrown herself into trade trg, which she uses to wile away the nightshift. **Sig Wong** entertained us all by throwing a Karaoke party for the take-over of the Sqn, It was surprisingly well received by all (especially the OC, **Maj Streete**!) **LCpl Hales** is keen to exploit the opportunities of being co-located with the Battle Group and hopes to break free of the COMMCEN and try his hand at a little patrolling.

And finally onto the new boys. The FofS tasks the FRT night and day - you might even call them his whipping boys. The highlights of their efforts so far have been the erection of a trial satellite, numerous trips to Bihac and servicing equipt in Sarajevo. To cope with the demands of the team, **Paul Saunders** has been promoted to **Sgt**. I'm sure you can imagine the torture he endured in the hours leading up to his promotion parade. **Cpls Braund** and **Talboys** (**Pat** and **Matt**) have risen to the Foreman's challenges with great gusto. However, they are rarely to be seen apart either at work or in their free time! **Cpl Matt Cox** has extended from the previous Sqn, and although things are a little different, has been a mine of information, advising all on the legacy problems that continue. **LCpl Paul Clayton** is taking the opportunity to work seriously at his endurance trg, and also to get his brain fried with maths problems set by the Foreman. **Sig Scott** continues to develop his skills as a Tech, and is looking forward to returning home later this month, as he misses his bairns.

The SSM getting a lesson from LCpl Clayton whilst the Foreman inspects his new dish

SERVICES TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Dias** CA
Tp SSgt **SSgt Meller**

We have now been in the Tp for a month and have seen many changes. **Capt Ricardo Dias** replaced **Capt Will Demers** after a couple of weeks into the tour, and we have had several changes of Dutch personnel in the Tp. The multi-national Tp now consists of one Canadian, three British and three Dutch military, ten Canadian civilians and three LECs.

The Tp is busy at the moment, although they have still managed to find the time to have dinner in Banja Luka at *Jezeros* and the *Kastle*, which probably served the best steak ever at a fantastic price of 16. **Sgt Edwin Hoogesteger** was the first in the Tp to drive his vehicle off-road when he had to swerve to miss a local driver trying to play dodgems with him. We are not sure if this is classed as cross country driving, but luckily there were no minefields in the vicinity. **Cpl Andy Newson** is busy organising sporting events, personal programmes and BPFAs for the Sqn, whilst **Sgt Steve Canderton** is still working on trying to visit *Tommy Tucker's* and *Echo's* for a brew during his 11/2 mile run, and still finish in time.

SYSTEMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Masseling** NL
IC DAGGER	**WO2 Parker**
IC CNR	**SM Toonen NL**

ANOTHER DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE DAGGER TEAM

Job descriptions vary widely throughout MNTFSU, and the DAGGER Team certainly gave testament to this on their recent operation.

The three DAGGER detachments; TIGER 99, **Cpl Dabell** and **LCpl Scott**; VIPER 97, **LCpl Pollard** and **Sig Titchener** and EAGLE 96, **Cpl Simms** and **Sig Sanghera** all deployed to their respective locations at Cazin, Velika Kladusa and Bihac to provide secure voice and data comms links into MYRA Blue system within MNTF(NW) in support of OP ARBALEST.

All Dets managed to achieve this purpose, and any problems that arose throughout the duration of the Op were overcome with minimal drama. This promoted confidence in the equipt and helped to widen experience and skills amongst operators. DAGGER tech, **Sgt Hall** was only a phone call away in the event of any hiccup with the kit. Consequently, as the Op progressed, Det personnel were able to develop a positive rapport with the subscribers. Furthermore, Comd MNBG was so impressed by the work DAGGER contributed to the Op, the Dets were invited to take part in patrols and taskings with 1 Bn PWO. This led to some rather interesting opportunities for Dagger team ops to get out on the ground (or up in the air in some instances!) and to be involved in non-signals ops.

Sig Sanghera and his DAGGER wagon

LCpl Pollard and **Sig Titchener** of VIPER 97 provided comms for an integrated Canadian Recce Sqn/PWO contingent at VK (near the Croatian border) and were able to tag along with platoons from A Coy to do weapons searches in numerous factories and houses. Ammo of various calibre, bayonets, magazines and weapons such as AK47s were amongst the seized caches. In addition to this, the Canadian EOD team had to be called out to one loc to deal with a live grenade that one VK resident had been keeping in her cupboard!

Later on in the Op, things just got better when Viper Det were offered the chance to accompany Griffin pilots from the Canadian Heli Det VK on routine night flight patrols along the Bosnian/Croatian border. This included a first time experience with night vision goggles (NVGs) – it certainly beat staring at a Promina Multiplexer in the back of a Dagger TD5!

Behind the scenes, the support contingent was ever-prevalent, thanks to the efforts of DAGGER Team leader, **WO2 Parker** and assistants, **Cpl Clarke** and **Sig Clarke** (not related!). Overall, the DAGGER Team felt confident post-Op Arbalest, with the general consensus being that it was a good omen for the rest of the tour.

DAGGERS ON A WINNING STREAK

Saturday 5 June saw positive results all round for personnel from the DAGGER Team. Five teams from various SFOR units entered in a volleyball competition at Banja Luka Metal Factory (BLMF). DAGGER's volleyball team won three out of four matches, making them overall champs! The female MNTFSU contingent also earned a few points, but this time on the rugby pitch, when men and women from BLMF were invited to a tournament at Sisak in Croatia. **LCpls Pollard** and **Scott** from DAGGER Team and **Sig Kelly** from ISIS, participated in their first ever match, scoring one try and a conversion between them, contributing to a final winning result of 32-5! Furthermore, the Sisak Team requested a rematch at a later date, and coupled with a match already planned against a team in Zagreb, SFOR ladies rugby has the potential to go from beginners to winners - so watch this space! **Capt Kinvig** was the sole representative from the males in the Sqn and then found himself in the Veterans Team (they also won), not, of course because he looks over 35 but because they were short of players!

UK SIGNALS DETACHMENT - KOSOSVO

Det Comd	**Lt Anne Gallagher**
Det SNCO	**SSgt Alleyne**

Huddled away in a corner of Slim Lines, the Kosovo Det of MNTFSU have wasted no time in settling in and getting on with the job in hand. There are only twelve of us altogether, but there are certainly enough tasks to keep us busy. Eight Det members have come from units in 2 (NC) Sig Bde, whilst the remaining four volunteered from Regular units. For the younger Regular JNCOs, this marks not only their first tour, but also their first experience of working with TA. For many, this is a second visit to Pristina, and the changes that have occurred here are noticeable. As well as the overall reduction in the number of troops, the visible signs of the March riots are a stark remainder of the fragility of Kosovo.

The Det here does not need any further incentive to stay focused on the job. We are taking full advantage of the wide range of skills in the group, and are very much learning from each other. As we rise up the learning curve and the days fly by, we always remember that *Brit House* is close by...

UK SATELLITE HUB – CORSHAM

Det SNCO **Sgt Roberts**

Seven members of 97 Sig Sqn arrived at Corsham in late April, just as the rest of the Sqn prepared to fly to the Balkans. It quickly became apparent that we faced a steep learning curve, and that the expected swap-round of personnel at the three month point may not happen.

Changeover was assisted by the fact that four members of the existing team have had their tours extended in order to provide the tech expertise that the TA, despite their long trade qualification courses, were sadly lacking (don't all cables come ready made?) We're getting there though, even if tracing cables does take its toll! **Sig Kate Ord** provided the hub with a laugh when, in her wisdom, she thought that the document being faxed had actually disappeared down the phone line! **Sig Leigh Ashton** was so surprised at this that his eyebrows not only shot up, but vanished completely.

We have been kept busy and have so far avoided any major disasters. As well as maintaining the Promina links to various operational theatres, we have been involved in the testing of new nodes recently despatched to Iraq and Afghanistan. We hope to be paying visits to the rest of the Sqn in the Balkans in the near future.

LIFE IN BANJA LUKA METAL FACTORY AS THE MNTFSU

Work aside, a great time is being had by all. Actually, even when work is considered, a great time is still being had by almost all. Several birthdays have already been celebrated with Sqn parties and Ops Officer, **Capt Chris Kinvig** looking forward to the extra time he gets for the BPFA in three weeks time when he hits the big 30.

There are plenty of opportunities for sport, with bikes to hire and running routes out of Camp, plus a well-equipped gym and indoor sports area. **Cpl Andy Newson** is ensuring that we all go back fitter than when we arrived with Sqn PT, Personal Trg, CV Sessions and various sports arranged throughout the week. Some are also learning kickboxing as well as ice hockey on a hard surface.

WO2 Usher has been enjoying the weekly CO's run so much that he even got 'lost in the woods with a nurse', covering over 20km, rather than the expected 9.8km. We believe his story! Meanwhile, **Sig Clarke** always puts on his marching order and is off at speed, not to be seen again until we finish.

The two-can rule is not cramping our style in any way, and the Signals cheered louder and longer than anyone else at the CSE Show.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

19th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC	**Maj G Wilson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Forrester**

THE SOinC(A) VISITS 209 IN THE FIELD - *by Sgt Venni*

It's not very often that the Sqn gets to show itself off to the SOinC (A), so when we were able to gain a space in his very busy diary, it was decided that the only appropriate thing to do in his honour would be to roll out the full HQ set up. Despite a very long drive from Blandford to Catterick amidst some very bad traffic, the star guest arrived in his customary lively and cheerful manner. During a curry lunch, he met the soldiers of the Sqn, quizzing them on the merits of certain Scottish football teams. It was then the turn of the Offrs and WOs to brief on the Sqn's many achievements over the last 12 months.

In the best traditions of the British Army, there then followed a short parade in the field, during which the SOinC(A) presented Commendations to members of the Sqn had been awarded them on OP TELIC2.

For the evening's entertainment the WOs' and Sgts' Mess opened its doors to the guest of honour and the Offrs of the Sqn. The evening seemed to be passing very well, until the SOinC(A) voiced his displeasure at the hotel room that **Lt Will Taylor** had recced for him (no wonder we have sent him off on EX LONG LOOK). Luckily he was only joking, and the Mess had a very enjoyable night.

THE MANAGEMENT GET EDUCATED - *by Lt Chatman*

Despite what they might tell you, all Offrs, WOs and SNCOs always benefit from extra education and self-development. With the recent influx of new personnel in the Sqn hierarchy, it was a perfect opportunity to combine an educational visit with some good old fashion team bonding.

First on the itinerary was a BOWMAN brief from the current subject matter experts, 12 Mech Bde. It's a long drive on a Sunday afternoon from Catterick to Bulford, but we managed to make it in time for 'last orders' at the bar, so at least the bonding got started early.

As the next Bde in line to become BOWMANised, it was an extremely worthwhile visit that certainly opened our eyes to the challenges that we are likely to be facing in the coming year.

The next destination was the ultra hi-tech and fully plasma-screened PJHQ Northwood. For most of the group, this was their first experience of PJHQ, and it gave everybody a better view of its role, and how it fits into the wider picture. The day ended on a high note in *The Hog's Head*, Uxbridge.

The ideal cure for the morning after, was a visit to the Imperial War Museum to brush up on the Army's proud history. It was a truly humbling experience as we remembered the great sacrifices that so many gave in order to make this country what it is today. In the afternoon we where extremely lucky to have a private audience at MOD London with **Sir Adam Ingram**, Armed Forces Minister. After explaining his role in the Government, he gave us some very frank answers to our burning questions on Army policy and strategic planning.

As the Offrs headed off to the Corps Dinner Night, the Sgts acquainted themselves with the London nightlife. With so much

Cpl Holroyd trying hard to convince a very sceptical SOinC(A)

already achieved, the visit was finished off in impressive style, with a guided tour of the Houses of Parliament by **William Hague**.

The trip was a great success, with everybody learning a lot and also bonding the management team in the best possible style.

Although we returned empty handed in terms of silverware (3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt and 21 Sig Regt (AS), were a touch greedy) we did place second in the Moving Targets team event, and **Sig Ian Courtaney-Wyllie** was second highest individual in the Moving Targets. Therefore the moral of the story is that as long as the enemy are moving when come to attack, us we will be safe; but if they remain static, we won't be able to hit them.

TARGETS UP AND HOLD - *by Sig Courtaney-Wyllie*

After the Corps SAAM last month, it was a new look shooting team that entered the 3 Div SAAM, at Bulford ranges. Led by the ever-solid **SSgt Bri Heslop**, the new members, **Lt Jim Chatman**, **Cpl Loz Clegg**, **LCpl Parker** and **Sig Paul Colling** gained an enjoyable insight into the world of competitive shooting.

With the sun shining down throughout the week, the shooting was a pleasure. The Para Cup (2-mile run followed by a complex shoot) offered everybody the chance to sweat some of the night before out, with **LCpl Whitelaw** proving that he couldn't have tried any more with a very visual demonstration.

Sigs Eldridge, Collingwood, LCpl Whitelaw and Lt Chatman getting up steam before the shoot

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

OC **Maj MJM Emslie**
USM **WO2(USM) R Ayling**

With the winter weather rapidly closing in, JCUFI have had very busy few months. From improving the physical defences around Mount Pleasant Complex during EX CAPE PETREL to providing PA systems during important memorial services, the Royal Signals element of JCUFI have turned their hand to everything. At the time of writing the current USM is busy handing over his post to **WO2(USM) Thwaite**, who has joined us from Wilton.

B TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt GP Gaw**
2IC **WO2(FofS) R Clifford**

Almost all of the Royal Signals personnel in JCUFI are to be found in B Tp, so we'll start with a round up of the sections. The fittest technicians continue to work wonders, keeping the aging DigiFITS system up and running until LAMBETH eventually comes into service. Despite attempts by **Cpl Nurse** to blow up a remote site at Bombilla, the system remains fairly stable, with just enough faults to keep the techs busy, especially when CDT turned up looking for samples.

RADCON, led by **Sgt Mulligan** from 21 Sig Regt (AS), has been very busy building a new ICP crash-out ISO container, providing PA systems to all the ongoing memorial services and being crashed out by the Tp OC. EX LAFONIA LINK saw Crash-out Dets being sent to North Arm and Teal Inlet, giving **LCpl Ritchie** and **LCpl Jordan** the chance to prove their abilities as det comds and HF wizards in desolate locs. The ex was a success, with the guys getting to grips with satellite comms, dodgy HF comms and almost non-existent VHF comms. The Line Section, headed by **Sgt Tomblin**, is by far the busiest group of Inst Techs in the Corps.

With manning chopped from 11 to 7 and tasks doubling, the team is rarely seen looking bored. Also responsible for cabling and infrastructure at RAF Ascension, **Sgt Tomblin** regularly jets north to top up his tan and check on his boys. The team have coped well with the cut in manpower, and **LCpl Stewart** still finds time to beast staff officers at PT in the afternoons and go for runs at 06.00hrs every morning.

Finally, the one-man team, the Configuration Management Cell, **Sgt Owen**. Faced with the thankless task of trying to document the entire cabling infrastructure in theatre, **Sgt Owen** is faced with over twenty years of cabling to try and make sense of. He has also turned his hand to mil trg and letting people use his very sophisticated colour printer.

EXERCISE RAM'S RESISTANCE 29 APRIL – 01 MAY 04 *- by Cpl Connor*

EX RAM'S RESISTANCE was attended by 10 volunteers from JCUFI: 9 Royal Signals and 1 RAF. The brief was simple - move into Naval Point across the harbour from Stanley and give the Falkland Island Defence Force (FIDF) a professional and aggressive enemy force for their final recruit trg ex.

The first couple of hours proved to be an eventful education in cross-country driving and self-recovery for all concerned, as two of the Landrovers went down with a splash, as the rich and soggy Falkland terrain enveloped them up to their headlights. Wireless Ridge and in particular, Fairy Cove proved that its reputation is not as gentle as its name suggests, as it revealed its secrets of treacherous peat bogs.

With over 1,000 rounds per man and more smoke and illum than we could shake a stick at to be expended, we were going to have a good time. One thing that we could count on was the Falklands weather, and true to form, we had snow, hail and gale force seven winds, with an odd period of clear skies.

After initiating the exercise with an ambush by **Sigs Morgan** and **Sowiak** and a counter attack by the FIDF, things were well and truly into swing of things. The next two days saw an insertion by rigid raider for **Cpl Thompson's** boat section (or were you really dolphin watching?) Following on from this, there were many nighttime patrols to infiltrate and harass the FIDF, all carried out with much enthusiasm and to great effect. With one patrol, feeling as if they had stepped in to a scene from Tomb Raider as they were pursued by a patrol of quad bikes, the phrase 'run Forrest run' was uttered more than once. Night nav proved to evade **Cpl Thompson**.

After attacking the FIDF harbour area, his patrol proceeded to try to tab back to Naval Point. Luck was not with **Tommo** that night when he ran straight into an FIDF clearance patrol. Consequently two of his patrol, **LCpl Bircham** and himself found themselves bagged and tagged.

The ex came to a conclusion on Saturday morning, with an impressive platoon attack supported by GPMG fire teams on quad bikes. The Falkland Islands Assistant Governor, local dignitaries and members from *Penguin News* were boated over to observe the attack. After an hour and a half the attack was over, and it has to be said that all our enemy force were impressed by the enthusiasm and professionalism of the FIDF. We look forward to working with them again.

EX TRENCHARD'S CHALLENGE – JUNE MARCH AND SHOOT

June's March and Shoot was named after the man who founded the RAF, and was an extremely tough and arduous affair, conducted over the undulating terrain to the north of Mount Pleasant over Mount Wickham.

The March and Shoot B Team

After a couple of weeks intensive trg, including classroom mortar fire control lessons, tabs over everywhere, and mine clearing, the two JCUFI teams performed very well indeed. The A Team, comprising **Cpl Lake**, **LCpl Stewart**, **LCpl Jordan** and **Sig Neilands** came 6th overall out of 24 teams, being beaten only by teams from the Roulement Infantry Company and the formidable

Falkland Islands Defence Force. A fantastic achievement demonstrating again that Royal Signals personnel may be skilled tradesmen, but can cut the mustard when it comes to soldiering in tough conditions.

The Pleasant Peak Memorial

The B Team, **Sgt Tomblin**, **LCpl Fearn**, **LCpl Thomas** and **Sig Taylor** came a very respectable 9th overall, again only bettered by teams from the RIC and FIDF. In fact, they actually beat a team from the RIC Anti-tank Pl. On the mortar stand, the team achieved a target round after only one correction – an awesome achievement for their first time. Unfortunately the mortar stand didn't count in the competition due to some of the teams being unable to complete it because of the weather. Another notable achievement was their position of 3rd on the shoot part of the competition.

PLEASANT PEAK MEMORIAL SERVICE

On a cold and frosty morning on 5 June 04, Royal Signals personnel from JCUFI gathered on the southern slopes of Mount Pleasant to hold a memorial service to remember **Maj Forge** and **SSgt Baker** who were tragically killed 6 June 1982.

To improve comms to the 5 Bde HQ, 205 Sig Sqn placed a manpack rebro on to Pleasant Peak, half way between Fitzroy and Goose Green. With the rebro's battery supply dwindling, **Maj Forge**, OC 205 Sig Sqn, and **SSgt Baker** gathered some fresh batteries and set off in a Gazelle helicopter towards Pleasant Peak. It was 04.00hrs in the morning of 6 June when the Gazelle was picked up on the radar of *HMS Cardiff*. They had no record of any British air activity that morning, and thinking it might be an Argentinean Hercules or SF helicopter, they engaged the target.

The Gazelle was shot down with a Sea Dart missile, killing all on board. It was a few days before the wreckage was found to confirming this tragedy.

During the service, **Maj Emslie** described the situation in the conflict up to 6 June, and explained why **Maj Forge** and **SSgt Baker** were taking batteries towards Mount Pleasant in a Gazelle. **Lt Gaw** took up the story at the point when the Gazelle appeared on HMS Cardiff's radar, explaining the difficulty in **Capt Mike Harris**' decision to engage the target.

After a two-minute silence, wreaths were laid at the spot where the helicopter came to rest. A tragedy that will never be forgotten.

ON THE ROAD WITH THE WHITE HELMETS

- by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

We leave Blandford very early in the morning. The coach is driven by **Cpl 'Dicko' Dickinson**, who as well a riding in more than half of the Team's 'tricks' (display rides), is also responsible for all the team's vehicles (other than the bikes), for all the transport admin, for Health and Safety issues, and for the training of other drivers. All Team members have two or three responsibilities in addition to their riding roles. The weariness from the previous day's trip is evident, and after plugging into their MP3s, most are dozing, as **'Dicko'** drives them on to Wiltshire.

One and a half hours later, the coach noses into a service area. It's a scoff stop. Like all soldiers, the Team are always hungry, so it's loading up with sandwiches, pies, biscuits and drinks to keep them happy for the rest of the journey. Some grab a newspaper. By now, everyone is awake, so a video of last year's Isle of Man TT Race appears on the in-coach entertainment screen.

The bikes are unloaded and lined up

We arrive at the Royal Bath and West Show, and everyone piles out of the coach and springs rapidly into action. Everything is unloaded from the truck and the bikes, quadbikes, and all the other event equipment are neatly lined up ready. There are mechanical problems with two of the bikes: one has a jammed valve, and the other a faulty clutch. With a repair team of two on each bike, the first has its engine stripped down and the other its clutch re-built. Each of the four mechanics is also a rider, performing in more than half of the rides. Both bikes are re-assembled and tested, ready for the first show of the day. With about 1½ hours to go for the first show, the uniforms come out, are checked for cleanliness, and the boots and helmets cleaned. It's a hot summer day, so it's left as late as possible before they all change into their gear. In between times, the 'tricks' to be ridden are confirmed and riders' roles in them checked.

A small group then moves off to the assembly area with all the props for the show: the ramps, the ladders, the fire jump frame (with straw and petrol), etc. Soon after, the thirty bikes follow them. The Team Captain, **Capt Alistair Youngman**, gives a final briefing on the order of the rides.

Cpls Paul Forster and Paul Cooper strip down an engine....

... whilst Cpl Baz Fullerton rebuilds a clutch

At last, the Team enters the arena to do their stuff, with the usual running commentary given by **Capt Youngman**. Whilst each 'trick' is going on in the centre of the field, a well-coordinated operation is going on at the side to assemble the next ride to go on, and to dismantle the one coming off. If one bike gives trouble, another is quickly borrowed from another ride to replace it. No fuss. No confusion. Everyone knows what to do to keep the show going at its usual brisk pace. With their focus on the centre of the ring, very few of the public are aware of this vital logistic process going on at the side.

The first show ends, the bikes and kit quickly leave the arena and it's back to the Team area to prepare for the afternoon show. **LCpl Mooney** has fallen off his bike whilst exiting the fire jump. He's more annoyed than anything else. It was a borrowed bike and it had performed differently from what he had expected. But he won't have to wear the black peak on his helmet – the penalty for any rider coming off during a public display. **Cpl Damien Chorlton** has 'put his bike down' after him. During the first show, two bikes have been 'bent', so the mechanics quickly get to work on them. It's a long, hot job, but both bikes are ready on time. Meantime, everyone is flat out cleaning up bikes, equipment, boots and uniforms. Then there is a talk through for the next show. It's only when everything is in place that they grab some lunch.

On go the uniforms – in the hottest part of the day!

Capt Alistair Youngman checks his commentary notes

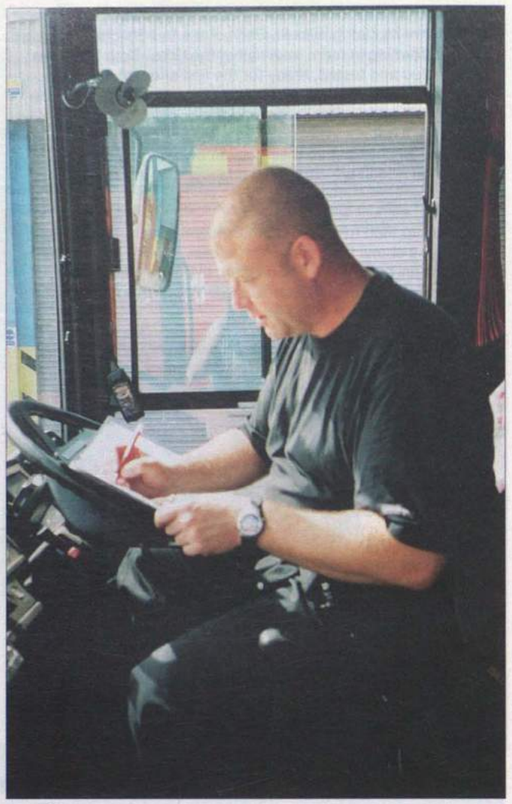
The afternoon's show is a repeat of the morning's one, except that in addition, the Team has been added at short notice to the final ring event, a ceremony to mark the 60th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings. With the Waterloo Band, 100 RBL Standards and their bearers lead about 800 veterans into the arena for an event that is to last about an hour. Finally, the Team leave the ring and move back to their area, absolutely soaked in sweat. The helmets and jackets come off and cold water is passed around before the packing up begins.

Bikes and equipment are quickly checked and loaded onto the truck, a process that takes about an hour. After a quick briefing on what is required for the following day (Sunday), we are all onto the coach for the return trip. We leave the park at 19.00hrs, and arrive at Blandford two hours later.

Sunday's start is scheduled for 09.00hrs. I arrive at 09.30 to find they have all started much earlier. Two damaged bikes have already been repaired, and everyone is busy cleaning and tuning up the others. **Cpl Dickinson** is working on the vehicle paperwork and scheduling an MOT inspection, **LCpl Dave Kruczek** is working on the T and S claims, whilst **Cpl Ed Lewis** works on accommodation requests for the next week. **Sig Dave Cumberland** has the responsibility to collect all the uniforms and get them to the drycleaners (and back!) first thing on Monday. On Tuesday they're off to the South of England Show – two shows a day for three days. Then on to Stevenage for another event. Then another. Summer has only just started. Team Sgt, **Sgt Bob Sizeland** is checking his wall planner to see when next he can give them time off. In the past two months, they have had only five days.

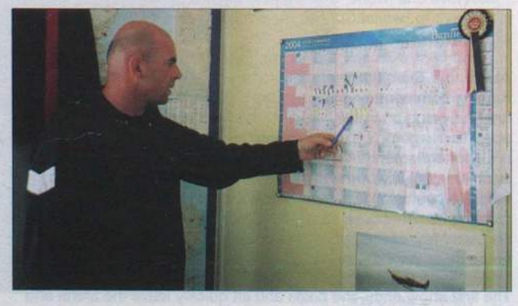
Sunday morning. Sig Justin Burrows fixes a troublesome fuel valve...

To some observers, being a member of the White Helmets looks quite a nice little number. But here's a lot more behind the glamour that you see in the arena – long hours, unsocial hours, multi-tasking by a factor of three, skill, dedication, and sheer hard work. But would any rider change his place for another in the Corps? In the words of **Liza Doolittle**, 'Not bloody likely!'



... whilst *Cpl 'Dicko' Dickinson does his transport admin*

Cpl Ed Lewis and LCpl Dave Kruczek work on some admin...



... whilst Sgt Bob Sizeland looks for some leave slots

Exercise Sahara Beaufighter - *continued from page 322*

Preparation had commenced some 10 months prior the event. Strict entry procedures were enforced by the event organisers, and there were significant financial costs involved in taking part. In addition to securing a range of military grants, the team secured official sponsorship from ADT Fire and Security and Horsey Lightly Fynn, Solicitors and Town Planners. Preparation of equipt proved equally time-consuming, as the team trialled trainers, clothing, sand-gaiters, sleeping systems and other essential survival items. A minimum daily intake of 2,000 kcals required for the event added to the dilemma of comfort versus weight to be carried. By the time we deployed to Morocco each of us had managed to keep our day-sacks down to a manageable 9-10kgs. Because of individual work commitments, each of us had taken responsibility for our own trg. It proved difficult to follow a strict programme, and the team embarked, relying largely on core fitness and experience to enable them to complete the event.

The Team flew to Morocco on a special chartered flight for the UK competitors. On arrival in Ouarzazate, we were transported by coach on the short journey to the Meridien Berbere Palace Hotel, where we were accommodated for the night. During the evening the team met up with another member of the Corps, **Lt Pete Hodgkinson**, who whilst currently studying for an in-service degree at RMCS, had entered as an individual.

The following day, the Team made the long trip south to Amsailikh Wadi by coach, stopping en route for lunch. The final stage of the journey was in the back of an open truck to negotiate the rough approach to Bivouac 1 (BV1). Once the competitors had been allocated a tent (shelter made from coffee-sacks and poles, with rugs), there was an opening address followed by an evening meal. The next day was spent conducting final preparation of our personal kit, and receiving individual medical and equipt checks, before handing over our holdalls. We were each issued salt tablets, a survival flare and a road-book detailing the race route.

The team at the start of Stage 1

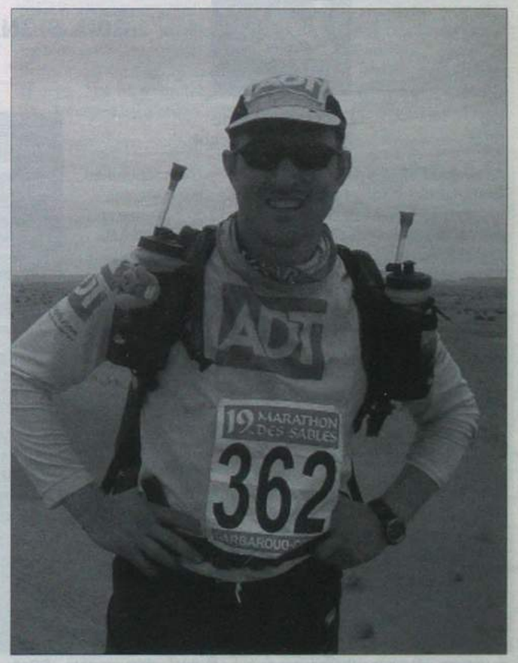
In the early evening, the competitors received a more detailed brief from the race organisers.
Stage 1 was from Amsailkh Wadi to El Khait Wadi. We felt mixture of relief and apprehension as we crossed the start-line for the first stage. The 28km stage was an opportunity for everyone to settle into the race routine and confirm that they were sufficiently well acclimatised. Whilst the heat did not caused much discomfort, there was a realisation on arrival at BV2 that the race was going to prove more difficult than anticipated...

Stage 2 (El Khait Wadi to Iriqiu Lake) proved to be a long and tedious day, with open expanses of gravel and stony ground that resulted in sore feet by the end of the 34km stage. It took us 6-7 hours, and finished with a short section of dunes where the team was able to test out the effectiveness of their gaiters for the first time.

Stage 3 (Iriqui Lake to Dayet Chegaga), Dunes Day, has a reputation for being one of the more demanding stages of the race, with the added pressure of a 10-hr time limit. After 12km of desert scrubland, we climbed the first dune and were greeted by 18km of high dunes. **Sean** and **Mark** were starting to feel their injuries, and the view was not well received! **Tom** did well, getting in around the 7-hr mark, with **Sean** and **Mark** crossing the line within the next hour.

With little time to re-focus, the non-stop stage (Dayet Chegaga to Jebel Megag) followed. 76km of dunes and cobblestone-type ground designed purely for provoking foul language and ugly feet. **Sean** completed the stage in less than 17 hours – a truly epic achievement that left him with feet like raw liver! **Tom** and **Mark** took a 3fi hr break at CP5 (58km) and completed the stage in just over 25 hours. We were left with the majority of our rest-day intact, and used it to consume rations and sleep. The day was made more interesting by the arrival of a sandstorm that consumed the bivouac, forcing the competitors to zip-up their sleeping bags and lie with goggles fitted waiting for the wind to drop.

Jebel Megag to Jebel Bou Debgane (42km) was the penultimate day of the race, and it was another period of toil as we battled



Sean during Dunes Day

with our injuries across terrain that now represented the surface of Mars. Yet despite bad knee injuries and blisters, we crossed the finish line comfortably within the time limit, and with just enough left in the tank for the final day.

A general feeling of relief swept the bivouac on the morning of the final stage, Jebel Bou Debgane to Tagounite (20km). The half-marathon stretched out through a palm grove and into the first signs of civilisation in six days. In the final part of the stage, the route led through a town, where local Moroccans cheered the competitors on.
Out of nowhere, we turned the corner to discover that there was just 500m between the finish line and us. One hundred and fifty miles had elapsed, and what a relief! The final paces of the route were lined with supporters and as we crossed the line, we were greeted by the race director who presented us with our medals.

The team were re-united at the finish, and after eating fresh bread, drinking Coca-Cola and taking photos, we boarded coaches for the 5-hr return journey to Ouarzazate. On arrival back at the Meridien Berbere Palace Hotel, we enjoyed the opportunity to shower for the first time in a week, eat fresh food and drink cold beer in the bar.

The day after the race was free for competitors to explore Ouarzazate, collect their finishers T-shirts and relax. The team explored the Casbah in Ourzazate, and enjoyed a meal together in the hotel restaurant. In the evening, we ventured to the Gala dinner in traditional Moroccan clothes, and enjoyed an entertaining evening of live music and karaoke!

All three members of the team successfully completed the event, securing both a credible team position and individual results. Considering both the level of competition and the limited trg that could be conducted prior to the event, we had done well. **Sean**, **Tom** and **Mark** finished 410th, 461st and 478th respectively (out of 609 competitors), with the Team finishing 36 (out of 39 teams).

The team at the finish in Tagounite

And we had raised in excess of £3,000.00 for the Army Benevolent Fund.

Ultra-marathon running continues to fall outside the boundary of Adventurous Training. However, there is no doubt that Marathon des Sables represents an exceptional opportunity to test the endurance and characteristics of individuals in what is one of the most demanding environments on earth.

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col IPF Vingoe**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Hancock**

As ever, 30 Sig Regt continues to live up to its reputation as the globe-trotting Regt of the Corps. We currently have troops deployed all over the World on ops, exs and AT. All four Sqns have been busy, and continue to fulfil the wide range of demands placed upon them, with new and different equipt in challenging environments. We congratulate the CO, **Lt Col Paul Vingoe**, for his selection for promotion to Colonel.

VISIT OF GOC THEATRE TROOPS

Maj Gen J Shaw CBE, GOC Th Tps, visited 30 Sig Regt on 29 April 04. The main focus of the visit was a taste of the type of trg received by a new arrival in the Regt, in order to reach very high readiness and prep for deployment - the progression from 'zero to hero' (new arrival to fully deployable soldier on R1 minus). The GOC seemed to enjoy the stands, and he left with a clearer idea of the demanding and diverse nature of life in 30 Sig Regt.

The visit of GOC Th Tps. L-R: Capt Sean Kielty, Maj Gen J Shaw CBE, Lt Col Paul Vingoe.

RACE THE SUN

The Regt entered a team in the annual Race the Sun event. As ever, it was a tough competition and we suffered from a lack of numbers. However, there were some notable achievements. **SSgt Back** prepared for his bike and run legs of the triathlon by warming up with a cheeky half marathon! In all, we had a good race and are looking forward next year to implementing our lessons learned. Many thanks to 2 Sig Regt for organising such a fun and diverse day.

Race the Sun. Cpl Luke speeding away

256 (JTFHQ) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Unsurprisingly, this has been another busy period for the Sqn, with our soldiers and officers spread wide both near and far. We currently have six personnel in Qatar, under the watchful eye of **Capt Irene Gordon**, working in support of SBMA; and several personnel deployed on OP TELIC in support of HQ 1 Mech Bde. Ops aside, we also have personnel deployed on EX RAPID ALLIANCE in support of JTFHQ afloat off the west coast of America, with the OC Sqn. **2Lts Mawby** and **Goldsmith** are studying in Blandford on their Tp Comds' Course. Good luck to them! We farewell **WO2(SSM) Duke**, who leaves us on promotion to Blandford; and welcome **WO2(SSM) Davies**, who joins us from Blandford.

EXERCISE MAYAN MERCURY

EX MAYAN MERCURY took place earlier this year in Belize with most of Alpha Tp and elements of SHQ. Once the town of Belazario was confirmed as the ex location, Alpha Tp came into their own, cutting grass, herding cows and chatting with the locals before erecting the HQ tents. At this point, **Cpl Gibney** and **Sig Harrison** moved from the ex loc (by Club Class flights) for another deployment. With everything set up, comms were in, we were able to get into routine, starting with 06.00hrs PT.

With the comms phase completed, we then moved to the jungle phase, which began with a Heli move into the jungle, followed by nav lessons, CQB and basic survival. Prep of animals for cooking was memorable, and the BBQ tasted fantastic. Night - time in the jungle was noisy and wet, with the mosquitoes, monkeys and jaguars conspiring to keep us all awake. No washing or shaving worked well for the less hygienic individuals in the group, and some very bad moustaches soon appeared. Phase three was then embarked upon with considerable relish: R and R in Cancun, where a good time was enjoyed by all. Enough said!

EXERCISE BEAR'S DEFIANCE

On the morning of Monday 19 April, 258 Sig Sqn prepared for deployment on EX BEARS DEFIANCE, our annual battle camp. After two stomach churning Chinook rides, all three platoons arrived at Stanford Training Area with a short tab towards Bodney camp awaiting them. The first week of the ex was a mix of early morning PT, veh anti-ambush drills, patrolling techniques, navigation and NBC. The second week started off with a day of scenario-based trg to test the skills we had learnt over the weekend. The three scenarios were thoroughly enjoyed especially by younger soldiers, who had never undertaken such realistic trg. Our skills also had to be honed on the Molotov cocktail range, which saw some awful shots coming from all three platoons, and a sense of relief from **Capt Jon Mayne** that the ground was still wet, and that we didn't start a forest fire.

Battle PT – Lt Lyndsey Gallacher carrying a bloke!

The next of **WO2(SSM) Karl Tucker's** many phases, was the fire team competition, which comprised two different routes around the trg area and a live firing package. The routes consisted of tabbing between various stands such as Survival, NBC, comd tasks, map reading, weapon handling, OBUA and the assault course. The Blue Route, which was deemed to be the hardest, was followed by a recce patrol throughout that evening.

The Molotov Cocktail Range, under the watchful eye of SSM Tucker.

Results of the competition were announced at the post-ex Sqn smoker. Delta Tp took a clean sweep, winning the overall best platoon collected by **Lt Davis**; and the best fire team award went to **Cpl Bufton**, **LCpl Fielding**, **Sig Chris Hoy** and **Sig Brooks**. The best field soldier went to **Sig Sale**, also of Delta Tp.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

A very busy period for Support Sqn with personnel attached to a diversity of locs and units, such as: drivers in Canada, Iraq and Kenya; chefs in Ireland, Cyprus and the Gulf; IS/tech support in the Falklands, Balkans and the Gulf; to name but a few. On the home front, the 2IC, **Capt Sean Keilty**, looks almost as relieved finishing the London Marathon as he did when passing the reins of the Sqn over to the new OC, **Maj Jon Duckworth**, whom we welcome with open arms along with his wife, **Clare**, and son, **George**.

Capt Sean Kielty completing the London Marathon....again!

250 GURKHA SIG SQN

There have been a number of personnel changes in the Sqn over recent weeks. We farewell **WO2(YofS) Faramus**, who leaves us for 39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn; Lt **Alex Stanger**, who is posted to 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC); **WO2 (SSM) Purna Gurung**, who goes to 2 Sig Regt on commissioning; and **LCpl Ward**, who also becomes a 'Mr' - but in Civvy street. We welcome **WO2(YofS) Dilly Dilnot**, who joins us from 264 Sig Sqn, **2Lt Vaughan** from RMAS and **WO2(SSM) Teshar Gurung**. We wish them all a happy and successful tour.

MELBOURNE TRAILWALKER

At the kind invitation of OXFAM AUSTRALIA, a team from QGS flew to Australia on 17 March to take part in Melbourne Trailwalker 04, a tough 100km run. We spent the first 6 days acclimatising and training, as well as familiarising ourselves with the route. Our prep paid off, and at the 75km point we were leading, but because of injury, we were forced to drop the pace slightly. Even so we came in 2nd out of 350 teams. We would like to thank all the individuals and departments involved for their help and support.

EXERCISE BEEFY MACAW - *by WO2(RQMS) Daz Sheerin*

EX BEEFY MACAW was a Battlefield Tour, taking place from 18 – 20 May 04 and focused on the role of 143 Bde (our admin bde) in the defence of the Ypres – Commines canal, the subsequent retreat, and the eventual evacuation of the BEF from Dunkirk in 1940.

The first evening included a scene setting presentation from our guide **Mr Peter Caddick-Adams**, the author of *By God They Can Fight*, a history of 143 Bde during WW2. He had arranged for four veterans from the 1940 operations to talk about their experiences. These elderly gentlemen soon had the whole group enthralled with their tales, extremely modest and understated, as they told of their deployment to France for the 'Phoney War', the Blitzkreig attack of the German forces, the somewhat chaotic retreat to Dunkirk, and in three cases their evacuation back to Blighty.

The following morning, during the long journey to Ypres, we were given more information covering the reasons for war, the deployment of the BEF and an overall picture of the battles we would examine. That evening we had arrived at our Spartan Belgium army accn, which did not appear to have changed since it was occupied by the BEF in 1940!

Wednesday morning saw us visiting the site of 143 Bde's defensive positions in the area of Antoing. Quite unexpectedly, the local Mayor and members of the local police met us from the coach. Having heard of our tour, the Mayor, wished to welcome us and thank us for visiting the area. The local police were to stay with us as our escort for the rest of the morning. We also met a local historian and author, **Colonel (Retd) Bauters**, who was an excellent guide and host. His vast knowledge enabled him to pinpoint individual trenches and truly bring the battle to life. Having visited various positions, we made our way to one of the many Commonwealth War Graves Cemeteries at Calonne to pay our respects. Once again the Belgians had pulled out all the stops and a full guard of honour with weapons met us at the cross of sacrifice. A Belgium bugler played the last post and the national anthems of both nations whilst **Brig Murray**, Comd 143 Bde, laid a wreath.

At Commines-Warneton we visited the location where one of the veterans from Monday nights presentation, **Maj Denis Dodd**, had been wounded. His description from Monday night made the visit all the more poignant. The cemetery where he had his first encounter with the Germans is still there. At 19.45hrs we assembled at the Menin Gate in Ypres for the moving Last Post ceremony.

Thursday morning saw the final part of the tour: the defence of the Dunkirk perimeter and the evacuation of the BEF. Our first visit was the scene of the massacre of approximately 90 British POW's by members of the 2 Bn SS Liebstandarte Adolf Hitler. We then moved on to Hoymille to discuss the perimeter defences and the VC action of **Capt Ervine-Andrews**, another example of individual leadership and bravery that changed the course of events and allowed men to escape to the beaches.

From there we moved into Veurne for a presentation on the defence of the town by the Grenadier Guards. The Grenadiers were to lose their CO and two Coy Comds during the initial recce. This made life all the more difficult for the Bn, but they still

managed to put up a heroic stand in the face of extreme adversity. The discipline of the Guards still held firm, and survivors recall the Grenadiers marching onto the beaches in three ranks and carrying out rifle drill as they stood waist deep in the water waiting for their evacuation. Our tour then moved on to the location of Lord Gort's HQ at De Panne. From here we had an excellent view of the beaches and learned of the feats of improvisation that enabled temporary piers to be fashioned from vehs and wooden duckboards to enable the troops to wade, often up to their necks, out to the armada of small ships.

Our final trip of the day was to Dunkirk harbour to the area of the Mole, where we received a presentation from **Lt Cdr Cass** on the use of The Mole and OP DYNAMO. **Lt Cdr Cass** informed us that a mole was not a small fluffy creature that buggers up your lawn, but a wooden pier type construction positioned to prevent the build up of silt in harbours. This narrow structure was to prove vital in the evacuation by the Royal Navy. Between 27 May and 4 June, 693 ships evacuated 338,226 people to Britain, with the Navy losing 220 vessels to enemy action. The tour completed, we began our long trip back to Shrewsbury.

The battlefield tour had been a resounding success. It gave a broad understanding of the nature of warfare, identified the lessons that can be learned from previous conflicts, and the problems of leadership under conflict. Finally, the tour enabled me to meet members of the Bde staff, who until the tour, had been faceless names on the end of a telephone. This has enabled a closer working relationship to be fostered between the Regt and the Bde.

ARMY

31st (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col SG Hutchinson MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Johnston**

During that last couple of months, we have run the 2 (NC) Sig Bde Trade camp, which was a great success, and sent 25 soldiers for 10 days' mountain climbing in the Pyrenees. The 2IC conducted a trip to Chèvres in Belgium with the 31 Sig Regt Assn to help open a new museum there. Last but not least, the CO and TM have started to learn to ride motorbikes under the watchful eye of **Sgt Pendleton**. Is this a mid life crisis?

41 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Steve Baker**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Watson**

With reduced MTDs and less weekends in the trg programme, the Sqn could have been excused for taking the opportunity for some well-deserved rest. Instead, the quiet period offered the perfect opportunity for the Sqn to re-organise in prep for this year's Annual Camp in September.

Maj Steven Ong left the Sqn in April, after 3 years as OC. With all the good work he did for the PLK Assn, it's the Belgium trip he will always be remembered for. The new OC is **Maj Steve Baker**, who has been here before, having completed a 3-year tour as OC from 1997-2000. So knows his way around the Sqn.

The former Sqn 2IC, **Capt Henry Taylor**, has resumed his former post of Regtl TOT, and his replacement is **Capt Debs Speakman**, who returns to the Sqn after a short spell at RHQ.

The Sqn also re-organised the tp structure in May in order to be able to field 2 tps of equal strength for Annual Camp. The superbly efficient husband and wife team of **Sgts Simon** and **Julia May** are now responsible for K and J Tps respectively (no competition there, then). K Tp remains under the solid leadership of **Lt Lee McEvoy**, and we have a vacancy for a tp comd in J Tp, if any reader out there fancies a stint in Cousldon.

Sgt Nick Tuck has returned to take charge of the Sqn's recruiting efforts for the next couple of years. **Sgt Kev Bedwell** remains the lynchpin in the Sqn's recruit trg, and is now joined by **LCpl Babs Ennis**.

The Sqn also welcomes back **Cpl Warren O'Driscoll**, who has returned after 2 years of wandering around Australia. Sqn members, **SSgt Ian Mackay** and **LCpl Darren Dunne** remain in Iraq on OP TELIC. We have said goodbye to **LCpl Scott Fisher**, who recently transferred to the RMP.

WO2 (SSM) Watson presents a thank you gift to Maj Ong

DINING OUT OF SQUADRON COMMANDER

On a cold Friday night in February the Offrs and Sgts Mess dined out **Maj Steven Ong** after 3 years as OC 41 Sqn. On behalf of the Sqn, **Maj Ong** was presented with a bronze combat signaller and a framed picture of the Sqn. In return he gave the JRs' bar a picture of 2 Bn 13 London (Princess Louise Kensington) Regt dated 1915, the Sgts' Mess a ships bell, and the Offrs' Mess a rosewood gavel. We wish **Maj Ong** all the best in his next posting.

TRADE CAMP 16 - 25 APRIL 2004 - *by LCpl Stan Still*

It was a long drive up for most of the 31 Sig Regt personnel, with many not arriving until early Saturday morning. When the trg

started properly on the Saturday morning, things had to be changed almost immediately due to a lack of equipt. But the DS, under the direction of the Regt YofS, **Dave Monger**, coped admirably, and as the week progressed, all the little hurdles were overcome to enable a full and challenging trg programme for all involved.

The only slight hiccup occurred during the final ex, when the entire camp was hit by a power cut. Rumour has it that the Class 3 Electrician Course had been a bit adventurous with their plug sockets. Luckily, the Forman soon sorted out some lighting and brew kit. Then the camp civil staff sorted out some generators, so that the day was saved for the final function on the Saturday night.

The most notable non-course incident was by **LCpl Wilkins** when, during a heroic attempt to save a goal, she not only failed to stop the ball, but also managed to break her collarbone. Despite this, she joined the rest of the personnel on the final day, making it 100% of the personnel who attended the week passing their respective trades.

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col EM Blyth TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Greenwood**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Phil Donegan**
SSM	**WO2 Norma Sproul**

In April, the Sqn bade a very fond farewell to its PSAO, **Capt John Lynch**. **John** has been with the Sqn since 1995 and is leaving the Army, after 34 years service, to run a Hotel on Isle of Arran. He will be best remembered for his contribution to AT. We wish **John** and **Dianne** the very best of success in their new venture and look forward to seeing them at future Officers Mess functions.

The vacant PSAO's slot was soon filled by **Capt Graham Reith**. His accession to the post brings up a hat-trick of appointments with the Regt. He has previously served as RSM and most recently as QM. His loyalty to the Regt and the TA is difficult to equal and is unlikely to be bettered. Before taking on the post of PSAO, Graham celebrated the christening of his son, **Cameron**, in the Officers Mess. We therefore wish **Graham**, **Victoria** and **Cameron** a very happy tour with the Regiment.

On 1 May, a small group of Sqn members were privy to **Maj Nicolette Mason's** wedding in North Yorkshire. **Maj Phil Donegan**, **Maj Cammy Payn**, **Capt Steve McBride** and **SSgt Marilyn Niblock** witnessed the union between the MO and her intended, **Steve Smith**. The event was blessed with glorious weather, which provided a splendid backdrop to the great day. After the wedding, all deployed to the reception for some Caledonian jigging. We wish **Nicolette** and **Steve** the very best of success in their happy union.

CORPS DINNER

On 13 May, a group of Officers enthusiastically participated in the Corps Dinner, at the Savoy Hotel in London. Following an excellent dinner, it was off to the Roadhouse in Covent Garden for some less refined entertainment. At this stage, C2 degraded significantly. Some reports had the PSAO **Capt Graham Reith** pogo-ing on stage, and other information placed **Capts McVey** and **Anderson** in a Lebanese restaurant at 03.00hrs the following morning.

51 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj Andrew Thompson**
SSM	

EXERCISE ORSUS

At the end of April an initiative weekend called EX ORSUS was conducted.

Its aim was to practise the navigational skills and initiative of Sqn personnel whilst working under pressure as a team. Members of the Sqn were given a series of tasks to carry out with limited resources.

The teams were formed in groups of 4 and 5. They were then dropped off 15 miles from their first objective, and 50 miles from the safe house with no financial resources. Each team had only a 24 hr ration pack to share and a photocopied map of the local area. Their objective was to return to the finish point, carrying out a number of tasks on the way, using just their initiative and determination.

At the end of the weekend everyone who had taken part enjoyed the ex, and the stories that were told at the debrief proved that Sqn members can not only use their initiative but also their imagination. It also turned out that certain personnel could hide money or credit cards in the most obscure places! One team managed to get £290 past the DS Staff by sewing money into their trousers. Another team managed to get a lift in a so-called bakers van, but according to local spies in the area, they had inside help.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

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

The Sqn has again had a busy few months. At the end of the Shooting season, firers competed at the Aberdeen Wapinschaw and 2 DIVSAM (North). The majority of the Sqn managed to get both their bounty and be classified FFR, and the push is now on to get everyone ITD qualified early in 2004.

We welcome **Cpl Johanne Mundie** back from her operational tour with the Balkans Sig Sqn, and congratulate **SSgt John Kell** on his appointment as Chief Clerk and subsequent promotion.

EXERCISE SALTIRE START

EX SALTIRE START was a BSS/ITD weekend organised and run from 23 - 25 April by **Sgt Sam Wilkie**. Based at Rosyth, the weekend consisted of a round robin of BSS and ITDs on Saturday morning, culminating with an afternoon ex testing these skills. The Sunday was spent on the ranges, with the majority of firers attempting their APWT. As always when the Sqn visits Rosyth, a cracking time was had by all, and with a good turnout, we are well on the way to becoming fully ITD qualified.

ABERDEEN WAPINSCHAW

Saturday 1 May saw the Sqn shooting team, masquerading as the Regtl Team travel north to Aberdeen to compete in the annual

Capt Davidson and members of 52 Sig Sqn (V) collect another shooting trophy

Wapinschaw shooting competition. After a long sunny day on the ranges, the team came through to win 11 of the 24 trophies available. Despite being pipped at the post by the Highlanders for the two big trophies, the team still managed to win the lion's share of prizes and our PSAO is now desperately trying to get another trophy cabinet installed, as we have outgrown our current one. **Captain Davidson**, **WO2 Swan**, **Sig Whiteside** and **Sig Donald** all managed to win individual Prizes.

2 DIVSAM NORTH 7-9 MAY 04

DIVSAM North this year was in some doubt up to the last minute due to problems at Barrybuddon Trg Area, but as ever, the event was a success. DIVSAM is one of the Regt's RAAT tasks and the Sqn's Q staff, led by **SSgt (SQMS) Chic Doyle**, worked extremely hard to make it a success. Members of the Sqn were competing as both a Sqn Minor Unit Team and as half of the Regt's Major Unit Team. The teams failed to shoot to their normal standard, but still managed to win all of the other Arms and Services prizes, with **Cpl McLaughlin**, **LCpl Rodger** and **Sig Donald** all winning Individual Prizes.

We are looking forward to another few busy months in the run up to Annual Camp with Regtl Athletics, EX GOLDEN BOOT and more ITDs to look forward to.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Andy Bruce**
PSAO	**Capt Peter Campbell**

2004 HERFORD MARCHES

After an entertaining ferry journey from Hull to Rotterdam, with **Sgt Jane Chisholm** providing a fabulous floorshow, 61 Sqn arrived weary but enthusiastic in Germany. Friday night was spent preparing for the strenuous day ahead by gorging themselves at SSgt Bob Harvey's favourite restaurant, *Tam's*. On Saturday, the Sqn spent the day on ex with the German reservists. Congratulations went to **LCpl Jamsie Costello**, who not only mastered the language barrier, but also managed to fool completely the local fire brigade with his skills working the hose. Even the hangers on from 51 Sqn, **Sgt Davie Riach** and **LCpl Brumie Wiggins** had a great time and successfully escaped from **Sig McRobbie's** water sports. All in all, the Sqn brushed up on old skills and learned some new ones from our colleagues in Germany, and look forward to defending the trophy next year.

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

CO	**Lt Col Somerville MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Browitt**

EXERCISE BANNOCH ROSE

22 Members of 33 Sig Regt deployed to Kingussie, Scotland for the permanent staff AT during the week 7 – 11 June. After the long hike up to Scotland from Liverpool on the Monday, everybody settled in and wondered what was in stall for them over the next week.

Tuesday morning saw the team depart in 3 groups for a 2-day overnight exped in the heart of the Cairngorms. As luck would have it, the weather held, although while the rest of UK suffered a heat wave, the Cairngorms were clouded in. This suited the activity, and unusually for Scotland, we even managed to get some views during the odd break in the cloud.

The overnight stay in bothies proved interesting. Accn ranged from a stone-built house to a garden shed, with bodies squeezed in where and when they could. The dawn start proved a popular move, although the groups hadn't much choice in the matter, as the dawn chorus was as loud as any car alarm found in Liverpool.

Wednesday afternoon saw the groups change the mode of transport from foot to mini bus, much to the relief of the footsore. A visit the Edradour Distillery, Scotland's smallest distillery was the name of the game.

The staff had seen groups such as ours before, as the free drink was handed out before conducting the tour. This had the effect of

Relaxing in the Cairngorms

stopping thirsty men rushing the tour guide around the distillery and ensured that some of the information sunk in.

Thursday was a busy day. The morning kicked off with the group splitting down to conduct different activities. The men from the MT swapped Landrovers for horses, and spent the morning being bounced around Alive Estate.

There was a rumour that the QM was fishing so he could supplement the rations, but we were spared the fisherman's tails at the end. Other activities saw group members spend a morning on the golf course, and for the weary, a morning at the local country club swimming pool was just the ticket.

Once everybody had re-assembled at the hut, the group departed for Culloden for a guided tour of the battlefield, the last battle to be fought in mainland Britain.

The tour proved interesting, and again the rain held off long enough for us not to get soaked. Of course such a trip would not be complete without a social element, so from Culloden the group moved into Inverness to sample the local facilities.

All in all, it was a worthwhile week, and a great chance to get away from Liverpool. Thanks to the Trg Maj and **SSgt Smith** for organising and running a fun week.

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col G Hearn**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) D Newton**

90 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Richard Lenton**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Les Stimson**

OFFICERS' MESS DINNER NIGHT

Whether it is on board a ship, running around a trg area or shouting at school children, time after time 90 Sig Sqn comes up trumps. The past few months have been particularly interesting for the Sqn, beginning with the Officers Mess Dinner held on board *HMS Trincomalee*.

HMS Trincomalee is a classic British Frigate built for the Admiralty in Bombay in 1817. It is the oldest ship afloat in UK today, and has been restored to provide a realistic experience of what it would be like for the soldiers and officers of Nelson's Navy nearly two hundred years ago. Docked at Hartlepool Marina, *HMS Trincomalee* was an ideal choice for 90 Sqn to host a dinner.

Guests included **Maj Gen Louden**, **Brig Wood** and **Cdre Sutermeister**, and in keeping with Navy tradition, toasts were given whilst Mess members and guests remained seated. This helped to alleviate any problems with balance when the ship began to sway, towards the end of the evening.

ORIENTEERING AND COMMAND TASK COMPETITION

Having only just recovered from fine wine and rich food, 50 Sqn challenged 90 Sqn to an orienteering and comd task competition on Catterick trg area. Whilst 704 Tp practised their pistol shooting skills, 741 Tp from Hartlepool practised their map reading and military skills. Activities included carrying a tractor tyre for one leg of the orienteering course, a challenge which **Cpl Andy Mason** welcomed without hesitation.

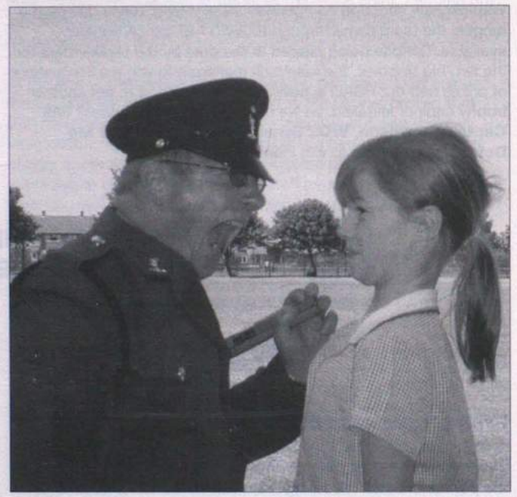
Sgt Belt enjoyed the challenge of the blindfolded assembly of an SA80, proving that, contrary to common belief, he doesn't just fumble around in the dark!

Finally, the challenge of the tug of war was just too much for 50 Sqn to take, and calls of 'Who ate all the pies?' could be heard as 90 Sqn dragged their way through to the winning post. The day was enjoyed by 50 Sqn and 90 Sqn alike.

NOISE AWARENESS DAY

As a result of 90 Sig Sqn's recent success, their SSM has found himself somewhat redundant. **WO2 (SSM) Stimson** was shipped off to The Holy Trinity C of E Primary School in Seaton Carew to practise his vocal skills.

In support of Teesside's noise awareness week, a competition was organised between teachers, children and **WO2 (SSM) Stimson** to see who had the loudest voice. Members from Cleveland County Council arrived to take sound samples. Finally, and much to the relief of the onlookers, **WO2 (SSM) Stimson**, with a deafening 111 decibel cry, was declared the winner of the shouting competition.



WO2 (SSM) Stimson and Elizabeth Birch, aged 8 at The Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, Seaton Carew.

HM LORD LIEUTENANT'S CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION

We congratulate **SSgt John Metcalfe** on receiving the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate in February of this year from **Sir Paul Nicholson**. This prestigious Certificate is awarded by to soldiers who have given outstanding service to the Army.

SSgt Metcalfe completed Regular service with the Royal Corps of Signals before joining the TA in September 1982. He enlisted with 118 Fd Sqn RE, based at Easington Road in Hartlepool, where was promoted to the rank of Sgt before re-roling to 90 Sqn Royal Corps of Signals under the Strategic Defence Review. During his career, **John** has been awarded the General Service Medal for time spent in the Regular army, the Northern Ireland medal for his work in the Province, and the Territorial Efficiency Medal for his work in the TA. In December 2001, he was awarded

SSgt John Metcalfe receiving the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate from Sir Paul Nicholson

the Kosovo Medal for service in the former Yugoslavia. The following year, he received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal.

In addition to his work with both the Regular and Territorial Army, **John** has acted as a liaison officer to Hartlepool's local Army Cadet Force, where he regularly attended evenings in support of trg, providing signalling instruction to cadets attending competitions.

During the Strategic Defence Review, **John** enthused many previous 118 Fd Sqn Engineers to re-trade and continue service with the Royal Corps of Signals. With over 22 years of military service, **SSgt John Metcalfe** has proved to be an outstanding example to all members of 34 Sig Regt, and it is with great pleasure that they would like to congratulate him for his recent award.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

15 (NE) BRIGADE SPORTS DAY

The 15 (NE) Bde Sports Day took place at Queen Elizabeth Bks, Strensall and Imphal Barracks, York on Saturday 17 April. The Regt was given responsibility for admin support for the event, and each Sqn provided personnel both for general duties and sports teams. **Capt Keith Williams**, 2IC 49 Sig Sqn, organised the event with some great support from **SSgt Gordon Hardaker**, **Sgt Kevin Arnold**, **Sgt Frank Mason**, **Sig Mark Clarkson** and the Hull det. His fetish for playing squash in his shin pads was witnessed by many during the day, especially the Bde Comd, as he just about managed to flit between the football pitch and the squash courts. The football team allowed their skills and fitness to surface once again, as they were victorious in retaining the 5-a-side trophy.

The Regt had a very successful day, winning the 5-a-side football and the badminton. Second place in the squash and volleyball

49 Sig Sqn's football team

events ensured that the Regt emerged as overall Bde Sports Champions for the first time in its history. Well done to all who took part.

The day concluded with the opening of the renovated JRC. The JRC Committee had arranged for the bar to be opened jointly by the Hon Col, **Brig Nigel Wood** and **Ronnie** from Leeds Rhinos Rugby League Club. A special mention must be made of **LCpl Sally Buck** and **Sig Jo Ambler** for their organisational skills. The evening also acted as a leaving party for **WO2 Alan James**, who has spent over 30 years in the Corps as a Regular and TA soldier.

RACE THE SUN – 07 MAY 04

The last few months have been hectic for the committed sportsmen and women in the Regiment as **SSgt Shiels** from 745 Tp organised the Regtl team for Race the Sun, which took place on 7 May. Although people from different Sqns took part in the event and performed incredibly well, a large amount of credit has to go to **Sigs Clarkson**, **Coleman** and **Evans**. **Sig Clarkson** competed in one of the most gruelling events, the triathlon, and to his credit he finished a very respectable third. **Sigs Coleman** and **Evans** both showed real character and true determination when successfully completing the mountain biking and forest run respectively. For **Sig Coleman**, the event was a good excuse for him to scrounge a new bike from his mum, and for **Sig Evans**, it was just an opportunity to do something energetic for the first time since coming back from his tour in Bosnia. **SSgt Shiels** said, 'It was great to see everyone from the Regt giving their all, especially as it was very hot. The competitors were of a very high standard.'

745 SIGNAL TROOP

On Sat 27 Mar 04 745 Sig Tp organised a military and communication skills trg day at Halifax Bks. The day was designed not only to maintain the trg links between the units, but to also give the cadets chance to learn and revise skills that they would need during the Mercury Trophy, a Cadet Military Skills Competition. The trg was organised by **Sgt Oxley** (the cadet liaison SNCO) with **2Lt McKerr**, **Cpl Ford**, **LCpl Brown** and **LCpl Robinson** acting as instructors. The stands were recce, voice procedure and HF/VHF radios, command and leadership, and PU12 mast erection. The DS were thrilled by the cadets' level of enthusiasm, which in turn, made teaching them even more enjoyable. Both the cadets and DS's hard work appeared to have

paid off when the team ended up coming first in the assault course and fourth overall.

Over the coming months some of the key people within 745 Sig Tp are going on their own little exped.

Sig Coleman is going to the States at the beginning of June, where he will spend a couple of months working with Camp America. **Sig Stead** is also going on his own little adventure.

From the end of May he is going to be travelling around Scandinavia for a few months, in order to sample as many of the local delights as possible. We all wish them both a happy and safe journey, and hope to see them refreshed and raring to go when they return.

GOC 2 Div chats to members of Cleveland ACF during the Cadet Military Skills Competition

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RG Dalton**

MOVING ON

We have now said farewell to **Lt Col Calvin Owen,** who has deployed on OP TELIC as SO1 Comms before he takes up his new, and as yet undisclosed appointment. Taking over command is **Lt Col Chris Edwards**, who is no stranger to the Regt; and he and **Tracey** have received an exceptionally warm welcome back.

Lt Col Calvin Owen hands over to Lt Col Chris Edwards

The newly established post of Unit Employer Support Officer (UESO) has been created in every TA unit to strengthen the Reserve Forces Employer Support activities. Its objective is to encourage regular contact and liaison with the vast number of employers who have employees serving with the TA and to encourage their ongoing support. To this post we have welcomed **Maj Les Ratcliffe TD** PARA, who will no doubt receive strong support from PSAOs who already act as sub unit ESOs.

In 48 Sqn, we welcome their new Regular FofS **SSgt Mike Holloway** and his family fresh from 11 Sig Regt. **Mike** will also provide tech mgt cover for 89 Sig Sqn based in Rugby as well as 48 Sqn. Finally, we have said farewell to one of computer expert and Regtl Webmaster, **Sgt Martin Walton**, who has now moved on to 30 Sig Regt - a simple case of our loss is their gain!

ON THE CREST OF A WAVE

Sailing is quickly beginning to catch up with Orienteering as one of the Regt's favourite pursuits, and is attracting more and more interest as different expeds are mounted almost routinely. First off the starting line is the CO's sailing exped off the Scottish coast that took place over the period 24 May to 1 June. EX OBAN DRAGON constituted Leg 3 of the JSATC Offshore Sailing Exped, EX MAIDEN ISLAND. Participants included the outgoing CO, **Lt Col Calvin Owen**, who organised the event. He was joined by a former SPSI, **WO1 Mark Giles**, who is a qualified Day Skipper. **Mark** was also well-known to most of the crew members, **SSgt Colin Richards**, **Sgt Dave Wright**, **LCpl Pete Cater** and **Sig Jethro Towers** who came from 89 Sqn, the sqn he served with. They were joined by a guest crew member **LCpl Nicky Freeman**, from 36 Sig Regt.

All crew members made their way to Dunstaffanage Marina to join their boat, *Placuna*, and practised their tacking, safety and other drills before eventually sailing into the sunset on 26 May. Initially, the wind was light but soon picked up, and they had a good run up the Sound of Mull, taking in some breathtaking scenery. Morale remained high throughout the exped, even when winds reached Force 5 during the progress round Ardmurchan point and on up past the islands of Mull and Eigg during Day 4. Fortunately, the winds dropped to a steady Force 2 or 3 and crew confidence on the helm was growing. Morale increased after the boat moored up at Inverie, where the crew discovered the most remote pub in Britain, and strong interaction with the natives took place. By now, the crew were on the crest of a wave, had bonded well and team spirit was growing daily. Day 5 saw an early start, leaving port at 06.00 bound for Plockton on Loch Caron. Later that morning, *Placuna* took on provisions from the Kyle of Lochalsh before mooring up for the night at Plockton. The remainder of the trip went well, taking in the Sound of Sleat, with port visits to Loch Nevis and Tobermory, before finally reaching the home port of Dunstaffnage on 31 May. **Lt Col Owen** summed up the ex by simply stating that it was an excellent one, in which all crew members were thoroughly tested.

Enjoying a port call – SSgt Colin Richards, Sig Jethro Towers and LCpl Nicky Freeman

Almost concurrently, the Adjt, **Capt Charlie Roberts**, noticeably absent from OBAN DRAGON, was preparing to participate in the Royal Signals Sea View Regatta at the Isle of Wight, that ran from 31 May till 2 Jun. He was joined by **OCdt Rachel Clayton** and **Sig Rees Mountford-Jones.** Weather was good during this competition, and the stiff breezes allowed the use of genoas and spinnakers. The social side was also enjoyable with evening barbecues and other activities.

The team, thrown together at short notice, continued to improve their skills and techniques throughout the two sailing days, achieving 4th place during the competition, and a final overall placing of 7th out of 10. **Rees** and **Rachel** are now hoping to complete a Dinghy Sailing Course, and in July will form part of the 35 Sig Regt Team going to Keil to participate in EX MARITIME DRAGON over the period 12 – 24 July. But more about this in the next edition of *The WIRE*.

LOST AND FOUND

In the popularity stakes, Orienteering is still slightly ahead of the sailing, with the Regtl and Sqn team making assaults on a number of key competitions, including the 5 Div Relay Champs at Long Valley on 5 May, the 5 Div Harris Championships at Hawley on 12 May, and the Army Champs at Braunton Burrows on 19-20 May. Kicking off with the Relay Champs, the team comprising expert navigators, **Capt Tom Jeffries**, **Capt John Middler**, **WO2 Chris Smith** and **SSgt Dave Arnot**, found they had taken the wrong direction to the competition area. Because of the numbers participating in this relay, the Regt was entered as a Minor Unit, and after an excellent team effort, achieved the runner up position. The following week, the team, which also included **WO1(RSM) Russ Dalton** and **SSgt Colin Richards**, travelled to Hawley for the Harris Championships as a Major Unit entry. The strengthened team put in a magnificent performance, and after the team events, their combined overall total secured top place, and they were declared 5 Div Champions. Still reeling from these successes, the team, further boosted by **LCpl Andy Price**, were off to Devon to participate in the Army Champs. Here the team, by a narrow margin, had to satisfy themselves with 4th place out of 21 competing Major Unit teams - all in all a very commendable result that has attracted praise from every quarter. Very well done.

ROUNDABOUT

Staying with AT, which happily seems to have dominated Regtl trg during the past two months, we have two further reports; one from the Regtl skiing team and one from the Permanent Staff AT.

This annual skiing pilgrimage took place in Switzerland, and the party was split into beginners and advanced skiers, each participating in activities appropriate to their skills and training needs. **WO2 Ray Edge** trained the beginners, **SSgt Dave Dewfall**, **Sig Kaz Kazam** and **LCpl Trev Carter** to a proficient standard and based his student's final grades on the amount of times they fell over or acted as snowboards! Meanwhile, **WO2 Andy Wilkins** and **SSgt Dean Mackenzie** took the others through their paces on the advanced course, teaching them the finer techniques of skiing. Students who had only progressed from the beginners' stage the year before, **Sigs Steve Horsenail**, **Emma Rutter, Tony Reid** and **Pte Dawn Gibbs**, progressed well and kept up with the more advanced students. The weather throughout was superb, providing excellent skiing conditions and skills were improved all round. Our special thanks to **SSgt Rod Shelton Smith**, who is now standing down, having organised these trips for over 20 years, and is handing over the reins to **Andy Wilkins**, and to **Cpl Karen Dilley**, for her catering support and exciting recipes. Now all we are looking forward to is next year.

Beginners on the Piste

Our hard pressed and often under valued Permanent Staff also took time out during Jun for their annual adventure training expedition to Wales.

EX WELSH DRAGON was held in Snowdonia during the period 7 – 10 June. It was organised by the RSM as a team building ex covering exhausting AT pursuits, including hill walking, rock climbing, abseiling, and white water rafting. The Permanent Staff were divided into two groups. On Day 1, the first group, led by **Capt John Middler** and the RSM, made the long ascent to the summit of Snowdonia, via the Crib Goch route, with **SSgt Paul Coxon** taking the lead. Mist and low cloud with a major drop in temperatures greeted the party, and needless to say, the descent was fairly rapid. Meanwhile, the second group engaged in a spot of rock climbing and abseiling at Betws-y-Coed, supervised by **Capt Kath Stevens** and **Sgt Colin Bentley**.

On the second day, the groups reversed and repeated the activities, except that the walking group ascended Tryfan,Glyder-Fach and Glyder-Faw. Meanwhile back on the Golf course, the

Trg Maj, **Maj Butch Maycock** and **WO2(RQMS) Ollie Lambert**, were physically drained by the time they reached the 19th hole, and had to force themselves to make the final desperate steps into the clubhouse. The highlight of the AT had to be the white water rafting at Fron-Goch. This proved to be an unforgettable experience for **SSgt Dave Arnot**, who had to be rescued by other group members when he was washed (or bounced) overboard. But **Dave** still wants to know who was pulling and who was pushing!!

To bring the regimental roundup to a close, a more sedate activity took place at 89 Sig Sqn on 21 May, when following a frantic and fraught RSIT inspection, the Sqn hosted a visit from the Mayor of Rugby, **Cllr Laurie Wright**. **Laurie** has been a consistent and unequalled champion and supporter of the TA in Rugby and we were delighted that during his visit he also presented the VRSM to **Capt David Brough**, **WO2 (SSM) Simon Wright**, **SSgt Dave Arnot**, **Sgt Andy Dodic** and **Cpl Nick Harvey**. All recipients were congratulated for their long valued and dedicated service to the TA.

Some of the medal recipients with the Mayor of Rugby

89 Sqn also mounted an extensive recruiting display to coincide with a Family Fun Day at Town Thorns in Easenhall near Rugby on Sun 6 June, where they were joined by elements from 30 Sig Regt. While no recruits were attracted on the day, the event proved to be a useful image event, that at least sowed the seeds of interest for the future from many of the youngsters who clambered all over the comms installation.

Roped into the recruiting team

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col SJ Richardson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) KP Innes**

46th (CITY OF DERBY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JD Pearson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) P Beedle**

SSGT (SQMS) ALAN LANDSBOROUGH'S DINING OUT

The Regimental WOs' and Sgts' Mess Function at Bass Brewery was one event that will stick in all Mess members' minds. Who would have thought of having a Pi… (ahem – let's call it a 'soiree'!) in a brewery. All the Derby Seniors arrived at the TAC on time despite hearing reports that the RSM's transport didn't arrive until later. However, in the end everyone made it there and had an enjoyable time. **Alan** was presented a statuette by the RSM and, in return, he presented the Mess with 2 port decanters. He will be missed, and we thank him for his support and loyalty for the many years he has given to the Sqn.

OPENING OF THE ALL RANKS BAR – THE RAM'S HEAD

The All Ranks bar can now proudly call itself *The Ram's Head*. During The St Georges Day Dinner, a carved wooden ram's head and a framed picture of a ram's head were presented to the Sqn by **SSgt Alan**.

HELICOPTER FLIGHT

Our resident HHI (Helicopter Handling Instructor) **SSgt Bishop** has recently been doing a course for 30 Sig Regt, teaching them to marshal choppers and how to handle under slung loads. At the end of the course, there was a Chinook familiarisation period, which involved a 20 min flight. **SSgt Bishop**, the good egg he is, arranged for 8 of the Sqn members to go on this flight. **SSgt Ryan Gillbank** has been waiting to fly on a helicopter for 18 years, and finally had a chance for that dream to be fulfilled. The flight crew was happy to see that there was a nice bunch of smiling faces getting on board. During the flight there were some dramatic banks and turns executed by the pilot. One nice manoeuvre that was carried out was when the pilot climbs up and then suddenly dropped back down simulating a lack of gravity. It was quite enjoyable seeing the flight crew float. We all had a most enjoyable day. Thanks, Staff!

64th (City of Sheffield) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj APD Whalen**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Horton**

Our PSAO **Capt Les Jordan** once again arranged the annual Army Benevolent Fund Golf day at Bondhay Nationwide Leisure Golf Club in Worksop near Sheffield. The competition started with a 9 hole warm up in the morning, followed by 18 holes in the afternoon. The day was a great success, raising £591 through the efforts of the players. The day was further enhanced when the CO of 38 Sig Regiment, **Lt Col Steve Richardson** presented the ABF with a further cheque for £400, from the Regiment's Charity Fund, bringing a total raised on the day of £991. We would have had a photo to capture this momentous occasion, but **SSgt (SPSI) Jason Wood** is equally as bad with a camera as he is with his golf clubs.

The Sqn deployed on one of its ICS weekends during May. The weekend was held in the Dukeries trg area and was a mixture of tactical comms coupled with some basic military skills, defence of a comms site, patrolling/night navigation ex and the revision of the Orders process. Overall, a successful weekend was had, combining comms and military skills, and leaving a relatively happy smiling Sqn, despite being a little depleted because of our Balkans commitment.

87th (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JP Ahern**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) S Coburn**

TA DAY – *by Lt Leanne Rudd*

15 May saw National TA Day mania spread across UK. This is an annual event where all TAC across Britain open their gates and invite the general public to come and see what we do. 87 Sqn also had a stand in Nottingham's Market to grab all those shoppers and invite them into our world.

With our location sorted and 12 x 12 erected, we set upon enticing the public over to talk to us. **Sig Rob Judd** donned a PRC 320 and paraded around the square, while **Cpl Steve Taylor** sat in the back of a Landrover communicating with him. **Sgt Babs Bedford** and **Sgt Kev Bedford** stood behind our desks in the 12 x 12 talking to interested people, and **Lt Leanne Rudd** and **Sig John Coller** handed out free pens, keyrings, torches, and of course the all important publicity flyers!

The day was a huge success, with our having recorded over 40 people's details. One person who paid us a lot of attention was an interesting character, who befriended **Lt Rudd** and informed **Sgt Bedford** that he was possessed by the devil and couldn't stop walking. He consequently walked around our stand and **Lt Rudd** in particular, for over 2 hours.

When confronted by the Lieutenant as to why he was following her he replied with, 'I'm in the SAS and I've been sent here to protect you, as you are surrounded by hostiles!' It wasn't long after this moment that the City centre's CCTV cameras zoomed onto us and the police came to take the nuisance away. Not surprisingly, more people came to look at our stand after that.

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Stillie**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj RR Loveridge**

EXERCISE WESSEX MERCURY - *by Cfn Karin Annan*

The ex took place over the weekend 23 - 25 April. The LAD of 39 Sig Regt in Bristol was invited to Tidworth Camp by the Staffordshire Regt.

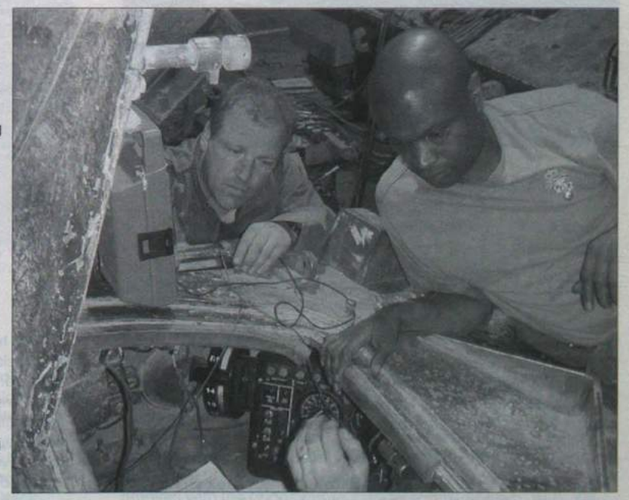
The weekend also incorporated the entire HQ Sqn, including medics, EDs and clerks. The aim was to assist in the repair of a fleet of around fourteen armoured vehs, which had recently returned from the Gulf and were being used on an intensive training ex. It was an amazing opportunity to get a closer look at various armoured vehs and their workings, especially for the inexperienced of our crew.

Early on the Saturday morning, we were split up into groups, depending on trade and experience. The armourer and metal smith was immediately in great demand and presented with a number of jobs which needed urgent attention!

The vehs, mostly Warriors and their variants, 432s, Scimitars and Samaritan were still out on exercise at this stage, so we busied ourselves preparing for their arrival. We were all given an in depth tour of the various vehicles in the garages, including the recovery vehicle. The various non-REME trades spent a number of hours being shown a variety of weapons currently in use by the services, including the modified SA 80.

We were called out to the plain to attend a recovery, some of us going in a four tonne truck, Land Rover and in the rear of a Warrior 513 REME variant. The APC was hitched to the 513 and we returned to camp.

On our return, the fleet of fourteen were gradually coming in, with a list of repairs that needed to be seen to. The class one VMs and electricians really had their hands full! Under their excellent supervision and with teamwork we all assisted in the task at hand. It was very interesting learning about all the different features of the Warrior, how everything works. And we all had something helpful to do, including the non-technical trades, who thoroughly enjoyed trying their hand at something new.



Cpls Airey and McCarthy look on, helpless, as the AFV swallows another victim!

The crews from the Stafford Regiment were especially helpful and really enjoyed showing us almost all there is to know about what seemed their prides and joy. We got a good insight on what their trg involved. They gave us in depth explanations of the workings of their equipt, and way of life in an armoured environment.

Ex WESSEX MERCURY was beneficial for all those who attended, not only the REME element, but all other trades, who thoroughly enjoyed the time spent with the Staffordshire Regt. We were pleased to have been given the opportunity to assist in the maintenance of their armour, and look forward to a return visit.

5 (QUEENS OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Empson**
SSM **WO2(SSM) R D Hall**

It has, as ever, been a busy time for the Sqn. Recruiting campaigns, charity events as well as the build up to the FTX and a visit from the Bde Comd, have kept us all on our toes.

Farewell to **Sig Emma Rye**, who is off with Tiger Team in Iraq. Congratulations to **LCpl Jon Godwin**, Skinners Award winner, and **Sig Louise Penfold** for Best Recruit.

Sig Louise Penfold contemplates necking her one celebratory drink for Best Recruit

We continue to recruit and raise our profile with several recent events in Oxford, the County Museum, Banbury, Cutteslowe Park, and out and about in Banbury on a charity march.

Our efforts are starting to bear results and we bid a warm welcome to our new recruits **Mark West**, **Karen Beasley**, **Julie Gilmore**, **Nathan Eagan**, **Clive Wragg**, **Graham Gadinier**, **Daniel Hone**, **Wayne Robinson** and **James Shutt**. You are a key part of our future.

Congratulations to **Lt Rupert Cranston** and **2Lt Alex Orr** on passing their JOTES Exam in May 2004. And finally a welcome to **2 Lt Alison Brumfitt**, who commissioned from RMAS on 29 May 2004.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Bill Ruthven**
A/SSM **SSgt Mike White**

The Sqn have been busy during the last few months, with both Sqn and Regtl exs. A number also went to the Escape Trg Centre at RNAS Yeovilton, organised by **SSgt Dave Langridge**. The faces on the video provided by the Navy said it all, a combination of terror and amusement was the order of the day. It was however, much enjoyed, and we thank the PSI for organising and interesting if somewhat different day's trg!

Sig Downs and the Master of Skinners

Our PSI has been in the news for a number of reasons since the last article. He with **Maj Bill Ruthven** and **Capt John Cullen** carried out a recce for the Sqn's forthcoming AT weekend on the Isle of Wight, in one of the Regt's white fleet vehs. A farmer drove head on into them with his Range Rover. Thankfully, as the OC was sleeping in the back with seat belt on, he didn't feel too much! Everyone else was OK, but the car stayed behind for an extended holiday.

Congratulations to **Sig Cassie Downs** who has had an eventful few months. She was part of the successful Regtl Shooting Team

Sgt Jones looks on as OCdt Trevellion hammers her foot into the ground

at TA CORPS SAAM this year, and achieved best TA female shot overall. She then followed this by being awarded The Skinners Award for 2003/4. She had previously won the SPSI's Trophy for best all round effort during Annual Camp 2003/4. What's next?

EXERCISE BRUNEL MERCURY

During the weekend 24 – 25 April the Sqn deployed to Hullvington Camp for a comms trg weekend. Deploying from Bristol and Gloucester on the Friday night, convoy drills were tested when **Sgt Dave Jones** managed to miss the Tac signs into the camp, resulting in the convoy drivers having to practise their reversing with trailer drills!

After setting up the NCRS dets, the OC officially announced the appointment of **SSgt Mike White** as Acting SSM. Congratulations; it must be the commitment shown by putting up his own personal 9x9. The only question is how long it will take for him to trade in his Range Rover for a GS110.

The next morning was taken up with NCRS trg for the RS Ops, with concurrent ED and Tech trg also taking place. The CO and RSM dashed in for a flying visit, and managed to leave before anybody had time to realise they were there.

Meanwhile, some of the Sqn seniors were reminded how to put up a 15m mast by **Sgt Dave Jones**, with **OCdt Sarah Trevelion** finally learning something about signals.

The bulk of the afternoon was spent with **Sgt Gringo Inns** familiarising the Sqn with AIRWAVE and SAINT. Despite his best efforts, by the end of the afternoon **Sgt Inns** still hadn't managed to get everyone to grasp the concept of 'Press, pause, speak, release.'

A good turnout combined with good trg and excellent weather, produced high morale all round. Overall, an excellent time was had, and the Sqn are now prepared for the upcoming comms exs.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

OC **Maj D Simcox**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Krikorian**

This month saw the departure of **SSgt Dave Churchward** to 250 Sig Sqn in Bramcote. Farewell to you, **Sandy**, **Jack** and **Daniel**. Hello to **Lt Alex Stanger**, who takes over from **Capt Mark Davies**, who moves to run the Sqn in the OC's absence. Also hello to the new SC ops who recently passed the last Special Comms course, **LCpl Patrick Morrison**, **LCpl Martin Hannam**, **LCpl Craig Johnson**, **Sig Chris Cairns**, **LCpl Daz Watson** and **Cpl Neil Port**. Congratulations to **LCpl Steve Stopforth** on passing P Coy.

As usual, the Sqn is a whirlwind of deployments, exs and more importantly, trips to *Chicago's* in Milton Keynes. On the work front, all of the non-deployed ops have been hard at work preparing for the annual Sqn deployment in support of 2 (NC) Sig Bde. This involved a number of beat up exs, involving both Regular and TA members.

EXERCISE FIGHTING LYNX

This was the last ex organised by **SSgt Churchward**, and proved to be one to remember. With a mixed bag of TA and Regular personnel, 1 Sig Sqn deployed to STANTA to practise section and platoon attacks.

The ex got off to a flying start, with **Cpl Colin Teo** being replaced by **LCpl Faye Mathews** as section comd after the first attack. Must have been something to do with **Colin's** admin spilling out of his Israeli issue webbing! **Faye** then took his section on an all out full frontal attack on an enemy position. Things ran smoothly into the night until recces were ordered to locate the enemy. **Cpls Mike McGhee** and **'Scouse' Dowell** took along a young TA member to show him how a CTR is done! After successfully locating the enemy, the trio proceeded to get into their pockets.

Satisfied that all had been achieved and both Cpls telling the young TA lad just how good they were, the much-feared word 'Halt!' resonated around the trg area. After giving the sentry the good news, and running 5k's in full woollens and fleece, the two Cpls proceeded to tell the young lad about how '...we'd just tested the enemies defences.'

To round the ex off, the troops were given the good news of a farewell BBQ, at the expense of **SSgt Churchward**. However, what the troops failed to realise until the last minute, was that it was at the end of a 2k casualty evacuation! The fact that the sun was out and the temperature was higher than Blackpool Tower, only added to the delight of carrying the not so light members of the Sqn.

EXERCISE SHORT LYNX

The next ex of the month was a comms ex in Fulbeck, Lincolnshire. This was in prep for a 2-week ex in support of 2 (NC) Sig Bde. The ex started well, with **LCpl Martin Hannam** in his Landrover leading two other vehs to Fulbeck, one of which broke down after 20 mins. This threatened to be more of a morale problem with the troops rather than a comms problem, as it was the admin Bedford. However, after MT sorted the problem out, the ex got underway. One of the dets got quite a shock as they pulled

into their loc, to find a platoon of screaming cadets just a stone's throw away.

The ex was well needed, as some of the Sqn operating procedures had to be reviewed to fit in around 2 (NC) Bde's plans for the future. After **WO2(YofS) Steve Milne** floored a Kangaroo Court on the best way to achieve our goals, a solution was found, and the Sqn began operating to its consistently high standards. The ex finished with a lot learned and a great deal achieved in the comms department, and a reminder from the cadets of why we don't wear bandanas, headbands or old '58-pattern webbing!

20th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj SJP Spiers**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Crawford**

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, and for the past year 200 Sig Sqn have been working harder than most. Having just returned from Iraq, we felt that it was time to inject some fun into our lives. The following articles therefore reflect some the sporting events and courses completed by members of the Sqn as well as the family day get together.

200 SIGNAL SQUADRON FAMILY DAY – *by Sig Charlie Riley*

With everyone suffering from the blues after POTL, a family fun-day seemed the ideal way to mark the first weekend back at work. With the majority of the committee members re-deploying to OP TELIC 4, **Sig Brown** and I gladly stepped in to help **Cpl Hendry** in the mammoth task of organising the festivities.

A week before the event the committee delivered leaflets, wrapped presents and manually inflated the bouncy castles, which wasn't easy. Stocks were built, pony clubs were begged for entertainment for the children, and so much other work was put in behind the scenes by lots of different people, especially **Kim Mercer** from the families' office.
The day arrived, cloudy and threatening to rain (as it always does),

The 2IC gets his punishment

but everything was in place ready for children, squaddies and families to arrive. The turnout was wonderful, and the DJ began the daunting job of ordering the Sqn hierarchy, one by one, to their fate in the stocks. There were a few grumbles but most accepted their punishment gracefully, and some even seemed happy to be in the extra-secure furry handcuffs. It's a mystery where they came from (but I will miss them so).

The kids loved the ponies and lucky dip. They probably would have enjoyed the castle and sumo wrestling too, but they couldn't get anywhere near it for the slightly tipsy adults posing as gladiators. Not surprisingly, the beer tent was the most popular of the stands, closely followed by the bottle stall. **Cpl Hendry** did try his hand at winning most of the prizes, but to no avail. Never mind; better luck next year.

Generally it was an excellent day and a lovely welcome back from OP TELIC 3. Many thanks to everyone involved and all who attended.

REPRESENTING THE ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS GOLF TEAM
– By LCpl Nige Brennan

As an avid golfer, I was delighted to be selected to play for the Corps Golf team in the recent Germany Golf Championships. At the moment, the team is captained by **Sgt Paul Taylor**, who makes all the critical decisions. He is responsible for deciding, based on their current form, who plays on the team, and also decides whether a match is won or lost. More importantly, he also has a heavy hand in helping persuade units to release players for matches.

I am one of the more fortunate players who is regularly released from the normal daily routine of garage work to play for the Corps golf team. The Royal Signals Golf team is ranked within the top three teams in Germany, and consequently all the other Corps try their utmost to beat us. We continued our current form in the recent championships, winning two of our four games and drawing one.

The calibre of the team does not mean that newcomers are not welcome. We are always looking for new recruits to add a bit of competitive fun. Because, at the end of the day, all golfers know that the nineteenth hole is the best and most important hole of them all.

SIGNAL OFFICER ATTEMPTS TO FLY – *by 2Lt Foster*

I recently had the opportunity to spend a fortnight on the Basic Free Fall Parachute Course that is held at the Joint Services Parachute Centre in Bad Lippspringe. The course is a fantastically organised 2 weeks, and although attendance was at full capacity, the instructors and staff ensured that everyone got maximum attention. **Cpl Stu Storey**, who works at the centre as a trainee instructor, took great delight in watching his Tp Comd make all the mistakes that novice parachutists do.

The course started with everyone rather apprehensive and no amount of bad jokes could get rid of the butterflies. After one and a half days of ground training, all the students were kitted out in bright orange jump suits and luminous yellow helmets. And just in case that wasn't obvious enough to spot from a distance, our parachutes were adorned with a deep crimson – a warning sign to any other jumpers perhaps? It didn't matter. The fact that we were festooned in an explosion of bright colours was the last thing on our minds. What we were really thinking about was the fact that we would shortly be taking off in a twin-engine Islander aeroplane and would not be landing in it.

A Signal Officer attempts to fly

They say that you always remember your first jump, and apparently all good parachutists can attribute their technique to that first exit. All I can remember is flying at an altitude of 3,200 feet above the ground and then experiencing a rather sickening feeling in my stomach as the dispatcher opened the sliding door of the rickety aeroplane. I looked around, and it was clear that everyone was in a similar state of mind - we were all petrified. It made me feel a little better to know that I wasn't alone in my terror, but the feeling of well-being didn't last. I was third out of the plane and the words of command, which were by now familiar, nonetheless felt like an icy needle through my spine: 'Clear Run-In, Clear Drop. In the Door! GO!'

Initially there was the obvious, yet unexpected feeling of falling to the earth. Then all hell broke loose as my static-line began ragging me around forcing me to kick my legs and break my arch. And then just as suddenly, the world became silent and calm as my canopy billowed open, allowing me to drift slowly to the drop zone. The landing was easy enough, and from then on there was no stopping me.

I couldn't wait to get back up, over and over again, and no amount of parachute packing was going to deter me. The fact that my exits left much to be desired and that I needed all the practice I could get, had nothing to do with it of course. But no matter how many times I went up, it was never enough. Because, and here is something I would never admit to the instructors, I love the feeling of parachuting.

The course instructors deserve a huge mount of credit for managing to hold their patience with students who required more than just basic instruction. For the most part, we enjoyed fantastic weather conditions and made maximum use of the daylight hours. 200 Sig Sqn have taken full advantage of the close proximity of the Centre, and on any given Sunday, you can find a Sqn member hanging in the clouds over Bad Lippspringe.

A STAFF SERGEANT DOES LANZAROTTE
– by SSgt Stroudley

During POTL, I took the opportunity to retune my body to the level required to undertake the demanding sport of Triathlon.

As a veteran of Army triathlon, I was invited to join a small team of Army tri-athletes made up mainly of RE personnel, on a triathlon trg camp in Club La Santa, Lanzarotte. The week's activities started at 08.00hrs on Monday morning, with a short sprint duathlon to shake out the cobwebs. On Wednesday a middle-distance triathlon ensured that we were stretched a little further out of our comfort zones and provided much needed practice. With the two minor events out of the way we could start concentrating on the main effort to be held on the Saturday: the 20th Annual Volcano Triathlon. All trg and coaching sessions took place under the watchful eye of team coach **WO2 (QMSI) Russ Clash (APTC)** of 21 Sig Regt (AS). The main event itself was tough and demanding, and competitors experienced four different seasons throughout the course. I managed an overall finish position of third with a personal best time.

Various other activities took place throughout the week, ranging from 120km bike tours of the island to aerobics on the exercise lawn. All the activities were professionally organized by the dedicated Green Team, who have a vast amount of knowledge and enthusiasm about most sports you may wish to enter for. It was an ideal way to unwind after a long hard winter tour on OP TELIC 3. Club La Santa is an excellent sporting facility, and caters for all your sporting desires, having perfect facilities at reasonable rates. It also provides the perfect conditions for an early season trg camp for any unit sports team.

7th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj Chris Ford**
RSM **WO1(RSM) ML Walsh**

The Sqn continues to juggle its many commitments, and with BOWMAN now looming, conversion has meant that many of our soldiers are now away in Blandford. In addition to this, we have been kept extremely busy carrying out an internal Board of Officers, and this, coupled with preparation for a four-day ECI, has meant that what soldiers that are left, have been burning the midnight oil now for several months.

On the sporting front, despite being without many of our gladiators, we have still managed to maintain a sporting prowess throughout the Bde's sporting calendar, and continue to romp home in disciplines such as squash, rugby, cross-country, football, hockey, water polo and swimming. We currently lead the Minor Units League in the Bde by some 15 points, and are on course to completing what must surely be one of the most successful sporting years in the history of the Sqn.

HEADQUARTER TROOP – *by Cpl Richards*

Tp Comd **Capt Peter Wettenhall**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Lockie**

A lot of personnel have been away over the last few weeks. **Cpl Westmoreland** is in the Peruvian Andes on this year's Sqn AT

exped, while **Cpls Stanham**, **Fu** and **Richards** have endured four weeks in Worthy Down on their Class 1 crammer.

We welcome the new Forman, **WO2(FofS) Cleminson**, and two new members of the workshop, **Cpl Holly** and **LCpl Anderson**. Unfortunately we say goodbye to **Cpl Clark**, who is posted to NI.

ALPHA TROOP – *by LCpl Baxter*

Tp Comd	**Lt Aileen Grant**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Al Clark**

The Tp started the month on a high with the wedding of **Sig Thompson** and **Sig Julie Wilson**. We wish them the very best for the future. After the long weekend off the Troop got straight back into the swing of things with EX RATS REMINDER, a reminder to all of us that time waits for no man, except Staff Officers of course! There was also time to fit in one more set of first lines and CEI Inspections on all the Tp's CLANSMAN equipt before the imminent BOWMAN refit.

We say goodbye to **LCpl Miller** and **LCpl Paul Steel**, who are both off to Colchester to jump out of aeroplanes; And we also farewell the recently-promoted **Sgt Lane**, who has gone to take over the Trg Wing. We say hello to **Cpl Powell**, **LCpl Baxter**, **Sig Green**, **Sig Elliot**, **Sig Gray** and **Sig Fielding**.

BRAVO TROOP – *by Sig Nelson*

Tp Comd	**Lt Simon Lord**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt John Giddens**

We farewell **Sig Smith 450** and **LCpl Honeywell**, who are off to Civvy Street and Blandford respectively. We welcome **Sigs Nelson** and **Rokotuibau**, fresh from the factory; and **2Lt Rea**, who has taken over from **Lt Lord**.

The Tp deployed on EX RATS REMINDER, a shake-out ex, designed to test the deployment and capability of the Bde HQ, which took place from 25-29 April. It was a useful insight for the new members of Bravo Tp on how a complex is set up, and what its function is in an Armd unit. We used mainly Alpha Tp's vehs for the exercise, with Bravo's troops being used to bring up the operating standards!

Bravo Tp has produced some good all round sportsmen and women who have represented us well in Sqn hockey, swimming, squash, basketball, football and most importantly, rugby, with **SSgt Giddens** and **Sgt Rumble** proving to be the stars of the rugby field – despite their combined age of over 65! It's all helping to keep the Sqn at the top of the Minor Units competition.

SUPPORT TROOP

QM	**Capt Sean Lawes**
RQMS	**WO2 Andy Maylett**

The QM's Dept is exceptionally busy at the moment, currently mid-way through the Board Of Officers in prep for the HO/TO of the OC. Then we have a 4-day ECI. Once these two milestones have been achieved, look forward to a long stretch of lazing around the Dept reflecting on our previous successes…if only! With BOWMAN conversion just lurking around the corner, the next Beer Call looks like being postponed for some time!

We farewell **LCpl Holmes** and **LCpl Wilson**, on posting to NI. We welcome **Cpl Whelan**, our latest arrival from 30 Sig Regt, and **Sgt Swann** has made a return from having his gallstones removed.

BACK TO GREEN - *by Sig Frank Ndegwa*

The Sqn's vehs along, with all the other Corp's vehs that deployed on OP TELIC are starting to look a shade worse for wear. I believe it makes it harder to feel proud about your det when it looks like they have not had that TLC of the old days, when you could brush paint until your heart was content! Health and Safety development and awareness has seen those days gone for good, much to the discontent of the old boys in the unit.

Sig Ndegwa stands between the before and after OP TELIC Landrovers

The first Mobile Spray Shop arrived in Hohne in early May and the Bde's vehs are now being pulled through the re-spray programme. Some of the old 43 series literally get pulled through to get their covering of green paint. The civilian contractors are doing a sterling job, including working weekends to get the fleet looking half decent again. To date half the Sqn's vehicles have been re-sprayed with the armour being placed on the 2nd phase of the programme. This, along with the prep for BOWMAN conversion and a Board of Officers, has made it a hectic period. At least we are moving in the right direction, and should see the fleet looking the way we would expect it to in the not to distant future.

FORK LIFT QUALIFICATION - *by Sig Kerry Jordison*

Having been in the unit for some 15 months I was pleased when my ever-thoughtful RQMS asked if I would be interested in attending a civilian Fork Lift driving course at Fallingbostel, the home of the feared 1 Bn Black Watch. On arrival, I was

Sig Kerry Jordison shows off her new skills in the Dept's forklift. The skill being the driving, not shaping her beret!

apprehensive about my skills on the driving front and how I would fare on a course that would require skill and confidence. But then I consoled myself with the fact that **LCpl Tug Wilson** had passed the course, so it can't be that hard, surely. The first day was spent in the classroom learning the theory and safety aspect of the Hyster. The next three days were the enjoyable part - plenty of manoeuvring and lifting various items - nearly including the instructor (oops).

My final day was the test, when, I have to admit, I was really nervous! But would you believe it, I passed with flying colours. The course cost me a £120, 80% of which I claimed back through learning credits. What a bargain.

EXERCISE RAT'S TALON – *by 2Lt Rea*

Ex RAT'S TALON is designed to test the leadership, teamwork and mil skills of young officers in 7 Armd Bde. Having been in the Sqn and part of the Bde for a whole two days, I found myself anxiously sitting in a briefing room at 04.30 hrs, waiting to be told the good news. I thought it would be a relatively gentle walk through the German countryside – but I was wrong! We had approximately 12 hrs to cover the 35km stretch of Range Road between Hohne and Fallingbostel, stopping at various different stands to carry out certain tasks.

I was in the last group to leave, and set off from Hohne at 12.00hrs. Everything was going well to begin with, and we completed the shooting, mine awareness and first aid stands with relative ease.

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC	**Maj P Smith**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) K Weaver**

The Sqn continues to work hard supporting a number of Bde exs, running up our new SAN(AP)s, and supporting a number of Bde units in smaller exs. In addition, due to the hard work of the MT and QM's the Sqn has been the only Bde unit so far to achieve greens on the LSI and ECI.

Despite this workload, the Sqn was still found time to deploy on EX MERCURY TIGER, an AT ex held at Penhale Camp, Newquay. It was a well deserved break in glorious sunshine, and included hill walking, mountain biking, orienteering, clay pigeon shooting and fishing, to name but a few. Congratulations to **Sig Jones**, who won best shot in the clay pigeon shooting; **LCpl DeGernier**, **Sig Stanyer** and **Sig Williams**, who won the orienteering competition; and **Sgt Korba** who was awarded the title of best angler.

We also congratulate **Sgts Robertson** and **Roseveare** on their promotion.

EXERCISE FALLSCHIRMJAEGER TIGER

On Sunday 7 March ten members of Alpha Tp deployed to the German parachute school in Altenstadt, Bavaria to carry out the required parachute descents to entitle us to wear the German Airborne wings brevet.

The trip started at early o'clock and after a fast ferry crossing and a long drive, we arrived in Bavaria at around 04.00hrs the next morning. Morale was soon raised back to its normally high level, when the German Sergeant Major informed us that the first parade would be at 07.00hrs.

Having met the German Officer and NCOs whose job it was to host us during our time at the school, we were introduced to the

With a good old 'biscuits and fruit' lunch on the move, we trekked on towards our next stand. The distances between CPs seemed to be increasing, along with the temperature and the weight on our backs! Next up was the orienteering stand, which made me realise that a bit of remedial map reading was required! After a quick water replen, on we trod to the TEWT stand. We had to plan a coy-level hostage release scenario, using the seven questions estimate process. By this time, the light was starting to fade and we were tiring, but being young and fit, we motored (well, plodded) on.

After carrying out a mines awareness test in the dark, (note to self – bring a torch next time!) we had a quick lesson on the use of interpreters, and moved off towards the media stand. It was now too late to complete the stand, so we headed towards the pick-up point. Almost at the 'falling asleep on our feet' stage, we finished the first day of the ex with an interpreter-based comd task.

During the night, we had lessons on foreign weapons, tank recognition and image intensifying equipt. The next day felt like the same day, only it got dark for a while, and saw us paint-balling, raft-building, and JCB driving in the morning, with javelin throwing, falling plate shooting and an Iron Man stand, courtesy of the PTIs, in the afternoon. The day was rounded off with a barbeque and a few light refreshments in the evening.

Despite all the tabbing and moaning, EX RATS TALON was an excellent way to begin my posting with the Desert Rats, and gave me a chance to meet other officers from the Bde. For those who did well on the exercise – well done. For those who didn't do so well - well done anyway!

chutes we would be jumping. These were the M 1-1C, which is a steerable parachute very similar to our own 22ft steerables. We then carried out the aircraft drills for the CH53 (Jolly Green Giant) helicopter that we were due to jump from later in the day. After lunch the weather had cleared and we walked the short distance to the D Z, located within the school. We then carried out two descents from an altitude of 2,000ft without incurring any injuries.

Bad weather prevented parachuting on the second day, so our hosts very kindly organised a sightseeing tour to the local medieval town of Schongau, where we visited the city walls, the Rathaus and the many historic churches in the area.

The third day was meant to start with a descent from a C160 Transall, but the aircraft became unserviceable at the last moment. So our hosts pulled a blinder got us onto a jump with a free-fall team from a Caravan aircraft, which involved squeezing ten blokes into a single-engined aircraft not much bigger than a Cessna. What was even more entertaining was the drill on the aircraft for jumping, which involved bum-shuffling up to the open door, handing your static line to a German called **Mario** (who liked shouting 'Achtung!' a lot) and then throwing yourself out over Germany at 2,500ft. When we were safely on the deck, we were informed that we had been the first troops (and probably the last) to be despatched in such a manner. As this was the last jump of the course we were presented with our 'blood wings' on the DZ and then taken out for a very enjoyable evening with our German counterparts.

On the way home, we stopped off at Arnhem to educate the younger members of the Tp on our heritage as Airborne forces and especially Parachute Signallers. We visited the Hartenstein Hotel at Oosterbeek, the site of the famous last stand, and the John Frost Bridge in Arnhem itself, to pay our respects to the men of the 1 Airborne Div, who made the ultimate sacrifice. What made the trip even more poignant was that this year is the 60th Anniversary of OP MARKET GARDEN.

Mention should be made, firstly to **LCpl Scottie Slater**, who organised the whole trip, and to **LCpl Corbett**, who qualified for his British wings only on the Friday before we left. Two sets of wings in a week is good going by anyone's standards. Lastly, we farewell **Cpl Lancaster** and **LCpl Campbell**, who both leave on posting to 14 Sig Regt (EW).

EXERCISE MERCURY'S INDUCTION

In May a new challenge was to present itself to the Sqn in the form of a partners' ex (not as the 2IC called it, EX LOOK AT WIFE)

Many of the ladies had never lived out in the field before, so expectations were a little varied. The weekend began at 08.00hrs on the morning of 8 May, which came as a shock to some of the ladies, resulting in them dressing a little OTT. Once introductions had taken place and they had watched the Sqn video the ladies were ready for anything.

The girls look confident and happy as the day begins...

Kit and equipt was issued in Bravo Tp lines, including a poncho and sleeping bag, which brought shocked looks as they realised that they would be spending the night out in the field. The first event was the assault course, which most ladies had never seen, let alone attempted. But without hesitation, they completed it in good time. Then it was off to Fingerho ranges for a spot of clay pigeon shooting. Most had never shot before, but they still managed to shame some of the more experienced soldiers.

Still smiling and laughing, they were taken to Friday Woods, where they were instructed on survival tactics by the RSM. After being shown how to skin a rabbit and gut a fish, some of the smiles had vanished, especially when they discovered it was their turn to do it. There were some frowns and squirms, but they still managed to produce a lovely rabbit stew.

The wood was going to be their bedroom for the night, and putting the ponchos up was found to be somewhat of a challenge, but they all got there in the end. Next was the night nav ex. Split into two sections and helped by a member of staff, each section had to trek to four different locs, with incentives at each one. After a short while they returned to base carrying a bottle or two.

The next morning started with a slow tab back to camp and by this time the ladies were very tired. Something they hadn't expected was to be marched around the Parade Square by the Chief Clerk who thoroughly enjoyed drilling them.

At the end of the events the ladies were hosted in the bar with a full Champagne breakfast. These festivities did not last for long though, as most just wanted to go home to a nice hot bath.

216 SIGNAL SQUADRON'S JUDO TEAM
- by LCpl CJ Woollon

After a 7-year absence from the sport, I decided to give the Army Judo Championships a crack. Soon **Cpl Nipper Sherlock**, **Sig John Sharpe** and I were training, and though very much out of practice, **Cpl Sherlock** and I won Gold in the under 73kg and under 81kg respectively, with **Sig Sharpe** taking the Silver for the under 81kg novices. All in all a pretty good day!

So we then entered a Sqn team in the Army Open Judo Championships, which consists of light, middle and heavy weight events. We were lacking a little a heavy weight, but **SSgt Rob McAdam** volunteered to fill this slot. In his first fight, **SSgt McAdam** threw his opponent with his first attempt. However, his opponent's experience soon got the better of him. We worked our way through the rounds to walk away with the Silver, having eventually lost to the RGBW who'd had 2 months full time trg - but not bad for a scratch team. In the individual event, **Cpl Sherlock** won Bronze for the under 81kg and Bronze in the open weight. I managed to win Bronze in the under 73kg, after being beaten by a guy who represented Ghana in the last Commonwealth Games; but I chickened out of the open weight. **Cpl Sherlock**, **Sig Sharpe** and I were picked for the Army Squad for the upcoming Inter-services.

Cpl Sherlock and I were selected for the Kyu grade (non Black Belt) team, in which Army beat both Navy and RAF to collect Gold. This was reinforced with **Cpl Sherlock** winning Bronze in both the U81s and the open weight, and me winning Bronze in the U73s. The last competition was the British Judo Association National Team Competition. With the RAF fighter for the U90s injuring his knee in his second fight, **Cpl Sherlock** stepped up a weight and went on to beat the U90's champion for the Midlands. Unfortunately the team lost, 2 fights to 5. Within 2 months 216 Sig Sqn have collected 13 medals, have managed to get 3 competitors on the Army Judo Squad, 2 on the Combined Services Team, and now & **SSgt Rob McAdam** is absolutely hooked on Judo.

... but things get serious as the RSM shows what a butcher he is

12th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC	**Maj Chris Paterson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Ken Marsh**

Things in the Sqn have continued to move apace over the past couple of months. Ex commitments have included 1 R ANGLIAN CAST, 1 R ANGLIAN TESEX and a Bde CAST as well as Sqn-level exercising. We've also conducted a Board of Officers and made the most of every opportunity for Sqn personnel to let off stream, with both Comms Tps organising trips away to have a break from BOWMAN and the relentless comms trg activities.

The Bde has now been warned for deployment on Op TELIC 6 in April 05, so this will become our focus for attention as we move toward the end of the year. Despite the availability of commercial systems in theatre, BOWMAN will be coming with us, and this will be the first time the equipt will have been put to the test in an op setting. Mil skill trg will also be a central theme, with our newly bolstered Trg Wing working hard to ensure that the Sqn's low-level tac skills are well honed prior to deployment.

ALPHA TP

Tp Comd	**Lt Zoë White**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Rob Fogg**

The exercise programme has kept the Tp on its toes over the past couple of months, as have the constant flow of visitors! We are becoming more adept in the use of the new tentage, although the layout and erection time continue to be significant issues. Every opportunity has been taken to get the Tp out and about and to get ourselves away from BOWMAN, including the aptly-named EX BOWMAN BREATHER and trips to HMS Havoc and the Heli dunker at Yeovilton.

After hankering for a Tp Sgt that looks like **Tamsin Outhwaite**, **Sig Handley** has finally had his dreams realised and leaves us to join the RMP at the start of June. We wish him all the best of luck, but if he ever sets foot in the garages again we'll set the dogs on him!

1 ROYAL ANGLIAN TESEX *- by Sig Washington*

May saw Alpha Tp deploy out onto the rather cosmopolitan tank park on Westdown Camp for the 1 R ANGLIAN TESEX. During the CLANSMAN era, the Sig Sqn would be required to provide ops to man the radio room in the BGTU building and remote handsets to the HICON in a lovely air-conditioned room, just next to the cafe. But because the BG wanting to exercise their full capability using a BOWMAN comms structure, and the BGTU not having any BOWMAN capability, it fell to the Tp to provide a full HQ build for the staff to work from - hence the tank park loc.

The Tp deployed three days prior to the staff to set up the HQ, test the kit to the R ANGLIANS and recce the most likely BBQ loc. All three were achieved by the end of the first day. During our set-up period R ANGLIANs redeployed to Westdown Camp for a main break, having been on the Plain for nearly three weeks before the TESEX was due to start. This afforded many the opportunity to do some big veh recognition and feel some track envy whilst the Challenger 2s and Warriors rumbled passed. Once the R ANGLIANS redeployed, it was time for the staff to start work. The ex was split into three missions for the BG and provided us with a constant stream of work due to the staff planning cycles.

Although not one of the higher tempo exs we have deployed on, it gave everybody a good shake out on the BOWMAN kit again; refreshing our faultfinding and operating skills.

Whilst the weather must have been unpleasant for the infanteers, the heatwave we encountered over the period certainly increased our PRI profits from the snack bar. Rumours that this will help fund the Tp to buy a racehorse are categorically denied by all sources. True to form, the RRB crews returned to Comms Ops looking like they had just come from the Greek Islands. Replendems requesting suntan lotion and leopard print thongs were not justified by their 'work hard, play hard' claim. For those in the Main HQ, the ex provided us with a good run out of the BOWMAN equipt and an opportunity to practise our basic skills once more. Working with 'live' friendly and enemy forces on the ground always adds an element of reality and sense of urgency to the ex, and this, combined with our ever-growing capabilities with the new kit, ensured that everybody learned a great deal from the ex.

EXERCISE BOWMAN BREATHER

EX BOWMAN BREATHER was exactly what the title says, a chance for the Tp to have a break and refresh our mil skills. It consisted of a three-day package based upon improving map-reading skills by working in unfamiliar areas. Bramley Trg Area was booked for the first day, providing a fantastic area to practise low level skills, such as target indication, range finding, judging distance and confirming everyone's pacing. The session finished with a quick run around the orienteering course. This was for some the first time we had encountered the sport.

The second day was based on the Pewsey Vale and practised the conventional military map reading skills that definitely needed some polishing, if not re-learning completely. In time-honoured tradition, the day started with a race to the top of the biggest hill in the area followed, by the question, 'Where are we?' For some, it was still below the summit at that point! After a couple of hours of refreshing everybody's skills, we were given a 6-figure grid ref, and told to select a route to the next loc. There was an immediate sense of urgency as the next loc was (also in time-honoured tradition) a public house (or place of worship to some) that was open for us to use over the lunch period. After a swift coke and a sun block stop for the gingers, we were off to the next loc. The veritable wreath of contour lines around the next trig point was a good combat indicator as to how cheeky this next leg would be. After much asthmatic ant style action, everybody made it to the summit to find **SSgt Fogg** relaxing waiting to remove everybody's maps and issue a set of bearings and distances to march on

Once the final ex had been completed, and the signal had been given to make it off the Vale, we all went back to **Lt White's** house for a BBQ. After a couple of beers, it was time to get back to camp after what had been an excellent day refreshing our mil skills and enjoying the sunshine. Day Three consisted of a tab along the South Downs Way and a final confirmatory ex with our map reading at various points along the way. Finishing in the time honoured tradition of course.... The three days away gave the Tp a good opportunity to get away from the rigours of the garage get a bit of fresh air before the next round of exs.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Christian Barker**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Matt Witham**

EXERCISE POLE STAR *- By Sig Mitchell*

After a period of rigorous BOWMAN trg and a hectic ex programme, Bravo Tp had an opportunity to enjoy a couple of

days away from the high pace working environment. EX POLE STAR was a day nav exe set Brighton and the surrounding area.

The Tp was split into two groups, each setting off from different locs to navigate to a designated RV, which just happened to be a pub. Thankfully, for my group, not many problems arose, and after light refreshments, we were allowed to enjoy the remainder of the day Brighton's seaside town and sampling the nightlife. Another day trip that week was organised by **Lt Barker**, a visit to London's Imperial War Museum. It was all the more interesting, as it coincided with the run up to the 60th anniversary of D Day. Following the visit, we ended the day experiencing the local nightlife. The two days were much appreciated by the Tp and proved to be great opportunities for hair to be let down.

HMS HAVOC - *by Sig Stewart*

On Friday 7 May, **Sig Jenkins** and I went to *HMS Havoc*, based at HMS Raleigh in Plymouth. This is where the Navy practise first line repairs on their ships as if they were badly damaged in theatre. It was good to have been selected for this trip, because we have been very busy of late with the all the pressures of BOWMAN conversion.

Our day began with a 3fi hr drive from Bulford to Plymouth, which also involved a ferry crossing. On arriving at HMS Raleigh we were quickly rushed into our trg, which took the form of power point presentations.

Finally we got to do what we set out to do: we boarded *HMS Havoc* and underwent an interactive simulation of the ship being badly damaged from an enemy attack. We were tasked to carry out repairs whilst the ship was sinking. This involved plugging all the holes where water was coming in.

The whole experience was tremendously enjoyed by the whole group, and I would recommend the experience to anyone.

280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Russell Edwards**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Dixon**

DRAW DOWN OF 280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON -
FORMATION OF 628 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL TROOP

280 (UK) Sig Sqn will draw down from its current size to a single, independent Tp with effect of 30 November 2004. The decision has been made in light of NATO reducing the number of deployable comms modules required in Northern Europe from seven to four.

The move will see the unit reduce to a strength of 1 Officer and 57 other ranks. Renamed 628 (UK) Sig Tp, it will continue to support NATO's deployable forces. A small transition team of subject matter experts, over and above the 58 posts in the Tp, will continue until the middle of 2005 to ensure the smooth draw down it. The Tp will continue to be based in Javelin Barracks, Elmpt, until at least 2007, at which point it will relocate into purpose-built accn at Brunssum in Holland.

The reduction will require approximately 26 personnel to be posted from the present Sqn. For those personnel with children in schools, or spouses employed in the Station, every effort will be made to find postings to other units in the area. The intent is for all those involved to have confirmed posting orders in early July and to receive at least three months notice of a move in all but the most unusual circumstances. If at all possible no soldier's career be adversely affected by the transition from Sqn to Tp.

280 (UK) Sig Sqn, and 28 (BR) Sig Regt before it, has a proud history of providing deployable comms support to NATO. The Sqn has been the only British Army unit under operational comd of NATO in both peace and war. During the last two years alone, personnel from the Sqn have deployed on ops to Bosnia, Turkey, Afghanistan and Iraq, in addition to supporting countless NATO exs in Germany, Holland, Denmark, Italy and Poland.

The transition of the Sqn to an independent Tp will be formally marked by a parade in Javelin Bks on Thursday 22 July 2004. The parade will be attended by senior officers of both the Royal Corps of Signals and the NATO chain of command, and an invitation will be extended to officers who have served in 280 (UK) Sig Sqn during it's ten year history.

The key message it that the Sqn is not disbanding, but merely reducing in size and restructuring into a smaller organisation. It will continue as an independent unit under operational command of NATO.

The Tp will continue to offer UK personnel the opportunity to be trained on cutting-edge NATO-sponsored comms equipt, deploy on overseas exs and NATO ops worldwide. Like 28 (BR) Sig Regt and 280 (UK) Sig Sqn before it 628 (UK) Sig Tp will continue to be at the forefront of NATO's deployable forces.

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT SIERRA LEONE

2IC **Maj Bob Carter**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Jed Keane**

Joint Communications Unit (JCU) is responsible for providing the majority of the comms support for the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) using equipt gifted without service support by UK, US, China and Australia.

The primary system is voice and Morse over HF, linking the four bde and twelve bn HQs, which are located nationwide to Joint Force HQ in Freetown. VHF is used to provide a secondary system within unit locs and the Freetown Peninsular.

Until recently, there have been 7 Royal Signals International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT) posts embedded in the 550 strong JCU. The first to jump ship was **Capt Mike Morton**, who was moved to the newly created RSLAF staff trg centre, the Horton Academy, as an instructor. The next to go was **WO1(RSM) Jed Keane**, who handed over to an RSLAF RSM before departing to the UK on resettlement in his hometown of Dundee. On the same aircraft was **WO2(YofS) Gaz Tabor**, en route to 7 Sig Regt on promotion. The Freetown Golf Club is already complaining of a downturn in trade now that Mike Morton is more gainfully employed and the RSM and Yeoman have departed! The upside of these departures is that we are, for the time being at least, a para free zone.

And then there were four - well 5 really, as the new Yeoman, **WO2(YofS) Ian Hughes**, will arrive mid July, just in time for the (very) rainy season! The remaining 4 are led by **Maj Bob Carter**, the Unit 2IC and Senior Advisor. Next is **WO2 (FofS) Dave Cook** who, although possibly the smallest Foreman in the Corps, manages to rise above the daily catalogue of 'constraints' (an RSLAF term for a shortage of just about everything) heaped upon him by the RSOs.

The other two members of the team are **SSgt Steve Young**, the ops trg advisor and Freetown Hash Club member (well somebody has to be!), and **SSgt Dave Mudway**, who is the tech trg advisor and well-known e-bay customer.

By the time this is published, **Bob Carter** will have returned to Blighty to retire, and **Dave Cook** to Chicksands. They will have been succeeded by **Maj Colin Lawrence** and **WO2(FofS) James Harper**.

We would to thank publicly 63 Sig Sqn (SAS)(R) for the Morse Trainer system, 94 (BY) Sig Sqn (V) for the typing tutors, and **Mrs Catherine Smith**, the Tech Librarian at RSS, for taking the time and effort to send us tech publications. All of these gifts are very much appreciated, as without them, our trg facilities would be so much the poorer. And a special thank you to RSS for all of the help and assistance they have given and interest they have shown during the existence of IMATT.

To those who have left, thank you for your hard work and dedication to what often seems to be a lost cause. Be assured that those of us who remain will do our best to struggle on, despite the 'constraints', weighed down by the worry of how best to spend our Loan Service Pay and Small Station rates of LOA!

2nd (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Steve Roden**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Bruce Singers**

We farewell our outgoing TECH PSI, **SSgt George Pendrich**, and wish him, **Brenda** and family all the very best for the future. We welcome **SSgt Tony Black** from 16 Sig Regt and hope you enjoy your tour up in Scotland. Welcome back to **Cpl Joe Wiggins** from his extended tour on OP TELIC. That's all of our Gulf deployed personnel back safely. We look forward to the war stories in the bar. Congratulations goes to our MT PSI, **Sgt Dave Honeyman**, on his promotion to SSgt and his retour with the Sqn.

It has been a busy time for the Sqn, taking part in the first deployment of the SUNFLOWER system as part of the Bde CPX. It was good to see that a lot of the skills were still there. We now look forward to our Battle Camp weekend at Cultybraggan.

Recently members of the Mess took part in a clay pigeon shoot at the Scottish Clay Centre in Leuchars, Fife. A great day was had by all, and it proved a lot more challenging than thought, with all the marksmanship principles going out the window. A special mention to **Sgt Bob Murray**, for winning the competition.

Sgt McKay lets 'em have it

660 SIGNAL TROOP 11 EOD REGIMENT

Tp Comd **Capt (Tfc (R)) DG Watson MBE**
Tp Sgt **Sgt S Bruce**

With a large influx of junior ranks arriving at Didcot, and there being nowhere for them to socialise on camp, it was decided that a new junior ranks mess/families room should be established. This was helped by a generous donation of £1,000 from the Royal Signals PRI Trust Fund and substantial donations from other sources.

After months of preparation, hard work, decorating, refurbishing and general organising, led by **WO2(RQMS) Burt**, with help from **LCpl Allen**, **LCpl Samuels**, **LCpl King** and **Pte Jardine**, the newly formed barrack club was to reopen. It was equipped with comfy chairs, bar stools, glass and wood tables, TV, stereo system, dance floor, pool table and a gaming machine. After a competition for the best name, it was aptly called *The Phoenix Club*, because it has risen from the ashes of the old Vauxhall Centre.

On Monday 1 March 2004, true to Didcot tradition, it rained, so the opening ceremony was a little rushed! The club was opened by CO,11 EOD Regt RLC, **Lt Col AM Gibson** cutting the ribbon (black nasty really), and the day got off with a bang.

It was a real family occasion with a bouncy castle, face painting, and a disco that converted into a karaoke in the evening. There was also a large buffet. Many of those who attended were a bit late work the following day enough said!

Since the opening, *The Phoenix Club* has been a massive success. It has opened the way for all soldiers and civilian staff on camp to socialise, with a pool team and darts team currently being organised.

This is an extremely busy time for the Sqns, with teams on various deployments to OP TELIC 3 and OP BANNER, whilst continuing exs and courses for those who remain behind. We say farewell to our old Tp Comd, **Capt (Tfc (R)) AT Kelly**, who has gone to Digby, and welcome in his place, **Capt (Tfc (R)) DG Watson MBE**. We say farewell to **Cpl Schiedecker** and **Cpl McCaskill**, who are off to 7 Sig Regt and 14 Sig Regt (EW) respectively. And we welcome **LCpl Holliday**, who has joined 621 Sqn, and **LCpls Baker**, **Sheppard** and **Hyder**, who have all joined 521 Sqn.

NEWS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SIGNALS OFFICERS ARE HONOURED

The following Royal New Zealand Signals Officers were awarded honours in Queens Birthday List announced on 1 June 04:

Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (CNZM): **Brig Clive William Lilley**; Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM): **Maj Ian Douglas Bateman**.

The New Zealand Order of Merit was instituted in 1996 and has five levels, Principle Companion, Distinguished Companion, Companion, Officer and Member. The Order roughly equates to the current UK British Empire Order.

Brig Lilley was appointed Asst CDF (Ops) in December 1999, being responsible to the CDF for the strategic management of NZ's commitment to East Timor, the biggest operational deployment of NZDF personnel since WW2. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 saw him playing a vital role advising Cabinet and government agencies on available options and contingency measures, particularly in counter-terrorism.

In December 2001, **Brig Lilley** assumed the appointment of DCDS, which among other tasks (including the continuing commitment to East Timor), saw him responsible for the oversight of NZ's participation in OP ENDURING FREEDOM.

Early in 2003, in response to the deteriorating situation in the Solomon Islands, at very short notice, **Brig Lilley** co-led a recce mission to determine what support was needed to restore law and order. In a difficult situation, he put together the genesis of what was to become the successful Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands.

Throughout his tenure as DCDS, **Brig Lilley** has retained strategic oversight of a range of peacekeeping missions, and made a significant contribution to NZ's commitment to support peace-keeping processes in a number of countries. His service has been marked by strong leadership, innovation, and in building relationships across the Defence Force and external agencies.

Since 1995, **Maj Bateman** has made a significant contribution to the governance of NZ Army trg, and has been at the forefront of developing its individual trg policy. His achievements have included establishing NZ Army's relationship with the NZ Qualifications Authority (NZQA). By re-aligning Army trg policy and practice, his work has resulted in Army personnel receiving civilian accreditation in the NZQA framework. He has actively pursued opportunities for the benefit of soldiers and has sought out opportunities to exploit all aspects of the NZQA relationship.

He assisted in the recognition by NZQA of the Army Trg Gp Waiouru as a Govt Trg Establishment, and has overseen the bulk registration of all relevant Army personnel with that body. **Maj Bateman** has also assisted individual Army Schools to become accredited trg providers for the delivery of recognised unit standards.

Maj Bateman's influence on Army trg systems has also included significant contributions to the Army-wide competency reviews conducted in 1995 and 2001, and he has been instrumental in the development of the mechanisms to support those reviews. Over the past eight years, he has played an essential role in the development, management and admin support of Army Trades, and the provision of tech support to various initiatives and projects associated with the NZQA, the competency reviews, and individual trg.

SPORT

FOOTBALL – THE SIGNALLER CUP

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT TAKE THE TITLE IN A THRILLING MATCH - *by Capt Tommy Steele*

On 5 May 04, the Signaller Cup final was held for the first time in Blandford. The match, between the holders, 7 Sig Regt and a young 2 Sig Regt side, was a real spectacle, producing a shock result.

Before the match, **Col JK Ewbank**, President of Corps Football, was introduced to the teams by the captains, **Sgt Collins** of 7 Sig Regt and **Sig Haley** of 2 Sig Regt.

With the Corps pitch in excellent condition, 7 Sig Regt kicked off, playing in their usual 3-5-2 formation, and immediately put the 2 Sig Regt defence under pressure. After 15 minutes of play, 7 had the upper hand, but the youngsters of 2 Sig Regt started to grow in confidence, were beginning to put the tackles in and win the ball.

Soon the game was more balanced, and the game started to flow from end to end. 7 Sig Regt looked very dangerous up front as **Cpl Stephenson** started to play, creating a number of chances that were not taken. This mistake was soon to be punished in the centre of the field, as **Capt Al Higgins**, under no real pressure, passed the ball back, wrong-footing the defence, allowing **Sig Pickup** the simple task of running the ball over the line. At the half time whistle, the score remained 1 nil to 2 Sig Regt, and a shock was very much on the cards.

The second half started at a frantic pace, and it was clear that 2 Sig Regt were in no mood to let their lead slip. They started as they finished the first half, with some strong tackling and good possession, making 7 Sig Regt work hard to get the ball. When they did manage to get the ball, the 2 Sig Regt defence were quickly on top of them. They very rarely got to threaten the 2 Sig Regt goal, and when they did, the keeper was up to the task. Against the run of play, 2 Sig Regt increased their lead at the 60-minute point, with a well-taken goal by **Sig McGhee.** The pattern was now clear, with 7 trying desperately to get back into the game, only to concede a soft third goal, when **Sig Pickup** scored from open play. 3 Nil to 2 Sig Regt, with twenty minutes to play! 7 Sig Regt were now really up against it, and the skipper decided to bring on **Sig Jay Bates** to recover the situation. Although 2 Sig Regt had a healthy lead, they were worried that if 7 Sig Regt could

Sig McGhee fights to keep hold of the ball

Sig Haley is presented with the Signaller Cup

get one back, the game could turn against them. But it was not to be. For all the effort that 7 Sig Regt put in, they could not score, despite the chances they created.

2 Sig Regt were worthy winners, preventing 7 Sig Regt from winning the Trophy for the third consecutive time. **Col JK Ewbank** presented the winners and runners up medals to those who took part, and presented the Signaller Cup to **Sig Haley** from 2 Sig Regt.

Capt Richie Bell, the long time secretary of Corps football and

ORIENTEERING SUCCESS FOR BLANDFORD – ARMY CHAMPIONS 2004

The Army Team Orienteering Championships held in Braunton Burrows, Devon on 19-20 March 2004, marked the end of a successful season for the 11 Sig Regt/RSS team.

The team had finished runners-up in the 5 Div League and finished third in the Div Team Champs, with a less than full strength team. On the individual front, the team boasted a number of successes at the Div Individual Champs with **Maj Mel Rayner** (SORLS) winning the ladies competition, **Maj Nick Bateson** (CSDC) winning the male veterans competition, and **Sig Abdulrehmen** (11 Sig Regt) winning the men's under 25 competition.

With all that success behind them the team headed off to Braunton Burrows on Tuesday 18 May, with hopes of a good performance but no real expectations of winning. Wednesday morning was spent trg over a course set up on similar terrain to which we would be racing over in the afternoon. Team Guru, **Maj Terry Crosby**, led the session, giving top tips on how to navigate our way around the tricky sand dunes of Braunton Burrows. The area is rather technical, and not one on which a novice orienteer would really like to find themselves!

The first competition was a team Harris Relay, commencing at 15.00 hrs on the Wednesday afternoon. At 14.45 hrs we were still 2 men short - **Maj Nick Bateson** and **2Lt Des McGuckian** were still somewhere between Blandford and the Devonshire coastline. Finally at 14.50 hrs they arrived in a cloud of dust. At the end of first day, 11 Sig Regt/RSS were lying in second place overall, with a combined time 11 mins slower than RMAS permanent staff, and 11 mins faster than third placed HQ LAND. The Gunners and Paras were lagging even further behind! It was still all to play for on Day 2.

After a couple of beers and a fine feast in a local pub (it's not all about wearing dodgy nylon suits and running around in the woods!), the team felt suitably refreshed for Day 2, the Team Relay. The concept here is very simple, first runner goes out, completes a traditional orienteering course then hands over to the second runner etc, etc. The fastest team to complete with clear runs wins. Day 2 was run as a chasing start, which meant that the fastest team from Day 1 went out first, with subsequent teams following on according to their Day 1 times.

With so many runners (over 300), it was very difficult to keep track of who was actually in the lead. The 11 Sig Regt/RSS Team were all having a steady run, and we were hoping that this would be enough to retain our place, or even improve upon it. Then came the news that RMAS had been disqualified due to a miss punch, a disaster for them, but in orienteering, you have to be accurate and check your control numbers or pay the price.

Maj Nick Bateson, our last runner, came over the horizon, and that was everyone in with a clear run - but still no idea of how we had fared overall. Anyway, without going into the complicated and nail-biting process for working them out, the final results were:

Army Team Champions	11 Sig Regt/RSS	5 hrs 47 mins 10 secs
Runners-up	HQ LAND	6 hrs 1 min 52 secs
Third	3 Para	6 hrs 19 mins 21 secs

The main squad members who competed were: **Maj Nick Bateson**, CSDC; **Maj Terry Crosby**, CSDC; **Maj Fraser MacDonald**, HQ SOInC(A); **Maj Mel Rayner**, SORLS; **Maj Jo Stewart**, HQ DCCIS; **Maj Geoff Woodcock**, HQ DCCIS; **2Lt Des McGuckian**, TC Cse; **WO2(SSM) Bob Lawrence**, RSG; **SSgt Ian Lee**, CSDC; and **Sgt Ferguson**, ASG.
The victory by the Team should not be underrated. It is the first time in 27 years that a Royal Signals Unit has won the Army Team Championships, and for 20 out of the last 25 years the competition has been won by a Gunner Regt. It was definitely a case of the sweet taste of victory!!

The main orienteering season runs from September through to May, with the summer being taken up with shorter league events. A vast number of civilian orienteering festivals take place all over the world each year. The Corps team, comprising both tried and tested orienteers and novices, went to southwest France last year for the French 5 Day Champs and are heading off to Sweden for the Swedish 5 Day O-Ringen in July 2004. Orienteering is a fantastic sport to improve fitness and navigational skills, as well as decision-making on the run. Each event has courses of different technical ability to suit different levels of experience. A permanent course has been set up in Blandford and has already been used for one of the Summer League events. **Maj Terry Crosby** is Secretary of Corps Orienteering and can now be found in Blandford on 94371 5434. Any one interested in taking up orienteering should contact their Regimental Rep.

The victory supper at Maj Mel Rayner's house.

RUGBY

ROYAL SIGNALS RUGBY UNION TOUR – BRITISH COLUMBIA

For the fist time in 9 years the RSRUFC went on a major tour. In May 04 a 30-man squad toured British Columbia and played 4 matches against civilian opposition. The itinerary was demanding, and it was clear from the out-set that the boys were going to make the most of it. The outward journey took 31 hrs without a break, and on arrival in Victoria, the squad intended to have a few quiet beers and then get some rest. The beers continued, the rest never happened and the tone was set - excellent.

27 quality players of mixed experience faced some very able opposition. There was a lot of good rugby and the trg standards were high. Credit goes to **WO1 Pete Curtis**, 71 (Y) Sig Regt and **Sgt Julian McTavish**, 21 Sig Regt (AS) who have done much to improve the Corps' playing standards. Here follows the match reports. Whatever happened in the social programme, the games were full-on.

Vellox Vahallians – 8 May 04

This was a keenly contested encounter from the off. Vellox were clearly not going to allow the visitors time to settle. They were abrasive, well drilled and direct. Not only were they winners of the Vancouver Island League, but they fielded two Canadian internationals at centre and prop. Clearly, competitive, short, fat, strong, violent chaps are in abundance on Vancouver Island. This turned out to be a difficult afternoon for the Corps.

We got off to a positive start and managed to maintain possession for extended periods, but we were unable to breach the Vellox defence. Vellox attacked with purpose throughout, and were leading by 19 points to 7 at half time. Their advantage in the scrummage had been significant. That said, the Corps XV held its shape, and mounted spirited attacks throughout the second half. They were rewarded by 3 unanswered tries, making the final score 26 – 19 to Royal Signals. This was an excellent result. Selfless commitment in defence ensured that sustained Vellox pressure in the final quarter resulted in no score.

The Director of Rugby offers clear direction during half-time at Vellox

The Corps backs performed well under pressure, but were given very little space. The back-row (**Capt Whittley**, JCU NI, **Lt King**, 216 Sig Sqn and **Sig Parker**, 2 Sig Regt) were outstanding and ensured a steady flow of possession to compensate for difficulties in the set-piece.

Cowichan – 12 May 04

Cowichan proved to be as tough as Vellox. What they lacked in skill, they more than made up for in physical commitment. The match was ill-tempered throughout, and poor control by the referee led to frustration and a number of scuffles. This detracted from the quality of the game. Despite the Corps starting promisingly in the second half, a Cowichan victory seemed inevitable.

There were many positives: forward drills were well executed, and the backs always threatened, only to fail at the final pass. Physical courage was much in evidence. **Maj Kennedy's** second half display at prop was outstanding, and gave the pack some much-needed focus.

Cowichan scored two converted tries and one penalty to our two tries and one conversion, the final score being Cowichan 17, Royal Signals 12. Our try scorers were **Cpl Parkinson**, 2 Sig Regt and **Sig Barni Nasavu**, 7 Sig Regt.

Port Alberni Black Sheep – 14 May 04

Port Alberni might have been the weakest of all our opponents, but were nonetheless committed. Their forwards were robust and scrummaged strongly, but they lacked pace and finesse in the back line. The Corps committed themselves to running rugby, and broke the deadlock in the 24th minute with a fine try from **Sig Bari Nisavu**, 7 Sig Regt. From that point, the Corps moved the ball swiftly and always looked dangerous in possession.

The Corps' front row prepares for Port Alberni

Port Alberni exerted pressure early in the second half, and scored a well-worked try. This period of sustained pressure was short-lived, and the Corps took complete control as the scrummage settled. Scoring was frequent during the last quarter, and the final score line was 55-5 to Royal Signals. Our try scorers were **Sig Rogara** (2), 7 Sig Regt, **Sig Littlehales**, 2 Sig Regt, **Sig Parkinson**, 2 Sig Regt, **LCpl Annetts**, 11 Sig Regt, **Capt Whittley**, JCU NI, **Sig Barni Nisavu**, 7 Sig Regt, and **Lt King** (2), 216 Sig Sqn.

Meraloma – 18 May 04

Meraloma is a high quality Vancouver club, able to field teams in the British Columbian Premiership and Vancouver Division 1. On the day, they turned out a mix of Premiership, Division 1 and U21 players. They were athletic and committed, and it was clear that they were not interested in giving the tourists an easy final match. The Corps started strongly. A settled scrummage provide a platform, and the backs began to attack with some fluency. However, early chances weren't taken, and Meraloma gained in confidence. The Corps were then badly disrupted by injuries, and fell behind. The tour had clearly taken its toll by this stage, and it was always going to be difficult to beat Meraloma, having expended as much energy socially as on the trg paddock.

The Corps packs down against Meraloma RUFC

That said, commitment was not lacking and the Corps contributed much to this entertaining encounter. The final score was 35-10 in Meraloma's favour. **Maj Kennedy** (1 try by means of an outrageous side-step which attracted a heavy fine) and **Sig Copson** (conversion and penalty) scored the Corps points.

The tour achieved much in terms of development of Royal Signals Rugby:

- The opportunity to train with 27 players free from distraction for 2 weeks has improved playing and coaching standards.
- Development of junior players (the tour party included 15 junior ranks). A number of players were considered to be regimental standard prior to the tour. They can now compete at Corps level.
- Incentive to represent Royal Signals. The tour demonstrated the potential for fun and enjoyment of sport that exists in Corps rugby.
- Club ethos. Playing, training and committed social activity has help establish a strong club spirit. Lasting friendships have been established in the Corps squad and with the Vancouver Island clubs.

The following awards were made on conclusion of the tour: Player of the Tour: **LCpl Scott Megraw**, 30 Sig Regt; Players' Player: **Lt Matt King**, 216 Sig Sqn; and Most Improved Player: **Sig Stevo Stevenson**, 2 Sig Regt.

Finally, thanks must be expressed to General Dynamic (UK), Cogent, Akhter and BAE Systems, who made substantial donations to the tour fund. The tour could not have been completed without their help.

SAILING - BLANDFORD GARRISON REGATTA

This year saw the inaugural Blandford Garrison Regatta, which was held at the Army Dinghy and Windsurfing Centre, Netley, near Southampton during 4-7 May 2004.

The aim of the ex was for personnel to achieve, where applicable, a Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Certificate appropriate to their level of competence, whilst encouraging members of Blandford Garrison to participate in water-based sports. The event had several objectives: to provide a platform for the Royal Signals Yacht Club (RSYC) to develop membership and participation to Corps and Army Sailing Events; to increase RSYC membership; and to demonstrate to Blandford Garrison the facilities available at the ADWC.

Sig Rachael Usher preparing to take to the waves

The Regatta Week was divided into 3 parts: novice trg for those personnel who had not sailed before; trg in asymmetric spinnaker sailing for those who had sailed; and racing on the Friday to round off the week.

Kohima Tp, 11 Sig Regt provided the majority of the sailors on the Novice Course, and they arrived on the Tuesday to some 'interesting' wind conditions (Force 8, Gales were recorded). This meant no sailing was possible, so the day was used to cram in all of the theory that was required.

The Asymmetric Course was introduced to the Laser 2000s, which the ADWC use to conduct their courses. After a rigging demonstration, each of the course members took turns to rig their boats and then got down to some theory lessons.

John Strange of CSDC and Sgt Daz Offord showing how to fly a kite....

Day 2 saw some better wind conditions, and before long everybody was on the water. The Novice Course suddenly discovered how to put their capsize drills into practice, but after a short time, the dinghies were going in a straight line as the students developed their techniques required to sail their Laser Picos.

...whilst others didn't quite manage it

By the end of the day, the Novice Course was able to negotiate a figure of 8 course, and most were able keep their dinghies level and upright for a complete session. Meanwhile, the Asymmetric Course was finally able to fly their spinnakers - with some quite interesting results (and plenty of swimming practice for some!). With a complete day on the water, the course was able to complete an upwind, downwind course with some interesting gybing angles being demonstrated!

People were now beginning to look forward to the racing that was scheduled for Friday. Some of the Novice Course were getting distinctly competitive as they raced each other around the training courses being set for them by their instructors, **Capt Ed Swift** and **WO1(YofS) Pete Goodliff**. This became evident on the Thursday, when the Novices were given a triangular course to sail. **Cpl Dom Tomkow** and **Sig Chris Hardy** were beginning to set each other in their sights for the following day's racing.

Meanwhile the Asymmetric Course continued to hone their skills as they practised their starting procedures and mark rounding. Some interesting manoeuvres were tried, with some knocks to the eqpt that caused a little consternation with the ADWC staff (and myself – ouch). **Maj Alan Stringer** was progressing well, having not sailed for over a year, and suffering from lack of sleep due to the newcomer in his family. He could now keep the boat upright!

Things were now looking good for the final day at the Regatta. The race briefing was given at 09.30hrs, with a trapezoid course being set for the Asymmetric students and a triangular course set

Sgt Mary Hessell and WO1 (YofS) Pete Goodliff during some close racing

for the Novices. With a steady force 3 wind, and blue skies, the day was promising to be a good one.

The racing amongst the Asymmetric fleet was close from the outset, with five races being conducted, a discard for one race was allowed amongst the fleet. This was fortunate for **Maj Alan Stringer** and **Capt Ed Swift**, who whilst trying to get a 'flyer' at the start of the second race, were over the line at the start, and having failed to return over the line, were disqualified from that race. All racers were doing well, but **Sgt Mary Hessell** and **WO1(YofS) Goodliff** put in the most consistent results, with 1 first place, 3 seconds and a third (which was a discard), giving them the overall first place.

The Novice course also put in some excellent performances, with places changing regularly. As the afternoon progressed, the tides began to play a more significant part in the placings, particularly as the wind began to ease. However, determined efforts by many ensured that the winner could not be established until the final race had been completed.

Only one point separated 1st and 2nd place and a further point between 2nd and 3rd. All in all, a very close regatta. Comd RSS, **Col MJM Dyer** kindly agreed to present the prizes on the final day. In addition to the prizes, 8 RYA Level 2 (Start Sailing) Certificates, 5 Spinnaker Certificates and 1 RYA Level 2 Windsurfing Certificate were issued. The final results of the event were:
Novice Course:

1st Place	**Cpl Dom Tomkow**, ASG, RSS;
2nd Place	**Sig Mark Pierce**, 11 Sig Regt;
3rd Place	**Sig Andrew Haydon**, 11 Sig Regt.

Asymmetric Course:

1st Place	**Sgt Mary Hessell** and **WO1(YofS) Pete Goodliff**, RSS;
2nd Place	**Mr John Strange**, CSDC and **Sgt Daz Offord**, DSTL (M);
3rd Place	**Maj Alan Stringer**, HQ RSS and **Capt Ed Swift**, 11 Sig Regt.

The event was highly successful, with all participants enjoying the week. All students are now in a position to progress and become more efficient and enter further events. They are eligible to enter the Royal Corps of Signals Sail Training Week and Regatta to be held at Netley, 21 – 25 June 2004.

In addition to the Corps Regatta in June, the ADWC also hold trg courses throughout the year. Anybody interested should call **Capt (Tfc) Owens** on 94371 2182.

Close reaching against the asymmetric fleet on the final day

EXERCISE SEA SPRAY DRAGON III DIARY OF G6 HQ LAND SAILING

- by Capt Alison Drennan

Majs Ian Gray, **Neil Fraser**, **Paul Flavell**, **Capts Nick Morris** and **Ali Drennan** took to the high seas on a physically demanding and occasionally frightening sailing exped in the week that COS HQ LAND promoted AT as a fundamental element of training for war. The ex took place in the Solent area and adjacent ports. After taking the opportunity to take a place on the G6 HQ LAND ex, my penance was to record the diary. Here are excerpts from my diary (**Elaine MacArthur** eat your heart out).

26 April 2004 Gosport to Yarmouth

Travelled to Gosport and signed for 10m Royal Signals yacht, *Skywave*. Conducted familiarisation and safety briefings. Purchased rations and stocked and fuelled the yacht. Prepared passage information for Cowes. Departed Gosport at approx 13.00hrs. A sunny crossing to Cowes, arriving at 16.00hrs giving us the opportunity to practise berthing. Left again at 17.00hrs for Yarmouth, where we docked for the evening.

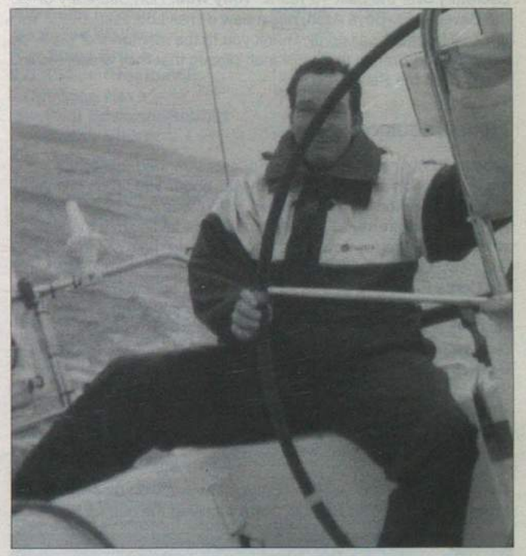
It was physically demanding...

27 April 2004 Yarmouth to Weymouth

Departed 09.00hrs, passed the Needles, Anvil Point and across to Weymouth. There was a force 5 wind and the tide against us until it changed 16.00hrs. En route, lessons where carried out on: Rules of the Road/Sea; Identification of Buoys, Beacons and Cardinal Points; Manover Board drills; Speed over Ground test; Heave To; Reef in the Sail; Rope, work learning 5 knots. Arrived Weymouth harbour 17.00hrs

28 April 2004 Weymouth to Lymington.

Departed 10.00hrs for Lymington. Due to live firing both offshore and onshore on the Lulworth ranges, we were forced to take a detour out to sea and round the danger zone, adding considerable time to the journey. However, we got to view a minesweeper and a US Frigate, and listened to the artillery fire. Between sailing and crewing, the time was spent receiving instruction on reading charts and how to update the logbook correctly. Arrived Lymington harbour 21.00hrs, after a long but enjoyable day.



...and occasionally frightening!

29 April 2004 Lymington to Southampton

Left at 09.00hrs for Newtown Creek, where we practised anchoring. Weather was very wet and windy, but we carried on regardless to Cowes, were we had lunch. We then sailed for Southampton, arriving in at 18.00hrs.

30 April 2004 Southampton to Gosport

Wet and windy conditions the whole journey. Once in Gosport, we refuelled and cleaned the boat and equipt ready for handover.

Overall, the trip well enjoyed by all, with much experience gained for those hoping to gain sailing qualifications in the future.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

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President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: MajGen A H Boyle CB

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Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C P Conlon
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr P J Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

BRANCH NEWS **Richard Grainge** is the new Secretary of the Middlesbrough Branch and can be contacted on 01642-723 517. Our thanks go to **Margaret Dadson** for her service as Branch Secretary over the past 16 years. **Tony Hull**, Hon Secretary of the Beverley Ex-Boys Assn, has a new e-mail address: tonyhull.beba@tiscali.co.uk Thank you to the members of the Huddersfield Branch for the branch plaque that they presented to Assn HQ at the Reunion.

ANNUAL REUNION

Around 1,060 members and their guests attended this year's annual Reunion at Blandford. This was about 150 up on last year. A special mention of **Tony Mifsud**, who came over from Malta, and **Terry Wickens**, all the way from Canada. Despite the wet weather, members enjoyed the opportunity to meet old friends and new. Our gratitude goes to the Corps Band, the TA Band and the Corps Pipes and Drums for putting on a splendid show on Hawke Square in damp conditions. Unfortunately the White Helmets and the Corps Free Fall Parachute Team could not display their skills due to the conditions. The Branch Standard Bearers must come in for praise. It cannot be easy to carry out their drill movements in such conditions. During a gap in the showers, **Len Melling** organised a drive past of WW2 military vehicles and other vintage vehicles (accompanied by his polished commentary), which was well received.

This year's Standard Bearers competition was won by **John Mumford** of Reading Branch. **John** received the cup for his

The Master of Signals, Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE inspects 11 Sig Regt...

... and later relaxes with some of them over a beer

Branch to retain for one year, plus a silver salver to keep. **Barry Moody** of the Scarborough Branch was runner-up. The Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**, presented the prizes.

The weather held fair for the Drum Head Service on Hawke Square on the Sunday. The magnificent total of £923.60 was taken at the collection. Following the March Past of members, four D-Day veterans laid a wreath at the Memorial on Hawke

John Mumford, Reading Branch, receives the Standard Bearers cup from the Master of Signals

Square. This poignant moment received a rapturous round of applause from fellow Association members.

Mrs Hazel Adams and her staff at Sodexho Ltd provided an excellent fare and service in the Regimental Restaurant. With an ever-increasing attendance, it will be very important in future that those planning to attend ensure they order their meals in advance.

Our thanks goes to **WO1(RSM) Simon Hadley** for opening the doors of the Sgts' Mess for our members use over the weekend. We must also mention **Mrs Lyn Simpson**, the manager of the Mess, for her kind help in welcoming our Members.

The 2005 Reunion will take place at Blandford over the weekend 25/26 June. Those wishing to attend might like to ask for their name to be included on the mailing list for details when they are released in March.

The D-Day veterans march on to lay their wreath

MEMBERS' POSTINGS. The RSA database was in full and welcome use at the Reunion. With refinement by the Corps Webmaster, **WO2(FofS) Andy Soward**, it was able to match Members' postings with those of all other Members who were there at the same time. Many Members took away a printout of their postings, with matching names against each unit. Several former pals were reunited through this service.

If you have not yet sent in details of your postings, why not fill out the form on our web page www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa Alternatively you may e-mail to:- rsa@rsignals.net or post them to me at: RSA, Griffin House, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH. All we need is: name of unit, plus 'from.... and to....' years. You may qualify the posting with the sub-unit (i.e. Sqn/Tp) or your appointment. The more Members' postings we have, the better the service we can provide in tracing former friends.

VISITING YORK? Members visiting York might like to consider staying at the hotel owned and run by the York Branch Secretary, **Bob Cook**. The hotel is only a few minutes walk from the City centre and a discount may be given to those producing their Life Membership card. Call **Bob** on: 01904 655 413.

RSA RULEBOOKS Copies of the revised April 2004 version of the RSA Rulebook are available from Assn HQ. For a copy, please send an A5 size (9" x 6") SAE to the Membership Secretary RSA, Griffin House, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH.

CERTA CITO LODGE Can anyone help with the contact for the Certa Cito Lodge? One of our Members is interested in joining them.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS A warm welcome is extended to the following Life Members, who have been enrolled since the last issue of *The WIRE*:-

Rank/Name	*Service*	*Branch*
Sgt Paul Crook	1969-81	
LCpl Stan Flood	1950-52	
LCpl Martin Thomas	1974-85	
Sig Geordie Gordon	1974-87	
Capt Ken Burnell	1943-47	Reading
Sig Steven Currie	1977-80	
Sgt John Bennett	1981-91	
Cpl Peter Moppett	1958-60	
WO2 Geoffrey Ransome	1944-47	Norfolk
Sig Alan Turner	1845-48	
LCpl Brian Anderson	1953-55	
Sgt Richard Hunt	1977-84	
SSgt Ken McCall BEM	1968-78	
Sig George Stewart	1951-62	BEBA
Cpl Ron Spencer	1937-46	
Lt Col David Ellis	1966-04	
Cpl Mark Wootton	1987-96	
LCpl Tyrone Matthews	1981-99	
Maj John Stuart	1981-04	
Maj Sue Barnard	1991-04	
Maj Mal Heaney	1967-04	
Capt Emily Greenwood	2000-04	
Capt Steve Pritchard	2000-04	
Capt Kevan Esson	1980-04	
Capt Dave Alexander	1978-04	
Sig Tim Moore	1982-90	
Cpl Tony Foat	1979-94	
Cpl George Robertson	1976-86	
Sig Colin Moston	1976-85	
SSgt Joe Williams	1974-95	
Sgt Steve Bruce	1982-date	
LCpl Mick Greatbatch	1968-80	
LCpl John Neve	1939-46	
Sig Paul Edwards-Rebbitt	1968-75	
Sig Arthur White	1969-73	
Sig George Parker	1954-56	
LCpl David Cooper	1982-88	
LCpl Daniel Richmond	1971-80	
Sig Albert Graham	1972-03	
Sig David Stather	1971-74	
Sig Lewis Chaplin	1960-62	Coventry
Sig Michael Sands	1958-60	Coventry
Sig Doble Jago	1943-46	Cornwall
Sgt James/Tubby Matthews	1962-71	
Lt Col Brian Gardner	1967-date	
LCpl Barrie Mullins	1961-73	
Cpl Ray Abbott	1951-56	
Cpl David Wilson	1991-97	
Sig Harry Jackson	1946-49	Darlington
Sgt Peter Jones	1953-62	
Sig Donald Bellamy	1942-47	
Cpl Helen Coultish	1973-76	Catterick
Cpl Keith Walters	1974-92	
Cpl Janet Endean (Lake)	1969-73	Aldershot
LCpl Michael Winning	1976-94	
LCpl Stan Beechey	1952-54	
WO1 Tony Rathmell	1980-04	
Sig Shane Lowdon	1990-95	
Sgt Steve Ible	1973-95	
SSgt Peter Bird	1974-90	
Sig Donald Evans	1942-46	
Cpl Jonathan Greaves	1990-date	Preston/Blackburn
WO2 Donald Webster	1965-99	Aberdeen
Maj Tim Prince	1974-04	
LCpl Steve Anthony	1964-69	
Cpl Gordon Blood	1950-56	
Sgt Martin Ormerod	1977-86	
Cpl Willie McLay	1974-82	
LCpl Paul Teague	1993-99	
WO2 Jim Gray	1975-99	
Sig Michael Brown	1955-62	
LCpl Paul Shillito	1976-84	
Sig Herbert Eaton	1950-52	
Sig James Buxton	1946-48	AFSR Assn

Sgt Chris Meehan	1978-02	
Sgt Joseph Wray	1950-55	
SSgt Ed Murphy	1967-84	West London
Sgt Ian Bemrose	1971-84	
LCpl George Blackwood	1966-76	
Cpl Nigel Waters	1964-74	
Lt Ken Embleton	1943-46	
Sig Harry Read	1942-47	
Cpl Colin Tongs	1952-62	BEBA
Pte Suzette Linsdell	1954-57	Exmouth
SSgt Gary Steel	1979-02	
Cpl Mike Evans	1962-69	
Cpl Dave Graham	1964-69	
Sig Niall O'Brien	1985-92	
LCpl George Hughes	1965-75	
2Lt Craig Hamilton	1990-00	
Sig Fred Broadbent	1948-64	Leeds
Sig Ernest Charnley	1943-46	Exmouth
Capt Vernon East	1954-67	
Sgt Trevor Legg	1978-02	
Sig Terry Morris	1957-60	Colchester
Cpl Steve Temple-Cox	1952-55	Colchester
Cpl Paul Hynard	1987-01	
Sig Peter Berry	1958-60	Huddersfield
Sig Ray Davies	1948-50	AFSR Assn
Sig Michael Circuit	1960-62	
Sig Clive Coutts	1971-75	
Maj Gordon Shelley	1968-date	
Lt Col Toby Rigby	1951-87	
Sig Peter Maughan	1953-55	
Col Michael Jennings	1957-90	
Maj Vyv Thatcher	1982-04	
Cpl Cameron Smith	1992-00	
Sgt Stephen Wells	1984-97	

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig Noel Moss**
Secretary **Capt Jane Knight**

Since last going to press, we have had a busy social calander. Our annual Quiz Night, the tenth of its kind, was attended by about a hundred people. The success of the evening was due to the support of Aldershot Garrison, our Members and the participation of our friends from other Branches. Reading and West London both fielded contestants, but this year the honours went to our own members, who did us proud. We congratulate our three winners, The No. I Set, The Cranmore Four and The Choughs, and also the team from the Garrison Mess, who took the Serving Units' prize. **Neville Lyons** was our experienced and knowledgeable Quiz Master. **Mary Pagan** assisted by **Jean Wilson** organised a very successful raffle, and during the interval an excellent repast was furnished by the Garrison Sgts Mess to sustain the contestants for the latter part of the evening. The Committee donated the raffle prizes, and worked hard organising the event. We have **Joe Fairbairn** to thank for the use of his Mess and the Sqns for the help they have given us on this and other social occasions.

In April, Aldershot Garrison celebrated its 150th Anniversary with a very wet parade, at which the salute was taken by our Colonel in Chief, who later addressed the serving soldiers and the veterans and went on a walk about. **Jane Knight** represented the Branch, marching with members of the Southampton Branch accompanying their standard and that of Reading. **GSM Joe Fairbairn** officiated. The parade was followed by liquid refreshment, curry lunch and a very large birthday cake - all very welcome, as everyone was soaked to the skin for five hours. Despite this, we all enjoyed ourselves.

In May, **Ian Ronald** and **Mary Pagan** organised a luncheon at the *Bat and Ball* hostelry. This was to be a gathering for our Branch widows, but it was attended by others of our Branch, and was a very happy event which we hope to repeat.

Those who watched the televised celebrations at Aramanches of the Normandy Landings, cannot fail to have been impressed by the RSM. **Joe Fairbairn**, our doughty Garrison Sgt Major, sure kept those veterans in order! Congratulations, **Joe**, on an impeccable parade.

We are sad to report the loss of a staunch member, **Lt Col Bruce Beattie**, who died in April. His funeral was attended by many members. He was accorded full honours, the Corps providing the Union flag and a trumpeter to sound the calls, and the South London Branch parading their Standard. **Bruce**, a regular soldier, served in the Garrison, as did his father before him, and he had many friends here. The tribute paid to him in the Obituaries of the June *WIRE* says it all. We have extended our sympathy to **Jeanne** and the family. We hope that **Jeanne**, who has devoted all her time to the care of **Bruce** in these last few years of illness, will join us again whenever she is able.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Ken Brown**
Secretary **Mr Phil West**

Brighton Branch continues to maintain a stable membership though inevitably some long standing members are now unable to attend. Our AGM in February was well attended, but it was a matter of concern that our President **Brig Colin Brown** was unable to attend due to sudden health problems. It is good to know that he is making a steady recovery, and we hope he will be back on our active list very soon.

Evening meetings have include a popular fish and chip supper, and a display of vintage military vehicles. Some members thought these were still in current use. The coffee mornings are still being held regularly, and attract a good attendance mainly from our senior citizens.

A Branch lunch was held at a pub in Shoreham by Sea which was well supported and enjoyed by all present.

The Branch is therefore continuing to have a varied programme, with a spread of events and timings to cater for our diverse membership. Contacts with adjacent area Branches are fostered as far as possible, and a warm welcome is extended to all past and present Corps members.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs J Barrett**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

In accordance with Branch custom, we dined out two lady Members of the Committee, **Doreen Allison** and **Marion Ballantyne**, who had done their time and retired to lie back, think of England and be entertained by those of us who remained. **Donald Crisp** presented each of them with a suitably embarrassing cartoon to hang in their respective small rooms, and we continued to eat and drink merrily until we were despatched by the very able and professional staff of the Thanet College of Catering.

On 14 March, 52 Members attended a splendid lunch at the Princes Golf Club in Sandwich, where we were royally entertained by a talk by a **Mr John Edmonds**, an ex-Sgt Instructor of things electrical in Catterick. He chose as his subject 'Morse to Mobiles', and much laughter ensued as those of us who were having difficulty remembering the mysteries of Ohm's Law and suchlike, tried to keep up with **John's** entertaining talk.

2 April saw 42 of us board a luxurious coach at Canterbury, make our way through Kent, through the Dartford Tunnel, through the

wilds of Essex, and into Cambridgeshire to stop in the lovely city of Cambridge for a lengthy stop for eats and general walk-about. On again, and we finally arrived at our destination just outside Derby, the Breadsall Priory Hotel and Golf Club, set in magical surroundings. We were thoroughly spoilt in first class and beautifully appointed rooms, food to dream of, saunas, indoor swimming pool and a most attentive staff. On Saturday we 'did' the town of Bakewell and sampled their tarts, and then visited Chatsworth House, which was a magical experience. Saturday evening saw us being entertained after dinner by our coach courier, a retired Police Chief Superintendent, a charming man who just happened to have brought along his Karaoke machine and gave us his renditions of Neil Diamond. This of course, gave **General John** the excuse of ordering all persons sitting down to get up and dance - which of course we did.

On Sunday morning we reluctantly left our luxurious hotel, and made our way to Matlock and the mysterious Heights of Abraham. There was frightening talk of cable cars and breathtaking views from hundreds of feet up in the air, and consequently, there was mutinous talk of refusal to take part. However, when push came to shove, there were very few refusals, and the area of Matlock rang out to the screams of delight and/or anguish, as the cable cars swayed and rocked on their way up, and even louder screams on the way down. From there, we opted for a little less adventure and visited the Denby Potteries, and then finally home. A most wonderful weekend.

Olive Castle, **Bernadette Cooper** and **Richard Gibson** have all been a little unwell lately with varying ailments, but are fortunately well on the way to recovery. **Peter Foakes** has been languishing for seven or eight months in hospital having something nasty taken away, but is now home with **Peggy**, who is herself limping about, having had a knee operation.

Finally, it is with great sadness that we must report the death of **Capt William (Bill) Lovett**, who passed away recently. His funeral was held at Elmer's End, in South London, where a number of us attended with his immediate family. **Bill** was a delightful gentleman and friend, who was at one time the Branch Treasurer. He had sadly lost contact with the Branch for a few months prior to his passing, but it was still a great shock to hear of his death. He is greatly missed by many people.

EXMOUTH BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Bill Irving**
Secretary **Mrs Olive Irving**

THE INAUGURATION OF OUR PRESIDENT

At a special function on 18 May 2004, the Chairman welcomed **Maj Gen Ian Sprackling OBE** and **Mrs Annie Sprackling**, stating that the night's occasion was the ultimate highlight in the short history of Exmouth Branch. The General had kindly agreed to become President, an honour and privilege for the Branch.

Maj Gen Sprackling was commissioned into the Corps in 1957. He was promoted to Maj Gen in 1986, and appointed as Master of Signals 1997, a total of 46 years' service to Queen and Country.

Exmouth Branch was conceived in 1999. The first meeting was held in Exmouth RAFA Club, with 6 Life members of RSA attending. They called themselves the Exmouth Royal Signals Group. The first recorded meeting was held on 4 April 2000, when a Committee was formed. With 34 registered members, a request for Branch status was sent to RSA Blandford in October 2000. This was approved in November 2000 with the authorisation to use the name Exmouth Branch.

In November 2002, the Branch purchased its Branch Standard, which was dedicated on 18 February 2003. The Branch is going from strength to strength, and recruitment is steady. The lady members of the Branch are very much our lifeblood. Without their help the Branch would not thrive.

The Chairman commended the Exmouth Branch to their new President, **Maj Gen Ian Sprackling**, and presented him with a Presidential Badge of Office, designed by **Mr John Goodman** (ex Chairman).

Bill Irving (Chairman), Mrs Annie Sprackling, Maj Gen Ian Sprackling OBE, Olive Irving (Secretary). Bob Coole (Treasurer)

Maj Gen Sprackling said he felt that it was a wonderful to join the Exmouth Branch. He felt a great affinity with the area, as a child, having many times visited Exmouth Beach. He recalled seeing the D Day Liberty boats moored off Exmouth Beach.

Working together, the new President said he hoped that the Branch would grow and grow. He felt that we were an affluent branch, and he was amazed at the amount raised by our monthly Branch raffle. He felt that for any branch to succeed, it had to have fun, and this was obvious in our Branch. He looked forward to wearing his Badge of Office with pride and thanked the Membership.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **Jim Prentice**

Branch members were invited to attend the Glasgow HQ Branch of RBL Scotland laying-up service in Glasgow Cathedral of the Branch Standard and the Queens Colour, which have served the Branch well for 75 years, and the dedication of new standards. **Bill McNamara** paraded our own Branch Standard. Another invitation from the Legion was to attend the various functions arranged to commemorate the 60th anniversary of D Day at Perth. **Bill** has also been busy accepting invitations to attend functions parading the Branch Standard in Perth, Millport and Kilwinng so far. He will also be parading the Standard at the Dunkirk Veterans parade in Balloch, and of course entering the Standard Bearers contest at the Blandford reunion. It is good publicity for the Glasgow branch, and **Bill** tells me it is also one of his hobbies.

Branch member **Andy McArthur** has made arrangements for members to visit the Strathclyde Police Museum, and a visit to the veterans at Erskine Hospital. Both visits will take place in July.

The Branch AGM was held on 18 May 2004, with Branch President, **Lt Col Alastair Petrie** presiding. 41 members were in attendance. In his address, the President thanked the CO and members of 32 Scottish Sig Regt (V), for their support of the Branch, and allowing the use of their premises for meetings and functions. He also thanked **Jim Prentice** for keeping the Glasgow Branch to the fore, by regularly sending articles of the branch activities to *The WIRE*, and asked the members for a round of appreciative applause. Branch Chairman, **Jim McMillan** thanked 52 n at East Kilbride for their hospitality at the Jimmy dinner, also the RCT Glasgow Branch on their visits, and **Bill McNamara** for the success of the Burns Supper.

52 Members and friends attended the Cellidh organised by the Committee in the Officers, and Sgts Messes of 32 Sig Regt, by kind permission of the CO. There was Scottish dancing and music to a band named *The Rusty Nail*. It was reported to be a very enjoyable night. A raffle was held, and the Committee thank all those who donated the prizes. A buffet of pie and beans was provided, heated and served in the HQ kitchen by Regtl Chef, **LCpl Christine McCormack**. **Eric McWaters jnr** and **Jim Cook** acted as waiters. A bar was organised and operated by ex Chairman **Joe Keegan,** very successfully. The Branch committee thanks **Joe** for a splendid effort.

HUDDERSFIELD BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs A Grainge**
Secretary **Mr R Grainge**

At our AGM on 25 April our Secretary, **Mrs Margaret Dadson** of 16 years loyal and faithful service to the Branch, tendered her resignation. There being no other volunteer to fill the gap, Plan B went in to operation, and **Dick Grainge** went from Vice Chairman to Secretary, and **Ken Jackson** was elected Vice Chairman/Social Secretary. Only time will tell who got the best deal.

On the evening of Thursday 13 May, the Branch visited RAF Fylingdales, a trip organised by our Chairman. 14 Members and 2 unexpected additions attended. The latter were the RAF Fylingdales Station Padre, **Rev Edward Bailey** and his son, **Rev Edward Bailey** - who turned out to be an ex Corps member, and was immediately summonsed to attend our next meeting.

We were met at the main gate by our host, **Sqn Ldr Anne McBurney**, and proceeded to the main admin and accn area, where **Sqn Ldr McBurney** explained the use of all the various buildings. The MOD Police dogs appear to have the best accn, i.e. their own rooms, en-suite baths, hair dryers, etc. We debussed and entered the main building, the **SSPAR**, Solid State Phased Array Radar, to be briefed on the role of the site.

Of the approximated 450 staff, only 20% are RAF personnel, the remainder being engineering, security and support staff, and a single US Air Force Liaison Officer. After the brief we were shown the inside of one of the 3 arrays. Each of these consists of 2,560 transmitter/receiver modules each producing 340 watts, an overall output power of 2.5 Megawatts. Hence the need for a good plumber (Radio Tech Heavy), as the whole thing is water-cooled.

Our next port of call was the main control room, where the duty shift of 5 took us through a replay of an incident that had happened a few years earlier. With a range of 3,000 miles both vertically and horizontally, it can detect anything that looks like a rocket being launched or a satellite in orbit - even down to a screwdriver and a camera that were lost by astronauts / cosmonauts working in space.

Finally, we were taken to the Officers' Mess for tea/coffee and biscuits. Our Chairman thanked **Sqn Ldr McBurney** for an excellent and very informative tour of the base.

Our next planned outings are a visit to the Water Gardens at Alnwick in June, and Eden Camp Reunion Sunday in September.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Secretary **WO2 I Wolfe**

The Branch notes for the June issue had just been submitted, when our old friend and Founder Member, **Harry Stanley** passed away after a short illness, and so we were unable to submit a Last post until now. Please see details in Last Post in this issue.

One of our Members also passed away recently. He was **Arther Irwin** of Crossnacreevey, Co. Antrim. **Arthur**, a Life Member for some years, had been referred to us a few years ago by one of his amateur radio friends, and we made him an honorary Branch Member. Branch Welfare Member, **John McAreavey** had visited him occasionally. We offer condolences to his family

A welcome awaits any serving or ex Signaller at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the third Wednesday of each month. Why not check out our website for what's on?

POOLE BRANCH

Chairman **Lt Col (Retd) Jess Weir**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Bob Peake**

Our monthly meetings continue to flourish in a very convivial way and it is our practice, once official business is concluded, to hold a social evening. We have quiz nights or darts nights. Both are popular, and there is a lot of light banter, but it is too early to say if our general knowledge or prowess with the darts is improving – good fun certainly!

In early spring when we planned the Branch Outing to Windsor Castle and Frogmore House Mausoleum and Gardens on 18 May we hoped that the weather on the day would be lovely. It turned out to be a cracking day – wall-to-wall sunshine, so the party of 27 members and friends left Broadstone by coach in very buoyant mood. The glorious weather had brought out the crowds to these famous historical monuments, but there was ample space for everyone.

Bob and Pauline Peake with his 50 Year Badge

First stop was Frogmore House, and soon we were able to lose ourselves amongst the large delightfully laid out grounds, where eventually most of the party would partake of their picnics. After lunch, we moved to Windsor Castle, where we were soon wrapped in awe at the grandeur of it all, including St Georges Chapel and the beautifully refurbished State Apartments. As we moved around the Castle, we were reminded of the need for the security of our great monuments, but in no way did we feel inhibited. After a short visit to the town centre to have a look at the shops, we boarded our coach for the trip home. On the journey home we raffled a bottle of wine and a box of chocolates, raising a gratuity for **George** our coach driver. It transpired that it was his birthday, so we may have made his day. Finally, we must pay a warm tribute to **Bob Peake**, for organising the whole day from start to finish. It was a wholly relaxed experience and went like clockwork.

At our April Meeting our President, **Brig Paddy Evans**, presented **Lt Col Bob Peake** with his 50 Year Badge. **Bob** joined the Branch in 1989 on his retirement from the active Corps. Never one to take a back seat, **Bob**, ably supported by his wife, **Pauline**, has been a stalwart of the Branch since that time, and has been at the centre of all activities and initiatives, serving as Chairman or Secretary, as well as doing a stint as the Corps Area 5 Rep from 1998-2003. He was instrumental in furthering the Associate Membership cause and encouraging our members' wives to take it up.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Chairman **Sid Smith**
Secretary **Tony Dear**

LUNCH AT SOUTHAMPTON CITY COLLEGE RESTAURANT

This went ahead as planned on Thursday 6 May. Fourteen Branch members attended. It was an excellent three-course lunch, with a choice of three menus. As the menu was written in French, it did cause a bit of 'oohing and ahing' but finally all placed their orders. As with all the events when our Branch get together, there was much banter and good humour, and all were unanimous in praise of the food and the service by the trainee students.

150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN ALDERSHOT

Our Standard Bearer, **Bryan Littlecott**, with the Branch Standard, was invited by **Brig Noel Moss** to attend the parade on Friday, 30 April 2004. The Army would be receiving the Freedom of Aldershot to celebrate the 150th Anniversary, with **HRH The Princess Royal** taking the salute. **Sid Smith** and **Norman Davies** accompanied him.

30 April dawned - it was raining. We arrived at the Aldershot at 10.45hrs – it was still raining. Suitable attired (we thought) in raincoats and waterproofs, we mustered at 11.20hrs. We stood in the pouring rain until 12.15hrs before the parade finally moved off. Everyone was soaked to the skin.

The Regular Army, in full uniform with rifles and bayonets fixed, led the parade, followed by various Associations and the RBL. Five ex Signallers took part, **Bryan Littlecott**, **Sid Smith** and **Norman Davies** from Southampton; **John Mumford**, from Reading; and **Jane Knight** from Aldershot Branch. **Claire Littlecott** more or less suitably attired, followed the parade, carrying loaded knapsacks and snapping pictures through the rain. The route and town centre were crowded with people, which made up for the appalling weather, and they did us proud. We arrived back at the starting point, once more in the rain, but it did not matter anymore. Like drowned rats, we headed for the refreshment area in giant marquees the other end of the camp. There we found solace in beer and an excellent curry lunch, cooked on site and presented by the Army catering staff.

HRH The Princess Royal arrived and made a speech, and then did a walk about, mainly in the dry of marquees. There she cut the fantastic 150th anniversary cake. It turned out to be a good day all round.

HRH The Princess Royal cuts the 150th Anniversary cake

A SERVICE TO MARK THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF D DAY

This was held at the D Day Stone, Portsmouth on 6 June 2004. Once more, Southampton Branch met the challenge on a sweltering day. **Bryan Littlecott**, our Standard Bearer represented all Royal Signals Veterans of the Branch including (and most importantly) those who served in the 43rd Wessex Div Sig Regt. Also present supporting the Branch were **Sid Smith**, **Norman Davies**, **Claire Littlecott**, **Ruth** and **Tony Dear**.

Standard Bearer, Bryan Littlecott marches in the D Day Parade

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

In May we held our dinner at the Masonic Hall in Staines at which our Area Rep, **Trevor Holyoaks** and his wife were our guests. This was a most enjoyable occasion which we hope will be an annual event.

The 31 Sig Regt visit to Arras included a number of our members. We visited Chièvres where, at the American Air Base, there is a museum. Here, we presented items received from Blandford for donation to the museum by the Corps. The presentation was made by **Col John Eversfield** of 31 Sig Regt, who gave a very commendable speech in French, which was well received. The entire visit was an enjoyable one and we look forward to the next.

We attended the Aldershot Branch annual Quiz Night, entering two teams. This year we were not successful in carrying off a prize, but no doubt we contributed to the success of the occasion, and we expect better luck next time. It was a convivial evening.

Jane Knight and the Corps RSM visited Monte Cassino, where they laid a wreath on behalf of the Corps. Unfortunately the photos have not yet arrived.

THE AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENTS ASSOSIATION

Chairman **Dr David Vickers**
Secretary **Mr Dennis Egan**

The past year has seen membership of the Air Formation Signal Regiments Association increase dramatically and the reunion at Stoke on Trent on Saturday, 8 May, reflected this with a record number attending, including a number of newly joined members. Our new President, **Lt Col Olly Halstead**, accompanied by **Mrs Jackie Halstead**, attended his first reunion, managed to speak to many of the members and gave an illuminating account of the work of 21 Sig Regt and the Cyprus Communications Unit (CCU). **Rev Jim McManus** had kindly agreed to take the dedication service at the National Memorial Arboretum the following day, and he and **Mrs Mavis McManus** attended the reunion as our guests. Members attending for the first time included **Fred** and **Betty Bradley**, **Alf Button**, **Harry** and **Mrs Kidney**, **David** and **Avril Mercer**, **Barry** and **Pamela Patrick**, **Christopher ReynoldsJones**, **Charles Walton**, and **Peter** and **Doreen Williamson**.

Lt Col Olly Halstead makes the presentation to retiring Chairman, Gerald Evans

Whilst Chairman, **Gerald Evans** kept the AGM very short, two significant matters were agreed. **Gerald**, one of the three Founder Members of the original 12, 15 and 18 Air Formation Signal Regiments Association, retired after twelve busy years as Chairman. During his time, membership of the Association had increased fourfold, membership of the Association had been formally opened to all those who served as Air Formation Signallers, the CO of 21 Sig Regt had been invited to become our President, and the Constitution had been rewritten. **Dr David Vickers** was elected as the new Chairman, and it was proposed and carried that **Gerald** should become Vice President.

In recognition of **Gerald's** outstanding leadership of the Association during its formative years, **Lt Col Olly Halstead** presented him with a silver Beaufighter mounted on a plinth bearing an inscribed plaque, and a framed print showing a WW2 DR on his motorcycle from an original watercolour by **John Castle**.

The following day, a convoy left the North Stafford Hotel, bound for the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas. Here we joined members of 19 Sig Regt Assn for a second service to dedicate the Air Formation Signals Crescent of nine copper beech trees. We were particularly pleased to welcome **Capt Fiona Watson**, **Cpl Alderson**, **Cpl Clarke** and **LCpl Clarke** who had all recently returned from Cyprus, where they had served with 259 Sig Sqn and CCU. They stayed with us and took buffet lunch as our guests.

The organist engaged to play had reported sick, so **Rev Jim McManus** led the hymn singing and the congregation sung lustily. **Lt Col Olly Halstead**, and **Mr George Brew**, Chairman of 19 Sig Regt Assn, read the lessons and **Lt Col Pat Soward**, Historical Officer of the AF Sig Regs Assn, gave the address. This address explained the significance of our memorial, and provided a thumbnail history of Air Formation Signals from October 1917 to the present day.

Lt Col Olly Halstead and George Brew, Chairman of 19 AF Sig Regt Assn. Chris Collier, parading the Union Flag looks on

Following the formal service in the Memorial Chapel, the congregation walked to the Crescent, where **Lt Col Olly Halstead** and **Mr George Brew** ceremonially turned the soil round the tree dedicated to 19, 20, 21 and 22 Sig Regts (AF) and the independent AF Sig Sqns. **Mr** and **Mrs Bob Taylor**, son and daughterin-law of **Ernest Albert Taylor**, who served as a DR with 1, 2 and 4 AF Sig Regts, 1942-44, and who tragically died in Italy just before the end of the war in Europe, performed a similar service round the tree dedicated to **Ernest's** life.

After the service, **Rev Jim McManus** was formally invited to become Chaplain to our Assn. He has accepted, and we have

great pleasure in welcoming him and **Mrs McManus** as members of the Assn. As **Chris Collier** remarked afterwards 'Now that we have a Chaplain, it is a sign that the Assn has come of age!' **Jim** served as a Pilot Officer, Radar Supervisor, from 1953 to 1955.

Gerald Evans, Dennis Eagan, Chris Collier, Tom Fearon and Colin Morgan, who were all members of the Bar None Motorcycle Club

Following an excellent buffet lunch, the Chairmen and other representatives of the AF Sig Regts Assn and 19 Sig Regt Assn Committees discussed the way ahead with **Mrs Jackie Fisher**, Senior Administrator at the Arboretum. They agreed that Members of the Assns should be encouraged to become Friends of the Arboretum and that the Assns would, in principle, support appeals from the Trustees for funds to improve the Arboretum.

REUNION 2005

Next year's reunion will be held at The Regency Hotel, Solihull, over the weekend 6-8 May 2005. The reunion dinner and AGM will be held on the evening of Saturday, 7 May, and a coach trip for Members is planned for the morning and afternoon of that same day.

216 PARACHUTE SIGNAL SQUADRON ASSOCIATION REUNION

This event is held Bi-Annually for those members of the Sqn who served between 1945 and 1977. This year's event, again at Scotch Corner Hotel, had a remarkable turnout, with over 210 ex Sqn members turning up from as far a field as Canada and the Virgin Islands.

The Association's flag was flown over the Hotel for the weekend. **Scottie Scott**, who served in MT Tp in the 1960s, delivered another flag to the function. It was the Bde HQ Pegasus flag that had been 'lifted' from outside the HQ in Barossa Barracks in the 1960s. **Scottie** decided that it would be appropriate to give it back to someone of authority at the Reunion.

Friday evening started with a meet and greet, where the bar is the first and last port of call for all those making a full weekend of the event. For those who were still able, a round of golf was organised on Saturday by **Jimmy Campbell** at the Catterick Golf Club.

Scottie Scott displaying the long lost flag to the then SSM (Later Maj Retd) Jack Turner

This year's winner of the golf was **Robin (Stan) Stanley**.

Due to the numbers attending, Saturday evening was a running buffet: a starter, main course and sweet. During the meal light background music was provided, which turned into a full-blown dance session later in the evening. During the evening, a raffle was run by the ladies **Myrtle Marshall**, **Margaret Campbell** and **June Hamilton**. The top prize, a bronze Pegasus statue, was won by **Eddie Newton**.

260 (SAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

Chairman **John Seymour**
Secretary **Geoff Scott**

DORTMUND 2004

As the oracle had foretold, as the sun rose on a very wet 7 May 2004, men of immense stature (mostly waistlines) and their ladies came from all corners of the known world to the Germanic town of Dortmund. This was to be the 8th reunion and the second in Dortmund of 260 Sig Sqn (SAM) Association. Great distances and many seas crossed, the arrival went without a hitch, and on being informed that the bar was open, spirits soared in more ways than one. By the evening all but a few were ensconced in the Hotel Drees.

The following day, Saturday, was to be the day of the brewery trip, but due to heavy rain the brewery was flooded, so all the work of **Pete Lori** had been in vain. But another activity was found, visiting the old Army camp and quarter areas. **Chris Conroy**, **Stan Howard** and I took a slow walk to the Westfalen Park in search of bratwurst, and we were not disappointed. The time was also used to buy prizes for the raffle that evening.

Saturday evening was the annual AGM, and the hotel had done us proud. The Venus Room had been laid out to perfection, which was only surpassed by the excellent organisation of **Geoff** and **Beryl Scott**. After the AGM, the main event was the banquet, superbly organised by **Pete Lori** and **Herr Drees**. We started by making two presentations; one, a 260 Sig Sqn plaque to **Herr Drees**, for all his help for the reunions we have had at his hotel, and the other to **Jan Greenland**, who had made our superb Standard.

After a great meal, and highly amusing raffle run by **Geoff** and **Beryl**, we toasted absent friends and finally the Queen. And as sixties music drifted through the night, the party got into full swing. The following morning, after a hearty breakfast, goodbyes were said and all went their separate ways. Hopefully, when we come back next year, we will have cracked the 200 member mark

DENBURY BOYS

Royal Signals Boy Soldiers arrived at Denbury Camp, Newton Abbot, South Devon on 19 September 1955 when 6 (Boys) Trg Regt was moved from Beverley. In April 1957 the unit was renamed the Junior Leaders Regt, Royal Signals.

The disbandment parade was held on 10 August 1967, when 71 Junior Leaders graduated to man service and 175 moved to the Army Apprentice College Harrogate, to complete their boy service trg. 39 had previously moved to Harrogate in January 1967.

There are approx 270 boys and staff, who are in touch through the Denbury Boys Yahoo Group and the Denbury JLR Association. We are getting together a couple of times a year for reunions, both in Newton Abbot and the north of England.

Our next reunion is at the Newton Abbot Racecourse on Saturday 11 September 04.

September 2005 is the 50th anniversary of when Beverley Boys became Denbury Boys, so we are now looking to expand our numbers and hold a grand event in Newton Abbot over the weekend of 17/18 September 05.

Thanks to the Royal Signals Museum, we have been able to find much of our history, but more is always needed. The *Junior Mercury* was published from June 1959 to February 1966 and thanks to a benefactor, originals are with the Museum, but we have nothing from March 1966 to the disbandment. If any readers can help with later issues or have other historical information, please get in touch with:

Steve Wright
Postfach 5103
58606 Iserlohn
Germany
Email: stephenandkarin@t-online.de
UK mobile: 07802 357744

If you would like to join us or just know more about Denbury Boys, please visit **Tony Gask's** website, www.denburydays.co.uk from which there is a link to the Denbury Boys Yahoo Group.

For details of the Denbury JLR Association, please write to:

Mike Butchers
25 Jarvis Way
Stalbridge
Dorset
DT10 2NW.

Maj TB Scarff

In this year's edition of the Retired Newsletter the death of **Maj TB Scarff** was published in the Last Post column. We are very happy to report that **Maj Scarff** is alive and well, and he sends salaams to all his friends. We sincerely apologise for the error and regret the distress and trouble caused to **Tom** and **Eileen** and their family.

CP Conlon Lt Col (Retd)
Asst Regt Sec

DONATIONS

Norfolk Branch	£100.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Cotswolds Branch	£25.00
East London Branch	£200.00
Mr AR Ayres	£20.00
Thrift Shop, Blandford Camp	£1,500.00
Mr W Braniff in memory of **John Wills**	£40.00
Eastbourne Branch	£100.00
Reading Branch	£40.00
Mr V Parker	£20.00
Mr JF Smith	£25.00
Mr HWL Cage	£35.50
In memory of **John Tyler**	£366.05
TK Armitage	£9.75
RSA Annual Reunion Church Service	£923.60
Will of **Leonard Douglas Reed**	£1,033.10
Dennis Jones	£10.00
In memory of **Lt Col (Retd) Bruce Beattie**	£230.00
Mrs S Garland in memory of **Maj (Retd) G K Rothwell**	£50.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Paul Mealey in memory of **Maj (Retd) GK Rothwell**	£20.00
Kenneth Wills	£30.00
Maj (Retd) DP Molloy in memory of **Maj (Retd) GK Rothwell**	£10.00
Northern Ireland Branch in memory of **Harry Stanley**	£20.00
Maj (Retd) RN Johnston in memory of **Harry Stanley**	£20.00

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

DUNKIRK VETERANS

From: **Inge van Dam**
Middelburg
The Netherlands
Email: ingevandam@zeeland.nl

Dear Sir,

Early in May this year, my partner and I visited Dunkirk. We arrived at the monument on Plage des Alliés, where a bus had just arrived with British veterans coming to honour their comrades who lost their lives in 1940.

We met 4 people and had a very nice conversation with them. Two of them were quite young. The other two, a man and a woman, where both over 80, and he had fought at Dunkirk in 1940.

The meeting was very special, emotional and warm. I took a photo of the old man, we talked a little more, and then went our own ways.

Unfortunately, we didn't ask them their names or addresses, which we regret terribly now. We would like to get in contact with them, so we can send the picture and, well, just to send them a nice card every now and then.

The old man had a lot of medals and I believe he is a Founder Member of the RSA Leeds. He told us he returns to Dunkirk every year. They have a British contact in Panne, where they stay during their visits to Belgium/France.

I realise we don't know enough about them to give a good description, but we have a photo of him.

We hope you can help us to find him. Maybe you can give us ideas on where to look for him?

Yours sincerely...

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT, HELLES BARRACKS 1972

From: **Peter Rothwell**
Email: skipper.engineer@ntlworld.com
Tel: 01258 370539

Dear Sirs,

Is there any chance that you are able to locate a photograph of the passing out parade of 11 Sig Regt on 14 December 1972 at Helles barracks.

I have lost most of my photographs from this period and have tried the Museum, who have suggested that I contact you.

Yours...

MIDDLE EAST SIGNAL UNITS

From: **EK Lakeman**
Flat 2 Kilverstone Court
6 St Margaret's Road
St Mary Church
Torquay
TQ1 4VW

Dear Sir,

Are any contacts among your readers from 1 Corps, 1 CRESS or 2 ASSU in the Middle East who may remember me and my wireless crew on VIC 11. I would be please to hear from them.

Yours.....

MICHAEL BANAGER

Nick Jones' mother in law wants to locate her old friend **Michael Banager**. **Micheal** was originaly form Ghana and was a Capt in Catterick in the 1960's/70's. If anyone can help please contact **Nick** at: Nick.jones@allied-mills.co.uk

INES GARTSIDE OR GARSIDE

I was stationed at NID Thiepval Barracks Lisburn Northern Ireland with **Ines Gartside** in 1952-53. I would really like to be in touch again. My friend **Debbie Buxgoyne**, who went to Singapore where **Ines** was posted also posted, thought **Ines** married and went to Australia or New Zealand.

I enclose a photo taken at NID.

Mrs Crissie Liddiard
(Née Power)
1a Nelson Road
Daybrook
Nottingham
NG5 6JE

HARRY WYER

Venetia Black is seeking the whereabouts or any information about her father, **Harry Wyer**, who served in the Corps around 1966. Anyone who can help, is asked to contact her at vennyra@aol.com.

DO YOU HAVE A PICTURE IN YOUR MIND A 'VISUAL MEMORY' FROM YOUR TIME IN THE FORCES?

Artist, working on commemorative project, is interested in collecting descriptions from anyone who saw active service (in any conflict, including peacekeeping operations) of what you might consider your strongest visual memories; an image that has remained with you.

These memories may be painful, poignant, funny, sad, or just plain boring. It is understood that some may be very sensitive, but please try to refrain from any self censorship as this is about your memories, whether anyone else likes it or not. All replies will be treated with due respect.

There is the option for participants to have their name credited in the final work, or if they wish, to remain anonymous by request. It would be appreciated if all participants could identify themselves in their replies (name, unit, when and where served), but it is not essential. Any details provided by those wishing to be anonymous will remain confidential.

Please send replies via email to: jrdowling@ic24.net

Or by post to:

John Dowling
124 Choumert Rd
London
SE15 4AA
UK

REUNIONS

BEVERLEY EXBOYS ASSOCIATION REUNION DINNER

Will be held at Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Willerby, Hull on Saturday, 11 September 2004

For bookings and info call
Tony Hull on 01202770261

LAST POST

Adey - SSgt RW Adey	Served 1958/82 Died 08/05/04
Anderson - Maj CA Anderson	Served 1939/46 Died 18/05/04
Arnold - Cpl ERL Arnold	Served 1939/45 Died 23/04/04
Beattie Lt Col BA Beattie	Served 1936/75 Died 19/04/04
Beever - Cpl RW Beever	Served 1933/45 Died ??/05/04
Bettridge - Sig JW Bettridge	Served 1943/47 Died 29/05/04
Blackman - WO1(RSM) RE Blackman	Served 1932/56 Died 26/04/04
Carter - Cpl Carter	Served 1939/46 Died 27/04/04
Chapple - ?? AG Chapple	Served 1939/46 Died ??/06/04
Coyne - WO2 A Coyne	Served 1949/69 Died 01/06/04
Gittins - ?? L Gittins	Served 1936/42 Died ??/02/04
Harbott - ?? MW Harbott	Served ????/?? Died 11/03/04
Harvey - Cpl DW Harvey	Served 1942/46 Died 20/05/04
Lawrence - ?? H Lawrence	Served ????/?? Died 07/05/04
Leahy - Col AJ Leahy	Served 1934/67 Died 29/05/04
Looseley - Cpl LWG Looseley	Served 1940/46 Died 22/04/04
Mayson - Maj J Mayson	Served 1972/03 Died 23/04/04
McKirgan - Maj T McKirgan	Served 1936/72 Died ??/??/??

Northcott - Mr Martin Northcott Served 1936/47 Died 23/05/04
Pollard - Sig H Pollard Served 1943/46 Died ??/04/04
Powis-Lybbe - Lt Col A Powis-Lybbe Served 1929/54 Died ??/05/04
Rowlinson-Caldrick - Cpl CD Rowling-Coldrick Served 1939/45 Died ??/04/04
Rutter - WO2 D Rutter Served 1970/92 Died 01/05/04
Stanley - SSgt H Stanley Served 1939/68 Died 18/04/04
Taylor - Capt FW Taylor Served 1938/69 Died ??/??/??
White - Maj DGO White Served 1946/75 Died 15/04/04
Wikner - Lt Col CL Wikner Served 1937/61 Died 09/05/04
Woodward - Sig AF Woodware Served ????/?? Died ??/05/96

OBITUARIES

CHESHIR - Sgt A Cheshir (Tony) died in New Zealand on 29 April 2004.

Sgt Tony Cheshir joined the Royal Corps of Signals in May 1945, and trained as a wireless operator. He served in 4 AF Sig Regt and CAFSO Branch, Air HQ MELF, and returned to UK to the War Office Sig Regt. On leaving the Army in 1953, he emigrated to New Zealand, where he lived in Christchurch and worked for NZ Industrial Gases Ltd until 1986.

During his illness, **Tony** was regularly visited by **Capt Ross James** of 3 NZ Sig Sqn and **Padre Mike Subritzky**, the Chaplain from Burnham Camp.

Tony was given a funeral with full military honours, with **Padre Mike Subritzky** officiating, and soldiers of 3 NZ Sig Sqn taking part. Before he died, when he was offered a full military funeral, Tony had said, 'The fact that I never served in the NZ Army does not seem to make any difference to them. I must say I was somewhat overcome, and it sure shows how old soldiers of any country seem to have feelings and sympathy for each other. It's a wonderful gesture on the part of the NZ Army.'

Tony leaves his widow, **Shirley**, and will be sadly missed by all his friends.

COOKSON - Sig Krystle Cookson died on 15 May 2004.

Sig Krystle Cookson was born on 17 January 1985. She joined the Army Training Foundation College in Arborfield on 17 January 2002. She completed her basic military training in April 2003 and she was selected to attend a Tech course at RSS Blandford. This course is one of the most intellectually and technically demanding junior soldier courses in the Army, and **Sig Cookson** was one of less than a hundred soldiers who are selected for this special training every year. She showed considerable potential from the outset, she achieved very good grades at every assessment. For such a junior soldier, she showed remarkable team spirit and leadership qualities, particularly when deployed on arduous military exercises.

In addition to this, **Sig Cookson** was a very competent and competitive sportswoman. She competed in an array of activities including football, basketball, boxing, netball and tug of war. She went on to represent the Regt in tug of war and netball in Major Unit level competitions, and this year she was selected to represent Royal Signals in the Army Netball Championships. Such was the exceptional level of her fitness, she was the only girl to take part in the gruelling Log Race event during the Gordons Cup Military Skills Competition held in Blandford in January this year. Her determination and enthusiasm were instrumental in the Team winning that particular event and her Sqn winning the Gordons Cup.

Sig Cookson displayed all of the characteristics of an outstanding junior soldier. She shone at all levels: academically, at military skills and at sport. She was a bright and popular girl who would have excelled in the Field Army. She will be sadly missed by her parents, **Patricia** and **Malcolm**, her brother, **Craig** and all of her family and friends, both in the Army and at home

MAYSON - Maj John Mayson MBE died on 23 April 2004.

A man of great fortitude, **John** joined the Army as a signaller at the relatively late age of 24, with wife, **Thora** and first child, **Carron**. From herehere, he worked his way throughout the ranks to Maj, receiving the MBE as part of this great journey.

Known for his ability to snore and his passion for organisation, **John** will forever be remembered as someone who got things done. His mannor often left succinctness at the door in favour of thoroughness. Sometimes relinquishingforgoing popularity, he always commanded respect. He served throughout UK and saw service in Northern Ireland (1985), Germany (1982-85, 1991-93, 2000-02) SHAPE (1998-00) and Kosovo (1999).

Sadly he contracted cancer, but fought it fought gallantly over several years until his final day. Perhaps his greatest achievement was the 35 years he spent with **Thora**, and their children, **Carron**, **Stuart** and **John**, who were all with him to the end.

Percy - RS Percy (Richard) died at the age of 79 on 18 April 2004.

In 1941, as a lad of 16, **Richard** was a GPO Messenger, and his love of motorbikes started at this time. In March 1943 at the age of 18, 14426463 **Sig RS Percy** started his Army career in Royal Signals. In May 1943, he did 6 weeks basic infantry training at No 6 PTC at Prestatyn. In the August it was Catterick Camp, 4 TTB for 12 weeks training as a DR. In December 1943 he was posted to 11 Air Formation Sig Regt, where he served in many and various locations in UK before being sent to France and Belgium, ending up in Hamburg and Celle in Germany. While at HQ BAFO Bad Eilsen, he met a WAAF, **Joan Bewsey**, who was to become his wife on 10 April 1948. In November 1946, **Richard** moved from 11 AF Sig Regt to 15 AF Sig Regt, where he remained until demob in September 1947.

In 1951, **Richard** became a policeman in the Buckingham Constabulary, retiring as a Sgt in 1973. A good-humoured man, he loved motorbikes, anything mechanical, big band music and jazz. He was a great handyman, especially carpentry. During his retirement, he was involved in the local community, being an active member of the Citizens' Advice Bureau, and serving as a driver for Age Concern. Sadly, he contracted from Parkinson's Disease and spent the last part of his life at the Avon Reach Nursing Home in Mudeford.

After the funeral on Monday 26 April, a Service of Thanksgiving was held at the Baptist Church in Ashley, New Milton. **Sid Smith** and **Norman Davies** attended, representing the Southampton Branch. During the Service, a short story entitled *My First Motorbike,* written by **Richard**, was read out by his grandson, **Lewis Hamilton**. His granddaughter, **Penelope Allen**, read from *John 14: 16.*

Richard is survived by his son, **Clive**, his daughter, **Heather**, three granddaughters and two grandsons.

RUTTER - WO2 (SSM) Dennis Rutter passed away suddenly on the evening of 1 May 2004, aged 50.

Dennis left his beloved Manchester to start his Army career with the Corps at 11 Sig Regt, Catterick. After successfully completing his training as a Telecomms Op (Radio), he was posted to Germany to join 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in Osnabruck. It was whilst serving here that he was to meet **Wendy**, the sister of his good friend, **LCpl Dave Orange**, She became the love of his life, and they were married shortly after. Together, they brought **Andrew**, **Mark** and **Robert** into the world. The family were inseparable throughout **Dennis'** postings, which included COD Donnington; 22 Sig Regt, Lipstadt; Army Apprentices College, Harrogate (where many will remember him as an outstanding weapons and military skills instructor); and 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

It was whilst serving in Northern Ireland that the then, **SSgt Rutter** was ordered to accompany his RSM, **WO1(RSM) John Stanley** on a winter visit to see their men in OPs in the hills and woods around Londonderry. On their way, they happened upon neatly stacked pile of freshly cut logs. To **Dennis** and his RSM, this seemed a golden opportunity to get some free fuel for the home fires of their cold winter quarters. Unfortunately, just as they loaded the first couple of logs, Forestry Commission officials caught them, and the consequences for a SSgt and an RSM were looking bad. But anyone who knew **Dennis**, will not be surprised to learn that through his great charm, he not only managed to persuade the officials to let them off, he also got them to help load up the vehicle with the logs!

When, after his final tour in Blandford, **Dennis** left the Army on 10 October 1992, he and **Wendy** and the boys decided to settle in Blandford St Mary, where **Dennis** took on a couple of surprising jobs for Poole Council, initially as a Animal Welfare Officer (dog catcher) and then a Waste Recycling Officer. His talents were soon recognised, and with some diligent studying, he became extremely well qualified in Health and Safety, taking up senior positions, firstly, with Poole Council and then with private companies, Powell's Shopfitting, and more recently, Signpost Limited. The staff of both companies have expressed their high regard of **Dennis** and also their condolences to **Wendy** and the family.

It is a tribute to the memory of **Dennis**, that the funeral service was attended by more than 200 people from near and far, and from past and recent times. The service was a true reflection of his life, and the start of it was so typical of **Dennis**, beginning with *Always Look On The Bright Side of Life* from Monty Python's *Life of Brian*. This was followed by the recital of Christina Rossetti's *Remember* read by **Charlie Carroll**, their future daughter-in-law. The three sons, **Andrew**, **Mark** and **Robert**, read a moving address on their deep respect and admiration for their much-loved father. **Ex WO1(RSM) Mick Orange**, his wife, **Mal** and younger brother, **Gary** then read a poem entitled *Our Den*, specially written for the occasion. In the wake that followed, a toast was made to **Dennis'** memory in one of his favourite tipples, Taylor's Port, which we are sure, will not be the last!

STANLEY - SSgt HW Stanley (Harry) died on 20 April 2004.

In the 1930s, while employed by GPO on veh maint, **Harry**, along with a number of colleagues joined a local Royal Signals TA Unit and attended Annual Camp at Portstewart, Co. Antrim. In 1939 war was declared and the Unit was sent overseas. **Harry** became a DR on **Gen Montgomery's** staff, where he was Mentioned in Dispatches twice in one year.

At the end of the war, he returned to GPO service (later BT) and rejoined the Corps with 66 Sig Regt(TA) in Clonaver Camp, Belfast, again in MT. Here he attained the rank of SSgt. It was while in the TA that he joined the Northern Ireland Branch of the RSA on its formation in March 1956. **Harry** was always the gentleman, well liked by everyone he met.

Harry became a 50 Year Badge holder, and although being our oldest male Member at 90 years, he rarely missed a Branch meeting during his long membership. He attended the annual Catterick and latterly Blandford Reunions, where he made many friends. Indeed, he had booked to attend this year.

The funeral was well attended by Branch and TA Members, and the Branch Standard was paraded. The sympathy of the Branch go to his son, (Branch Member) **Maj Maurice Stanley** and the family circle. He will be very much missed.

SALTER - SSgt Norman Salter MBE died on 7 June 2004.

Norman saw action during WW2 in North Africa, Italy and Palestine. He joined Royal Signals in 1950, and went on to serve in Singapore, Kenya, Germany and UK. His last posting was as SSM 90 Sig Sqn (TA) Brambles Farm Teeside, where he was awarded the MBE. He retired from the Regular Army in 1970 and spent some time with 90 Sig Sqn as SSgt.

Sadly, **Norman** lost his wife, **Rene** in 1990. He will be sadly missed by all who

WILLS - WO2 (FofS) J Wills (John) died 26 April 2004 age 77.

John Wills was born in Patricroft in 1926 and moved to Hyde 4 years later, where he lived until he left school.

John served in the Merchant Navy for 5 years before joining the TA in the Parachute Regt. He then joined the Regular Army in 1952 and again volunteered for the Parachute Regt. He was posted to 3 Para in the Canal Zone of Egypt, where he was promoted Cpl. Leaving the Army in 1955, he did various jobs before re-enlisting in Royal Signals in 1959.

Posted to Catterick, **John** qualified as a Radio Tech, and was immediately selected to be an instructor at 8 Sig Regt. He played rugby for his Sqn, and spent a lot of time climbing in the Lake District. Seeking more action, he volunteered to go back to the Parachute Bde and after yet another parachute course, was posted to 216 Sig Sqn and from there out to RAC Para Sqn.

On qualifying as a Foreman of Signals, he went with his family to 19 Sig Regt in Singapore, where he was responsible for maintenance of the Changi telephone exchange. **John** was well known for his love of sailing there, and took part in the Round the Island race, coming first in his class.

In civilian life, **John** worked in the Middle East. He was in the Gulf with a colleague when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. The Japanese main contractors abandoned them, and they had to make their own way home overland. Undeterred, they returned later to finish the job.

John and **Joyce** retired to North Wales, where he was able to do some more sailing and climbing with friends from his service days. Two years ago, to be near their children, they moved to Stowmarket, Suffolk. Tragically, **John** was killed in a road traffic accident. His funeral was at Bury St Edmunds on 14 May 04.

Contributed by Bill Braniff

ADVERTISEMENTS

WHY NOT JOIN THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION NOW?

All serving officers and soldiers, who contribute to Corps Funds through the 'Days Pay Scheme' (DPS) are eligible and welcome to become Life Members of the RSA.

To find out about your Association and what it has to offer, call Association HQ on Blandford Mil 94371 2090 or see the RSA website:-

www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa

DENBURY BOYS REUNION 2004

11th September

Teign Suite The Racecourse Newton Abbot

Evening event including buffet £15.00

Cheques payable to JA Thompson to be received by 31 July 2004 or for further details SAE to Mike Butchers 25 Jarvis Way Stalbridge Dorset DT10 2NW

michael.butchers@btinternet.com

CALLING ALL PIPERS AND DRUMMERS!

From Pipe Major Gordon Rowan, A&SH, Senior Pipe Major, The Royal School of Signals

Can you play the bagpipes or the drums? Do you want to learn? Do you want to resurrect skills perhaps half forgotten? Did you know we have our own pipe band? The Royal Corps of Signals Pipe Band is going from strength to strength, and takes part in parades, engagements and performances, either solo or in conjunction with the Corps Military Band.

We are continually looking for pipers and drummers of all levels who are interested in taking part. The present complement of regular, reserve and retired Corps members has earned the approbation of senior officers for their performances, notably in support of the centenary celebrations of the Canadian Signals organisation held last year in Canada.

Practice sessions, training weekends and camps are organised by Blandford Camp at a variety of locations country-wide, such as Glasgow, Catterick and Blandford. Anyone who wants to take part should contact me on Blandford Mil 2787, or return the attached proforma.

To: P/M G Rowan, The Royal School of Signals, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH

From: _____ **(Rank and Name)**

_____ **(Address)**

_____ **(Contact Tel No and/or E-mail)**

I am interested in joining the Royal Corps of Signals Pipes and Drums.

THE FIGHT FOR IRAQ

In 2003, some 46,000 British servicemen and women went to war in Iraq. Six British Army photographers went with them.

Their work has resulted in *The Fight for Iraq*, the official British Army pictorial account of OPERATION TELIC.

The Fight for Iraq contains over 170 full colour photos covering the first six months of this operation.

For those who were there, this book will bring back vivid memories of OPERATION TELIC. For those who weren't, it will give you a clear picture of the role British forces played in that operation and the conditions in which they were deployed.

Priced at £14.99 (+ p & p) *The Fight for Iraq* is available from ABF Enterprises, phone 0870 7743820. Proceeds from the sale of this book go to the Army Benevolent Fund.

Quote Reference TGI

SVR
Scottish Veterans' Residences

SVR is a charity formed in 1910, which provides unique and unrivalled full board residential accommodation for our ex-service community. We now have accommodation available at our residences in Edinburgh and Dundee. Each resident has their own fully furnished accommodation, most of which are en-suite and full board is provided. We also have permenant residential or respite care available.

For further information about our accommodation or to arrange a visit contact:
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Each year SVR takes care of the needs of some 300 ex-service men and women of all ages. Our philosophy is that our residents deserve the best quality of support, services, kindness and understanding we can provide. Dignity, privacy and respect for our residents are of paramount importance.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT - After all, with no Government funding, who else can we turn to? With your help we can continue to look after our veterans' needs.

Donate online at www.svronline.org
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SVR is a registered charity number SC015260

Supporting independent living for our ex-service community

THE wire

October 2004

The Royal Corps of Signals

A SHORT NOTE FROM THE WELFARE SECRETARY

Although we receive a great many thank you cards, it is not very often we actually get to see the result of our grants. However, we have received a note and photo from **Mr Doug Littlefield**, who served his National Service with Royal Signals, and who, because of his disability, required an electrically powered scooter. **Doug** contacted SSAFA Forces Help, who then approached us for consideration of some assistance. Our Welfare Committee was very happy to be able to make a grant towards the scooter and help him regain some independence.

During the first 6 months of 2004, the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund has provided assistance to over 288 cases and made grants totalling £115,798.

If you know an ex-Corps member who could benefit from assistance, then please advise them to contact, in the first instance, their nearest SSAFA Forces Help or Royal British Legion County Field Office. Their telephone numbers can be found in your local telephone directory.

Doug Littlefield and his new electric powered scooter

GO TO IT

Museum Director **Cliff Walters** accepts **Cpl Thomas Waters'** Military Medal, from his daughter **Sylvia Atkinson**. **Sylvia** kindly opened the Museum's new D-Day display, which is dedicated to her father.

The newly refurbished, interactive model tells the story of **Cpl Waters'** heroic actions at Pegasus Bridge. Using sound effects from real weapons and aircraft of the time, in conjunction with original commentary by **Richard Dimbleby**, the *Go To It* display tells the story from take off at Tarrant Rushton to the successful assault of Caen Canal Bridge.

Seen left, **Sylvia** proudly shows her father's medal in the Officers Mess, next to the Painting by Peter Archer commemorating her fathers deed's.

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The Magazine of the Royal Corps of Signals

Established in 1920

The Wire

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Deputy Editor Miss D S Haselden

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FRONT COVER

Among the sporting activities on the horizon for 11 Sig Regt is a multi-discipline adventure race in the Scottish highlands in October. Show here is the Regt team, in their new strip, trg at Blandford prior to the race. L-R are **Capts Adam Corkery**, **Bee Robson**, **Liz Pointon** and **Kerry Larson**.

BACK COVER

Royal Signals put in an outstanding performance shooting at Bisley this year (see story on page 386) Here members of the team pose with the SOinC(A) and their haul of remarkable trophies.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

LANYARD TROPHY

Many more teams entered the Lanyard Trophy, which saw its 25th anniversary this year. There were also more female teams competing. One team (19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn) even roped in an unsuspecting Aussie officer, **Lt Glen Bellingham**, who was innocently in UK on an EX LONGLOOK tour. Among the many Lanyard Trophy reports are: 11 Sig Regt, on page 393; HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt, on page 394; 7 Sig Regt on page 403; and 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, on page 419.

DEFENCE COLLEGE OF CIS

As DCCIS settles in at Blandford, its Comd, **Brig John Terrington**, clarifies its role, explains how it fits in to the greater scheme of things, and brings us up to date on its progress. He also makes a plea for more people to consider the College as a posting. Read his report on page 383.

AN EXPEDITION IN PERU

Among the many AT exercises reported, is an interesting one from 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207). EX INCA DIAMOND, described as a Level 3 trekking exped, was conducted in the mountains of Peru. Complete with pack animals and handlers, the team trekked for nine days in altitudes ranging from 2,750 – 4,800 metres. Read their report on page 436.

NIJMEGEN MARCHES

An event almost (some would say 'nowhere near') as arduous as the Lanyard Trophy, are the Nijmegen Marches, a 3-day international event held each year in Holland. This year, JSSU (Digby) entered a team. Spectator support helped them forget about their sore and blistered feet, and they came through with flying colours. Read their story on page 443.

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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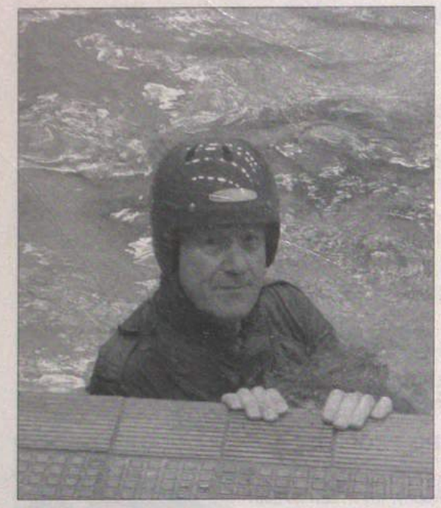


EDITORIAL

I've spent some time recently getting to know 11 Sig Regt – even to the extent of joining them on an underwater helicopter escape course at RNAS Yeovilton (see photo). In their role as trainers and developers of our soldiers, this Regt is fundamental to the success of the whole Corps, so I felt it time for us all to have a clearer insight of them. I soon realised that the relationship between the Regt and the Corps is one of inter-dependence. The Corps relies on 11 Sig Regt to train and develop its soldiers, whilst the quality of the personnel manning 11 Sig Regt is dependent on the quality of postings in from the units. So they need the best people in to deliver the soldiers that we need. Given the responsibility involved, a posting to 11 Sig Regt must therefore be regarded as a positive career move, and one where you can make a real contribution to the Corps' future.

So we have quite a lot about 11 Sig Regt in this issue. In addition to their normal contribution on page 392, we have a piece on their role and structure on page 385 and some thoughts from a range of their people (both cadre staff and trainees) on page 420. As well as enjoying their comradeship, I found the time I spent with them quite enlightening. I am grateful to CO, **Lt Col Graham Complin**, and all ranks of 11 Sig Regt for this privilege.

This year saw the 25th anniversary of the Lanyard Trophy, a gruelling event where teams of 10 soldiers tab 40 miles carrying 40lb Bergens (25lb for female teams). This year it was held in the Brecon Beacons, one of the toughest venues so far. But despite this, there were some notable performances, as can you read about in unit reports. As expected, 216 Sig Sqn won the event again this year, with 7 Sig Regt not far behind them. Of note, were the female teams, whose numbers increase each year. HQNI and 15 Sig Regt ladies came first this category in a remarkable 14 hrs 6 mins, followed by 11 Sig Regt ladies, who were competing for the first time. Lanyard and similar events, such as the Nijmegen Marches and the Lombardia Military Skills Competition (also reported on in this issue) play such an important part in developing teamwork, fortitude and leadership in our soldiers. I hope that reporting them here will encourage more units to support and participate in them in the future.

Shooting is another important military skill, and one that Royal Signals is getting better at. As you will read about on page 386 and see on the back cover, the Corps team did very well at Bisley this year. In his conclusion to the report, the Corps Shooting Captain, **Maj Krishna Gurung MBE**, urges COs and OCs to support Corps shooting events as a means of improving skill at arms in their units. One can only agree with him.

There have also been some recent successes in sport. In Army football, Royal Signals narrowly missed retaining the Massey Trophy, but they again won the Quadrangular Tournament and came home with that Trophy. In yachting, our sailors took Silver in the J24 European Championships in Malmo, Sweden. By year's end, the Corps will have had one of its most successful years – despite having been stretched to the limit on operational commitments and the continuing technical and organisational changes, which they also take in their stride.

I am very pleased with the continuing improvement in Unit and RSA Branch reports. As they realise how effective *The WIRE* can be in promoting their Unit or Branch, more and more are focussing on their achievements and the things that make them stand out in the Corps, rather than their in-house issues. With this, comes more interesting writing that has a wider appeal across the whole readership - and thus a better *WIRE*. I regularly monitor what other corps and regimental magazines (including *Soldier*) are doing and I can see that we are definitely moving ahead on this count. More Units are now consulting with me on how to improve their reports and photos, and many are inviting me to visit them. I can only welcome this.

Finally, as this issue goes to press, another 60th anniversary is commemorated in Arnhem. As with the D Day commemorations, it is pleasing to see the involvement of so many serving soldiers in these events, and to observe the strong camaraderie that develops between them and their forebears. I have just returned from the small Lincolnshire village of Caythorpe, where I joined 216 Sig Sqn, who with ex members of 1 Airborne Div Sig Regt and the whole population of that village, remembered the lead up to and launch of OP MARKET GARDEN. There will be more about this in the next issue of *The WIRE*, but suffice to say, it was an extremely moving weekend. I am indebted to **Maj Jason Gunning** and all ranks of 216 Sig Sqn for inviting me.

Brig McDowall, Jimmy Wilds, Maj Murell and Col Ewbank

JIMMY DOES IT AGAIN

In 2002, **Jimmy Wilds** sponsored the commissioning of a band and pipes march, *Garter and Thistle*, to mark the 25th anniversary of **HRH The Princess Royal** becoming our Colonel-in-Chief. Now he has made a presentation to the Band to recognise the hard work they have put into supporting the Corps over 66 years.

At a small ceremony in the SOinC(A)'s office, **Jimmy** presented a large *Jimmy* statue to the Corps' Director of Music, **Maj Paul Murrell**. The intention is that the statue be displayed at the Band's indoor concerts.

Both the SOinC(A), **Brig David McDowall MBE ADC** and the Regtl Col, **Col John Ewbank**, expressed their thanks for **Jimmy's** generosity. The Band were delighted.

THE DEFENCE COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The DCCIS Team

- by Brig JA Terrington

The formation of Defence College of Communications and Information Systems was heralded in the April edition of *The WIRE* and the spring edition of *The Journal*. So what is DCCIS, and what effect will it have on Royal Signals trade training? Following on from its recommendation to form the Defence Academy, the Defence Training Review also recommended the formation of six separate Defence Colleges to undertake Tri-Service specialist training. In addition to DCCIS, the following colleges were formed on 1 April 2004:

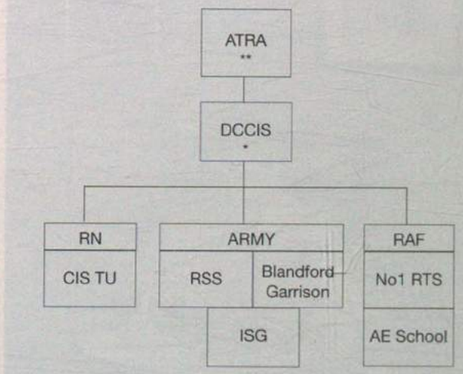
Defence College of Aero Engineering;
Defence College of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering;
Defence College of Logistics;
Defence College of Police and Personnel Administration; and finally
Defence College of Security, Languages, Intelligence and Photography (formed 1 April 2003).

The long-term intent is to identify an industrial partner to deliver training and infrastructure services under a Public Private Partnership (PPP). The six colleges are divided into two 'packages' for ease of contracting, and the three technical colleges (DCCIS, DCAE and DCEME) have been grouped together in Package 1. Invitations to industry are expected to be issued in October this year, with an expectation that a partner will be selected in 2006/2007.

On formation, a small Tri-Service DCCIS HQ was established at Blandford, and has taken under command:

CIS Joint Training and Development Team (JTDT);
Royal Navy CIS Training Unit, HMS Collingwood, Gosport;
Royal School of Signals, Blandford;
No 1 Radio School Royal Air Force, Wolverhampton;
Aerial Erectors School, RAF Digby; and
Elements of the Information Division at RMCS Shrivenham.

Under the terms of the PPP, the selected partner will recommend how and where to collocate these disparate elements onto a single site by 2010.



Developing a Joint approach to CIS training now makes sense to support Joint operational deployments. Equally, new equipment programmes such as SKYNET V, FALCON, and of course BOWMAN, will equip not just the Army, but other Services as well, so training harmonisation makes sense in the near term as well. Looking slightly further ahead, if Network Enabled Capability, based on better use of information, is to become a reality, then we must have a more cohesive, Defence-wide approach to training

for it. Bringing all of this together will be the main task of DCCIS in the years ahead.

To date, you will have seen little obvious change, as much of the work we have done has been behind the scenes and focussed on data capture to ensure the DTR Integrated Project Team has the right information to go to industrial tender. More recently, the effort of HQ DCCIS and the JTDU has been to identify common strands to the training that is currently delivered. The outcome is the production of a common CIS Defence-wide training objectives and learning database, which is now being used to design new courses more quickly and effectively. This is of immediate relevance to both RAF and RN as they change their CIS trade structures over the next two years. New, genuinely Joint courses are also being developed, and will be introduced over the next 12 months. To begin with, these are largely focussed at specialist Phase 3 training courses such as Crypto, SATCOM Management and Fibre Optic training. The idea is to remove duplication and to standardise training where it is appropriate.

So what of the future? Ultimately, a co-located DCCIS will deliver significant efficiencies in training. But this is not just a savings exercise; we are determined to ensure that 'betterment', a key theme of DTR, remains to the forefront of everything we do. Better accommodation is a top priority, as is a move to more modular training, using modern computer based training techniques. Hopefully, some of this training will be delivered closer to your parent units, thus reducing the time spent on residential courses away from home. All of this will develop more quickly over the next 2 – 3 years, although until a partner is identified, the College will remain 3 separate schools based in at least 4 separate locations. So rumours that Blandford is about to close are premature to say the least!

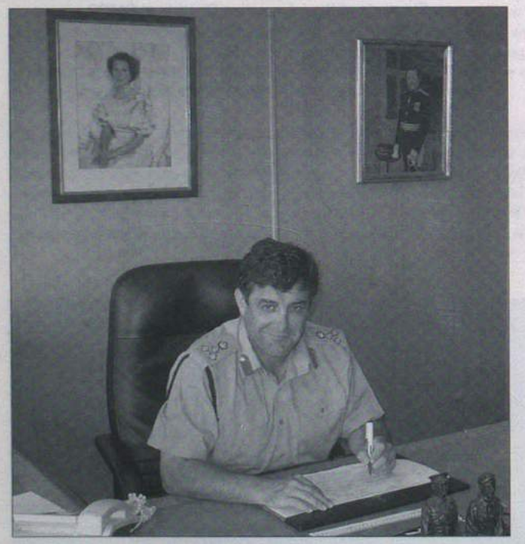
Although, a co-located DCCIS is still some way off, we will gradually begin to alter single Service school structures from April next year, so that we are well prepared for the future when an industrial partner comes on board. But rest assured that even when we are co-located, we are determined to ensure that Service specific differences are maintained. Individual Service ethos and identity is a key theme in all that we are seeking to achieve, and is paramount in maintaining operational effectiveness. It is an issue that is just as important to RN and the RAF as it is to the Corps.

Finally, training is one of those subjects that we all have views on. 'When I was…' and 'It was better in my day…' are often heard, usually from those who are unwilling to take up the challenge of a posting to a training organisation. DCCIS is a vibrant, exciting place, where change will be the norm over the next few years. So there are lots of opportunities to influence the future and genuinely make it better. Training the future members of the Corps is a critical task, and one that requires a constant stream of high quality staff. In reality, a training organisation will only ever be as good as the people in it. So if you think you can contribute or do it better, volunteer for a tour in DCCIS and help shape the future of our Corps.

THE THOUGHTS OF A DEPARTING SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF

- by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

Brig David McDowall MBE ADC leaves the office of SOinC(A) on 8 October 2004. With such a huge number of things that have happened in the Corps during his watch, organisationally, technically and operationally, I couldn't let him leave without getting some of his thoughts for *The WIRE*. So I asked him a few questions.



What are the most important things that have happened in the Corps during your tenure?
Firstly, I would highlight the Corps' continued efforts in support of operations and training. In operations around the world, the Corps are delivering a vital component of military capability. They are resolving the challenges of delivering that capability with a mix of aged equipment as well as a range of modern equipments that are being introduced as Urgent Operational Requirements. I am hugely proud of the efforts of our commanders and soldiers at all levels.

Secondly I think that members of the Corps in key staff appointments across Defence have made a significant contribution to the modernisation process that is being undertaken. Our personnel are playing leading roles in shaping all aspects of future CIS support, both deployed and non-deployed.

Personnel from the Corps are thus fully engaged in developing and delivering CIS in support of the command and staff processes, from tactical to strategic, in land, joint and multinational environments. Meeting these challenges has been very demanding, yet we have still retained the ability to participate in sporting and adventurous pursuits, enjoying considerable success in various Army and Combined Services Championships.

What are the next steps, the next big challenges?
Introducing into service the modern range of CIS that is planned will certainly pose additional challenges, but they represent enormous opportunities to better equip and train our soldiers to deliver their component of capability. BOWMAN is now with us, CORMORANT enters service later this year, FALCON at the end of 2006, SKYNET S and REACHER in similar timelines, and SOUTHSAYER a year or so later.

These systems will support enhanced infrastructure and applications to provide commanders and staffs with a wider range of command support facilities. We will need to adjust our training, trades and structures to meet the new demands, but I have every confidence that we are well placed to do precisely that.

I suppose the other challenge in the immediate future is to retain our current healthy manning situation.

What would you say to a young person just joining the Corps?
This is a Corps that has established a fine tradition as the Army's Combat Communicators who play a vital role as part of any UK military force. Our role continues to expand to enable us to provide the wider range of Information and Communication Services needed by modern land, joint and multinational HQs. You are joining a Corps that will ensure you are trained and developed to enable you to exploit your talents, and will help you to progress through the ranks. You will have the chance to enjoy a challenging military career, with a high probability of deploying on operations, whilst at the same time learning how to exploit the fast moving technological opportunities that will come along.

I know that you will be as proud of being a member of the Corps family as I have been throughout my career. Welcome to the Corps.

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT – WHAT DOES IT DO?

– by Capt Ross McLeod

11 Sig Regt's Mission is 'to command, administer and support Blandford Camp personnel in order to support the CIS trg requirements of Defence.'

Everyone in Royal Signals has a view on 11 Sig Regt. Either they have been trained by it, or have been exposed to it while passing through Blandford. Many people, however, are uncertain what the Regt does. This article aims to explain what 11 Sig Regt's role is, and where it fits into the Corps.

11 Sig Regt looks after soldiers undergoing trg at RSS. The Regt is responsible for Phase 3 soldiers (up-graders) returning to Blandford from the Field Army, but its main effort is developing the Phase 1 soldier. Soldiers come to Blandford, having completed Phase 1 (basic military) trg at one of the ATRs (Bassingbourn or Lichfield) or AFC, Harrogate. These soldiers undergo their Phase 2 specialist Royal Signals trg at Blandford.

Phase 2 trg at 11 Sig Regt is the Corps' opportunity to mould future Royal Signals soldiers – it is the 'one opportunity to get it right'. The Regt must define and deliver Standards, Values and Ethos as part of Phase 2 trg, and develop the grounding established in Phase 1 trg to ensure that soldiers 'do the right thing' intuitively. The work for 11 Sig Regt's Cadre Staff is relentless and frustrating - but rewarding!

SIZE

The Regt is approximately 1,000 trainees strong – two thirds are Phase 2 soldiers, and one third are Phase 3. It provides discipline and admin support for a total of over 2,000 personnel, and as well as its permanent military Cadre Staff, it has 230 other support staff, who are a mixture of military and civilians.

SQUADRONS

The Regt has four Sqns: 1 (Ouston) Sqn, 2 (Catterick) Sqn, 3 (Harrogate) Sqn, and Blandford Support Sqn.

1 (Ouston) Squadron

1 Sqn has four key roles: the induction into the Corps of all Phase 1 soldiers, which provides the transition between Phase 1 and Phase 2; Driver Trg; the management of Soldiers Awaiting Trade Training (SATTs), and Rhino Tp, which includes all the trainees from combat trades at 11 Sig Regt. The Sqn also administers Spec Ops while in Blandford, and delivers driver trg to them, before sending them to Chicksands. The Sqn ranges between 100-250 strong.

2 (Catterick) Squadron

2 Sqn covers all operator trades, and IS Engrs. It consists of approximately 450-500 trainees.

3 (Harrogate) Squadron

3 Sqn covers all Tech trades, both Phase 2 Sys Eng Techs and Inst Techs.

Blandford Support Squadron

Blandford Spt Sqn includes all the elements required to support the Regt, such as the QM's Dept, the MT Pool, the Regtl Accounting Office, and so on, as might be found in a normal HQ Sqn.

Soldiers first, tradesmen second. In addition to their trade trg, all trainees continue with mil skills trg

FIRST CONTACT

The introduction to 11 Sig Regt and RSS for Phase 1 trainees is a one-day visit from their Phase 1 trg establishment. On completion of Phase 1 trg, they complete a one-week induction course, under the control of Kohima Tp. The purpose of this is to introduce and familiarise all Phase 1 Royal Signals soldiers with Blandford Camp, its facilities, amenities, welfare agencies, personalities and health and safety. It also informs Phase 1 Royal Signals soldiers of the standards expected of them and the rules they are to abide by while at the RSS, and finally introduces them to the history and ethos of the Corps, as well as the values and standards of the British Army. The course includes a variety of briefings, conducted by the CO down, checking of documentation, introduction to welfare agencies, an introduction to the Corps Museum and Corps history, and instruction in health and safety and manual handling. There are also those old favourites: block inspections, and Tp and Sqn Parades…

WHY SATTS?

One question that is often asked by people outside 11 Sig Regt is 'Why do we have Soldiers Awaiting Trade Training?' There are a number of reasons: The output from Phase 1 trg establishments is irregular, and therefore Phase 2 courses at Blandford cannot always be perfectly tied-in with Phase 1 output, which leaves some 'buffer time' in between. Also, some trades (Spec Op, for example) run so few courses, that there are long gaps between them. The unpredictable nature of driving trg also has an impact, as it precludes accurate availability forecasting (how many lessons, for example, will it take Sig Snodgrass to pass his B (car) licence? What about B+E (trailers)?). Finally, delays in getting trainees security cleared, and those imposed by medical problems, particularly with the long-term sick, add to SATT pool.

At any one time, there are about 100-120 SATTs. 90% of trainees spend less than 30 days awaiting training. Most very long term SATTs (over 3 months) are medically or otherwise unfit for posting. Time spent sitting around, however, is alleviated by the significant standing commitment for SATTs at Blandford. This includes guard personnel, bus escorts, Orderly Sgt assistants, and standbys for driver trg. There are also usually 30-40 trainees under the SATT banner who are sick, on leave, clearing, and so on.

Driver trg is also an important element of our activities

DRIVER TRAINING

The Army has a contract with BSM for B and B+E trg at Blandford. This is provided by 16 civilian instructors and 3 Defence School of Tpt (DST) examiners. 11 Sig Regt passes on average 115 Cat B licences and Cat B+E licences monthly. First time pass rates for the theory test are 94%, and over 85% for the practical test. There are incentives for all. The sooner trainees pass, the sooner they reach their first units. For the instructors, they receive cash bonus if soldier passes their first test! Finally, we book C+E trg at DST Leconfield prior to trainees' posting to Field Army.

ARE YOU INTERESTED?

11 Sig Regt is changing. The importance and emphasis placed on the Regt's Cadre Staff has never been higher. There are opportunities for enthusiastic and motivated people of all ranks to serve in the Regt. This is a chance to influence the future of the Corps. There are also excellent facilities at Blandford, and the camp is located in a very attractive part of the country.

Anyone interested in serving in the Regt should express their preferences through the chain of command.

CORPS SHOOTING

- by Maj Krishna Gurung BEM, Capt of Corps Service Shooting

The Corps put in an outstanding performance at Bisley this year. **Maj Krishna Gurung BEM**, 2 Sig Regt came third in the Queen's Medal Competition, and won the Army Hundred Cup and the Old Contemptibles' Cup – in his penultimate (31st) year in the Army. Twenty-one percent of the Army Hundred (the top 100 shots in the Army for this year) were Corps members, of whom 12 were first-time achievers. 21 Sig Regt (AS) won the Parachute Regiment Cup outright. In the NRA competition, the Corps 'A' Team won the Unit Championship, bagging a whole host of quite remarkable pieces of silver in the process.

CENTSAM 04, incorporating the Queen's Medal Competition, was held on Bisley and Pirbright Ranges from 25 June to 8 July 04, the NRA service weapons events taking place from 4 to 7 July.

As in previous years, a Corps Concentration was run at Pirbright prior to CENTSAM, for Corps unit teams and individuals who had qualified from their respective Div SAMs. This no doubt contributed to the excellent results achieved by at Bisley. We thank **SSgt Dave Copley**, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn, the Corps Adjutant, and **Capt Colin Kell**, 30 Sig Regt for a most successful Corps Concentration. Thanks also go to the COs of units and individuals who competed at Bisley, for their support. The detailed results follow.

CENTSAM/QMC 04

Notable Team Achievements

2 Sig Regt: 2nd Overall/Best Other Arms and Services Team in the LSW Team Match; 21 Sig Regt (AS),1st Overall in the Parachute Regiment Cup, and Best Other Arms and Services Team in the Fire Team Match; 30 Sig Regt: Overall winners of the Falling Plates, Best Other Arms and Services Team in the Rifle Team Match, the Combat Snapshooting Team Match, and Unit Championship.

Royal Signals were 3rd Overall in the Methuen Cup, and also won the Woolwich Trophy (Royal Signals v RA v RE), and the REME Trophy (best Other Arms).

Notable Individual Achievements

Maj Krishna Gurung BEM, 2 Sig Regt, was 3rd in the Queen's Medal Competition, winning the ARA Bronze Jewel; Winner of the Army Hundred Cup and the Old Contemptibles' Cup; Captain of the Royal Signals Team that won the Inter-unit Championship in the NRA Service Rifle Meeting; Captain of the Army VIII, winning the Inter-Services FIBUA Match and Inter-Services Rifle Match; and Top scorer for the victorious Great Britain Team in the International Service Rifle Team Match.

Cpl Devprakash Gurung, 2 Sig Regt, was Runner-up in the individual LSW championship; and Winner of the Royal Signals Cup for best Other Arms LSW score.

LCpl Chris Brock, 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, was Overall Class B winner of the Graham Trophy (FIBUA Match); and Class B runner-up in the Roupell Cup.

THE ARMY HUNDRED

Of the 38 Royal Signals members who participated at CENTSAM/QMC 04, the following 21 achieved positions in the Army Hundred:

3rd	**Maj Krishna Gurung BEM**, 2 Sig Regt
9th	**Capt Yamkumar Gurung**, 30 Sig Regt
11th	**SSgt Dave Copley**, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn
13th	**Capt Colin Kell**, 30 Sig Regt
23rd	**Capt Yam Rana**, 10 Sig Regt
24th	**Sgt Som Chochangi**, 30 Sig Regt
31st	**LCpl Chris Brock**, 3 Inf Bde Hq & Sig Sqn*
34th	**Sig Sekendra Gurung**, 21 Sig Regt (AS)
37th	**Sig Shiva Gurung**,30 Sig Regt*
46th	**LCpl Khagendra Tamang**, 21 Sig Regt (AS)
48th	**LCpl Lloyd Newell**, 3 Inf Bde Hq and Sig Sqn*
50th	**Cpl Devprakash Gurung**, 2 Sig Regt
54th	**Sig Bhupal Gurung**, 2 Sig Regt*
57th	**Cpl Matt Bradley**, 16 Air Asslt Bde Sig Sqn*
65th	**Sig Chris Halton**, 2 Sig Regt*
70th	**LCpl Sanjay Rai**, 21 Sig Regt (AS)*
79th	**Sig A Fuller**, 30 Sig Regt*
82nd	**Sig Krishna Limbu**, 21 Sig Regt (AS)*
94th	**Sig Gautam Gurung**, 2 Sig Regt*
95th	**Sig Chijkumar Gurung**, 30 Sig Regt*
98th	**LCpl Sanjeev Rai**, 30 Sig Regt*

* First time achievement

THE ARMY SERVICE PISTOL CHAMPIONSHIP

The following Corps members achieved positions in The Pistol Thirty:

7th	**Lt Col Richard Hoole**, SO1 HQ ARA
13th	**Maj Krishna Gurung BEM**, 2 Sig Regt
25th	**Capt Colin Kell**, 30 Sig Regt
26th	**SSgt Dave Copley**, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn

NRA SERVICE WEAPONS MEETING

Inter-unit Championship

In the NRA Service Rifle Meeting, the Royal Signals 'A' Team of **Maj Krishna Gurung BEM**, **Capt Colin Kell**, **Capt Yam Rana**, and **SSgt Dave Copley**, won the following trophies:

The Sub-machine Gun 30 Cup
The Canada Challenge Shield
The Mappin Challenge Cup
The 14/20th King's Hussars Cup
The African Challenge Cup

Individual Championship

SSgt Dave Copley, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn came 4th overall in the Individual Championship, winning the Martin's Challenge Trophy.

BRITISH ARMY COMBAT SHOOTING TEAM (BACST) – INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

The British Army sends teams to compete in international Armed Forces competitions in Canada and USA in one year, and South Africa and Australia in the next. Teams are 20 strong, including the Team Captain, Adjutant and Coach. Team members are selected by the Captain of the Army VIII in consultation with HQ ARA, based on their performance at CENTSAM/QMC. The next two of these events are: EX UNCLE SAM, 24 September – 19 October 04, at Little Rock, Arkansas, USA; and EX PROTEA LION 05, April/May 05, in South Africa.

UK SHOOTING DATES FOR 2005

CORPSAM 05, 8 – 15 April 05. CENTSAM 05, 24 June – 7 July 05

CORPS CAPTAIN'S CONCLUDING STATEMENT

Trg for and competing in events like CORPSAM and CENTSAM enables soldiers to handle their personal weapons effectively whilst under stress, leading to increased battlefield efficiency. The Royal Signals Combat Shooting Association is continually looking for young officers and soldiers keen to improve their marksmanship and weapon handling skills. COs and OCs are urged to support these Corps shooting events as a means of improving skill-at-arms in their Units and in the Corps.

See Back Cover photo

TROOP COMMANDERS' COURSE 058

- by 2Lts Parkes and Williams

On 15 July 2004, the officers of TC58 completed their 5-month course, armed with the skills and drills eagerly ready to take back to their units. With us on the course were three Kuwaiti officers, **Lts Al-Sabah**, **Al-Ajimi**, and **Al-Mutar**, who found the English weather and working hours, somewhat different from that of Kuwait, as was the nightlife!

The Course was led by **Capt Bee Bryan**, and TC58 was her last Troopies Course before moving on to her new posting. It is just as well, as any longer spent with TC58 may have led her to a nervous breakdown.

Besides the academic study of comd trg, radio systems and the like, the Course went on an AT exped to the exotic location of Castlemartin in southwest Wales. This was a welcomed break from the classroom, with an action-packed week, superbly organised by **2Lt Williams** and **2Lt Wardle**. EX WET DRAGON introduced the Tp Comds to a variety of activities, including land-yachting and the opportunity to gain the RYA Level 2 Power Boat Certificate. The course was split into two groups for the week. Group 1 started the RYA Levels 1 and 2 Power Boating Course. This was a two-day course, including half a day of theory and the rest of the time at Milford Haven on the boats. We learned how to rescue a man overboard, fast and quick turns, and tying up to a buoy. It was made challenging by the weather getting steadily worse throughout the day, and everyone was dripping wet by the end of it.

Group 2 did land-yachting, which benefited from the windy conditions. Having assembled the somewhat crude looking machines and received invaluable instruction and a safety briefing from **WO2 Driver**, the first three victims jumped on and sped off. To begin with, we turned by tacking into wind, and as our confidence grew, we learned how to gybe. This is slightly more dangerous, and **2Lt Whillis** was credited with the first crash. With only minor grazes sustained, he was quickly back on 3 wheels. But the most spectacular crash of the day went to **2Lt Parkes**, who left the runway, hit a gorse bush, and landed upside down.

He was relatively unscathed, but managed to break the mast of his land-yacht, so for a while, we were down to 2 land-yachts, while **2Lts Snelgrove** and **Lowe** were despatched to fix it. Unfortunately, this also coincided with it starting to rain. For the rest of the week, the rain steadily worsened, but it didn't stop the racing, and actually made the cornering more fun.

It was alleged that speeds of up to 30mph were reached, and we regularly had the land-yachts on two wheels. 12 of the Tp Comds gained the RYA Certificate Level 2, and the rest a few knocks and bruises, but all had good fun and enjoyed the break from training.

Upon returning from Wales, it has been a hectic last few weeks and with the exams and testing finally over at Blandford, we are looking forward to returning to our units.

2Lt Chris Parkes of 14 Sig Regt (EW) was awarded Top Student on TC58. At the culminating Leadership Dinner, he was presented with the Evis Memorial Sword by **Brig JA Terrington**, Comdt DCCIS.

Brig Terrington (R) presents the Evis Memorial Sword to 2Lt Parkes

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, AUGUST 2004

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col LA Relph	SP Pol P and V
Lt Col M Baines	16 Sig Regt
Lt Col Complin	DII Convergence EMS
Lt Col RR Holmes	NATO C3 Agency (BAE)
Lt Col RW Lapslie	BLO Germany DGD and D
Lt Col FTJA Riley	LSP ABU DHABI UAE
Lt Col CH Turner	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col K Whitehead	DCBM(A) Knowledge Environment
Maj MWG Adams	Shape Staff (BAE)
Maj RJ Anderton-Brown	EC - CCII - HORG
Maj G Blondel	EC CCII Horg
Maj IA Buchanan	2 Sig Regt
Maj MC Burke	G6 Branch HQ UKSC(G)
Maj RJ Carter	34 (Northern) Sig Regt
Maj AM Churchill	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Maj MC Cornell	DSTL Information Management
Maj NB Cullen	2 Sig Regt
Maj PJ Doherty	Royal School of Signals
Maj ML Drake	AD CBM
Maj AJ Duncam	R and LS Staff North West
Maj RJG Edwards	280 (UK) Sig Regt
Maj MJM Emslie	33 Sig Regt (V)
Maj RJ Farrimond	Royal School of Signals
Maj PR Flavell	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Maj MA Graham	DCRS
Maj IC Gray B ENG	DCBM(A) Capability Intergration
Maj JP Hazlewood	102 Log Bde Hq and Sig Sqn
Maj JM Hodges	EC CCII Horg
Maj NJ Makepeace	Royal Signals Int Div
Maj EN Moxon	DCSA D Strat and Tech Dev
Maj DM Sharkey	Cast(S) LWTC
Maj JL Smart	OCE HQ Land (HQ MND(SE))
Maj CR Sutherland	Special Projects
Maj IA Walton	11 Sig Regt
Maj RB Wyllie	Customer Relationship Management DCSA
Maj NGC Yardley	RMCS Courses Defence Academy
A/Maj DC Ball	G6 HQ Land
A/Maj PJ Day	Royal School of Signals
A/Maj CL Ward	MOD CS Personnel Director
A/Maj KT Wilson	Royal School of Signals
Capt KA Baker	1(UK) Armd Div Hq and Sig Regt
Capt CN Biddulph	Royal School of Signals
Capt NC Bruce	Royal School of Signals
Capt PJ Brunton	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Capt PE Conner	Royal School of Signals
Capt AKT Crapper	DCSA Dei and Is Deployed Ops
Capt TJ Downes	G6 HQ Land
Capt MR Edwards	Royal School of Signals
Capt AS Foote	2 Sig Regt
Capt ASF Hutton	4 Armd Bde Hq Sig Sqn
Capt SG Jackson	HS HQ Saclant
Capt AG Jenkins	RHQ 10 Sig Regt
Capt L Keily	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt JR Knight	OCE HQ Land
Capt RA McCleod	Royal School of Signals
Capt DG Richards	Royal School of Signals
Capt AJ Rickman	Royal School of Signals
Capt LN Rickman	HQ 3(UK) Div
Capt EA Robson	JSSU Digby
Capt DM Stachini	21 Sig Regt
Capt MJ Swift	7 Sig Regt
Capt WDJ Wilson	3(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt AS Wilson	Royal School of Signals
A/Capt BT Kelly	RMCS Courses Defence Academy
Lt CEJ Davies	3 R Irish
Lt GM Dorrington	RMCS Courses Defence Academy
Lt DA Lish	RMCS Courses Defence Academy
Lt IJ Scaife	2 Sig Regt
Lt CSC Wartemberg	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
2 Lt FP Aldrich	7 Sig Regt
2 Lt S Bill	16 Sig Regt
2 Lt Cocoran	2 Sig Regt
2 Lt KM Dunwiidy	8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
2 Lt C Fogerty	7 Sig Regt
2 Lt VJ Freestone	3 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
2 Lt JZ Haines	14 Sig Regt (EW)
2 Lt JW Hodges	3 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
2 Lt GLM Hood	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
2 LT JW Hooker	21 Sig Regt (AS)
2 Lt DR Mackiln	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
2 Lt JA Markendale	2 Sig Regt
2 Lt DJ McGuckian	7 Sig Regt
2 Lt JP McMillan	16 Sig Regt
2 Lt CH Mikulla	7 Sig Regt
2 Lt WGR Parish	14 Sig Regt (EW)
2 Lt JM Paulin	19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
2 Lt IJ Peers	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
2 Lt Russell	16 Sig Regt
2 Lt SJ Witcher	30 Sig Regt

OFICERS, SEPTEMBER 2004

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col M Lithgow	2 Sig Regt
Lt Col NW Gill	DCSA
Lt Col RJ Quinlan	HQ SOinC(A)
Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts	15 Sig Regt
Maj JS Adams	International MIL Staff Brussels
Maj RW Bryan	JSC and SC Defence Academy
Maj CE Caie	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Maj EC Dale	DISCSU HQ
Maj PK Gorford	MIS HQ ATRA
Maj MG Hanson	DCSA D Start and Tech Dev
Maj GF Manning	R Sigs/Int Div
Maj NJ Morris	JSC and SC Defence Academy
Maj R Patrickson	Royal Sigs/Int Div
Maj SJ Purser	G6 HQ Land
Maj A Roberts	HQ DFTS
Maj LV Tomkins	HQ 4 Div
Maj RC Young	30 Sig Regt
A/Maj PJ Hale	ICSC(L) Defence Academy
A/Maj JC Stewart	ICSC(L) Defence Academy
Capt W Anderson	ICSC(L) Delence Academy
Capt IM Ballantyne	ICSC(L) Delence Academy
Capt IFK Bates	JSC and SC Defence Academy
Capt BH Bryan	Royal Sigs/Int Div
Capt AD Clixby	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Capt MJ Fayers	Royal School of Signals
Capt OS Finnie	ICSC(L) Defence Academy
Capt AHT Garrett	JSC and SC Defence Academy
Capt EL Mclellan	G6 HQ Land
Capt RG Nixon	HQ 5 Div
Capt KL Parsons	SOinC(A)
Capt NM Peet	JSC and SC Defence Academy
Capt CD Roberts	Royal School of Signals
Capt AD Shakespeare	SAT IPT DCSA
Capt DA Whitaker	Cyprus Communications Unit
Lt IN Gordon	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Lt AJC Grant	ATR Lichfield

WOS AND SNCOS, AUGUST 2004

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 YofS PRC Barnes	60 Sig Sqn (V)
WO1 D Winfield	JSSU Digby
WO2 YofS CJ Barker	21 Sig Regt
WO2 YofS L Davis	12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
WO2 YofS MI Holden	HQ SACLANT
WO2 YofS MI Murphy	LSP Oman
WO2 KM Fogg	G2 Branch
A/WO2 YofS IM Fawcett	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/WO2 YofS KD Tharby	CAST South
SSgt MA Bell	21 Sig Regt
SSgt S Cain	600 Sig Tp
SSgt MN Campbell	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt IR Clark	32 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt PP Corcoran	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt DE Cox	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt SC Curry	21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt DE Leask	2 Sig Regt
A/SSgt AS Allen	30 Sig Regt
A/SSgt AJ Delaney	1 Bn REME
A/SSgt AD Fadzilah	38 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt JA Garner	39 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt CH Henson	30 Sig Regt
A/SSgt CJ Jacobs	JACIG
A/SSgt YL Jones	DCSA (CIS)
A/SSgt SG McIlroy	38 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt CJ Mulligan	32 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt RE Smith	4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/SSgt MJ Witham	40 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt DS Adams	1 RHA
Sgt MJ Beeson	21 Sig Regt
Sgt BJ Brown	16 Sig Regt
Sgt SJ Crouchman	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt AJ Dawes	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt RJ Evans	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Sgt DL Gunn	HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt PD Hounsell	Royal School of Signals
Sgt PN Howie	JSSU Cyprus
Sgt PC Korba	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt SR Lewis	Royal School of Signals
Sgt JG Manley	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt DAA McCallum	7 Sig Regt
Sgt LJ McKeown	46 Wksp Coy REME
Sgt S McKie	JSSU (AN)
Sgt AJ McMullan	7 Sig Regt
Sgt JN Medcraft	4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt PW Nesbitt	7 Sig Regt
Sgt M Raine	Royal School of Signals
Sgt BJ Rigby	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Sgt N Ruff	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Sgt J Simmons	40 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt RJ Smith	ATR Litchfield
Sgt GG Sutherland	15 Sig Regt
Sgt MJ Tiplady	NATO Comms School Latina
Sgt S Tucker	29 CDO Log Regt RM
Sgt MT Turner	37 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt DJ Walker	DCSA DEI & IS Config Mgt Blandford
A/Sgt I Munro	15 Sig Regt

WOS AND SNCOS, SEPTEMBER 2004

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 YofS SA Warburton	2 Sig Bde
A/WO1 YofS J Budding	BOWTAG (S)
A/WO1 YofS GAD Thomas	PJHQ (UK)
WO2 YofS CR Scott	BATUS
SSgt AJ Craig	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt LAJ Hill	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt RT Lee	AFCO Norwich
SSgt JE Morely	Royal School of Signals
A/SSgt P Oulton	3 Bn REME
A/SSgt NJ Rogan	Royal School of Signals
Sgt MB Adams	NATO Set F17 Balado Bridge
Sgt S Bretherton	37 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt SW Burman	Royal School of Signals
Sgt JE Butt	Royal School of Signals
Sgt IJ Chappell	Royal School of Signals
Sgt SC Dixon	225 Sig Sqn
Sgt TN Donaghue	Royal School of Signals
Sgt SL Donaldson	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt JP Drewett	11 CTT
Sgt SV Ferry	2 Sig Regt
Sgt JD Gill	Royal School of Signals
Sgt MA Gordon	Royal School of Signals
Sgt AJB Gray	Royal School of Signals
Sgt LA Jay	Royal School of Signals
Sgt MD Laidlaw	Royal School of Signals
Sgt RA Lang	Royal School of Signals
Sgt RL Milligan	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
Sgt MJ Mullan	46 Wksp Coy REME
Sgt MA Partington	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
Sgt SJ Rimmer	DI(SI)
Sgt VJ Shepherd	AWC Waddington
Sgt SA Slaughter	71 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt JG Sneath	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt LS Stevenson	Royal School of Signals
Sgt SW Thomas	Royal School of Signals
Sgt NJ Tipping	46 Wksp Coy REME
A/Sgt IDJ Kingsford-Smith	CIRT Corsham
A/Sgt JK Laye	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt ND Tarry	243 Sig Sqn

RETIREMENTS

AUGUST 2004

Name and Rank	*Date*
Kemp - Capt GH Kemp	17 Aug 04
Payet - Maj FS Payet	08 Aug 04
Sellwood - Capt RJ Sellwood	05 Aug 04
Stocker - Maj AB Stocker	12 Aug 04
Cameron - Maj ADE Cameron	01 Aug 04
Carr - Maj JD Carr	19 Aug 04

SEPTEMBER 2004

Name and Rank	*Date*
Hilborn - Capt AB Hilborn	01 Sep 04
Weaver - Lt Col A Weaver	10 Sep 04
Donohue - A/Maj N Donohue	11 Sep 04

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

PARTING THOUGHTS

- from Lt Col Eric Mandille, French Liaison Officer to HQ SOinC(A) and RSS, 2001-2004

Lt Col Mandille

After three years as a Liaison Officer in Blandford, I have now moved back to France, and I am delighted to be asked to write a small report about my time in Blandford for *The WIRE*.

I had an excellent time, not just simply because of the nicety and calm directly associated with any peacetime liaison job, but more because of the spontaneous warmth I received from the soldiers of Royal Signals, and the full support I got from the SOinC(A)s I worked for, **Brig Cedric Burton** and **Brig David McDowall**, and the School Commanders, **Col John Ewbank** and **Col Mike Dyer**.

I must admit most of my work consisted in the following activities:

> Writing reports about digitisation, network enabled capabilities, and various communications and information systems and organisations;
>
> Initiating, facilitating or organising visits of officers from the rank of Maj Gen down to 2Lt; and
>
> 'Being there, doing that' with Royal Signals during three years, attending meetings, functions (the nicety I mentioned above), presentations and other events.

So far for the work, but the most exciting experience as a French officer was to live on a British Army camp. I am fully conscious that some readers might not share my excitement, and wonder what I am writing about. This is very simple; imagine an Army with no equivalent of married quarters, no Officers or Sergeants Mess, (but all ranks mass catering), no NAAFI shop, a Signal Corps with no Regimental Colonel, no *WIRE*, no Army Benevolent Fund, etc. Of course in this digitised and operational Army (the French one I am talking about) you can buy or rent with your own money, a cheap property in a lovely country, and go to a restaurant or café as you please, but well, the *Esprit de Corps*, as soldiers say in Britain, is practised there in a subtle and discrete way.

So you might get it now about the difference, and understand why my wife, **Anke** and I are already missing the ethos of a Corps we had the privilege to be associated with.

We lived in Blandford, as a family of five, in beautiful Dorset, became part of the local community and really enjoyed our time in England, visiting Wales and Scotland as well. Thanks to budget airlines, Northern Ireland is not so far from France, so we can complete our *tour de UK* one day. We will certainly come back to Britain often, just to see our eldest son who is doing his A levels,

HQ SOinC(A) GO ADVENTURE TRAINING

During the period 7 – 11 June 04, the CoS's Pillar undertook an AT package to Castlemartin, Wales. The trg was organised (?) by **Maj Ronnie Westerman** and **WO1 Fletcher**, with **SSgt Roberts** giving expert advice.

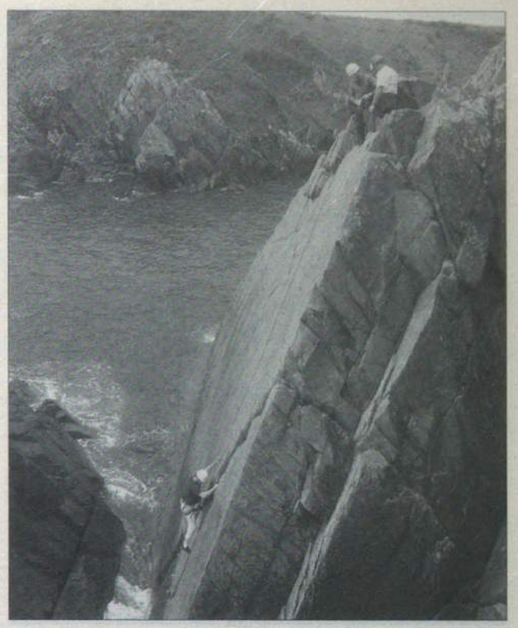
The journey started on the hottest day of the year so far, which was ideal for sitting in the minibus for 5 hrs, but worth it for the cool relaxing dip in the Irish Sea on arrival. It took **Maj Colin Russell**, **Capt Holt** and **WO2 Whiteman** a few days to get their colour back after that swim. After the group photograph, the trg began in earnest, with a 12 km paddle down a flat river. The only ripples were made by **Lt Col Botterill**, who capsized his canoe with apparent ease, much to the horror of his crewman. After escorting the higher-ranking Offrs for a few cheeky beers in the XL Club, it was an early night ready for the adventures of Day 2.

Unfortunately, the next day was sailing, and for once, the wind didn't blow - not a breath of it. But that didn't stop **WO1 Kev Clarke-Brown** and others throwing themselves into the sea at every opportunity. We did have an exciting RIB ride to an island to see the local wildlife, during which **Maj Jill Pease** took several pictures of the sky trying to catch a puffin flying past. The evening brought the most exciting and heart thumping adventure of the week - go-karting. A grand prix was arranged and the cheating began. Hats off to **WO1 Nick Fletcher** for crashing several times on the practice lap, and to **Maj Ronnie Westerman**, for winning Driving Miss Daisy. But the sight of **WO2 Ginge Whiteman** bumping all and sundry off the racing line was one to behold. The tactical skill of **Lt Col Thomas** didn't stand a chance as **Ginge** flew on to take the chequered flag.

Day Three brought more sunshine and even less wind, which was ideal for rock climbing but not land yachting. Rock climbing proved again to be a sport for small light people with a vice like grip. Unfortunately, we didn't have a lot of them, but frozen smiles were to be found on several faces as they got stuck on the rock face. But abseiling down was great fun. The land yachting was the one event everyone wanted to do, and we weren't let down,

Land yachting – Lt Col Torpedo John Botterill

especially as the wind picked-up. **Lt Col (Retd) Clement** showed the skill of the ocean going sailor he is as he flew around the course. For the rest of us, it was just fantastic to pick up



Maj Colin Russell makes rock climbing look easy

speed and be cornering so fast that your back wheel came off the ground. Not to clever to put your leg down, though. The final day was spent trying to get the pink Frisbee off the roof. We failed, so if your ever at Castlemartin and you see such a Frisbee, please send it back to HQ SOinC(A), because we like the AT facilities so much, we booked for next year. Fantastic

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj D Macaulay**
SSM **WO2(SSM) N Pollitt**

EXERCISE TRIDENT DRAGON, 16 – 23 JULY
- by Sgt MJC Holt

Friday 16 July 2004 will be a date that will live on in SYSEX history. 0830hrs saw the troops tooled up and weighed down with enough ammo to invade a small third world country. After receiving top secret orders from a higher formation, the Tp soon discovered that an error had been made, and they were in fact going on AT, not as they originally thought, going to flush out AQT from the mountainous areas on the Afghan/Pakistan border.

Enthralled at the challenge of the op, the Tp moved off with a spring in their step and a strange glint in their eyes. On arrival at Fremington's sleepy seaside fun camp, they were welcomed by the recce party, which had already made its presence felt by taking in the nearby facilities and attractions of Barnstaple. The next two days, saw the Tp's acclimatisation to the North Devonshire weather, with cultural visits to Ilfracombe and Woolacombe.

The Tp then embarked on a 3-day intensive programme of mental and physical challenges, and sometimes even both at the same time (if you get my drift). These involved vertical climbing; hill walking on some very steep hills; mountain biking; and sailing. In between these intensive daytime activities, the Tp experienced the gentlemanly pursuit of clay pigeon shooting.

On Thursday the troop faced a tactical ex in movement with a four-wheeled veh around a local farm (quad biking is ace!), followed by paintballing. The day was rounded off with BBQ. The week ended with the battle-weary and penniless Tp returning to the peacetime location for some well-earned R and R.

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj N Baugh**
SSM **WO2(SSM) R Lawrence**

Life in Operator Sec of Radio Systems Group has been as hectic as usual with over 10 courses running concurrently, ranging from Basic RS Ops to assisting the Tp Comds' Course remedy some of their crimes against VP. At the same time we said goodbye to a few friends from the Sec: **Sgts Nigel Brewin**, **Steve Gray** and **Scouse Lloyd**, who left the section to attend their YofS Course;

The Dream Team chasing LCpl Becky Edmonson

and **Sgt George Sutherland** to Northern Ireland. We are eagerly looking forward to welcoming the instructors from the Field Army who will augment the Sect in order to enable the Gp to undergo BOWMAN Conversion in October – interesting times ahead. But finally we are also eagerly looking forward to the arrival of our Group OC, **Maj (TOT) Baugh**, who joins the Group from HQ ARRC.

Eqpt Sec has had a quiet couple of months - the calm before the storm, with BOWMAN pending. The troops are keeping fit and are enjoying the new programme of Gp PT twice a week, which is supplemented by the CO's Run once a month. Be fit! Be Healthy! Live Longer! Congratulations to **Sgts Ferguson** and **Gordon** for successfully passing the recent FofS Board. They will be shortly leaving the Sec to start the next course in Sept 2004. Congratulations also to **SSgt Smith** for being awarded his Corps Colours for Cricket, which are well deserved.

Radex Tp has been through quite a busy period during the last month, with the impending arrival of BOWMAN. In addition to the normal round of Soldier and Comd Courses we are in the middle of a rolling programme to prepare our Defender FFRs, which are to be exchanged with LAND units for their Wolf FFRs, which are being converted to BOWMAN. Well done to **Cpl Dave Haskell** for being selected for promotion.

Following their time in the Gp, members of Tp Comds' Course 58 played Comd Sec at cricket, with the obligatory BBQ to follow. This turned out to be a really good day, as they paid their debts for aggravated assault on God's Trade. It would be unsportsmanlike to gloat over the fact we hammered them by 2 whole runs, so instead I will content myself with the fact **LCpl Chris McKechnie** went for a duck!

A big hello to **Cpl Lee Dixon**, **Cpl Jacko Jackson**, **Cpl Dave Honeywill** and **LCpl Shep Shepherd**. Hope you all have a good tour. Farewell to **Sig Mark Lowes** and wife **Jen**, off to 20 Armd Bde; **LCpl Somerville** and wife **Serena**, off to 14 Sig Regt; **Sgt Charlie Henson** and wife **Debbie**, off to 30 Sig Regt; and **Capt James Dennis** and family off to play with sailors in Portsmouth. Good luck and best wishes to all.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col GJ Complin**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) SA Hadley**

BLANDFORD SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Mackay**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Roberts**

The Sqn has continued to keep Blandford ticking over the last couple of months, including support to this summer's 'home of the Corps' activities. We bid a fond farewell to **Capt (QM) Angie Hilborn** who is retiring from the British Army to join the Australian Army. The whole Sqn and Regt wish her well. We welcome **Maj Pete Doherty MBE**, and his wife **Jackie**, who is taking over as the new QM (Tech).

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JC Boisvert** RC Sigs
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Overton**

FOVANT BADGES 2004

Since 1914–1915, in a small town called Fovant, nine giant cap badges have laid on the chalk downs. One of these cap badges is a Royal Signals Jimmy. Over time, the chalk colour fades and it becomes necessary to restore it. This year it was our turn and it took 11 men from 1 Sqn about 7 days to complete the task.

On arrival in Fovant, we suddenly appreciated what the task involved. The Jimmy is over 150 ft tall and needs 20 tonnes of chalk to cover him. Not an easy job when you're working on what seemed like Mount Snowdon. The week did not start off brilliantly as everyone got sunburnt over the first two days. Jimmy needed to be completely de-weeded, and any waste chalk had to be removed. The rest of the week then consisted of bringing the new chalk to replace the old – oh, and working on that squaddie tan. However, by the end of the week we were able to do a quick tidy up and have nice BBQ with Jimmy refreshed again.

The 1 Sqn Team take a breather at the top of the Corps' Fovant Badge

LANYARD TROPHY - 11 SIGNAL REGIMENT FEMALE TEAM
- by Sig Walker

The rest of the team had been training for months, but were short of an eighth member. I joined them less than a week before the competition started, but I hadn't trained and didn't know what to expect. I didn't expect I would finish, I don't think anybody did.

We left on the Tuesday for Sennybridge. Upon arrival we started to catch up with the other female teams, and this was when we realised what we were up against. All the other teams seemed to have done so much more trg than us. However, we tried to keep focused on our 14-15 hr goal.

Next morning was a very early start; we had to be ready for 03.00hrs. Upon waking I felt a lot less nervous, but by the time we got to the start point I was shaking like a leaf. It was at this point I realised what I had let myself in for. Everyone set off together. Racing up the hill was the hardest bit, but we had a goal, and at this moment in time that goal was to be at the front.

On getting to CP1, we were told we were in second place. It wasn't first, but it was a good start, and the aim now was to keep the ground that we had made. One of the hardest parts is not knowing how far you are in front so there is a constant fear that other teams will catch you up.

The rest of team had recced the course in brilliant sunshine, but on the day, we were faced with thick fog. At 05.00hrs, the rain started and didn't stop for the next seven hours. This was my lowest point in the whole day. I was ready to give up, and by CP4 my hands had swollen from the cold. We didn't stop to rest at any point throughout the day; we even ate our sandwiches on the move.

By CP6, the sun was out and we were still in second place. We were all surprised at how well we were doing. However, none of us had seen the route after CP5, so we had to trust **Capt Robson** that it wasn't that bad!

By CP9 there was no way that any of us was giving up. We had got so far, with just 3 more checkpoints to go. We pulled each other through it. The finish could be seen from about four miles away, and none of us could stop smiling - we just wanted to get there. The wind was incredibly strong coming down to CP12, and a few of us nearly got blown off the ridge. We were aching all over, but after a few more pink Smarties, nothing was going to stop us. As we arrived at CP12, the male team were there to cheer us on. This encouraged us to finish the last leg, which was the longest mile I have ever walked; it seemed to take forever. We made it to the finish! 14hrs 34 mins earlier we had been at the start. It was the ultimate feeling of achievement. Against all odds, we had come second in the Lanyard Trophy.

The 11 Sig Regt Female Lanyard Trophy Team: Capt Robson, Sgt Wood, Cpl Underwood, LCpl Owens, Sig Walker, Sig Chrisholm, Sig Saunders, Sig Deeley

It was a brilliant experience, and one that we all look forward to repeating next year! We couldn't have done it without each other and our own determination. We would like to thank our fantastic admin team, **Cpl Saxton** and **Cpl Scarcliffe**, without whose encouragement and support, the day could have been a lot longer and harder.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SSM Youngson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) EC Williams**

2 Sqn would like to welcome their new 2IC, **Capt Kerry Larsen** and Iron Tp Cpl, **Cpl Jennings**. They say good-bye to **Capt Liz Robson** who is off RAF Digby.

HARROGATE CUP CRICKET

The cricket competition of the Harrogate Cup was held over three days. The first match was between 1 Sqn and 2 Sqn. 2 Sqn won the toss and batted first. There was some magnificent cricket played, and 2 Sqn made a great total of 156 for 3, with **Sig Deeming** scoring 88 runs. This was followed by 1 Sqn scoring 52 runs all out. 2 Sqn won by 102 runs, and scored maximum batting and bowling points for the match.

The next match was 1 Sqn v 3 Sqn. 3 Sqn won the toss and batted first, gaining 57 runs all out. 1 Sqn responded by getting the total in 9 overs and losing only 2 wickets, which earned them 15 points. **Sig Reeves** from 1 Sqn had 4 wickets for 11 runs, an outstanding performance by any standard, well done.

The final match was between 2 Sqn and 3 Sqn. 2 Sqn won the toss and elected to go for maximum points and batted first. They managed to bat the full 20 overs and put on a staggering 206 for the loss of 2 wickets. There were exceptional performances by **Sig Deeming** making 84 by himself, and the Captain, **Sig Wall** retired on 50 not out. 3 Sqn came in to bat with high hopes, but a great performance by 2 Sqn bowled them out for 57 runs. There was outstanding bowling by **Sig Nimmo**, who took 4 wickets for 9 runs.

The results for the Harrogate Cup cricket were as follows: 2 Sqn won the maximum 40 points and came first, 1 Sqn came second, and 3 Sqn were third. This gives 2 Sqn a nice lead for the second half of the Harrogate cup competition, which recommences in September with basketball.

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING IN SWANAGE JULY 2004
- by Sig Wall

Upon hearing of an AT afternoon, I jumped at the chance to go. Twelve of us went to do climbing, abseiling and walking along the South West Costal Path. I was with the walking group for the first part of the afternoon. Under the guidance of **SSgt Richardson**, we all took it in turns to navigate and lead the group. We covered around 10 km along the coastal paths, enjoying the good weather and sights as we went. We finished at the *Square and Compass* in Worth Matravers. Later we were treated to sea cliff climbing with the Tp Comd, **WO1 Duke**. To start we had to abseil down on to a ledge about 50ft below. The only problem with this was that when we got down the only way up was to climb out. We all had a go at two climbs, one easy and one hard. **LCpl Fisher** tried to break-dance his way to the top. At one point the weather closed in with some light rain, which made the rock slippery and harder to climb. This caused a couple of people to be nervous and it took about 45 mins to get everyone back to the top.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj R Jones**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) T Ward**

LANYARD TROPHY – MALE TEAM - *by Sig Goodwill*

On Wednesday 30 June, we were up by 02.30hrs for breakfast at 03.00hrs. After trying to stomach a not so healthy fried breakfast,

Gearing up before abseiling off the cliff at Swanage

we left Sennybridge Trg Camp for a 40-minute drive to the start. The weather was very foggy and it threatening to rain as we arrived to find hundreds of people checking in. At this point, I realised the importance of the event and how big it really was. We lined up on the start line and began what was to be an eventful competition.

The real low point for me, and I expect many others, was from CP6 to CP7 - Fan Fawr, the valley from Hell. There were quite a few false summits, most of the team were struggling, and **Sig Haworth** twisted his ankle. Luckily, the twist was not as bad as first expected and he battled on. As we got closer to the finish, members of the team were starting to pick up injuries and were going though a lot of pain.

When we arrived at the final checkpoint, realising that we were in a good position, the team were determined to drive on around the final part of the race, despite the fact that the final road seemed to go on forever. When we finally crossed the line, as a complete team, it was a feeling that I have never had before, lots of emotions all at once and an amazing sense of achievement.

Overall, 11 Sig Regt Male Team came fifth out of 32 teams, with a time of 13hrs 20 mins, and were the first team to finish with all 10 team members who started. The team comprised: **Capt Wilson**, **Sgt Dade**, **Sig Goodwill**, **Cpl Chittick**, **Sig Shanker**, **Sig Min**, **Sig Josephs**, **Sig Haworth**, **Sig Maynard**, **Sig Lalit** and **Sig Sachin** as reserve.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col NP Metcalfe MBE QGM**
RSM	**WO1 D Mitchell**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj D Deegan**
SSM	**WO2 AV Gill**

LANYARD TROPHY MALE TEAM – *by LCpl Scipio*

Following an energy fuelling meal of takeaway pizza – and a bit of sleep – the male team of HQNI and 15 Sig Regt headed off via minibus into the gloomy drizzle of the Welsh hills.

At 05.00hrs a parachute flare marked the beginning of Lanyard Trophy 2004, with us trotting steadily along, watching other teams run off like madmen. We were confident that we would catch them up – especially with **SSgt Jase Lawer** leading us from the front. CP4 provided us with our first team support, but unfortunately we had to drop off **LCpl Chris Slade**, and after our team captain had given us a motivational kick up the behind, we lost only one other guy, **Cpl Dean Dickson**. There was no turning back – we were going to finish this, no matter what.

Just like the trg we had done for the event, we breezed up all the major hills (such as Pen y Fan) and flew down them just as easily, with **Capt Ben Norton** keeping us going from the rear of the team. Eventually the weather sorted itself out, it stopped raining, and the sun was shining for our final effort around the reservoir, with other teams chasing us. Digging in and gritting our teeth, we got to the finish point with a time of 13hrs 43 mins.

Despite the fact that some of the team members were not as experienced or as fit as others, we stuck together as a team, which got us there in the end. Everyone was well pleased with the result. The goal was to finish it – although some thought that the real goal was to get to the pub for a well-earned pint.

Thanks go to all members of the team - **Capt Ben Norton**, for keeping us all together at the back; **SSgt Jase Lawer**, for leading us; **Sgt Chadders Chadwick**, for his motivational skills; **Sgt Rory O'Neill** for keeping us laughing; **Cpl Paul Lomas**, for getting on with it; **Cpl Ryan Booth**, for being seemingly unstoppable; **Cpl Dean Dickson**, for joining our team at the last minute along with **Cpl Kiel Fraser**, without whom we couldn't have done it; LCpl **Chris Slade**, for sticking it out as long as he could; and **LCpl Skip Scipio**, for almost killing himself with effort and not giving up.

We must also mention the men behind the team – **WO2 Ian Good**, who along with **Sgt Jase Lawer** performed miracles in getting us to the trg and to the event, making sure we had everything we needed; and **Sgt Neil Blenkinsopp**, **Sgt Parks** and **Cpl Glen Moffatt**, for helping us out enormously at the team support check points. Well done lads!

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SJ McConnell**
SSM	**WO2 TJ Lappin**

OFFICERS v SNCOs CRICKET - *by Sgt Groundsell*

As always the sound of leather on willow brought members of both messes scurrying out of the woodwork for the annual Offrs v SNCOs cricket match on 8 July 2004, staged at Thiepval Bks Sports Field. For once, the Northern Irish weather was kind, and we were set for a full 30 over game without fear of interruption. After the usual pre-match aperitifs and banter, the two captains, **Lt Jez Wadia** and **Sgt Scotty Burman** tossed, with the SNCOs winning the toss and electing to bat.

The fetching attire worn by the Offrs squad was obviously off-putting for **WO1 (RSM) Dave Mitchell**, who was soon caught on the boundary for a disappointing 21. But this didn't deter the SNCOs amassing a very useful total 220 for 5 in their allotted overs. All the batsmen chipped in with runs, notably **Sgt Stu Sharman** (43), **Sgt Neil Cansfield** (40) and a superb knock of 51 not out by **Sgt Martin Angus**. For the fielding side, all the bowlers stuck to their guns, and at times bowled very well, particularly **Maj Inglis**, **Capt Erskine** and **Lt Wadia**.

The tea interval was a mixture of tactics, sausage rolls and the occasional can of lager. The question now was did the Offrs have the batting line up to cause the biggest upset since **SSgt Steve Perry** actually managed to hold a catch!

The answer wasn't long in coming as the eagerly awaited "duel" between the RSM and the CO lasted only two balls, with the CO taking long, slow walk back to the pavilion. Wickets continued to tumble at an alarming rate, with very little resistance being offered by the batting side. Only **Capt Cook** really managed to trouble the scorer with a hard fought 13, prolonging the inevitable, with the Offrs being bowled out for 25.

It was then deemed sporting to allow the Offrs a second innings. A much better batting display second time around saw them reach a creditable 87, with notable contributions from **Capt Jeffrey** (14 not out) and **Lt Wadia** (38 not out). As for the SNCOs bowling performance, a special mention should go to **Sgt Taff Powell**, who took three wickets.

The CO gracefully handed the trophy to a beaming **Sgt Burmans**, which rounded off a thoroughly enjoyable day. A special thank you to **Sgt Eddie Izzard** and his team for keeping the refreshments flowing, and to **Sgt Lesley Jay** for her superb impression of **Carol Vorderman** in keeping the score book ticking over.

WINNING LANYARD – THE FEMALE TEAM – *by LCpl Fewster*

At 05.00hrs on Wednesday 30 June, the 15 Sig Regt 'Helga' female team, along with 30 other teams from the Corps, were ready to face the challenge of the Lanyard Trophy. The race began in typical Welsh weather - mist and constant drizzle. With initially only 7 team members, we were grateful to **Cpl Nicki Harrison** for stepping in to save us from disqualification.

After a total of only 7 days in the Brecon Beacons prior to the competition (which only half the team were able to attend) the bad visibility and an officer as chief map reader, we were more than a little worried about navigating from CPs 1-4. So **Capt Debbie Coslett** was keen to stay hot on the tail of 216 Sig Sqn, and at every opportunity encouraged the team to participate in a little jog!

Congratulations to **SSgt Lisa Openshaw** who after joining us at the last minute, having no time to train, managed to complete the first 15 miles in 4hrs. Unfortunately she had to pull out of the competition in order for us to maintain our lead over the other 6 female teams.

Character, determination, and a warped sense of humour are important factors in winning a competition such as Lanyard, but none more so than teamwork. With all of these things, and more we eventually made it over the finish line to win the Female trophy with a time of 14hrs 6mins.

I would like to thank all the girls on the team for their own contributions, **Cpl Sam Clarke** for her morale stories, **LCpl Kirsty Burgmans** for pushing the pace! **LCpl Ange Fewster** for not dying on Pen y Fan, even with the 180 BPM heart rate!

The ever energetic **Sig Chez Williams**, but seemed happy enough to run the first 40 miles, **SSgt Pam Mitchell** managed to keep her on a leash. A special thank you to **Capt Coslett** and **SSgt Mitchell** for not only organising and running with the admin, but making this possible out on the ground. Well done girls!

The girls collect their trophies

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Fawcett**
SSM	**WO2 Wakeling**

COMRADES MARATHON - *by Cpl Karl Turner*

EX STRIDING SPHINX was a 15 Sig Regt exped to South Africa, to enter a team into The Comrades Marathon, one of the hardest Ultra Marathons in the world. The team comprised **Capt Paul Randell**, **Sgt Paul Newell**, **Sgt Nate Dorian** and **Cpl Karl Turner**, with all runners raising a total of over £700 in sponsorship for the Army Benevolent Fund. The exped also included a two-day visit to the Umlohzi Game Reserve and battlefield tours of Rorkes Drift and Islandwana.

Sgt Paul Newell ready for a shake down run!

The Comrades Marathon is steeped in history, going back to 1925, and is run from the coastal city of Durban to the industrial city of Petermarizberg, some 56 miles away. The marathon changes direction each year, 2004 being an up run with the first half being all up hill and the second half 'very undulating'! The race is against the clock with a cut off time of 12 hrs, and various checkpoints in between at which competitors are withdrawn from the race if they do not make the cut-off time.

Race day saw the four eager athletes bleary eyed in the centre of some 11,000 runners waiting for the 05.30hrs start. As the miles went by, an excellent atmosphere took our minds off some of the pain, and after some emotional moments, we were all at the finish. **Sgt Paul Newell**, aided by his new running GPS, completed the race in an excellent time of 8hrs 58mins, to earn a well deserved silver medal. **Capt Randell** came in at 10hrs 45 mins, winning a bronze medal, and **Sgt Dorian** and **Cpl Turner** finished together in 11hrs 15mins, to receive their copper medals.

Despite some very sore legs the following day, we moved north for battlefield tours at Rorkes Drift and Islandwana, made famous by the films *Zulu* and *Zulu Dawn* respectively. All four of us were given a guided tour by the renowned historian David Rattray, and not only were we given a commentary from a military point of view, but also from personal accounts as well. It was very informative and a good insight into not only a British victory in the area but also a British defeat - or great Zulu victory, depending on the point of view taken.

8th INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC	**Maj DC Gaul**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) KJ O'Neill**

BRIGADE MARCH AND SHOOT - *By Sig Creighton*

On 23 July 04 twelve members of the Sqn prepared to take part in the annual 8 Bde March and Shoot competition. After two months of constant trg, the team were feeling confident of doing well against the resident inf bns.

As soon as we arrived at Magilligan Trg Centre to take part, we were drenched by the fine Northern Ireland rain. Soaked to the bone, we had a quick kit check, weighed in, and set off to the first stand, a falling plate competition. After knocking down all the plates and handing in our leftover rounds, we set off on the first four-mile tab to the next stand.

We arrived at the next stand after 43 mins of carrying 25 kg, made heavier by the downpour. This stand was the Roupel Cup, which was quite interesting for most of us, as we'd never done it before. When the scores were read out, we realised that we weren't doing so well, because some guys couldn't hit anything.

The team tabbing hard between shoots

With that stand over, we set off on the next 4-miler to the last stand, the Parachute Regt Cup. By this stage, some guys were struggling, but thanks to the words of wisdom from **Cpls Pete Thorpe** and **Stevie Girling** (tabbing monsters), the whole team managed to make it to the finish, coming in with an overall time of 88 mins. We did a little bit better on the final stand, and then jumped in the vehs back to the admin tents for a brew and a burger.

We waited for the results thinking we had done alright. We did ourselves proud by not coming last, seeing we were the only non-inf guys. The winners were 4 Royal Irish, who do this sort of thing all year and have a full team of Army marksmen.

Thanks to **Cpl Jamie Crooks** for organising and running the whole trg programme. Let's hope we do better next year.

EXERCISE CALEDONIAN FINN - *by WO1(RSM) O'Neill*

8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn deployed on EX CALEDONIAN FINN 04 which was a two week AT ex in the Cairngorms area of Scotland. The plan had been to undertake two identical weeks trg with a change over period in the middle, with the guys and girls having a go at hill walking, kayaking, and mountain biking. Unfortunately a week prior to deploying the Kayaking instructor had to withdraw from the exercise.

Main Body 1 deployed from Ballykelly and via the Larne to Cairnryan ferry and a 5-hr road trip to Aviemore, arriving in time to get some scran and a quick brief from the RSM. Then for the lucky some, a quick bus trip to enjoy the delights of the local town.

Over the next few days, the 3 groups got the opportunity to go hill walking with **WO1 (RSM) Kev O'Neill**, who kept their spirits up with a never ending supply of top class jokes, and **Sgt Andy Doyle**, who took his group around Ben Macdui, Cairngorm and racing up Coire Raibert. **Cpl Stoney Stone** took the groups mountain biking around the Glenmore forest area, over some cheeky terrain.

Capt Ashton and group at Summit of Beinn Mheadoin

The last day of week one allowed the guys the chance to go fishing, biking or walking around the Norwegian lodge, where the team was accommodated. The RSM drew the short straw and took the girls walking. The chaps who went fishing had a fairly successful day, brining back 5 fish for that night's BBQ. The less said about **Col Sutherland's** golfing, the better.

An early start on the Thursday morning saw Main Body 1 heading back to the Province. Group 2 arrived on the Saturday and it was straight back into it, with the RSM, **Capt Dan Ashton** and **Sgt Billy Mathews** leading the hill walking, and **Cpl John Mercer** doing the mountain biking. It was fortunate that we had **Capt Ashton** with us for Week 2, as his JSMEL qualification allowed the groups to undertake some more interesting walking than was possible during Week 1. It was excellent stuff, with the groups managing to Climb Cairn Toul, Beinn Mheadhoin, Braeriach and Ben Macdui, providing some excellent views of the entire Cairngorm region.

The final day of this week again saw some of the troops going fishing, but the majority did a mini battlefield tour of the Culloden

HO/TO of 218 Sig Sqn between Maj Gaul and Maj Parsons

Moor, the last battle to be fought on British soil. As every one in the group was either English or Commonwealth, the RSM felt a wee bit like Bonny Prince Charlie's troops would have on that day in 1746, heavily outnumbered. A meal in town that evening finished the ex off nicely and the group rose early the next day to return to the Province.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt JD Landreth**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Love**

With the Marching Season and prep for it taking up most of the Tp's time this period, it's hard to believe that most of the lads still got to deploy on the Sqn's AT package as well. Perhaps it's a sign of the times.

The Tp's manpower continues to change at an astonishing rate. We welcome **Sig Martin** from Blandford, and have lost **Sig Creighton** to 14 Sig Regt (EW) and **LCpl Baxter** to 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn we wish them both good luck in their new posts.

There has also been a change of Sqn OC. **Maj Gaul** has departed after several leaving dos, and we wish him, his wife **Helen** and their children all the best as he heads off to Fort Halstead to start an SO2 appointment. His replacement, **Maj Parsons**, has taken over the helm. He and his wife, **Rachael** are settling in quickly to their new posting.

QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT

QM	**Capt O'Keefe**
RQMS	**SSgt Kielty**

The QM Dept has been as busy as ever over the last month or so in support of the Marching Season and the Sqn's AT camp in Scotland. The Dept welcomes the new QM, **Capt Eddie O'Keefe**, who arrived this month. He fills the OC Sup Tp post left vacant by **Maj Merv Gordon**, who left for 71 Engr Regt (V) in Scotland.

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

2nd (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

ARMY

Comd	**Brig JE Thomas MBE**
COS	**Maj J Rowley**

The staff of HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde has been determined to see more of the country than the greenery of their office windows. A CPX in South Cerney was soon followed by a week of AT at Castle Martin, and then a short Mil Trg Ex at Fremmington. With all this going on, **Capt (TOT) Sid Sideras** still managed to take over as SO3 Tels/Eqpt and compete in the Lanyard Trophy for his previous unit, 21 Sig Regt (AS), finishing with a very respectable time. His predecessor, **Capt (TOT) Neil Taylor** departed for 16 Sig Regt, to take over his new post in Basrah.

There have also been some changes amongst the TA staff. **Maj Steve Baker** moved back to 31 Sig Regt (V) and has been replaced by **Maj Steve Ong**. **Maj Roddy Sutherland** also left the HQ on promotion to Lt Col has taken command of 32 Sig Regt (V).

EXERCISE POCKERIDGE DRAGON 04

On 14 June 04 a minibus carrying the 4 most adventurous members of the Bde HQ departed Corsham for the long journey to Castle Martin in Wales. The activities were not due to start until the following day, so after some PT, **WO2 (YofS) Clint Barker** decided to lead the group to the nearest pub. He forgot to mention that it would take over 1½ hrs to walk there.

The Bde Comd, **Brig JE Thomas MBE**, arrived early on the Tuesday morning, and it was then all aboard the minibus for the drive to Dale, where the activity for the day, a trek, began. The sun shone, and the now slightly larger group walked the coastal path from Dale, past St Ann's Head around to Westdale Bay. There was little chance of getting lost, as the sea was on the left and the route was signposted. By midday, the Comd's driver, **Cpl Tim Lockwood**, had arrived, and the walk moved inland, away from the coastal path. This proved navigationally more difficult, especially when walking through one cornfield to the next. Should any disgruntled farmers have appeared the Comd, the only Welshman in the group, was given the task of doing the talking.

After a hard day's walk, the evening was spent on the clay pigeon range. **Majs Charlie Miller** and **John Williams**, from 14 Sig

Regt (EW), set the range up and then went through an instructional lesson. A series of shoots, each of 2 shots were set. By the half way point, the YofS had a clear lead, but he had peaked too soon. By the final shoot, the Comd and **Cpl Tim Lockwood** had levelled with him. A shoot off followed, with **Cpl Lockwood** taking the honours by 1 shot. The Comd came in second, with the Yeoman a disappointing third.

Wednesday 16 June was to be the most adventurous day of the ex. It began with the long drive around the coast to Porth Clais. Having been issued with all the kit, it was time to do some rock climbing. With the majority of the group being total novices, even wearing the shoes known by the professionals as 'stickies' proved to have difficulties. Apparently, they were supposed to fit like ballerinas' shoes. The climb involved being lowered (abseiling) down a cliff face almost into the sea. The route back to the top was up a smooth surface, with very few places to put hands or

Hold tight – eyes closed; going down

feet. **Capt Rev Bolam**, the most experienced climber in the group, led the way, and showed just how easy it was.
Maj Tom Dean did not agree with this, using both knees as extra points of contact. The climbing was hard, but the belaying proved to be even more difficult. **Capt Hannah Owen** went into blind panic as she nearly joined **Capt Rev Bolam** when he went over the edge to be lowered, and the YofS gave the Comd no confidence at all. Just as he was starting to move down the cliff face, the YofS had become completely confused with which rope he was supposed to be pulling on.

The entire group made it up the 25m rock face without being pulled, and later learned that it was classed as a severe and known to be very hard, especially for beginners. The biggest relief was when the stickies were taken off and feet were allowed to return to their natural shape.

The loc for the afternoon's activity, land-yachting, was Newgale Sands. The weather remained calm, which was a problem, as wind was required to move the yachts across the beach. After a short wait, the lightest members of the group, **Capt Hannah Owen** and **YofS Clint Barker** took to the sands, and got the yachts moving. The remainder of the group were not so lucky,

OK, who is going to push me now?

and although most managed to move a short distance, few managed to get up any speed.
Due to the JSUC Cocktail Party, the Ex had to be cut short, so the 2 (NC) Sig Bde adventurers returned to Corsham to dress up for the evening's activity.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

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

CO **Lt Col AP Bristow**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C Bruce BEM**

As always, a busy time for the Premier Regt. The CO is on Adv Trg (again!), sailing (again!) and the remainder of the Regt are on summer leave. Notable activities for this period were EX PREMIER CHALLENGE, a 'fun' ex conducted all over Germany, and the Regtl ex, EX PREMIER CHAIN all over the Hameln area.

HERFORD STATION SUMMER FETE

This year's Station Summer Fête was organised by 211 Sig Sqn on 12 June 2004. The build-up had started many months ago, and with the day rapidly approaching, the weather was decidedly unpredictable to say the least.

As the opening time of 11.00hrs approached, the weather closed in and the storm (Hurricane Rhino) peaked at 10.58hrs! With the CO, **Lt Col Andy Bristow**, opening the event with the Bielefeld Pipes and Drums accompanying the grand opening, things were not going well. There was a break in the rain, which allowed the Fête to be opened and the 14 people waiting to come in, flocked to the attractions.

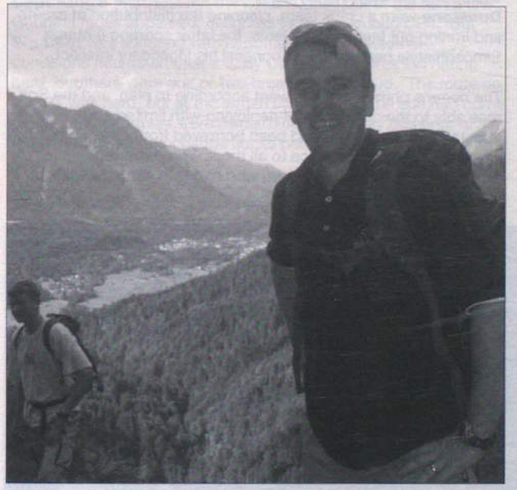
Thankfully, the day improved and the event was a great success, the highlight being a school trampoline and gymnastics display team from UK calied *The Kangaroos*. The entertainment just kept coming, with an England v Germany youth 5-a-side football match, Inter-Sqn *It's a Knockout* and a Grand Raffle. The day was a complete success, and we managed to raise nearly 8,000 for charity – Great Ormond Street, The Army Benevolent Fund and a local German children's charity.

EXERCISE PREMIER CHALLENGE

EX PREMIER CHALLENGE was the CO's 'fun' exercise, which involved exploiting the German countryside and showing the Regt the opportunities that are on our doorstep.

Run over a 2-week period, the ex saw the Regt spilt into peer groups of eight. Set off in two Rovers per team, the teams were released onto the German roads. As in a treasure hunt, the teams were given their next grid ref and a time to meet the 'Agent', and had to complete a task to collect vital intelligence leading to a final grid loc.

Tasks included trekking in the Bavarian Alps; mountain biking in the Hartz mountains; a section attack on a local trg area; a cultural visit in Garmisch, Bavaria; rock climbing; kayaking; and many more. Once all teams had accrued their points and 'vital int', it was off to the final loc, where they all completed an orienteering route in their teams. It was neck and neck at this stage, with 2 of the 38 teams way in front – HQ Sqn Comd Team and 211 Sig Sqn Comd Team. Needless to say, both teams performed appallingly in the orienteering, and each team thought that the other had come second overall. After the gruelling orienteering, the Chefs put on a wonderful BBQ, and the results were announced. Overall winning team was the HQ Sqn Comd Team with 211 Sig Sqn Comd Team in a close second place. The Sqn prize went to 211 Sig Sqn.



WO2(FofS) Andy Draper enjoying a photo opportunity while trekking.

Not being able to relax too much, the QMSI decided that an early morning run after the heavy BBQ the night before was in order before the drive back to Herford. Nice! It has to be said it was a fantastic ex, with the teams and DS enjoying it immensely. Roll on next year and Premier Challenge 2005!

EXERCISE PREMIER CHAIN

EX PREMIER CHAIN was a Regtl-level ex, conducted in the Hameln area. The aim of the ex was to build on previous Sqn level exs, and to build up towards the Div ex coming up in September.

It was slightly different from your average ex, with the HQ deploying to private land... Sennelager Trg Area was closed for refurbishment! The recce offrs had come up trumps with some plush farm complexes and schloss to build the HQ near. The GOC, **Maj Gen P Wall CBE**, visited the tps at various locs, and was impressed with what he saw.

The ex was a reasonably fast moving one, with several moves over the 2-week period, the highlight being the Sugar Factory loc. Not only was it a sugar factory, but a frozen food distribution factory... i.e. free ice cream and cones! Building Div Main dismounted inside the factory was a challenge, and then to tear down and drive the veh inside to build the HQ again was again... challenging. In the meantime, 212 Sig Sqn were re-roling as DSG.... not an easy task I hasten to add, when the Sqn is scaled to provide a Main or Alt HQ!

The OC Maj Andy Lucas closely followed by SSgt Scott McKenzie stride out in front of Diamond 1 in the Sugar Factory

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Stuart MacRostie MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A Dick**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Clarke GM QGM***
SSM **WO2(SSM) P Haughton**

ARMY IN YORK OPEN DAY AND KOHIMA WEEKEND

- by Capt Matt Nuttall

After many months of furious and meticulous planning, the Army in York Open Day and Battle of Kohima 60th Anniversary parade took place over the weekend of 17-18 July 04. The main aim of the Open Day was to provide an exciting and informative day for all the family with a core theme of military activity, but with as many diverse and interesting stalls and attractions. This was to give the Army the chance to show itself off to the public and raise many thousands of pounds for worthy causes at the same time.

Each of the Sqns in 2 Sig Regt provided stalls and hosted and liased with the many outside agencies and attractions who supported the day. A well planned publicity campaign in the weeks running up to the Open Day ensured that many thousands of people attended from as far away as Newcastle and Leeds, with the local papers, radio and TV providing excellent local coverage.

The main attractions included the White Helmets, The Royal Signals Parachute Display Team, Gurkha cultural shows (including dancing and Taekwondo), marching bands, a military re-enactment display and a fly past by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. The Regional Recruiting Gp did a smashing job in providing attractions such as rope slides and climbing walls, and there was all manner of military hardware for the young (and not so young) to clamber over.

Despite the atrocious weather on the day, around 8,000 people attended, raising a fantastic amount for charity. It was without doubt an unqualified success, and will surely be repeated for many years to come.

The Taekwondo Demonstration

The following day saw the 60th and last Battle of Kohima celebration. Kohima was one of the most decisive, but little recognised battles of the Burma Campaign in WW2, widely accepted as the turning point for the Allies in that theatre.

This year marked the last official celebration, and so it was fitting that another WW2 veteran, **HRH The Duke of Edinburgh**, took the salute at the March Past. Many veterans paraded past York Minster with the crowd that included many hundreds of tourist breaking into spontaneous applause. Afterwards a curry lunch was held on the Sgts Mess lawns before a final flag lowering ceremony. It was a most fitting end to a fantastic weekend for the Regt.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

CO	**Maj Rab Young**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Daz Abson**

EXERCISE CENTAUR'S CHARGE – *by Sig Bolden*

The Sqn had a hectic June and July with prep and deployment to the fictitious country of Anglia on EX CENTAUR'S CHARGE. Our role was to provide comms to support the 1,500 exercising troops from 7 Air Defence Bde. The ex was our last with the PTARMIGAN equipt (we'll believe that when we see it) and we were determined to go out on a high.

219 Sig Sqn Ops team ran the show, with **Maj Rab Young** overseeing all. **SSgt (YofS) Matt Kutzner** and **SSgt FofS Gaz Dunstone** were a crack team, planning the distribution of assets and ironing out teething problems, the latter sporting a Marge Simpson style head of hair to conceal his legendary intellect.

The comms phase of the ex went according to plan, and the Sqn rose ably to the challenges of deploying with limited and substandard equipt that had been borrowed from other units. The ex gave valuable experience to all those who deployed, particularly the newer signallers, who had to endure the trials of living in the field for several weeks.

HRH The Duke Of Edinburgh meets Veterans and QGS Soldiers

219 Sig Sqn now moves onwards and upwards in the dawning of a new era with the imminent arrival of CORMORANT and the BOWMAN refits.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Ade Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM)**

LANYARD TROPHY 2004

2 Sig Regt put together three teams for Lanyard 2004. **Capt Jim King** and **WO2(SSM) Darren Abson** ran the main team; **Lt Luke Webber** and **Sgt Vinod** ran a 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn team and **Lt Jules Thomson** and **Cpl Emma Brown** ran the female team.

The teams travelled down the day before the event, booked into the accn and received last minute briefings. Then they were up for breakfast at 03.00hrs and on the transport to get to the start at 03.45hrs. Around 30 other teams also lined up on the start line.

The rain and darkness meant that teams at either side of the start line could not see each other. At 05.00hrs they were off. The teams had to travel to CP4 before we would see them again. The rain had not relented and the temperature had dropped.

Capt King's team cleared the CP first, then out of the rain a few Ghurkha faces appeared, delighted to have reached CP4. But **Sig Dilip** was suffering with hypothermia. The weather conditions had taken their toll. By CP6, the rain was still hitting hard, but there were one or two breaks in the cloud. The route up to CP7 was hard, but at the admin stop at CP9, the sun had come out and temperatures were rising. There was only had time to refuel with water and change socks before the climb to Pen-Y-Fan.

There was now a large gap between **Capt King's** team and **Lt Webber's**. **Capt King** was pushing his team hard only a few minutes behind 11 Sig Regt. Their bodies were hurting, but their faces showed pure determination to try to catch the 11 Sig Regt team. They almost ran the whole 2 km to the finish.

The 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn Team

Capt King's team made 6th place overall, with a time of 13 hrs 26 mins. 246 (QGS) Sig Sqn lead by **Lt Webber** made it round in 15 hrs 40 mins. The female team, with pure grit and willpower made it in 20 hrs 34 mins, putting them as 5th female team. They could only manage a crawl between CP12 and the finish, but they finished in style, holding hands walking across the finish line.

Sig Bloor was taken straight to the ambulance to check her feet. She still managed to walk down the aisle two days later to wed **Sig Gurung**. Congratulations to them on their marriage and to all the teams that competed in Lanyard Trophy 2004. See you there next year?

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON IN IRAQ

246 Sig Sqn are now deployed on OP TELIC. See our separate report in the Gulf Section on page 413.

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col DB Hudson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) DJ Kelly**

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Roy Freeman**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Wakeling**

Things in Sqn HQ seem to have quietened down since EX IRON TRIANGLE finished, that is if you do not include continuing with BOWMAN, courses, postings and the odd birth or two. AT went really well, and was an opportunity for the Sqn to relax after a very busy couple of months. The weather at Capel Curig was fantastic (for Wales) and smiles seemed to remain on everyone's faces all week. Good luck to **Maj Freeman** and **WO2(SSM) Wakeling**, who are both moving onto pastures new. And welcome to **Abigail Levick**, the newest and youngest member of the Sqn, with congratulations to **SSgt(FofS) Pete Levick** and **Sandra** on their new arrival.

NORMANDY TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Rachel Thompson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Loz Sharp**

EXERCISE IRON TRIANGLE

Over the last few weeks, the Tp has been getting acquainted with the new Div HQ build, and in particular, DRASH, (Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter). However, the 'Rapid' part of the name is open to serious debate! On a warm Friday morning, just outside Rollestone Camp, the build of the Div HQ for EX IRON TRIANGLE began.

On arrival at the selected piece of real estate, we surprised to discover that it was hard standing! **SSgt Sharp** then to cracked his whip, and after a 48 hrs of hard graft, the 'Big Top' was erected. Once comms had been installed and tested, we began the Regtl phase of the ex.

During this phase, several members of the Tp were tasked by the Regtl Ops Team to test the defence plans of some of Regt's other assets. Needless to say, there was no shortage of volunteers for these tasks! However, on such ops you have to accept that things may not always run smoothly, as certain personnel found out, when they were captured and made to pan bash for one of the other Sqns!

With the Regtl phase over, and all POWs repatriated, the main phase of EX IRON TRIANGLE began in earnest with the arrival of the GOC and his Div Staff. The Tp Comd, **2Lt Rachel Thompson**, along with her merry bunch of men and women, ensured that the many conference calls went smoothly, whilst over in Radio Village, the remainder of the Tp ensured there were good HF, VHF, and PTARMIGAN comms throughout this phase. Although the pace may not have been as furious as expected, the Tp and indeed the Sqn conducted itself extremely professionally, a point which was made by the GOC in his post-ex debrief.

DRASH from the air

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Nick Range**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Fitz-Patrick**

It is with great sadness that we report the death of **Sig Michael Thomas**. Having joined the Regt from trg and enjoying a successful tour on OP TELIC, he had quickly become a model soldier and a friend of many. He had shown great enthusiasm for Army and Corps life, and indeed greater promise for the future. At this sad time, the hearts of the whole Regt go out to his family and friends.

On a happier note, we congratulate to **Maj Nick Range**, **Lt James Caveen**, **Sgt Gaz Mace** and **WO2(FofS) Nicholls** on their recent marriages. Also congratulations to **Cpls Jay Butler** and **Tracy Fairbairn** on their selection for promotion. We farewell **Cpl Pete Mayhead** and **Sig Kurgan Walker**, who have moved on to pastures new; and we welcome **SSgt Mick Woods**, who joins us from 30 Sig Regt on promotion.

LANYARD TROPHY *- by Cpl Jay Butler*

The 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt Lanyard Trophy Team started training in early April with enough people for two teams. As the trg progressed and got more intense, some of the lads knew

When the going gets tough, the tough get going

something we didn't, and quit while they were ahead. After too many miles and blisters, we all felt like quitting!

It wasn't going to get any easier. We had two trg camps at Sennybridge to endure before the competition finally started. We grew to know the route like the backs of our hands, and the infamous Welsh weather seemed to be on our side for the majority of our time. As we came to the end of our trg, the Team had more or less picked itself: **Cpls Jay Butler**, **James Smith**, **Carl Brownsword**, **Aaron Garside**, **Sigs Thomo Thompson**, **Aaron Brown**, **John Williams**, **Taff Hughes** and **Matt Lyons**. Thanks to **Lt Watson** for being chucked in at the deep end and getting the team off the start line.

At a very early hour on 30 June, the Lanyard Competition began. As we entered CP1, **Lt Watson** was allowed to rest for the remainder of the day, and we dropped off our first injury victim. With only eight left in the team, we now couldn't afford any further injuries. But the terrain had other ideas and we picked up our second injury between CP3 and 4. With only seven left in the team, and being at the back of the field, we decided to go for it.

By CP 6, we had clawed our way back to sixth place, but the rest were too far ahead. We had no further injuries, and eventually we were approaching CP12. We knew it wasn't far to go now. After what felt like an age, we saw the finish. And after 13 hrs and 4 very long minutes, we crossed it, slightly the worse for wear, to say the least.

A big thanks to the Admin Team, **SSgt Dave Alderson** and **Cpl Jay Harding**, without whom we couldn't have achieved such a result.

BRITISH ARMY (GERMANY) HOCKEY - THE LEIGH TROPHY 2004 *- by Sgt Murcott*

It was with confidence and expectation that the 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt Hockey Team set sail for the delights of JHQ and the Leigh Trophy. For several members of the team it was an opportunity to see what life in Germany was like, and for others it was a chance to meet up with old friends. Despite the usual havoc of the M25 and **Cpl James Masters** exiting the port of Dover without actually boarding the ferry, we eventually arrived safe and sound in JHQ. Once everyone had caught up on some much-needed sleep, it was down to Javelin Bks for some light trg in the pouring rain.

Although expectations were high and despite getting off to a great start with a fine individual goal by **Sgt Marcus Murcott**, the team lost to Hohne 2 – 1. Further defeats by JHQ 1st XI and West Yorkshire Police meant a trip into the Plate competition rather than the Cup itself. Although this was disappointing, the team coped well, and morale was certainly high throughout the day, with everyone enjoying the JHQ BBQ and mixing with the other teams.

With clear heads, the team set off next day determined not to be whitewashed. Marshalled superbly in defence by **Sig Rachel Hay**, we managed to hold JHQ 2nd XI to a 1 -1 draw, thanks to a goal by **Lt Sophie Howe**. With the Golden Goal period not finishing in a result, the tie went to penalty flicks, and after some heroics by our goalkeeper, **Cpl Pete Mayhead**,saving all three of their flicks, and some fine goals of our own, scored by **Sgt Marcus Murcott**, **LCpl Tim Tyler** and **Cpl James Masters**, we had our first victory of the tournament.

The semi-final saw us taking on JHQ 1st XI, and although we had been beaten by them the previous day, we felt confident that we could get something from this game. Unfortunately, it was not to be, and an early opposition goal sent us out in the semi-finals.

Overall, this was a great weekend of hockey, and though we were disappointed by the results, we were pleased to have taken part in such a competitive and well-managed tournament. Plans are already underway for next year, and hopefully we will then be returning with the silverware.

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col GR Norton**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Manktelow**

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CHALLENGE

2 July this year dawned cloudy and distinctly wet, but the members of 7 Sig Regt were anticipating an activity packed day. Activities ranged from clay pigeon shooting, paintballing and skiing to diving, golf and water skiing. We even managed to get the Bde Comd, **Brig N Couch** to try out a few of the activities. The afternoon then took the form of a BBQ for lunch, a series of *Gladiator*-like contests and the water stocks - all in aid of Silver Child and Great Ormond Street Hospital.

SUB – AQUA DIVING *- by Sgt Karen Gunn*

It was a Friday morning in Elmpt Station's swimming pool, and 20 would-be **Jacques Cousteaus** arrived for a taste of diving. The day was hosted by **Mr George Ryan**, **Sgt Karen Gunn** and **Cpl Richie Savage**, all members of the Elmpt Station Sub-aqua Club. We started the morning by giving everyone a quick safety brief and an introduction into basic Scuba equipt. We then took two candidates and kitted them up with Scuba gear, put them in the pool, and got them started on basic breathing. The time allocated for each pair was about 20 mins, which gave people enough time to familiarise themselves with the underwater environment and the equipt. Everyone agreed it was a new way to spend a day…some even thought it was more favourable than spending the day in garages!

PAINTBALLING *- by Sig Kim Smith*

Several members from each Sqn attended the paint-balling event, not knowing the dangers that we would face. During the day, we were given different scenarios that related to our mil skills trg. One of these was to capture the enemy's flag from their base camp, and return it to our own before they could steal ours. **LCpl Redpath**, **Sig Coverley** and I decided to use our pepper-potting skills to nick the enemy's flag. We were within 20m of their base, when we realised they, had a sentry out. **Sig Coverley** decided to take the position by storm, but was 'killed' instantly, the remaining two of us hearing only a yelp in the woods ahead! **LCpl Redpath** was soon killed, leaving me to complete the mission alone. I decided that a full frontal attack was my only option, and soon found myself running towards the enemy camp. I was stopped in my tracks by a machine gun (loaded with paint of course), so our attempt at a quick mission was over! During this time, the other members of my team were also involved in a firefight defending our own flag. After a further 30 mins of fighting, the enemy flag was stolen and returned to our base, winning us the game.

All in all, everyone really enjoyed themselves, and are keen to fight again!

WATER SKIING *- by Sig Timmy Churchill and Lt Lucy Webster*

The water skiing took place at the Blue Lagoon, a big private lake near Venlo. It used a pulley system to drag the skiers around. The best approach was to stay low and lean back, not quite the manner **Sig Cairns** demonstrated when she went headfirst into the water leaving her skis behind on the platform! After a few goes, most could master at least one lap without swimming - that was, until they tried to progress on to just one ski. The weather wasn't kind to us, not that that mattered with everyone soon soaked!

Everyone enjoyed the day, especially **Maj David Hay** RASigs, who evidently had memories of past times in sunny Australia, which must now seem like a distant memory.

REGIMENTAL SUMMER FETE *- by Sig Sorby*

On Friday July 2, 2004, 7 Sig Regt held its annual summer party, organised this year by **SSgt Kidd**, with three long days spent setting up the attractions.

Start time was 14.00hrs, but at 13.30hrs, it was still raining and things weren't looking good. But at the last minute, just as people started to arrive, the weather eased and the fun began.

The stocks were making plenty of money for the Regtl charity, Silverchild, with many popular faces offering their services to raise as much as possible. In total, 1,089 was made. Special thanks go to Regtl MT and LAD, for raising the bidding so high to use the hose from the Station Fire Service on the CO, **Lt Col G Norton**. All in a good cause, Sir!

Next we had an inter-Tp *Gladiator* contest, with the winners representing their Sqns at inter-Sqn level. Once again, 231 Sqn came a close second to overall winners, 229 Sqn.

At the end of a hardworking and fun day, with good timing, the rain hammered down, signalling to all that the day was over. I think its safe to say that everyone enjoyed themselves.

LANYARD TROPHY 2004 *- by Sgt Chris Healey*

This year was the 25th anniversary of the competition, which took place in the Brecon Beacons. After our well-deserved 3rd place last year, trg for the Regtl squad started early this year. They gathered in March and trained early every morning and on Friday afternoons. The trg varied from circuit work to 20-mile tabs. For a number of reasons, the numbers slowly began to dwindle, until a squad of 18 remained. These were the individuals who would move down to Cwyrt-y-Gollen for the continuation trg. Our aim was simple – to achieve a better result than last year. We had 2 weeks to prepare ourselves. The trg was done carrying 30-35lbs, and a third of the course would be covered each day, with the team splitting down into smaller groups to locate the quickest route. This was done day after day, until every member of the team knew the entire route off by heart. Hopefully, this would remove the need to navigate, and therefore save time. The trg was interspersed with swimming, running and watching the England matches in the local watering hole! As time went on, several team members picked up niggles and bad blisters, and eventually, the team more or less selected itself. The remaining few days were spent eating, sleeping and stretching, in preparation for the event.

The Magnificent Nine stride it out

The team moved down to Sennybridge Camp the day before the competition and busied itself making final preparations. We were up at 03.00hrs the following morning to travel to the start point. The weather was wet and windy, and visibility was hampered by fog. We set off as a mass start at 05.00hrs, and the battle for an early position began.

The main contenders soon created a gap from the rest of the field. At the halfway point, the pattern was set, with 216 Sig Sqn in the lead, followed by us then 14 Sig Regt (EW)). As the day wore on, the weather became hotter, and this began to take its toll on the teams. The team positions didn't change, and 7 Sig Regt with 9 men, tabbed over the finish line in 2nd place, in a time of 11hrs 22mins. We had fulfilled our aim. The course was the hardest for many years, and those individuals who competed, or who were in the admin team did an excellent job. The journey back to Germany however, proved to be just as emotional as the event!

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj David Hay** RASigs
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Daz Welch**

The past couple of months have been a busy time for the Sqn in terms of personnel movement and commitments. Sqn HQ has lost the FofS, **SSgt(FofS) Mick O'Hara**, Tech SSgt, **SSgt Chris Stuart**, while all the Tps have seen movement in and out. But Bravo Tp would like to say a special goodbye to **Sgt Andy Delaney** on promotion to 1 Bn REME

We've been involved in several exs in UK with 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, building HQs and demonstrating our SATCOM assets at high profile demos for four-star Generals...oh yes and working every hour possible for that time of year again, RSIT. All in all, it has been demanding and testing, and all that is left is EX DRIVE THRU, a sqn-level ex that is being kept tightly under wraps! Details in the next edition.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Fallowes**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) G Dixon**

EXERCISE BAVARIAN ODYSSEY BACKSTOP - *by Sig Lock*

On 28 Jun 04, we left Javelin Bks for 10 days' AT in Bavaria as part of the Regtl AT package at Hubertushaus Lodge. On arrival, we were split into three groups with a round robin of all activities available over the first three days: rock climbing, kayaking and mountain walking. After the initial three introductory days, as part of the R and R package half the group went white water rafting, while the rest visited the cultural town of Garmisch. We were then given the opportunity to focus on of the three activities we wanted to do for the remaining five days.

Those who chose kayaking had the opportunity to gain their KFC (not Kentucky Fried Chicken but Kayaking Foundation Course!), which is the first step towards becoming an Instructor. By the end of the week, nearly everyone could do Eskimo rolls under the expert instruction of **Sgt Robbo Robertson**.

The rock climbers visited Fussen 1 and Fussen 2, where they were continuously challenged by increasingly arduous climbs. Bad weather forced them indoors for a couple of days, and this developed their ability to 'lead' climbs. **Sigs Orton** and **Blackett** were particularly proficient.

The most rugged and fearless individuals, including myself, opted for mountain walking as a preparation for future MLT courses, and we braved many peaks including the daunting Rubihorn and Nebelhorn, the highest peak in Germany at 2,224 metres.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**Lt Col RD Meinertzhagen**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) M Jolly**

LANYARD TROPHY - *by SSgt Bruce Thornton*

Without a doubt, the Brecon Beacons was always going to be a tough competition route. And it didn't let us down. Our trg started in earnest a couple of months prior to the competition in the local area, moving to the competition area for the final two weeks. The number of other teams training in the area indicated that the 2004 competition was going to be toughly fought over.

On the day at the start point, we witnessed all sorts of professional warm-ups and 1950's style stretching. There was, it must be said, a good mix of high spirits, good humour and determination. For many, this was going to be their 'Longest Day.'

In traditional style, the competition started with 216 Sig Sqn running off at their usual pace. With high hopes, we followed closely - for at least ten minutes until we lost sight of them in the mist, never to be seen again! The first couple of CPs were very busy, with a lot of teams still pushing themselves. By CP3, the running order had thinned out, with only 216, 7 Sig Regt and 21 Sig Regt(AS) in front of us. We arrived at CP 4 with 21 Sig Regt(AS) and managed to leave ahead of them, but losing one of our team to injury. From then on it seemed to be a continued chase after 7 Sig Regt. We would catch glimpses of them now and then, but it was not until Pen y Fan and some good weather that we realised that the gap between us was good 20 mins.

The Regt Lanyard Team at the finish line. A well deserved 3rd Place in 11hrs 45mins

To our dismay, we also realised that 21 Sig Regt(AS) had not given up the chase, and were close on our tails. Our problems were soon compounded when we lost a second team member due to injury. We realised that 7 Sig Regt were just too far ahead to be catchable and we were told that 21 Sig Regt(AS) were catching us up. Needless to say, with the finish almost in sight, we stormed up the last road keeping the Colerne contingent at bay. We reached the finish in third place, with a time of 11hrs 45mins, to be greeted by our supporters, 7 Sig Regt, and the host unit, 216 Sig Sqn.

The team on the day was **Lt Mathews**, **SSgt Bruce Thornton**, **Sgt Paul Chester**, **Cpls Andy Allen**, **Mick Allen**, **Chris King**, **LCpls Andy Bellamy**, **Shez Sherrington**, **Steve Giroux** and **Sig Stevo Stephenson**. Reserves were **Cpl Mike Atherton** and **LCpl Jamie Campbell**.

A big thank you must be said to our admin staff on the day who were also part of the trg squad. Third place is steady improvement for the Regt. Hopefully this progress will help us to improve for next year's keenly-awaited competition.

TRAILWALKER 2004

After the Regtl ex and most of the pre-trg being carried out in shell scrapes, the Regtl Trailwalker Team were re-deployed with a short turn-round of 24hrs, to the South Downs for the OXFAM and 30 Sig Regt led TRAILWALKER 2004. The 5-man team consisted of **SSgt Mark McMullen**, **Sgt Gaz Welch**, **Sgt Red Davis, LCpl Kinnon Tagni** and the massive admin support team, **Cpl Truck Carvin**.

Just before 07.00hrs on the following day, the team made their way to the start point alongside the other 350 teams. At this point it hadn't hit us just how far 100km actually was. We passed through the first few CPs in an easy 15th place all in good spirits, but not realising what was yet to come.

SSgt McMullan, LCpl Ragni, Sgt Welch and Sgt Davis during Trailwalker 2004

After CP5, the mileage and constant running up and down hills started to take its toll on the knees, feet and morale of the much-fatigued team. The route took the team over every hill in sight, with each one becoming steeper and more painful. From the CP, it was the home run to Brighton Racecourse and also the test/breaking point of the entire course.

Overall, the team managed 40th place out of 350+ teams, and raised over £1,200. The event was very well organised and coordinated throughout; the whole team enjoyed the challenge and will remember it for the years to come.

REGIMENTAL EXERCISE - DRAGON'S TALON 04

Continuing the long-standing Regtl tradition of deploying to obscure parts of the world that they have never heard of before, 14 Sig Regt (EW) spent 2 weeks of July in the Republic of Waziritan (formerly known as Sennybridge Training area). The official reason for the deployment was to help bring about peace and stability to the region. As usual, shortly after our arrival, things took a serious turn for the worse.

The first week of the ex consisted of a series of peacekeeping-type incidents, against the background of an EW scenario written by the best selling author **Capt Churm**. The lads were also allowed a bit of down time to compete in the Regtl March and Shoot Competition, which was suitably hard and wet.

Initial probing of the EW sites by Breconite paramilitaries provoked clashes, with reports of 17 paramilitary deaths. This led to war crimes investigations into the platforms involved, which resulted in a dramatic reduction in the kill claims and a reduction in the red meat ration for 245 Sig Sqn (EW). Things then settled down for a while, with platforms having to deal with various incidents, such as press, civpop, refugees and riots. At one stage, Regt Ech was hit by a suicide bomber, causing a number of casualties. BFAT and triage skills were tested to the full!

OPFOR initially consisted of the Revolutionary Forces of **WO1** *'Mao Tse'* **Tongs**, striking paranoia (rather than fear) into the troops, and leading to a mass outbreak of Asprophobia (*Fear of things that are white, such as white minibuses or armbands. Can cause extreme reactions such as an urge for physical violence, cocking of weapons, and intense unnecessary application of fire against ant white item in the vicinity).*

A Breconite paramilitary lies mortally wounded

As the ex progressed into the second week, open hostilities broke out between the Waziri factions, with the EW scenario became more demanding. The paramilitaries were finding life more difficult, notably when they tried to take on an isolated EW det. It was only after starting the firefight that they realised their target was surrounded by 3 platoons of Royal Anglians, all bombed-up and looking for trouble. 'Now that's what you call Force Protection!' laughed the det, as OPFOR slunk away in disgust.

At this stage, the paramilitaries were joined by the hordes of better-armed Training Wing Militia, led by **Capt** *'Papa Doc'* **Wallace**. The militia became increasingly unpopular amongst blue forces leading to an increasingly dodgy series of headgear changes by their leader. When asked about his questionable sartorial taste he confessed that it was simply a matter of disguise. "It's 'coz I don't want them to get me", he exclaimed,

alluding to the generous bounty which has been placed on his head by Blue forces (£1.40 plus VAT)

ENDEX was also carried out in the traditional manner, with **WO2** *'Chemical'* **Dagnall** dispersing CS for breakfast, dinner and tea.

The ex was recognised by many of the participants as one of the best and most enjoyable that they had experienced - and was of great training value. It is hoped to repeat it again next year - and scripting starts now!

EXERCISE DANISH DRAGON 04

The Regiment participated in the Corps Sail Trg Exercise, DANISH DRAGON during July 04, which saw a group of 6 mixed ranks swap the wind and rain of Brawdy for the wind and rain of the Baltic. After a short practical exam, the two weeks qualified the novice sailors as Competent Crew. It had not only involved sailing over 400miles in all types of weather (day and night), but saw the crews introduced to the sport of sail racing.

The ex, which chartered the British Kiel Yacht Club's ten new *Comfortina 36* yachts, was well supported by Regular and TA units alike. It is run annually, and is well worth the £150 personal contribution.

The Blandford crew on Grebe fighting Pintail for last place

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Bains**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Renshaw**

With the last of the Regt having recently returned from Iraq, the situation is somewhat fluid at the moment, with many on POTL and the rest organising themselves back into the original ORBAT in prep for the upcoming ARRC exercises. The Regt bids a fond farewell to our CO, **Lt Col Thackray**, and wish him all the best for the future. At the same time, we welcome his replacement, **Lt Col Bains**.

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Collier**
SSM **WO2 C Batley**

The last two months have seen the reformation of 230 Sig Sqn after their return from Iraq. We bid farewell to **Maj Dom Sharkey**, who now has the delights of Warminster to look forward to. We also say goodbye to **WO2 (SSM) Angove** who is now promoted to WO1 RSM. We welcome the arrival of a new OC, **Maj Collier** from 264 Sig Sqn and **WO2 Batley**, who has moved over from HQ Sqn. We also welcome **SSgt(FofS) Ashman**, **SSgt(YofS) Carter** and **SSgt Strachan**. The Sqn is also due to have two more new Tp Comds and two new Tp SSgts posted in soon. Aside from taking over the Sqn's equipt again, the main event of note over the last couple of months was the Sqn battle camp, conducted on Haltern trg area, involving mainly range work and some particularly exhausting shoots! There was also some low-level inf trg in prep for the upcoming ARRC exs and some testing comd tasks.

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

IS TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Manning**
Tp SSgt **SSgt S Davies**

The Tp has been enjoying a well-earned rest after return from OP TELIC 3. We farewell **Capt Al Peel**, who is off to Regt Ops; **WO2 Jack Payne**, posted on promotion to RAF Oakley; **Sgts Geordie Gowland** and **Yvonne Jones** both of whom are posted on promotion to SSgt; **SSgt Dave Skinglet**; and **Cpl Martin Bentley**. We welcome **Capt Russ Manning**, who has come from RA; **SSgt Kitchener**, **Cpl Carston** RLC; **Bdr Mawer**; and **LBdrs Anderson** and **Kerr**.

Finally, congratulations to **WO2s Pete Asplen** and **Richie Nichol** on your promotions; and to **WO2 Tom Ward** and his wife **Kirstene**, on the birth of their son.

H TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Griffiths**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Wilson**

H Tp has been a busy place since May. A large number have been on tour for the past 4-6 months. We had a few out in Iraq; we sent a few out to the Falklands; and we've had a few working on projects in Bosnia. Welcome back to all who have returned from their tours, and well done for their hard work in those areas.

Also worth mentioning is the 'shipwreck' beach party that was held for 255 Sig Sqn in July. It was a fantastic night, and a big thank you is due to **Sgt Farrow**, for his organisation, and to all of H troop for their ideas and participation for making it a night to remember.

We've farewelled **WO2 MacPhee** (recently-promoted), **Sgt Farrow**, **LCpl Sanderson**, **Sigs Aston** and **Wilbor**. And we welcome **Sig Buley** and our new Staffy, **SSgt Wilson**; and we're expecting **Sig Webber** and **Sig MacClaren** soon.

We congratulate **Cpl** and **Mrs Lake**, on the arrival of their baby, **Alexander**; **LCpl Stephenson** on getting married in August; and **LCpl Goddard** who is also getting married in September. Lastly, a big well done to the members of 255 Sig Sqn for winning the potted sports championship with a team that consisted mostly of H Tp!

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO **Lt Col DG Halstead**
RSM **WO1(RSM) GC SMITH**

REGIMENTAL ATHLETICS

The Regt has had yet another excellent Athletics season, with successes at Div, Corps and Army level. First Male Team and First Female Team were secured at the 5 Div Champs, Morrison Cup and the Army semi-final. At the Army final, the Regt secured Female Army Champions and Army Runners-up. At the Inter-Corps Champs, the Regt fielded an unprecedented 21 male and 8 female competitors. Congratulations go to the Regt's Army individual champions: **LCpl Hardy** (M 400m), **LCpl Gilding** (M 400m H), **Cpl Tagilala** (F Shot Put), **Sig Cartwright** (F High Jump), **LCpl Williams** (M High Jump), **Sig Harvey** (F 5,000m) and **Sig Jones** (F 800m). Many congratulations also go to the following individuals for their award of Army colours: **LCpl Williams**, **LCpl Gilding**, **Sig Maosa**, **Sig Campbell, LCpl Hardy**, **Cpl Morris**, **Sig Cartwright**, **Cpl Tagilala**, **Sig Harvey**, **LCpl Greenhalgh**, **Sig Jones**, **Sig Chepwony** and **Sig Laycock**.

CELEBRATION OF THE CORPS BIRTHDAY

The 84th anniversary of the Corps was celebrated with an afternoon of events and an evening function at Colerne. The celebrations started with an Inter-Sqn tug of war competition, which was narrowly won by HQ Sqn, and 244 Sig Sqn comfortably winning the female competition. Seniors v Juniors followed, with the Juniors winning easily, without breaking into a sweat.

SSgt Tam Ewart and the Corps free-fall parachute display team provided another excellent display, culminating in a special bottle of champagne brought down from 10,000ft to celebrate **Mrs Anne Eversedge's** birthday.

The Corps Band then finished things off with a humorous and well-received show. A few presentations were made in the afternoon to the Army Benevolent Fund, money being raised by the Regt Marathon des Sables 2004 team, and the LAD on completing the Hadrian's Wall route.

The Regt then headed for the bar for a few free drinks and a barbecue. During this part of the day, a Corps Citation was read out by **Sig Cartwright**, and the Corps Collect was recited by **Sig McDonald** - on his 18th birthday.

A special mention to the members of RSA Bath and Swindon Branches, who came up for the day. We hope to see you back next year! The evening entertainment was in the form of a karaoke evening for the juniors, and a combined officers/seniors function.

An excellent day was enjoyed by all, in this second consecutive Corps Birthday celebration. Many thanks to **SSgt Mark Morgan** for co-ordinating the day's activities.

VISIT OF MR HOWARD CARTER

Mr Howard Carter, a former RAF serviceman based at Colerne Station from 1945 to 1947, visited the Regt on 05 May 04 to see the reformation parade of 248 Ghurkha Sig Sqn and receive a tour of the camp. **Mr Carter** has fond memories of the station and was able to share some of his wartime stories with members of the Regt during a post-parade lunch and social. It was a unique opportunity for current members of the Regt to gain an insight into station life some 50 years ago, and also for **Mr Carter** to see how things have developed since he served here. We trust that **Mr Carter's** visit was as memorable for him as it was for those of us who hosted him.

The CO arm-wrestles Mr Carter for possession of the last Regimental Plaque

EXERCISE AURORA – *by Sig Brown*

On 12 May **Sigs Robertson**, **Bean** and I set sail aboard *HMS Ocean* as part of Commando Helicopter Force heading towards the east coast of the United States. It would take us two weeks to reach Norfolk, Virginia where we would first enjoy 4 days R and R before the main ex deployed. On the journey out we kept busy trg to qualify to fast rope from a helicopter from 90 feet, and lots of PT.

After our arrival and R and R in Norfolk, we once again set sail, patrolling off the coast where we would be conducting the ex. Insertion would be by either LCU (Landing Craft), Chinook or Sea King. Following insertion, it was then nearly a month of living in a jungle inhabited mostly by mosquitoes and large numbers of snakes. I was on the FARP Det (Forward Arming and Refuelling Point) with **Sig Robertson** on the FOB (Forward Operating Base) and **Sig Bean** aboard *HMS Ocean*. The ex was a busy time for us, moving around the large trg area of Camp Lejune, as well and manning the nets with over seven Sqns of Chinooks, Sea Kings, Gazelles and Lynxs. The ex ended with a large Bde night attack, led by 42 Cdo RM against the US Marines. We then moved on to Mayport, Florida for 7 days of hard work on the beach and deployments to different tourist sites before our 2-wk journey back into Plymouth on 12 July and a long weekend at home.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj SJ Morgan**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A Burdus**

There has been a significant changeover in RHQ manpower recently. Farewells to **Maj Mike Burke** going to DCSA Germany; and **Maj Jurgen Wilson**, with congratulations on promotion to Ops Offr 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt; to **Capt Alec Masson**, deploying into civilian life; to **Capt Lindsey Courage** and **Capt Sid Sideras**, off to 2 (NC) Sig Bde; to **Sgt Shaun Stainton** AGC (SPS), to a BATUS posting; and **Cpl Dutton** to 38 Engr Regt. Welcome to **Capt Mike Morton**, **Capt Tac Bartlett**, and **Capt Bob Wymer**.

EXERCISE RED BEAUFIGHTER 2

In early July TM Tp deployed on EX RED BEAUFIGHTER 2 as part of the Regt Ech. Our first loc was Tilshead water tower on Salisbury Plain. The move to loc went OK, but the set up took a little bit longer than expected. After the set up we started to go into our work routine.

The next day saw us off on a patrol, starting with **Cpl Neil Beedon** giving us our Orders. After a few rehearsals, we started out to Copehill Down FIBUA Village, with **SSgt Tam Ewart** as DS. Everything was going OK until we rounded a small plantation. We were shaking out into arrowhead formation to patrol across some open ground, when three Challenger 2s came over the brow of the hill to the front of us. As they got to about 200m from us we went to ground (apart from **SSgt Ewart**) and the tanks stopped. After a couple of minutes **Cpl Beedon** got to his feet and waved his men on. As we got closer to the tanks, the middle one turned its turret towards us - not a comforting moment. We continued patrolling on to Copehill Down, where **WO2 Anthea Burdus** greeted us with a welcome 20l jerry can of water, and told us to prep ourselves for the confidence course. After the confidence course, we patrolled back to the Ech location at Tilshead. On arrival, **SSgt Ewart** gave us a debrief on our performance during the patrol, and we cleaned ourselves up before 'tea and medals' in the TM Tp admin area.

Wednesday was a normal day, with quite a few radios being brought in from the field Sqns to be 'fixed'. That evening, however, we moved to a new loc at Fore Down, a densely wooded area, which proved to be a challenging place to move the Ech fleet of HGV vehicles into under cover of darkness. It was a difficult set-up, but we managed to complete it by our deadline of first light.

Thursday continued in the normal work routine, with the addition of an early morning guided tour of the Ech for all of the newcomers. This was to give them an insight into the type and level of support that the Ech provides to the Regt when it deploys.

Friday was again a normal workday with us completing all but a couple of outstanding jobs. Because the first move didn't go so well, we were to practise a further night move. This time we were to travel further towards the east to Barton Stacey. The drive to Barton Stacy was quite a long one, basically one side of the Plain to the other, but the move into loc, even after the long drive, still went well. TM Tp were quickly set up and then able to give a hand to other sections, including the acting SQMS, **Sgt Karl Hannah**, ensuring that the all-important cookhouse tent was set up and ready for breakfast. The Ech was fully established well before the first light deadline. After another good breakfast, we got our heads down for a well-deserved rest. Mid afternoon saw us settled back into our work routine.

Sunday was another normal day, and ENDEX finally came at around lunchtime. Once again the tear-down went well, and the move back to Azimghur Barracks, even though it was quite a long one, went equally as well. On arrival we were welcomed by the MT refuelling team, headed by the MTO and MT. The turn around of vehs and equipt progressed rapidly, and was just about complete when OC HQ Sqn, **Maj Steve Morgan**, called a parade. He gave us his thanks for our efforts and continual improvement through the ex, and knocked us off for the day - until Monday morning's SSM's parade!

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Lovett**
SSM **WO2(SSM) D Taylor**

In June, the Sqn conducted AT in Weymouth, taking part in rock climbing, sea fishing, hill walking and 'social bonding' events down in the town. The week provided a change of scenery and let us relax and have some fun - especially with the England win against Switzerland!

The Sqn has also recently been busy with EXs RED BEAUFIGHTER 2 and LION BEAUFIGHTER. We farewell **WO2(YofS) Mick Murphy** on his imminent departure to Oman; and **Sgt Barney Gray**, who is off to Blandford for his FofS trg.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj L Golley**
SSM **WO2(SSM) MA Brown**

The final few weeks leading up to the Sqn taking over High Readiness included an AT package in Tenby, South Wales. Some ninety members of the Sqn enjoyed canoeing, coasteering (cliff jumping), surfing, mountain biking and hill walking. Activities were interspersed with the odd beer, whilst the Sqn observed the events in Portugal. EX EAGLES STRIKE with 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and the Regt's EX RED BEAUFIGHTER 2 on SPTA marked the transition to High Readiness. EX LION BEAUFIGHTER swiftly followed, with a collective mil skills package, culminating in a patrols cycle on Dartmoor.

The Sqn farewells **Maj Steve France**, who departs for DCSA CRMC; and welcomes **Maj Lloyd Golley** from HQ SOinC(A). Welcome to **WO2 YofS) Jim Skimins** and to **SSgt John Kelly**, who takes over as SQMS; whilst **SSgt Taff Morgan** moves to Alpha Tp. **Cpls Nye**, **Whyte** and **Wressell** all leave on their T1. **Cpl Matt Parkes** leaves for Civvy Street. **Cpl Millings** joins the Wksp from TM Tp.

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Kennedy**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ganesh**

FORMATION OF 248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

On 5 May 04 a parade was held in Azimghur Bks, Colerne, to commemorate the official welcome and integration of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn into 21 Sig Regt (AS), making it one of the Regt's five Sqns, as well as the third Sqn of Queen's Gurkha Signals. The CO led the parade, and wished the newly formed Sqn all the best for the future. The Sqn looks forward to an official reformation ceremony in Bramcote in September this year.

Congratulations to **Cpls Jas**, **Sun** and **Kamal** for coming off the Sgts' Board. Also to **LCpls Amritman Gurung** and **Ragoon Pahim** and **Sigs Gopal Saru**, **Sekendra Gurung** and **Khagendra Gurung** on promotion to Cpl and LCpl respectively.

EXERCISE CENTAURS CHARGE

Juliet Tp, led by **Lt (QGO) Tol Bahadur Khamcha**, deployed on the Sqn's first ex, EX CENTAURS CHARGE. The Tp joined other Corps elements for an ex briefing at Imphal Barracks, York, before deploying in support of 7 Air Defence Bde.

Sqn OC, Maj Kennedy and WO2(SSM) Ganesh visit EX CENTAURS CHARGE

The exercise saw TN 022 deploy to Woodbridge, before establishing at STANTA in Norfolk. Once all circuits were up, the opportunity was taken to run some cross-trg for some of the younger members of the Tp.

The TN subsequently deployed to SPTA, where the scenario included an NBC phase.

We were visited during the ex by **Lt Col Macrostie**, CO 2 Sig Regt**, Capt (QGO) Krishna Bahadur Gurung**, 2IC, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn and **Lt Col RT Ohara**, QM RSS. In addition, from 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn, **Maj Kennedy**, OC, **Capt Buddhi**, 2IC and **WO2 Ganesh**, SSM also paid a visit to the ex loc.

Personnel from J Tp during the NBC phase

ARMY

31st (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col SG Hutchinson MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Johnston**

The main focus for the last 2 months has been Sqn-level trg, which culminated in a Regtl FTX on Salisbury Plain. Thankfully, it was dry and sunny and all the Sqns made the most of the conditions. The level of trg in the Regt is increasing all the time, and all the Sqns managed to get themselves into loc in the dark and establish comms on time, including the HF link to America. Special congratulations must go to **Cpl Marlow**, who managed to stay awake the entire weekend.

Sadly, we have said goodbye to **Maj James Gagen**, who is returning to his native Australia. **James**, we will always remember you as the lone Aussie shaking the hands of 250 Brits after watching the Rugby World Cup Final in Chelsea Bks. We also say goodbye to **Maj Steve Hudson**, who has retired after 37 years of service both Regular and TA**. Sgt Galatain** has left the Regt to transfer to the Int Corps and **SSgt Brooksbank** has moved on to be a recruiter in Ilford. In a fit of genius, MCM Div have decided to replace him with another **Sgt Brooksbank** from 21 Sig Regt (AS). Well at least we don't have to change any of the headed notepaper!

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj A Lamb**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Cooper**

This period has seen a busy time at Eastbourne, with lots of activity focused on building up the Sqn for annual camp. There has also been an additional focus on creative recruiting, with one summer social event. We welcome back **SSgt M Dowds**, who has recently returned from operational service with 97 (Balkan) Sig Sqn. He was apparently on very good form out there and we are all extremely proud of him.

SSgt Young is convinced this potential recruit will make a fine soldier

Special thanks to **Sig Ford** and **LCpl Still**, who put together an extremely entertaining Caribbean summer party. Your reporter was extremely impressed by the quality of the beach bar and the effort put in by all with the various costumes.

Other highlights were the Sqn's contribution to EX EXECUTIVE STRETCH. This was run by **Cpl Gardyne** and members of his Det, while **SSgt Young** and **2Lt Jellineck** thoroughly enjoyed themselves as DS for a section of executives from organisations across Eastbourne.

The team faces a tricky time in rough sea - EX EXECUTIVE STRETCH

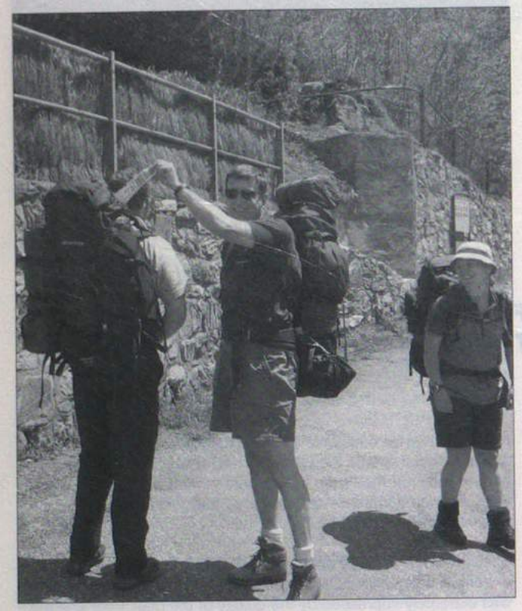
EXERCISE COCKNEY PYRENNEES

After packing the minibus with all the loan stores and personal equipt, we set off for Portsmouth with **Cpl Garth Hulin** showing us how he can transfer his ambulance driving skills to TA use. We were pleased to be joined on the trip by Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas MBE**.

The 36-hour trip to Bilbao could have been a nightmare of seasickness for those who suffered, but were very relieved when the Bay of Biscay turned out to be as flat as a millpond. The day was put to use in route planning, safety briefs and some practical instruction from **Lt Helen Currie**.

Eventually, after a brief unplanned sightseeing tour of the Bilbao motorway network, we arrived at our drop off points. The plan was to ascend to some of the cirques in the area and then descend to meet the backup team the next day. With unexpected

snow cover down to around 2,000 metres, the routes had to be adapted at the last minute.



The CO acts as the Comd's Batman.

For Team 1, led by **WO2(SSM) Rob Watson**, the overnight stop meant the hardship of descending to a manned Cabanne. The leadership of **WO2 Watson**, in his best 'Allo Allo' French, ensured that the team secured a couple of bottles of wine, some beer and a bed for the night. It wasn't exactly Burger King, but not bad hospitality from one man and a donkey in a hut stuck halfway up a mountain. Teams 2 and 3, lead by **Lts Helen Currie** and **George Dickey** respectively, faired similarly, but they did have to rough it a little and sleep in their tents.

The views afforded to all teams were spectacular, with snow-covered peaks and valleys about to burst into bloom from the indigenous flora. While new routes were being worked out, several members of the teams decided to take advantage of a nearby patches of snow and create their own Cresta Runs.

The teams were picked up and ferried back and forth by a dedicated back-up team, which included **Sgt Nick Tuck** and **Cpl Warren O'Driscoll**, who were able to get the minibus almost as far up the mountains as the walkers were (1,900m). Midweek, the back-up teams were able to swap over and do some hiking.

The end of trek saw everyone taken back to base camp in the nearby town of Luz St Sauveur for a BBQ. This proved one sausage too many for **Sig Douglas**, who considered that his job as a catering manager didn't extend to spending the rest of the evening cooking for the team. But even **Brig Thomas** took his turn at flipping the burgers.

The Summit

The very long drive to Normandy the next day meant an early night for some, and the opportunity to sleep off their exertions for others.

Normandy was preparing for the 60th Anniversary of D Day, and we took the opportunity visit some areas of interest. The museum at Pegasus Bridge proved of great interest to all, with some reminiscing of equipt once used by the older members of the group. A visit to the American war memorial on the cliffs overlooking Omaha Beach before heading off to the ferry home was a moving end to the whole trip.

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col RJH Sutherland**
RSM **WO1 A Ironside**

During July and August, the Regt gained a new Comd Team. **Maj Roberts**, **Maj Finnie**, **Capt Reith** and **WO1 Greenwood** have moved to pastures new; and **Maj Holt**, **Capt Alexander**, **Capt McNaught** and **WO1 Ironside** have taken their places.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Phil Donegan**
SSM **WO2 Norma Sproul**

Over the weekend of 11-13 June, the Sqn deployed to Strone Camp in Garelochhead for a REME-sponsored weekend. Under the command of OC LAD, **Capt Chris Mermegan**, and assisted by PSI LAD, **SSgt Steve McLean** and **SSgt Pete Lawler**, the Sqn was put through a series of arduous challenges with a distinctly REME flavour. The weekend commenced with the assault course, followed by a series of comd tasks. After a quick lunch, we were formed into teams of 5 to tab to a series of practical tasks spread around the trg area. An early rise on Sunday was quickly followed by some off-road driving and pre-BLUEBELL trg for the REME soldiers.

This weekend obviously did the trick for the LAD, as they went on to achieve third place out of 17 teams in EX NORTHERN BLUEBELL in Warcop at the end of June. Well done the LAD!

The end of June saw the Sqn off to Aberdeen for some REEBOK training. Led by **FofS Pullen**, we were given a detailed look at REEBOK and AIRWAVE/SAINT. Also lending a hand were **FofS**

Challenges with a distinctly REME flavour

Denish Gandhi, **SSgt Alan McGibbon** and **Cpl Hagar Kennedy**. Despite the vast array of technical wizardry on view, the most popular IT item was the provision of SKY TV in the CP.

In mid-July, **WO1 Ron Hamilton** organised a highly enjoyable and active driving weekend near the shores of the Solway Firth. After a map-reading ex on the Friday night, we arrived at an exact replica of an NI patrol base in Armagh in Kircubright. Saturday morning involved the completion of a number of comd tasks, including weapons, NBC, map-reading and generators. Next, the teams were set a road-nav assignment, which monopolised the majority of the afternoon and early evening. The competition went right down to the wire, with the winning team decided only on the basis of their lesser mileage.

The Sqn continued to maintain its high profile in the community with a recruiting stand at the Open Day in Clydebank, in mid-July. Led by **Sgt Jackie Sliman**, **Sgt Flook** and **LCpl Kev Currie**, a number of displays for the attendant public were demonstrated.

As well as local press coverage, the team made an impact by bringing the principles of camouflage to the Face Painting stand.

In June the Sqn bade farewell to the CO, **Lt Col Eric Blyth TD**, at his dining out in Bridge of Don Barracks in Aberdeen. **Col Eric** was presented a samurai-type sword by the Mess. The guests were then privileged to witness an interesting display of sword work by the CO on the very un-crowded dance-floor. Although the departing CO looked nothing like **Uma Thurman**, the RMO, **Maj Nicollete Mason**, was on hand in case the comparisons to *Kill Bill* became too real. After a brief spell abroad, **Col Eric** will be taking up the post of SO1 G3 at 51 (Scottish) Bde.

51 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj Andrew Thompson**

Our congratulations to **LCpl Hunter** and the new **Mrs Hunter** on their wedding. It was a splendid day, and most of the Sqn attended to offer their best wishes and to ensure all the free drink didn't go to waste. Even the CO put in an appearance after his dining out had finished.

August's STW was AT in the Scottish Highlands. There was a lot of hard work put in to the planning by PDS and equally hard work was put in by the lads and lassies of the Sqn. There was a good attendance for the ITD RTW, which allowed some of the Sqn to achieve FFR status.

Finally, our best wishes go to **Capt Norrie Donald**, who retired on 27 July, and to our PSI, **Andy Minorczyk**, who is off to pastures new. A warm welcome to **WO1 Derick Postlethwaite** who has returned from Kuwait and **SSgt Chris Mulligan** from the Falklands. The lamps will swing on Remembrance Day!

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj Andy Bruce**

EXERCISE SALTIRE SPLASH *- by Sgt Mark Kelly*

Friday evening 6 August 2004, saw the start of EX SALTIRE SPLASH. After loading onto the mini-buses, we were ready to go on our fun filled weekend to Garelochead. Up bright and early on Saturday morning, ready for some arduous training, we split up into groups for canoeing, sailing and power boating.

The Hunters' Wedding Party

The power boating, ran by the Squadron SPSI **SSgt Bob Harvey** was based at BP Finnart fuel depot on Loch Long. Assisted by myself and **SSgt Gus Macpherson**, we gave the teams a safety brief and got them into their buoyancy aids before boarding the two boats. The boats, *Sea Rider* RIBs, were kindly loaned to us by HMS Faslane sailing school. Having carried out man over-board drills, using **SSgt Macpherson** as the victim, the rest of the group had a drive of the boat before heading up to Arrochar at the head of the Loch to have a brew in the local café. After lunch, we cruised up Loch Long to Lochgoilhead and moored near a hotel to wet our whistles.

The second group took part in dingy sailing at the HMS Faslane sailing school, where they had to get out of the water whilst a nuclear submarine was coming in. The third group did canoeing in Luss on Loch Lomond. All in all, everyone had a great day, followed by a great BBQ prepared by our PSAO, **Capt Pedro Campbell**. The evening saw the hosting of our new CO, **Lt Col R Sutherland**.

The following day saw groups taking part in hill walking, mountain biking and rock climbing. The hill walking was lead by **SSgt Compo Forbes**, who managed to tire out the OC by taking the group up the Cobbler. The mountain biking was led by **Cpl Alexander Cook**, who took his group on an arduous ten-mile ride without managing to break the bikes or the troops. Finally, the climbing group went off to Arrochar for some climbing, led by **SSgt Webb** from 51 Sqn.

By 12.00hrs, all the groups were shattered and returned to the Camp for some well-deserved lunch before packing up and heading back to the TAC in Edinburgh. Many thanks to all the instructors from both the Regt and from HMS Faslane for an excellent weekend. Much fun was had by all.

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

CO **Lt Col D Somerville MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) M Browitt**

It has been a busy time for the Regt. Having recently returned from running a CCF camp for 1,200 cadets at Warcop, we are now well into preparations for EX ARRCADE FALCON 4.

We farewell **Sgt Bob Pendleton**, **Sgt Mick Watkinson**, Sgt Olly Oldroyd and **Sgt Steve Dixon**, who have left us recently. We congratulate the newly-promoted **Maj Neil Turnbull**, who is leaving to be Trg Maj at 35 Sig Regt. Congratulations also to the newly-commissioned **2Lts Bob Patterson** and **Glen Martin**.

SUCCESSFUL CADET CAMP

33 Sig Regt (V) sponsored the CCF Annual Camp, held at Warcop Camp, Cumbria. There were two separate 8-day camps, with a total of 1,200 cadets from all over the country attending. The CO, **Lt Col David Somerville**, and members of the Regt, supported by Regular Army Cadet Training Teams, arranged a very ambitious and exciting programme, comprising signals, assault course, first aid, map and compass, march and shoot, watermanship, initiative tests, abseiling and a 24-hr ex.

The CO, Lt Col David Somerville, WI WO2(SSM) Frank Hale and WO2(FofS) Mark Jones arriving to run the CCF camp

Although all the members of the CCF are affiliated by cap badge to different Regts (as are the ACF), 33 Sig Regt (V) portrayed a very professional image, and it is anticipated that out of the 1,200 cadets who attended, there are now some potential future recruits for Royal Signals.

Cadet Norman Jones prepares for battle

continued on page 429

NEWS FROM THE GULF

1st MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC **Maj PEJ Drew**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PA Buckley**

As OP TELIC 4 continues, the Sqn has undergone a number of changes in the past few months. The UK Bde HQ has now moved from Basrah Palace to Basrah International Airport (BIA). The ground covered by UK troops in Basrah Palace itself has now become much smaller, with 'the Island' and a good portion of the Palace grounds handed over to the Iraqi authorities at the end of June 04. As those who have served there in the past will appreciate, most people will miss the pleasant surroundings of the Palace, despite the mortar and rocket attacks.

The move into BIA has brought with it some major changes. The Sqn are now accommodated in 'Waterloo Lines', a Temporary Field Accommodation (TFA) camp on the APOD. The sleeping accn is small Corimec type 2-man rooms and the camp is self sufficient, with cookhouse, messes, gymnasium, Med Centre, offices and armouries. Some of the soldiers have commented that the accn here is better than Tidworth - a sad but probably true state of affairs. The QM, **Capt Miles Webb** used his wily, Del-Boy ways to furnish the Junior Ranks Mess within a week of arriving, despite having very little money to purchase anything. He even managed to acquire a JCB and 4 Iraqi civilian workers before dispatching them to steal some palm trees to plant in the JR Mess outside areas.

Revamping the JR Mess

Generally, welfare facilities are excellent here with a more than adequate provision of shops, gym equipt, telephone/internet and DVDs/books/games etc. A big thank-you to the QM and his sidekick **SSgt Mac McKay** for his handyman and decorating skills. We've also managed to bring with us our trusty tailor, **Tim** and barber, **Safaa** from the Palace, so floppy hats can continue to be cut down professionally, and we can have our hair unceremoniously ripped out by blunt clippers whenever we feel the need (normally when encouraged by the RSM).

The Sqn has taken on a great deal more responsibility since arriving at the BIA. 16 Sig Regt, the MND(SE) Sig Regt, left theatre at the beginning of July, and were not replaced. The Sqn now has responsibility for the provision of HQ and ICS support to both HQ MND(SE) and the UK Bde HQ. SHQ, the 2 comms Tps, the Techs (both Sys Eng and Inst), IS Engrs and ODA make up what is now known as Basrah Sig Sqn (BSS). A number of 2 Sig Regt and TA personnel have augmented the Sqn, not only to help with the extra burden of work that Div HQ has presented, but also to provide SYNERGY mobile dets (see article below).

The majority of the G1/G4 elements of the Sqn have now become part of the Joint Support Unit Basrah (JSUB). This is a tri-service organisation, comprising the G1/G4 elements of all units within the APOD, commanded currently by **Lt Col Wally Drain**. There is now a joint LAD, MT, Admin Office and QM's Dept. The transition phase of this new organisation has been difficult, and a great deal of work has been put in to ensure it has happened. Hopefully, the transition will be complete by late October 04 when a new J1 Village is constructed within the APOD, tying together all the welfare assets, shops and retail outlets and admin facilities - much like the project recently completed at Shaibah Log Base.

There are number of hellos and goodbyes to be said to members of SHQ. Goodbye to **WO2(FofS) Duff**, off to Blandford on promotion; and to **WO2(RQMS) Terry Crosby** PWRR, who has served here so long he was probably beasting Saddam Hussein's boys to sign for their beds and lockers before the war. Welcome to the Chief Clerk, **SSgt Steve Ash**, who has been fighting the war (and an eye injury) in Tidworth for the past few months; and to **WO2(FofS) Mick O'Hara** from 7 Sig Regt.

In summary, the operation is going well out here. We have settled in to our new working environment, and the change probably came at just the right time to keep us interested and motivated. As this is being written, fighting has intensified across the AO and has led to a number of tragic fatalities. However, morale is as high as can be expected, and everyone is keen to get on with their jobs supporting the Bde and Div HQ to ensure the guys on the ground get the support and assistance they need, when they need it. Whilst we are all looking forward to going home, it is still a long way off until 4 Bde arrive in mid October.

EDEN TROOP

OC **Lt Graeme Brown**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Wilford**

On the morning of Thursday 1 July 2004, we were all on parade outside the Sqn in York with our bags packed and ready to go. However, we were told that the Tp wouldn't be deploying to sunny Basrah straight away but would be stopping off in Blandford instead. There was a mixture of disappointment and joy. Disappointment as we were all prepared and ready to go, and joy as we knew we could enjoy a pint at night and not have to cope with the 50° heat.

Our task whilst at Blandford was to train on the new SYNERGY Mobile Det, which allows the deployment of comms into the field, if required. The two IS Ops (**Sig Conway** and **Cpl Kay**) got the hang of the IT side of things and the EDs (**Cpl Govin** and **Sig**

Milan) quickly got to grips with the new mobile generator (which now doesn't have a trailer and has to be lifted by a forklift. So much for mobile!). The ops (**Sgt Bird**, **Sgt Allen**, **Cpl Vday**, **LCpl Malugu**, **Sig Hom** and **Cpl Spicer**) worked hard at learning all the new systems and modules they would have to deploy as part of the Det.

The Tp finally deployed to Iraq in mid July, where they have now been subsumed into Tigris Tp.

TIGRIS TROOP

OC	**Lt Cat Yarroll**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Danny Gard**

Tigris Tp is the mobile communications Tp based at BIA. Since arriving in theatre at the beginning of April, we have been exceptionally busy doing a wide variety of tasks.

Initially we spent a lot of time providing escorts for convoys and Bde staff around Basrah and the surrounding countryside. This gave everyone the opportunity to get a bit of a feel for Iraq and its people, as well as the dubious local driving skills.

Another popular task for the Tp has been providing an Immediate Response Op (IRO). Working on a 7-day rotation, IROs have been deployed with RM Commandos as part of the RN Trg Team. **Sig White** certainly enjoyed his river patrols enough to dive head first into the Shatt Al Arab waterway. Before deploying as an IRO, everyone had to get trained up on the AN/PRC 117F TACSAT, a radio we had not seen until we arrived in theatre. **SSgt Danny Gard** did a great job of trg the Tp on this piece of equipt, as their confidence in operating it now shows.

The SYNERGY Mobile Det

Our Tp also mans a number of dets around the AO. A MOSCA and a DAGGER Det provide deployable satellite links anywhere they might be required. We also have a permanent det working in the ops room of the Danish Bn in Camp Eden. Whilst manning the Det, **Sig Cox** managed to find time to get out on patrol with one of their call signs. Though he did say that they are professional, he was happy to say that the British Army is way better.

Of course, as well as all of these commitments, we still have to maintain our deployable HQ capability. This means a lot of time has to be spent maintaining our armd dets down at the tank park. Preparing a veh for an inspection in 50°C is no easy task.

Now that the halfway point of our tour has passed, everyone has started to look forward to going home. The next big event for us will definitely be when the 4 Bde recce party arrives. Although we are enjoying our time out here, the end of our tour will not come too soon.

Keeping up our mil skills. A pair of Cpls brassing up the Iraqi desert

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

ARMY

Sqn OC, Maj Ade Clewlow

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON IN IRAQ

OC **Maj Ade Clewlow**

246 Gurkha Sqn has deployed as a composite Sqn, made up of Gurkha, British and mobilised TA soldiers. They are deployed across Iraq: Shaibah Log Base, supporting NSE Tp under comd of **Capt Joe Docherty**; Mobile Tp, led by **Lt Graham Brown**, under comd of 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; **Capt Paul Denning** with Imphal Tp augmenting I Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; and the SHQ element and Baghdad Tp supporting the Senior British Military Representative in Iraq (SBMR-I), the Multi National Force Iraq, the Multi National Corps Iraq and the Iraq Survey Group. Baghdad Tp Comd is **Lt Sarah Panting**.

NSE Tp deployed in April and all were in excellent heart when I visited them last week. The members of Imphal Tp, who spent 2 months with the Regt prior to deployment, are beginning to settle into their new roles in the Sqn. Mobile Tp had to spend additional time in UK before finally flying out to theatre and undergoing RSOI. Only **Lt Graham Brown** deployed with the main body, splitting his time between looking for our comfort box ISO container and days out in Kuwait.

Although it took the RAF 5 days to fly everyone out from UK, the 2 Sig Regt contingent has settled down and is learning that there is nothing normal about serving in Baghdad. Apart from the daily temperature hitting 50° C, dodgy air conditioning, and sporadic mortar, rocket or VBIED attacks around the International Zone (it's still known as the Green Zone by everyone), we are getting used to the new sights and sounds of life in the capital of Iraq. The American Constitution reigns supreme here; everyone (men and women, military or civilian) carries a weapon. And they don't mind pointing them at you, especially on Route Irish, the link between both Green Zones in Baghdad. However, through a combination of common sense, excellent trg and a fair proportion of good luck, we are still at full manning.

BAGHDAD TROOP - *by LCpl Sagar*

Tp Comd	**Lt Sarah Panting**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Tosh**

After a tiring journey, Baghdad Tp arrived safely at Baghdad Support Unit (BSU) on 04 July 04. BSU is based in Baghdad's International Zone, close to Saddam's Palace. The excellent facilities and food make it feel like home. The offices and accn are air-conditioned, we have reliable welfare telephones and Internet, as well as BFBS, American gyms and PX close by. On Sundays we have a roast, and on Thursdays, curries (we're looking forward to a proper 246-style Bhat!). The tropical bar is great for BBQs and a beer or two!

On our first morning we were warmly welcomed by **Lt Gen McColl CBE DSO**, who wished us a safe and successful tour as he thanked the det from 16 Sig Regt for their comms achievements in Baghdad. As soon as they had left, work began for us and everyone had quickly to adapt to the long days, especially the techs, who worked through most nights in our first week.

Baghdad is as turbulent as it looks on TV, but so far we've been up only once in the night for a mortar attack, diving for the nearest shelter at midnight! Route Irish is the road across Baghdad to our outdets at Camps Victory and Slayer, and we cross this once or twice a week. It's a perilous route, but my forefathers said 'it's better to die than to be a coward,' and as a Gurkha, I keep that as my motto.

Lt Sarah Panting

Lt Sarah Panting writes...

It was only my first day back in the Regt when I was handed a nominal roll of Baghdad Tp and told to get cracking on pre-deployment admin. To say I hit the ground running was an understatement! After two months of courses, ITDs and exs, and three days of travel, I made in into theatre for my first op tour. To be honest, I didn't really know what to expect other than a lot of high-ranking officers all wanting comms!

We took over from 16 Sig Regt, whose manning profile was very different from ours - I'm very glad we have a YofS and a FofS around! One month into the tour, and I think I'm pretty settled. I couldn't ask for a better environment for my first tp comd. Baghdad is an eye-opener, and I feel privileged to be able to see some of the more famous sights when I go running in the mornings. From the comms perspective, I'm having to learn fast about Synergy, OSCA and JOCS to be able to hold my own with the staff when it all drops out at once!

MULTI NATIONAL CORPS-IRAQ DETACHMENT AT AL FAW PALACE - *by Sig Paddy Grierson*

Sqn 2IC	**Capt Samundra RGR**
Det Comd	**Sgt Joey Maguire**

I am the sig for **Maj Gen Graham CBE**, Dep Comd General (DCG) at Multi-National Corps Iraq (MNC-I). Having never done this type of job before, I was looking forward to the challenge and also the chance to learn new types of equipt and systems. I met the DCG on my first day and to my surprise, he seemed very laid back and friendly. I was shown my duties, which consist of setting up a VTC call for the DCG and other staff when required, fault-finding and replacement of equipt, ensuring the General's office is cleaned by contractors on a regular basis, assisting the ADC, **Capt Hempenstall**, with various tasks, and ensuring the duty veh is fueled, cleaned and serviceable. I am on call 24 hrs a day, having been provided with a mobile phone, but most of the calls I receive are during the working day. The rest of my time is spent between the WOSCA Det and our OSCA Det at Brit House, assisting in the smooth running and carrying out any tasks laid down by the Det Comd.

Sig Paddy Grierson

Sig Heard and **LCpl Gros** are the resident IS Ops, and their main role is maintaining and running the JOCS system. **Sig Rawle** is the tele mech, and has been busy running lines and drawing up records for Camp Victory. **Sgt Netra** and **Cpl Surya** are the det techs, and are responsible for maintaining the VSAT and Promina link and also repairing faulty equipt. **Capt Samundra** and **LCpl Raju** have been involved with admin for all of the Baghdad Det, which leaves our Det Comd, **Sgt Joey Maguire**, who has been the busiest so far, topping up his tan and chilling by the pool.

IRAQ SURVEY GROUP DETACHMENT

Det Comd	**Sgt Rob Smith**
Det 2IC	**Sgt Man Kambang**

We have now been in theatre for almost a month and are all settling in well. All comms are running smoothly and we have the Det almost the way we want it. Out of the three areas of Baghdad where 2 Sig Regt personnel are located, I think that we at Camp Slayer have it the worst. The water in the swimming pool is freezing and the quality of the suntan lotion in the PX is sadly lacking.

The Det techs are also well into the swing of things now with **Sgt Man Kambang** running about, and **Sgt Brett Doyle** at least thinking about fixing things. However, due to the amazing expertise of the two ops on the Det, the only things they have to fix are the things they have broken themselves.

JOINT SUPPORT UNIT (BASRAH)

CO	**Lt Col Wally Drain**
QM (A)	**Maj John Byrne**
QM (T)	**Capt Miles Webb**

Joint Support Unit Basrah (JSUB) was formed by the Project Officer and now CO, **Lt Col Wally Drain** with the aid of an RAF Colleague **W Cdr Paul O' Neill**, and went operational on 12 Jul 04.

JSUB is a wing of Basrah Air Station commanded by a Gp Capt, and provides the core J1/J4 functions to all BRITFOR BASRAH. Its establishment comprises the life support elements from 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, Joint Helicopter Force (Iraq) and the RAF APOD personnel, who have joined together to make it work. This type of organisation has never been put together on a live operation before.

All personnel are committed to the success of JSUB, and the RAF are getting used to the way the Army does its accounting procedures. They have very quickly found out that the clothing store is not C and A, and have named it 'The Window of No.'

The CO and his QMs at 'The Window of NO'

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

MULTI NATIONAL TASK FORCE SIGNALS UNIT 97 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SL Streete**
SSM	**WO M Prowse** CA

HALFWAY POINT

It is unbelievable that we have reached the halfway point already, and our Chuff Charts are now reading fewer days to complete than we have done. Summer is with us, and apart from Sundays, we now have hot, sunny days to enjoy. Battlefield Tours to Sarajevo have been experienced by many, as well as a hike through a Croatian National Park. Free T-shirts have been gained by all those who attended the second mine awareness trg, but fortunately, no one has been called upon to use the skills they have learned.

VISITORS

Something about the MNTFSU makes us very popular to visitors, and among others, we have enjoyed hosting the Armed Forces Minister, **The Rt Hon Adam Ingram MP** and **Brig JE Thomas MBE**, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde.

UK SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Fernand/2Lt Curtis-Rouse**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Small**

Sadly, the Tp managed to break **Lt Laura Fernand**, and she departed from theatre at the beginning of July, escorted by three nurses and a stretcher for the Herc ride home. All she did was fall over while enjoying a hike in the Plitvicka Jezera National Park in Croatia. How unlucky can you get! She is now back working in

The Rt Hon Adam Ingram MP with SSgt Dowds and Cpl Newell

UK at 2 (NC) Sig Bde, waiting for an operation and being missed by all of us in the Sqn. Her replacement, **2Lt Mike Curtis-Rouse**, who found himself on the plane before he had time to blink, has now settled into the post.

SERVICES TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Dias** CA
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Meller**

Services Tp has been as busy as ever, keeping Multi-National personnel in comms across Bosnia. In addition, one of them has found time to spend time working with local children who are

living in broken homes and refugee camps. **Pfc Wendy Zijlstra** helped to organise an activity day for numerous children, a day she found one that she will remember for the rest of her life.

SYSTEMS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Masseling** NL
IC DAGGER	**WO2 Parker**
IC CNR	**SM Toonen** NL

OP GUISARME was this month's harvest operation (weapons harvest, that is - not potatoes), combined with illegal logging prevention. The op was headed by MNBG, and all DAGGER and CNR radio dets were deployed. Accn was varied, with **Cpl Simms, Sig Sanghera**, **Sig Stam** and **Sig Winter** residing in a luxury hotel with en suite bathroom and TV in their rooms, a bar and tennis court for recreation, a maid service and a brothel next door! Meanwhile, the rest of the solders were in tented, dusty accn with the BG or Canadian Recce Sqn. It is alright for some!

DAGGER did what it always did – provide secure voice and data to the relevant Comd Teams. Many went out on patrol and found hand grenades, rifles, a pistol and numerous types of rounds. We then went on to provide comms at the opening of the Mostar Bridge at the end of July, and yes, we didn't meet **Prince Charles**!

Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde hearing all about DAGGER from LCpl Pollard and Sig Titchener

UK SIGNALS DETACHMENT - KOSOSVO

Det Comd	**Capt Gallagher**
Det SNCO	**SSgt Alleyne**

Capt Gallagher spent three weeks in Banja Luka running the UK Sig Tp until their new leader could deploy, but the rest of us worked as hard as ever. The Det cat has managed to get itself pregnant and so we are expecting the patter of tiny feet at any moment. We are running a sweepstake on how many mini 'Kos' we will end up with, and this has caused a lot of feverish betting in the TSCP. William Hills is still refusing to take **LCpl John McCabe's** bet on 101, pointing out to him that it is not a Dalmatian! We must also congratulate **Capt Gallagher**, who was recently promoted.

UK SATELLITE HUB – CORSHAM

Det SNCO	**Sgt Roberts**

Sig Katy Ord was deported after a short but eventful stay, and is now enjoying life at the other end of one of our links in the BLMF. One of the nodes in the Middle East went up in smoke, and so we had to sort that out. **Sig Rob Charlton**, man of many accents, faced automatic eviction at the end of July, and is now happily ensconced in the DAGGER Team.

RPGs AT DAWN – *by SSgt Lynne Camm*

In preparation for the planned Sqn Range Day, a familiarisation shoot on AK47s was organised for the range staff at Tuzla. We, **Capt Kinvig**, **Lt Fernand**, **SM Toonen**, **WO2 Parker**, **SSgts Small** and **Meller**, **Sgts Kuipers** and **de Vries** and **Cpls Brittain** and **McCourt** and I, met up at a very hot Springfield Ops and boarded the RN Sea King - provided for us because we bribed the pilots with an opportunity to shoot! After a much-enjoyed one-hour flight (which would have been five hours by road) we touched down at Eagle Base. The demolition range was another hour's drive away, so we piled into an assortment of vehs, including a Humvee, to make the hot and dusty journey there. On arrival, we saw that the range was actually a quarried out valley, wooded on either side with a cleared slope to the front. Our excitement mounted as US **SSgt Bakker** unloaded the various AK47s and ammo and then brought out two RPG launchers and a box of 12 grenades!

SSgt Meller in the quarry with her AK47

With the safety brief carefully covered, we loaded up our magazines and went to the firing point. Some 500 rounds later, you could say that we were fairly familiarised with the AK47. Next came the real highlight of the day, as **SSgt Bakker** took us through the RPG. At this point, the Cheshire cat grin that had been forming on **SSgt Cindy Meller's** face from the start of the day, became a permanent fixture, as she eagerly volunteered to be the first firer. The ferocity of the back-blast as she fired, took us all by surprise, although we found that the firer is more or less oblivious to this! For someone who is not usually that enthusiastic about weapons and shooting, I found it to be a thoroughly enjoyable and exhilarating way to spend an afternoon.

THE CSE SHOW – WHAT A NIGHT! – *by SSgt Buzz Small*

The CSE show came to the Metal Factory for a two-night show, and was greatly received by all troops. We had **Ian Stone**, the stand up comedian, who started the show by taking the Mickey out of anyone on the front two rows, especially those with ginger hair. He then introduced the dancing girls, who made all male members (and female rugby team) reach for their cameras. **SSgt Trevor Grant** was quick to offer them space in his Corimec if their hotel was not up to the mark, but we wait to hear if they needed the room! Next up was **Ricky Grover**, another alternative comedian, larger than life and very funny. More dancing girls, including some of the crowd this time, then the grand finale, **James Fox** and his band who did a lot of very good cover versions.

On Tuesday evening the Officers' Mess hosted the entire cast, and **Maj Sarah Streete** managed to pose for a photo with **James Fox**. Not to be out done, **SSgt Cindy Meller** has his autograph on a part of the body where the sun don't shine. **SSgt Lynne Camm** also managed a grope of his six-pack when the Seniors hosted the cast on Wednesday evening after the show.

Well done to the organisers and everyone involved - a nice break from the daily routine of army life.

MULTI NATIONAL PROMOTIONS

UK and Canadian eyes were opened when the Sqn carried out its first Dutch promotion. Unlike the proud moment that the soldier has when offered his new rank slides, the Dutch remove the old slides, throw them to the ground and put on the new ones. Then they pour two cans of beer all over his head, new slides and on his beret! **Sgt De Vries** enjoyed this moment, as did the rest of the Sqn who looked on rather unbelievingly. Shame he didn't get to drink his two cans that day! This was followed a few days later by the promotion of **Sgt Saunders**, who in British style saved his two cans to drink. Congratulations also to **SSgt Ross**, SQMS and to **WO2 Usher** Foreman of Signals, who have both been promoted.

MOVEMENTS

Our halfway point has meant that we have said goodbye to some of our Sqn and welcomed some more. Our Ops Team, **Capt Kinvig**, **WO2(FofS) Usher** and **WO2(YofS) Skimins** have all returned to the UK and in their place, we have welcomed **WO2(FofS) Farrow** and **WO2(YofS) Bole**. They fell straight into the task of planning the latest op, as well as dealing with the ongoing issues and tasks that fall to the Sqn.

Sig Ord, **Cpl Newson** and **SSgt Dowds** have all returned to work in UK, and were replaced by **Sgt Cook**, **LCpl Lock**, **LCpl Thompson** and **Sig Penfold**. In addition, our soldiers in the Hub are swapping with those in theatre, so even more change. However, none of these changes have affected our operational effectiveness and the troops are working and playing as hard as ever.

OTHER REGIMENTS AND SQUADRONS

19th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC	**Maj Dooley**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) D Forrester**

EXERCISE IRON TRIANGLE - *by Cpl Anderson*

Since returning from Iraq at the end of last year, the first real commitment that we were faced with was the task of providing vital life support and comms on EX IRON TRIANGLE. Comms wise, the main challenge was to create a large spaghetti-like design with coax cables to remote all of the varied systems into the staff cells. Although this appears nothing out of the ordinary, it must be considered that there were seven different units providing everything from Ptarmigan to the latest Sat comms and multiplexers. It was no easy task tending to the needs of the Staff, so all personnel from 209 must be congratulated for their sterling efforts.

LANYARD TROPHY 2004: 25th ANNIVERSARY - *By Sgt McKie*

After build-up trg in Catterick Garrison, which included an intensely painful river run, we set off for our acclimatisation down in the Brecon Beacons. On our arrival at Sennybridge, we were more than pleasantly surprised to see the place had lived up to its name, and the weather was glorious for the whole of the nine days' trg. The time spent on the hills and surrounding area proved invaluable to all. Without it, we would not have done as well as we did.

The 19 Mech Team in action

Unfortunately, the trg brought some injuries to the team, but that only made our admin team better, and they proved their worth countless times (just ask some of the teams that did not bring an admin team with them), all working hard together to keep the rest of the lads on their feet and fully fuelled up.

The less said about the pain, sweat and tears of the competition itself the better. Suffice to say, that all the team and admin staff gave their all for the cause and nothing more could have been asked from anybody. Crossing the finish line for the Sqn were: **Capt Mark Barratt**, **Lt Glen Bellingham**, **WO1(SMI) Rick Young**, **Sgt Ski McKie**, **Sig Spence Armstrong**, **Sig Horse McGuire** and **Sig Mule Rankin**. The Man of the Match award must go to Australian **Lt Bellingham** (currently with us on EX LONG LOOK), who braved the Welsh mountains to produce an extraordinary performance, despite having had very limited trg time.

Man of the Match Lt Glen Bellingham

I believe that this was, without a doubt, one of the hardest Lanyard Trophy routes that will be put to the test. The old cliché springs to mind: 'It was the lads that made it what it was.' Without their hard work, grit and determination, none of us would have finished. And with us (apart from the competition winners) being the only Sig Bde Sqn to finish the course, we should all be proud.

209 Sig Sqn would like to congratulate the 216 Sig Sqn team for their superhuman efforts to complete the course in such a fast time to win, and to thank the remainder of their Sqn for all of the admin work that was put in to make the Competition happen (although my body my not thank them just yet).

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

GETTING TO KNOW 11 SIGNAL REGIMENT
– BY Bernard Redshaw, Editor

In its role as the prime trainer and developer of signals personnel, 11 Sig Regt has a key role in our Corps. The quality of soldiers in our units, their trades and skills, is directly dependent on the capability of 11 Sig Regt to develop them. At the same time, the quality of the personnel manning 11 Sig Regt is dependent on postings in from the units. So as both customers and suppliers, it is important that the whole of the Corps has a good understanding of 11 Sig Regt. With this in mind, I set about finding more about them.

I began by talking to a number of their personnel. Space limits how many of them I could publish here, but what the following had to say gives a good representation of how they feel about 11 Sig Regt and its location.

Lt Col Graham Complin has been CO 11 Sig Regt since May 2004, having come a short distance from HQ SOinC(A) in Blandford.

'This Command was my first choice. I spent my first 6 years of service as a Royal Signals soldier, so I can readily identify with my cadre staff and my trainees.

'I have a passion for developing people, especially for this Corps. If we get it right in 11 Sig Regt, then the whole Corps will benefit.

'As soldiers, if we set the right standards and present the appropriate role models in training, then our Regt supporting the Field Army can only prosper.

'I want 11 Sig Regt to have a definite and positive identity, an identity that demonstrates the highest military standards, values and ethos – and to develop these in our cadre and our trainees. We are building this concept of standards, values and ethos into every course, every lesson, every exercise, every sporting event, every activity that the Regt gets involved in.

'I am very conscious of 11 Sig Regt's role as the Corps' depot Regt, so we will get it right, and we will set the standards for the whole of the Corps. This will become particularly important as we move towards a single-site Defence College of CIS.

'I put a lot of emphasis on my cadre staff. I charge each one to lead by example, to represent everything that's good about our Corps. And I don't mean just technical and training skills; I also mean their personal values as well. Wherever they go, whatever they do, they must be the best example for others to follow. These are the sorts of people I want in this Regt. We have a good team here already, and we are steadily developing them to be the best. We want more of the same to follow them.'

WO1 Simon Hadley is RSM of 11 Sig Regt. As such, he is also Corps RSM and Blandford Garrison RSM. He arrived in April 2004, having been RQMS 31 Sig Regt (V).

'For a number of reasons, I previously didn't want to be in Blandford, but on my promotion to WO1, I really wanted to be RSM of 11 Sig Regt. Why? Because it would give me an opportunity to have a real influence on the development of the Corps' soldiers, and also I saw myself ready to be in a training unit.

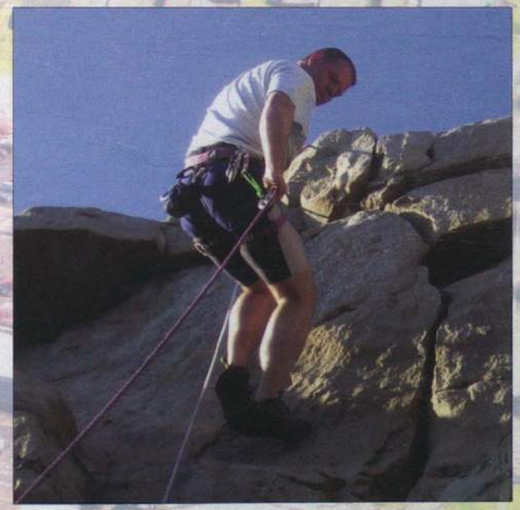
I was soon to realise that the surrounding area that Blandford sits in, is absolutely fantastic. There's something here for everyone, both for older people like myself and for the younger ones. There are beaches, fishing, sailing, hill walking cycling – you name it, all within easy reach. And on Camp, the facilities and the clubs, groups, etc provide for a huge range of interests that I doubt you would find anywhere else.

'When I arrived in April this year, it was straight into the lead-up for the Morrison Cup, the RSA Reunion Weekend, the Gordons Cup and a number of other events. Being a job that was heavily involved in Corps matters, there were also policies, politics and protocols to get my head around, as well as finding out who's who at very senior levels. For the first 3 months, my average working day was from 07.00hrs to around 20.45hrs, 7 days a week. But I must add, I was not alone in this. Others were putting in just as many hours. And it wasn't long before we started to see the results of our efforts. We had one of the best Morrison Cups ever, and the parade we laid on for the RSA Reunion Weekend was something for us all to be extremely proud of.

'The job of RSM has many facets, from being the chief disciplinarian in the non-commissioned ranks, to helping soldiers to manage themselves, to setting an example for them to follow. And that really suits me. With me, what you see is what I am, and I try to project this. I have three maxims: manners cost nothing; never forget where you come from; and don't try to be someone that you are not.

'I am passionate about the Corps, and my aim is to help all I can to develop good people for it. Every one of them (trainees and cadre staff alike) is different, and every one has huge potential. My mission in life is to help them find that potential, to build upon and develop it. I want them to know, I want them to see, that any one of them can get to where I am now – or even further. To the newly-promoted Corporal, I will say, 'Now fix your eye on the Sgts Mess. You can do it!'

For me, this posting has produced a huge personal change. I am confident in my job; I'm at ease with both the very senior officers in the Corps and also the newest of recruits. I have had the opportunity and encouragement to develop a style that makes it all work.



WO1 Paul Duke, Tp Comd, Beaufighter Tp was posted in on promotion from 30 Sig Regt.

'At first, my friends (and even my then OC) took pity on me when my posting to 11 Sig Regt came through. But I had a different view. For me, it was a great career move. Being physical, I saw the opportunities of orienteering, cross-country running, rock climbing in South Dorset and hill walking in the Purbecks.

'And the job has given me a unique insight into the development of Phase 2 trainees, the part that you can take in it, and indeed the responsibility you take on with them. I was soon to realise that here I was, playing a key role in the development of future members of the Corps. Not only that, but I was developing my own cadre staff and helping them realise this. All of this has stood me in good stead in my next role as RSM of an about to be formed Regt.

'Blandford is no sleepy hollow. With the right attitude, there are loads of opportunities you can grab for your own personal development. True, we are not a 'normal' Regt - but it's certainly not a 9-5 job. What with early morning activities, evening social events, and weekend sport, we probably work longer hours than you do in most other Regts. And most of our time is working closely with people, watching them grow and develop. My time with 11 Sig Regt has been a huge learning event, both for me and for my trainees. And I know that I'm going to meet up with many of them again later in my career. I wouldn't have missed this posting for anything.'

Sgt Natalie Roberts has been in 11 Sig Regt for nearly 2 years, having come from 7 Sig Regt. Recently promoted, she is currently Tp Sgt.

'I was pleased to be coming back to UK and to a different type of job – although I didn't know exactly what that job was at the time. Blandford was also going to give me a different slant on training – I had done my trade training at Harrogate.

'But on the other hand, I was a little apprehensive. I had heard that they operated with very large numbers in a Tp. When I got here, it was quite a whirl, with so many things to take in in a very short time – who's who, the different courses, etc.

'But it didn't take me long to find my feet. Although I was left on my own to just get on with things, there was always someone to turn to if I needed help. The support from my colleagues was, and still is, total.

'In this job, no two days are the same. Every day is different, with different people coming and going. You get much closer to people, and to many more of them than you would ever do in a normal Regt. You get to understand their different personalities, and you work out different strategies to work with each one. And the scale of things really is bigger. I have had a Tp of 160 soldiers! The range of our responsibilities is very large.

'Although we do work long hours, we still have plenty of time for sport and for courses. I keep fit doing running, scuba diving and walking, and there are plenty of facilities for these and more. Over the last year, I have had a real drive on qualification courses – about 17 weeks' worth. (*I found out later that she had achieved Top Student out of 134 on the all arms Skill-at-Arms course – very rare for non-inf soldiers; even rarer for a female – Editor*)

'Blandford is a great place to be. Social activities are looking up. The Cpls' Mess now has a do every month, and there are loads of things to do both on and off Camp.

'This posting has really done me the world of good. It has brought me out, and has helped me really to think about my career, of where I want to go and what I need to do to get there. I had thought that 11 Sig Regt was a career halt, but here I am promoted just a couple of weeks ago on the basis of what I have done in this job. And I am confident that if I can handle the admin of a Tp of 160 soldiers in this job (which I can), I can do even more for my Tp when I join a normal Regt.'

Sig Greg Mesmer, from Norwich is coming towards the end of a 9 month Installation Technician's Course.

'It's been a hard course. A lot of things to learn in a very short space of time. But it's a good course – you come out with a load of civilian qualifications, such as City and Guilds. It's practically orientated, and you can relate the theory as you go.

'The staff are really good. They have a lot of field experience, so they can tell you how it really relates operationally. They can also see it all from your point of view. And you can ask them things at any time. They're very approachable.

'Other activities? Where do I start? Blandford has every sport, every club, every hobby you can imagine. And you can get involved in Sqn or Regt activities, particularly on the competitive side.

'I've been involved in football, rugby, hockey and boxing in the Harrogate Cup, and the log race for the Gordon's Cup. Then there's the drill competition. That leads up to the RSA Weekend.

'The RSA Weekend is a really good weekend. We all put in a lot of hours' practice for the parade, but it was the most impressive one I have ever done. And it was really great afterwards meeting up with the retired signallers and hearing from them what the Corps was like in their day.

'We have great Sqn events, too. There's a big do at least three times a year, organised by the up-graders. We have discos, live bands, comedians, hog roasts and barbecues. These all give you the chance to meet others in the Sqn that you don't see normally, and it brings the Phase 2s and the cadre staff together.

'I've got a lot of time for the cadre staff. They're helpful and really approachable. For instance, with welfare issues, they will put in a hell of a lot of effort to help you get sorted when you need it. And they put in a lot of extra hours. I spent some time working in their office, and I saw what goes on behind the scenes, and the extra effort they put in. This is not always appreciated by the trainees, but they all do it willingly. I really enjoyed my time in their office. It's something I'd like to do myself in the future.'

Sig Mark Strachan is from Merseyside, and is half way through his Radio Systems Operator Course. He is married, and occupies a married quarter on Blandford.

'I'm really enjoying this course. It's interesting, it's highly practical, and there are a lot of things going on. The instructors are great. They're very experienced, and they frequently drop in little anecdotes of their own operational experiences with the equipment, which makes it even more interesting.

'The cadre staff are good too. They're always willing to help, whatever your problem. We sometimes get out on military skills exercises with them. We had a great time on one last weekend. We rough it a bit, but I enjoy being out in the field.

'There's 'Sport for All' every other week, and you can try all sorts of things that you've never experienced before. I've done clay pigeon shooting, squash, golf, swimming and athletics. I would never get the opportunity to do these anywhere else. And if you're good enough in any of them, you can take it further.

'At Blandford there are clubs for every hobby or activity you could imagine: amateur radio, sailing, sub-aqua, and many others.

'My wife and I have a very nice quarter. It's clean and modern, and everything's there. And there are plenty of places for us to go in the area. We love Lulworth Cove, and we are in Bournemouth or Poole at least twice a week. We really enjoy it.

THE CORPS' OTHER YEOMEN

The splendid six. John Keohane, Tom Trent, John Kenny, Tom Sharp, Ray Bruce and Alan Fiddes

– by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

It is a little known fact that of the 35 Yeomen of the Guard at HM Tower of London, 6 are ex-Royal Signals. Not long ago, there were 8. This is why I was summoned to the Tower by The Yeoman Gaoler, **John Keohane BEM**, to sort this little matter out, i.e. to let the Corps know about its other Yeomen.

On my arrival, I was escorted to **John's** office in the Byward Tower, where windows had been fitted to the ancient loopholes through the thick stone walls, and computers anachronistically shared space with items of mediaeval clothing and weaponry. It was rather like an adjutant's office, **John** being second in the hierarchy of the Body of Guards' organisational structure. At its head, is The Chief Yeoman Warder, **Thomas Sharp BA (Hons) MIL**, another Signaller, whom I was to meet later in the day, and whose name appeared the following week in the Queen's Birthday Honours list as having been appointed a Member of the Royal Victorian Order (MVO) for his 20 years' service to the Tower.

After handing me a file of CVs for all the Royal Signals Warders, **John** gave me a detailed brief on The Body of Yeoman Warders of the Tower of London (also known as the Yeomen of the Guard Extraordinary), which I can only briefly summarise here.

Warders of the Tower were in existence in 1301. In 1485, **Henry VII** formally created the Yeoman of the Guard and gave the Yeoman Waiters (or Warders) of the Tower seniority in this body. Their main responsibilities were, and still are, to maintain the security of the Tower of London and all that is contained within it.

This includes the guarding of important prisoners of the Crown (the last of whom being **Rudolf Hess** in 1941), the Crown Jewels and the Armouries in the Tower. They are also the Sovereign's Guard Extraordinary.

As early as 1671, members of the public were allowed to enter the Tower, and the supervision of them and their safety became another responsibility of the Yeoman Warders. With visitor numbers growing from 100,000 a year in the mid 19th century to 2 million a year today, this has become the greater part of their job.

As well as being skilled in such things as public security, first aid, and health and safety, a Yeoman Warder must have an encyclopaedic knowledge of the Tower and its history. To do his job, he (as yet, there are no Yeowomen) is required to pass a test rather similar to 'the knowledge' test for London cabbies. In this, he has to prove his competency by taking the Resident Governor and Chief Yeoman Warder on a personal guided tour - mercifully, at a time before the public are admitted. But even this is not enough to equip him for the job. His voice must carry enough to be heard above the cacophony of noise that can occur in this part of the City, and his accent and turn of phrase has to be 'understood by the American, the Australian, or the self-taught Finn.' And in return, he must be able to understand them when they ask him questions.

As **John Keohane** took me around the grounds, I was able to observe the Corps' other yeomen in action. **John Kenny** was conducting a guided tour of the Chapel Royal. **Tom Trent** was doing a similar thing, shepherding a larger group of tourists

John Kenny keeps his admirers enthralled in the Chapel Royal

Tom Trent with his 121st guest of the morning

outdoors. **Alan Fiddes** was doing the celebrity bit, by being photographed with a bevy of attractive female tourists. And after joining us for the group photo, **Ray Bruce** stood down for his break.

And here we come to a major problem. After 20 years' service in The Body of Yeoman Warders, **Tom Sharp** retires in October 2004, leaving the number of Signallers at 5. **John Keohane**, who steps into **Tom's** shoes, would dearly like to restore, even increase, the Corps' complement. He asks that any retired, or soon to retire Royal Signaller, consider serving on in a service environment by joining the Body. You can contact **John** by phone on 020 7488 5645, or by email at john.keohane@hrp.org.uk. In the box below, are the main prerequisites for the job, and you can find out more about the Tower and its history, by visiting the Historic Royal Palaces website at www.hrp.org.uk.

MAIN PREREQUISITES FOR THE POSITION OF YEOMAN WARDER

Candidates will be expected to fulfil all of the following:

a. Be a former SSgt or WO (commissioned rank was disallowed by the Duke of Wellington in 1827);

b. Be in possession of the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal;

c. Have served in the Armed Forces for a minimum of 22 years;

d. Be of Exemplary Character;

e. Be under 50 years of age on appointment; and

f. Be medically fit.

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

The March Past

CO **Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RG Dalton**

FREEDOM OF BIRMINGHAM

It had been more than six years since the Regt last exercised its right to march through the streets of Birmingham with drums beating, bands playing and bayonets fixed, and this right was once more being exercised on Saturday 25 July, on one of Birmingham's busiest shopping days.

The Freedom of a City is an ancient custom that dates back to the time when Boroughs and Cities had the right and need to control the passage of armed bodies of men through their territory. Today a 'Freedom' is granted in recognition of a particular deed or an association with the City in question, and is a great honour. 35 Sig Regt was granted this great honour on 12 September 1970.

Such an important parade requires a vast amount of organisation and preparation, not least the vital parade rehearsals that involve some complex drill movements, especially for the scroll bearing party. This fact was not lost on the RSM, **WO1 Russ Dalton**, whose stress levels seemed to be increasing almost on a daily basis during the preparatory stage. First he had to deal with the logistical problem of getting five widely dispersed Sqns together for the parade rehearsals, and then hope the same individuals would turn up for the parade itself. 25 July arrived sooner than the RSM would have liked, but he managed a final parade rehearsal in 48 Sqn's TAC. Experience shows that even a mediocre rehearsal usually results in a perfect final parade, and much to his relief, the actual parade went like clockwork.

The Lord Mayor escorted by the CO

During this lavish ceremony, the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, **Cllr Mike Nangle** escorted by the CO, **Lt Col Chris Edwards**, presented the Iraq campaign medal to thirty members of the Regt who had served during OPS TELIC 1 - 3.

The BBC took a great interest in the parade, and ensured we were treated to a one-minute slot on the local news that evening, which included an excellent interview with the CO, and with **WO2 Nav Muhammed** and his wife **Sgt Wendy Muhammed**, who both served in Iraq during OP TELIC 2.

The girls with the medals

Following the parade all members of the Regt, former members and old comrades and their families were treated to a lavish lunch in the striking surroundings of the Birmingham Council House, providing a fitting end to an eventful, memorable and historic day.

MOBILISATION RULES, OK

It was a pleasant surprise during a visit to the RTMC, to see at first hand how efficiently TA personnel for OP TELIC 4 were processed through the system, and how sympathetically their problems were being addressed, in particular on hardship issues. RTMC have finely tuned their system so any TA soldier can feel confident that they will be processed smoothly and treated with a great deal of respect and understanding before joining their reinforcing units.

The visit also gave us the opportunity to say farewell to both Sqn and other Regt personnel who were deploying, including **Sgts Wayne Amos** and **Jean Parr**, **Cpls Ian Townsend** and **Paul Spicer**, and **LCpls Steve Alpers**, **Joy Gilford**, **Chris Fulthorpe** and **Phil McLachlen**. All have deployed with 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, and by now will have joined either 2 Sig Regt or 215 Sig Sqn. Also joining them shortly on TELIC 5 will be **Sgts Gary Potts** and **Mick Bell**, **Cpl Graham Yeubrey** and **LCpl Simon Parry-Hall**. We wish all our mobilised soldiers a challenging, enjoyable and safe TOD.

CANADIAN MOUNTAINEERS RESCUE THEIR MAN

This year the main AT exped, EX FRONTIER DRAGON, was mounted in the Canadian Rockies during the period 11 – 26 July, as usual organised by **Capt John Middler**. But the last thing our exped leader expected was to become involved in a full-scale mountain rescue on the first day.

Our team was on a mountain pass overlooking the deep green water of Lake Louise, when they were approached by the leader of a Japanese tourist party. One member of his party had suffered a serious fall and required immediate medical attention. What followed was a dramatic rescue, coordinated by **Maj Piers Ashdown**, who was first on the scene, assisted by **WO2s Kevin Bannigan** and **Andy Wilkins** applying first aid, while **WO2 Richard Roberts**, **SSgt Colin Richards** and **Sgt Dominic Anslow** put together an alpine basket stretcher to move the injured tourist to where he could be recovered by the Canadian Mountain Rescue Team's air ambulance. Their swift and skilful action ensured that the tourist did not suffer any further injuries. He was moved quickly to the Mineral Springs Hospital near Banff, where he received emergency treatment and is now well on his way to making a full recovery from his injuries

After this exciting and unexpected interlude, all members of the team ascended Fairview Mountain, which provided them with spectacular views over the Rockies. On the Wednesday the expedition moved to the British Columbia ice field, where they were split into three groups and engaged in a three day round robin, including traversing a glacier, rock climbing and hill walking. The main event for the second week was a four-day trek, with the team covering 75 kms from Banff to Lake Louise, after which the team returned to Banff for R and R following a final day of rock climbing.

Many benefits were gained from this experience, not only the teamwork required to mount a successful rescue, but also the substantial skills that were both developed that resulted in many team members receiving Summer Mountain Proficiency certificates. Well done to all concerned!

The rescue team

REGIMENTAL ROUNDUP

Anything else that has taken place in the Regt now seems an anti-climax, but there are one or two events more than worthy of mention, starting with a most unusual inaugural dinner night. The CO expressed a wish that his dining-in would include all ranks. So the RSM and the PMC of the Officers Mess organised a special event that coincided with a Regtl Weekend at Swynerton over the weekend 10/11 July.

The nearest TAC that could cope with the expected numbers proved to be 95 Sqn, and they certainly had their work cut out reorganising the drill hall to accommodate over one hundred all ranks. But **Capt Alec Rodgers** and his team, by deft management, managed to pull it off - despite many changes to the seating plan.

The menu suited all tastes with good food and fine wine. **Sgt Kay Yeubrey** with her team of willing cadets, deserves a medal for her role as Major Domo, keeping the event running smoothly and on schedule. The evening, though unusual and unique, was thoroughly enjoyable, made even more so by the CO's inspiring speech. It also gave the junior ranks an insight into Officer's and Sgt's Mess protocol.

Finally returning to the AT theme, which has been a prominent feature of life in the Regt for the past three months, 89 Sqn ventured out to Anglesey during the weekend 7/8 August to participate in EX WANDERING DRAGON. The weekend was organised by the Sqn SPSI, **SSgt Paul Coxon**, assisted by **Sgt Tony Thirlwell** 89 Sqn's resident Tech, and it was supported by eighteen members of the Sqn.

Activities included abseiling and rock climbing during the Saturday morning, followed by coasteering, which took up most of the afternoon. This activity provided the most exciting photo opportunities, especially when **LCpl Pete Cater** leaped off a 40-foot rock face, egged on by a rather enthusiastic instructor. He was followed by **WO2 Simon Wright**, who is still pumping seawater from his ears. On Sunday, all participants engaged in a spot of gorge walking, where the OC, **Maj Ian Cassell**, got stuck up a narrow passage, before returning to base camp for a barbecue, courtesy of **SSgts Charlie Walker** and **Dave Arnot**, prior to the long journey home.

LCpl Pete Cater and 2Lt Alan Lunn – ready for anything!

20th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj Simon Spiers**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Andy Crawford**

200 SIGNAL SQUADRON WIN ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS
– by Sig McCosh

If there is one thing that I have learned during my time with 200 Sig Sqn, it is that armoured units are very busy places indeed. It was therefore no big surprise to find out, at the last minute, that we were taking part in the BF(G) Athletics Champs. The fact that we were in the middle of Tp exs didn't deter us, and **Sgt Walsh** was given the unhappy task of pinging people to do various events.

There were a lot of shocked faces scurrying about the Sqn as people hastily tried to find running vests and shorts and, for the more professional amongst us, running spikes. We also found out, again at the last minute, that the timings for the programme had changed, which meant that competitors had no time to warm up. But we made up for our disorganisation off the track with sound performances on it.

In the females' field events, **LCpl Griffiths** did us proud with first places in shot put, javelin and discus. She even had the cheek to continue throwing long after she had seen her opponents off. I got spammed with the female long jump and high jump, and had to try to remember how to get it right. After a few attempts, the technique came back to me. **Sig Riley** also took part in the long jump, and put in a good performance. The men were no less impressive in the field events. **SSgt Kidd** took first place in the pole vault, even if it did mean him taking the rest of the week off with a bad back. The men's long jump was dominated by **Sig Brown**, and the javelin by **Cpl Green**.

The track events produced equally good results. **Cpl Storey** put in a gutsy performance in the women's 200m and 800m, beating her rival in both instances. **Sig Riley** was brilliant in the women's 400m hurdles, but admitted that it was much further than she expected. 'The hurdles just refused to get any less and I felt like was on a treadmill,' she later commented. **SSgt Stroudley** bravely took part in the men's pentathlon and as a reward for his courage, got dunked in the water hazard after the event.

The winning team

After all the scores were tallied up, 200 Sig Sqn were announced the BFG Minor Units Champions. Not a bad days work for a Sqn that had no idea they were taking part.

EXERCISE WILD WATERS – *by Cpl Stewart*

On a cold and wet morning, the members taking part in EX WILD WATERS gathered under an overhang to await the bus. The weather was strangely familiar, despite being in Germany and notwithstanding the fact that it was July.

EX WILD WATERS was a low level AT exped organised by **2Lt Foster**, and gave us the opportunity to test our skills (or lack thereof) at sailing dinghies and toppers. The British Mohnesee Sailing Club is only an hour away from 200 Sig Sqn, and therefore provided the perfect venue. Upon arrival at the Club, we were given a brief before doing the mandatory swim test. Although everyone passed, some of the results were a little dodgy. I'm almost sure that **Sig Griffiths** managed to escape the test altogether.

Sailing like a pro – well, almost

Be that as it may, we quickly got our buoyancy aids on and took to the water. After a couple of false starts, we soon got the hang of it and it wasn't long before everyone was sailing like a pro (well not quite a pro). Those who didn't sail, spent their time on the mountain bikes exploring the wonderful sights of the Mohnesee Lake. The evenings were equally entertaining, and we got to know the nightlife quite well.

It was good to have the OC, **Maj Simon Spiers**, and the RSM, **WO1 Andy Crawford**, with us to keep up the morale. The week passed far too quickly, and I personally could have spent another week there. Come to think of it, I could spend all year there, but then we aren't all as lucky as **Sig Woodhouse**.

EXERCISE FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET 2 – *by LCpl Halliwell*

EX FLEXIBLE GAUNTLET 2 was a Sqn-level ex, designed to test and practise the troops in setting up and tearing down the Armd Bde HQ. It also provided Echelon the opportunity to assess their supporting role.

Because there are a lot of fairly inexperienced people in the Sqn, the ex kicked off with a number of tutorials and 'walk-through, talk-through' lessons. The pace quickened as the week progressed, and soon the troops started getting to grips with the intricacies of setting up a decent working environment. The week culminated with the Bde Staff Officers visiting Alpha and Bravo Tp HQs. It gave them a chance to meet the operators they would be working with, as well as to ask some burning questions. On the whole the Staff were pleasantly surprised, and appeared to enjoy learning all about the armour.

The week was long and tiring, but worthwhile. The old and bold got a chance to revise those skills that had lain dormant for the duration of OP TELIC 3. The new and inexperienced soldiers got the opportunity to learn exactly how to set up and tear down the Armd Bde HQ. Everyone came away with a sense of achievement and a sound knowledge of how to tackle future exs. And with CAST and EX RHINO CHARGE just around the corner, it is just as well.

Laying their own smokescreen, the panzers move out

continued from page 412

LORD LIEUTENANT'S CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION – SGT MEAKIN

On Tuesday 11 May at Altcar Training Camp, **Col Alan Waterworth**, the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside awarded certificates that recognise significant service to the Reserve Forces. After more than 25 years of such service, **Sgt Meakin's** commitment and dedication was rewarded with the presentation of this prestigious certificate.

During his time with the Regiment **Sgt Meakin** has served as a Dvr Lineman, Provost Sgt and more recently, Officers' Mess Sgt.

It is in this role that he has excelled and as his citation states '…without his helpful nature and willingness to give of his own time, often at short notice, many events would simply not have taken place, and consequently the whole of the Military in the NW region owe **Sgt Meakin** a debt of gratitude.'

The Lord Lieutenant presents Sgt Meakin with his Award

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col G Hearn**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) PV McGarry**

The Regt has had another 12 deploy on OP TELIC 4 with 2 Sig Regt, and a number of key personalities have arrived and left, including a change over of RSMs. A fond farewell and congratulations on your commission to **WO1 (RSM) Daz Newton**, and a warm welcome to the new RSM, **WO1(RSM) Paul McGarry**.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj CL Jones**
SSM	**WO2 J Harkin**

This year's annual charity event for HQ Sqn, EX CLIMB EVEREST, involved teams running from the floor of the Tees valley to the top of the North Yorkshire moors at Eston Knab. The total climb for each team was the equivalent height of Everest. Some 60 members of the Regt took part and raised a total of £3,500 for a local Children's charity. **Maj Jones** raised £300 and **Sgt Tracey Downs** RLC £350.

The Regtl Cocktail Party took place in the only pool of sunlight to hit the northeast of England on a very wet Saturday 3 July. 120 local dignitaries and members of the Offrs' and Sgts' Messes watched, as The Royal Signals Northern Band performed a superb Beating of the Retreat among the cloisters of North Yorkshire's Mount Grace Priory. Echoes of the *Last Post* rang through the ruins as the last rays of the sun shone through the empty windows, and dark clouds hovered threateningly all around. A very successful and enjoyable evening.

Another successful event that demonstrated the organisational skills of the permanent staff and TA of HQ Sqn was the ITD Weekend, held at Catterick and Darlington on 17/18 July. 120 members of the Regt successfully passed 9 ITDS over the weekend. Despite it being another wet weekend, everyone who attended enjoyed it.

The 49 Sig Sqn CLIMB EVERSET team

Congratulations to **WO2 John Harkin** the newly-appointed SSM on his promotion for a second time to WO2. SDR saw **John** revert to SSgt from SSM when his previous unit disbanded.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

Congratulations to **SSgt Eastwood** on his well-deserved promotion. Good luck to **LCpls Robinson**, **Gowan**, **Melissa Bertuzzi**, **Donna Smith** and **Sig Gemma Shippen** who have departed for the Middle East.

OPERATION TELIC 2 - *by LCpl Patricia Hutton*

On 13 July 04, **Maj GW Wilson**, OC 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209), visited Darlington TAC to make a presentation to the members of the Sqn who served with his unit on OP TELIC 2. He was very generous and sincere in his comments and made us feel that we all had made a valuable contribution. He presented the Sqn with a framed bayonet and it was really great to see everyone again and find out how they were all doing.

Maj Greg Wilson (R) presents a framed bayonet to Sig Ronnie Robson and LCpl Pat Hutton

I had been in the TA for 5 years, and in May 2003, I received compulsory call out papers to be mobilised for Iraq. At first I was a little bit shocked and very uncertain about what the future had in store for me. I knew that I would rise to the challenge and give 100%, as this is what I had been training for, and it would also be a huge opportunity to travel and learn about a totally different culture.

On initial mobilisation, I was still feeling quite apprehensive, but soon realised this was normal. Also, I got the chance to talk to people who had served on previous military ops, and began to understand what was expected of me. Nothing could have prepared me for the heat when I first arrived in Kuwait for acclimatisation, but at least I got a good suntan.

On arrival at Basrah, I was attached to the MT Dept of 209 Sig Sqn, who immediately made me feel welcome and very much part of the team. This being my first operational tour, it was a steep learning curve for me, and the Regular soldiers were most helpful, sharing their knowledge and previous experience, which was crucial to the success and smooth running of this very busy Dept.

Overall, although this post was quite demanding, I came away from it feeling quite proud of my achievement and the small contribution I had made. I got promoted, lost weight and made a few extra friends into the bargain. It was both an honour and a privilege to serve with 209 Sig Sqn and I would be delighted to serve with them again any time in the future.

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj RB Lenton TD**
SSM	**WO2 LD Stimson**

Two members of 90 Sig Sqn part in the US Forces Exchange Programme this year, involving the US National Guard and Reserve Forces. **Lt H Baxter** of 741 Tp and **WO2(SSM) Stimson** crossed the pond for two weeks, picking up the skills and swagger of Uncle Sam's Army.

Although travelling to the largest Signal Centre in America, **Lt Baxter** was destined to demonstrate her nursing qualities (it's all in the uniform), providing an insight into her caring compassionate nature whilst exercising with 202 Medical Unit in Fort Gordon, Georgia. Her work included assisting in open-heart surgery in an air-conditioned field hospital and the subsequent transferral of patients to the psychiatric ward to receive shock treatment before being transported out of the area on C130 Hercules. Many patients were heard to breathe a sigh of relief as they departed, safe in the knowledge that they could no longer be stitched up by a female Comms Officer!

Meanwhile, further north, **WO2 Stimson** was thrown into reality with 138 Sig Bn from Anderson, Indiana. The Bn were practising convoy and anti-ambush drills at Camp Draylin in Kansas, which is approximately the size of Wales. **WO2 Stimson** showed our allies how to fire the M16 rifle before going on to a live firing anti-ambush run. After recovering from the ex area back to their armoury in Anderson (10 hours drive), the Bn turned the vehs round and started on mandatory tests, fitness and, to their surprise, a compulsory drug test. A good time was had by all, and there was even time to take in a major league baseball game.

Lt Baxter and **SSM Stimson** weren't the only soldiers to participate in the physically demanding. **LCpl Paul Tate**, **Sgt Eddie Waring** and **SSgt (FofS) Tibbetts** of 90 Sig Sqn were busy clambering up the hills of Catterick as part of the 34 Sig Regt Lanyard Trophy Team. Carrying 40lb Bergens, the soldiers courageously tackled the 40km race, enduring gale force winds and driving rain to maintain the reputation of the Regt. A very well done from the guys and girls of 90 Sqn!

Congratulations to **Sgt Kitching** and **Lt Baxter** on their recent promotions, and welcome back to **Capt Simon Smith**, returning from Afghanistan.

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col PN Willmott TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) MA Giles**

WINNING THE COPENHAGEN CUP IN THE ROYAL SIGNALS SAILING REGATTA – *by LCpl Emma Burton*

With only two members of last year's crew, **LCpl Nikki Fleming** and **LCpl Emma Burton**, the Regtl Sailing Team set off to Kiel to defend our title as the overall Regatta winning boat 2003. With our old skipper and mate, **WO2 Terry McIntyre** and **Capt Rob Francis** aboard the 39 Sig Regt boat, we knew we had a huge challenge. The second day provided an even bigger challenge when our engine failed. We discovered the previous crew had refuelled with petrol instead of diesel.

With this put right and with our skipper, **Sgt Windy Gale**, the RSM, **SSgt Leigh Griffiths** and **Cpl Claire Burrows**, we proved to remain a force and managed to finish second overall by just half a point. The racing proved very competitive, and the Corps has unearthed another salty sea dog in **SSgt Leigh Griffiths**. For those who think sailing is a holiday, get out and try it! It's fun, but hard work at times. In one race, we passed the finish line at 19.00 hrs, put the boat to bed in the Svenburg Marina, showered and went out for a crew meal. As we went back aboard at midnight, another crew were just coming in from the race.

Despite our disappointment at being so close to repeating last year's feat, we did achieve another first in being the first TA unit to win the coveted Copenhagen Cup, awarded to the winning crew of the Long Passage race. This was a very hard fought 120 nautical mile race, during which it appeared that our old skipper and mate were attempting to rejoin us in our cockpit, sailing very close in high winds in the dark at one o'clock in the morning! We de-powered the sails to prove the old adage of the tortoise and the hare, along with proof that SNCOs can read charts as well as maps better than Officers.

The Sailing Team with the gun 'Cito'

SAUMUR CHALLENGE 2004 – *by 2Lt Vicky Freer*

The Saumur Challenge is an annual military equestrian competition between teams of Reserve Officers from the UK, France, Belgium and Holland. This year, the competition was hosted by the Belgians on Saturday 15 May at Chateau de Buvrinnes near Mons, the home town of the Comte de Looz-Corswaren. Each nation is invited to enter two teams of three riders, and the competition consists of two phrases, cross-country and show jumping under FEI rules for eventing.

2Lt Vicky Freer of 45 Sig Sqn was selected to ride for the UK B team, along with **Sub Lt Hugh O'Driscoll** RNVR (team captain) and **2Lt Emma Colquhoun** RWxY. Sadly, **Sub Lt O'Driscoll** had a family bereavement, and was unable to compete. His place was taken by a reserve rider, **2Lt Michael Whitehead** RWxY and **2Lt Freer** stood in as team captain. The course was long, hilly and far from small. It was well built, with many technical fences.

The horses had travelled from the Netherlands, and were grouped in teams of three. A draw was made to pair them with the riders. This done, I spoke to the owners about their ability. My Franglais is rather rusty, but I managed to deduce that our first horse was a national-level jumper, the second was smaller, but apparently jumped well, and the third was a wild-looking mare called Mozzaria, and had never done cross-country before!

2Lt Whitehead went first and produced a good clear round cross-country. **2Lt Colquhoun** was less fortunate, retiring half way round. Although her horse jumped well, it was not fit enough to cope with the stamina-sapping course. Somehow, I managed to coax Mozzaria round to finish with four refusals. Despite her lack of experience, she was fit and honest, which helped. Out of 24 competitors, only 6 got round with 3 refusals or less. The other 16 were eliminated but allowed to continue in the competition on maximum points.

The show jumping ran with riders in reverse order, and in general, most horses jumped well, though it had little influence on the final result for the teams. It was not the case for individual results though.

2Lt Whitehead was lying in 2nd place after the cross-country and then incurred 12 penalties in the show jumping. His final score of 48.8 had secured him second place, but a win seemed impossible, as the last to go only had 22 penalties. The last to go was **Lt Jurgen Venteville** for the Netherlands A team, riding the aptly named Troublemaker. The crowd watched in astonishment as they incurred 28 penalties and dropped to second place. **2Lt Whitehead**, our reserve rider, had won the individual competition by 1.2 points!

The UK B team finished a very creditable third on 547 penalties, behind Netherlands A, 403 and Belgium A, 508.4. The UK A team finished fifth on 632.8 penalties.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON
- by Major M Baker TD

Having commanded 44 Sig Sqn previously, I felt well prepared to return to Regtl life following a staff appointment with 2 (NC) Sig Bde. It did surprise me, however, that I would lose my new SPSI, **Sgt Keith Betts** after only 18 weeks! He moves on

promotion to Chicksands, and we welcome **Sgt Scott Witts**, who served with us previously as CO's driver. Around the same time, the current CO's driver, **Cpl Ian Phillips**, was also selected for promotion and moved to 44 Sig Sqn, along with the QM(V), **Capt Les Scott**, who takes up the 2IC post at Greys. With the SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Graham Carrol** about to be mobilised, I'm starting to feel deserted.

The Sqn came up trumps by narrowly pipping 44 Sig Sqn to win the Regtl Driver Training competition in the Long Valley - allegedly with some sharp practices by **SSgt Egunjobi** and myself. To show there were no hard feelings, we then conducted AT together in South Wales, scrambling and caving. My next challenge, judging by the Mountvoy Trophy Karaoke, is to do something about the Master Chef's voice. Her rendition of Shirley Bassey's *Hey Big Spender* must be an all time classic.

HQ and 44 Sqn adventurous training in Wales

44 (CINQUE PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON
- by Major REC Davis TD

We say a sad farewell to our SPSI, **SSgt Mick Woods**. We wish him the very best in hid new posting, and extend a warm welcome to **SSgt Dave Berry**. I understand he has already had a taste of the delights of Grays.

With some members having worked 9 weekends on the run, our annual recruiting exped to the Southend Air Show fell on a Bank Holiday. This did not deter **SSgt Sally Howson** and her team, who deserve a big thank you. The social events that take place during the event might have been a contributing factor, and I am intrigued by the collection of autographs **Sig Barnes** collected in certain places! The event has led to 16 potential recruits.

In July, **SSgt Gordon Bathurst** organised two team entries in a German Reservist Mil Skills competition near Stuttgart. I am sure he was not responsible for the non-stop rain throughout the long journey, which left everyone shattered on arrival. Our mood was quickly changed by our hosts' warm traditional welcome. The next day the teams were issued with German rifle and rations, then navigated via various stands. **LCpl Stew Robinson's** face was a picture of agony after crossing a lake on a single cable - a certain part of his anatomy was very bruised. Saturday evening saw more of the traditional German celebrations, although **Sig Guy Hurst** abandoned the beer for something lethal named an Atomic U-boat. Sunday started gently, followed by a formal lunch and a cultural tour of Backnang. We returned on the Monday, having had a fantastic time, for which we are most grateful to our hosts in Germany.

45 (EASTERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON
- by Major M McKenzie-Bell

During April, our two Tps at Warley, Essex moved out of the TAC and found temporary home at Sqn HQ in Colchester. Clearly accn was tight, but bar profits were significantly higher. It was with relief that on 22 July, we moved a Tp into our new TAC in Ipswich. Our aim is to establish a fully recruited Tp within one year, and this started well with the transfer of **Sgt Rob Aldridge** RA, and the enlistment of our first Suffolk recruit. With recruiting events planned and many enquiries on the TA website, we should hopefully soon see the Tp blossom

The new Ipswich troop complete with new recruit

EXERCISE RED TERN 4 – by *2Lt Vicky Freer*

On 30 July, fourteen intrepid members of 45 Sig Sqn deployed to the Joint Service Parachute Centre at Netheravon to participate in a static line parachute course with the Army Parachute Association, in aid of Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital.

The ground trg was progressive and very thorough. It began with orientation on the airfield, and landmarks that can be easily identified at 4,000ft were pointed out, along with the assurance that this was the biggest landing zone in the country. Our instructors took us through the equipt, and then we practised our exits, stability, canopy control and flight drills. Final practice trg took place inside a large hangar, where there was a mock up of the aircraft and a large gantry, with several harnesses hanging beneath. We practised our exits from the aircraft door, and then learned how to land, including how to fall over Para style. Everyone seemed to be quite skilled at falling over, so we moved quickly in to the harnesses. Lined up like a row of babies in a giant baby bouncer, we practised the malfunction procedure. It was then back to the classroom for a written test.

With ground trg complete and fabulous weather, we were able to jump that afternoon. We climbed aboard the aircraft and sat on the floor in the order we would jump, as dictated by the manifest. Being the last in, I was the first out. At over 4,000ft the door opened and I shuffled to the edge. By now there was no going back, so on the word 'Go!' I went.

The world went white; I couldn't see the ground, aircraft or anything else. 'One thousand, two thousand, three thousand, four thousand, check canopy'. Instead of seeing a big square canopy, I saw a small round blob and twisted lines. Still hurtling towards the ground at a rate of knots, the trg took over. I applied the drill for twists, the canopy opened, and all was well. I looked for the holding area, and was wondering where I would land. Luckily Salisbury Cathedral was a long way off. Once the parachute is open, it is rather lovely up there - quiet and with a spectacular

view. The landing went well, and I waited to see the rest of the group float to the ground.

The following morning we had the opportunity to jump again. Nine of the group did so, and some of these have also planned return visits. Would I take up parachuting? Only if I could do it without having to jump out of a plane again!

54 (EAST ANGLIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON
- by Lt Darren Ambler

Firstly a very warm welcome to **Lt Abbi Adey**, who has recently joined us from 32 Sig Regt (V). I understand that she has already volunteered her services to the Adjt and RSM in his role as RATO to organise the Regtl Skiing.

The Sqn is still basking in the glory of winning the Mountvoy Trophy in the most convincing manner, displaying our skills in map reading, first aid, NBC and comd tasks. The giant, inflatable table football finale enabled us to utilise our top goalkeeper, **Sig Shona Peachey**, along with some extremely painful-looking striking by **Cpl Kyle Blackwell**. The Team Captain, **2Lt Mike Chapman**, has asked that the other sports results are not made public, saying, 'Volleyball is not my sport - indeed it should not even be a sport.' Having seen him play, I know why.

Finally, we say farewell to the OC, **Capt Gordon Shelley**, who has been mobilised to take up the QM Capt post at Ilford - and informed he could not hold the two posts at the same time, no matter how good he is.

His replacement is **Maj Dennis Prince**, who will be most ably assisted by the recently-commissioned **Capt Frank Branson**, who moves from Bedford at the same time as we lose **Sgt Eddie Allen** for a six-month paid holiday in the sun and sand. How will we cope?

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col SJ Richardson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) KP Innes**

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj APD Whalen**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Horton**

ADVENTURE TRAINING

64 Sig Sqn held its annual AT weekend at RAF Valley, North Wales. The weekend was designed to test mental, physical and emotional qualities of all participants. The weekend started off with a brief on safety, followed by the options that were available white water rafting, mountain biking, dry slope skiing, hill walking, gokarting, quad biking, clay pigeon shooting and climbing. The Sqn split into several groups and undertook two or three activities each. Gokarting, quad biking and clay pigeon shooting proved to be the most popular events, with the karting falling into a free for all wacky races/dodgem shoot out. It was more like stock car racing especially when you consider several 'entrants' had never driven any sort of veh before!

LCpl White explaining the Rules of Engagement to one of his victims

Saturday evening was rounded off with the usual BBQ and beers although some (**Sig Hancock,** et al) managed to get themselves invited to a private Birthday party on camp and were not seen or rather heard until 04.00hrs the following day! Overall, a good, fun weekend.

PRO-AM CELEBRITY GOLF TORNAMENT

In order to support local charities in the Sheffield area, The Regt sponsored holes 8 and 14 of a Pro-Am Celebrity golf tournament was held at Bondhay Nationwide Leisure Golf Club on Wednesday 2 June 2004. Two local employers (**Peter Langford** and **Peter Townsend**) and two TA Soldiers (**Maj Andrew Whalen** and **WO2 (SSM) Phil Horton**) were invited to take part in this competition, and these were paired off with 2 professional golfers and 2 celebrities. **Phil Horton**, a keen golfer of only 11 month's experience accepted with apprehension his invitation to attend, as he was expected to play from a handicap of 18. He had declared a handicap of 36 rather than the normal 28 (most golfers will know that a handicap of 36 is for Ladies). His apprehension grew even more when he found out that he was part of a team, and that his score in the tournament would count towards the overall effort. Although he had a severe case of nerves on the morning of the competition, he was very quickly put at ease by the professional golfer, who was able to give him a few tips. The weather throughout the day was good, and he thoroughly enjoyed the company of the other members of his team who were not intent on taking the golf very seriously. **Maj Andrew Whalen**, who also claims a handicap of 28 (who is he kidding?), decided to improve his golf technique by getting his advice from the celebrity rugby player (**Mark Aston**) as his professional golfer was taking things rather too seriously. A great day was had by all the contestants, and a substantial amount was raised for local charities.

The Dream Team at one of the holes sponsored by the Regt

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JP Ahern**
SSM **WO2(SSM) S Coburn**

LOMBARDIA INTERNATIONAL MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION - by *Sgt Nevill*

On 20 May 2004, the 87 Sig Sqn team travelled to Italy to enter the Lombardia International Military Skills Competition. The competition was held over a weekend, but in true 87 style, the team went over a day before to do a recce of the area and to sample the local hospitality. Well it would be rude not to, wouldn't it? The team consisted of **Sgt Ibby Nevill**, **Cpl Pete Magas**, **LCpl Brendan Aylward** and **Sig Ruth Hallam**. Providing much needed support and driving the team, were **Cpl Steve Keay** and **SSgt Mick Hallam**.

On Friday morning we were given an outline of the ex scenario to memorise, and on Friday evening, the 80 multi-national teams gathered for the final briefing. Each team was given an envelope containing maps, an update of the tactical situation and the mission. The start times on Saturday morning were staggered from 04.39hrs and as team 70, our start time was 07.59hrs. The ex was to cover 26km and would climb to heights of 1,200m, with a number of stands to cover in between. The whole event was timed, and points were awarded for speed, accuracy and conduct.

After weighing in our daysacks (each person carrying a minimum of 7kg) the team split into pairs for the first stand at Alpha, where we answered questions on the scenario and marked an aerial photograph of the area. After a steep uphill march, we arrived at Bravo to find the first of many queues. Our task there was to set up a mortar to fire on the enemy position. At Charlie we had to assault an enemy OP, using air rifles and pistols, followed by a 4km speed march to Delta. We made the most of the 2hr delay at Delta to eat lunch and chat with the other teams. The enemy were holding out in the village of St Michelle, and our task was to recapture the village. A wellplaced mortar shot by **LCpl Brendan Aylward** into the enemy position secured our victory, and part one of the Delta task. We then moved around to a first aid stand, where we had a simulated casualty. A climb to 1,204m led us to Mount Della Colonna, and then down to Echo, where we were tasked to adjust artillery fire. From an initial photograph showing an enemy position and a nearby explosion, we had 5 shots to zero in on the target.

Foxtrot was an OP at the top of St Martino. In pairs, we identified vehs and units, and pinpointed their grid references from the recce photos. Following a designated route, we moved to Golf, where we were to patrol and execute IA drills. 100m in, we were ambushed and taken prisoner. Handcuffed and blindfolded, we were lead into the caves. **Sig Ruth Hallam** was chosen for questioning, but for once she didn't say much, giving only her name, rank and number. We could hear the sounds of other prisoners being 'tortured'. Having given up on getting **Sig Hallam** to talk, they led us into another cave, where another prisoner was waiting. Once the guard had left, this prisoner helped us to escape through a series of vaults and out through a broken grating, followed by the sounds of gunshots.

Following the cliff edge path, we came to a series of tunnels and were given our Hotel task, which was to identify objects we found. The tunnel system proved to be quite lengthy, with a number of IEDs along the way. Emerging from the tunnels into early evening sunlight, we were greeted with the most amazing cliff top view over the surrounding valley. Arriving at India, we were tasked with starting a fire, filtering water and setting a snare. Unfortunately, the fire-making equipt had been used by 69 teams before us and broke just as **Cpl Magas** was getting it warm. **LCpl Aylward** decided that a rabbit would not feed four and constructed a trap for a wild boar. At Juliet we reassembled 2 pistols, a machine gun and a rifle. Kilo was the much-awaited river crossing. **LCpl Aylward** and **Sig Hallam** tackled the less-than-stable Burma rope bridge, **Cpl Magas** crossed parallel wires on his hands and knees and **Sgt Nevill** side stepped across on two ropes (she could only just reach the hand rail above her!)

A short crosscountry walk then took us to Lima, where we were introduced to the SPAS 15 shotgun. After engaging five targets in a variety of firing positions, we concluded that it was almost impossible to miss with this weapon. In the back of an Italian military veh we found four gas masks. Our final task at Mike was to dress in the NBC equipt provided which, if nothing else, proved to us just how good the British equipt is! A short walk in the dark finally brought us to November, our finish point. Two more sets of questions followed, and the competition had finally ended at 22.22hrs! **SSgt Hallam** and **Cpl Keay** were waiting for us with celebratory drinks. Saturday evening was upon us, and we headed for the nearest bar for story telling about the day's events.

Sigs Nevill and Hallam show off the haul. The smiles say it all

On Sunday morning, an Italian marching band provided entertainment for the parade with their flamboyant marching and dancing. The prize giving began, and to everyone's surprise 87 Sig Sqn was first to be called up. We had won the Golf stand award for Law of Armed Conflict. The day really had started well, but the icing on the cake came when 87 found that we had come in 8th overall of the 71 teams that finished the competition. We were also top British team, beating Royal Marines, UOTC and some Regular teams. What a success! The team headed back to the UK carrying a huge gold trophy and silver plaque and of course, inflated egos for coming 1st of the UK entrants. You can see our names on next year's brochure now!

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

OC **Maj D Simcox**
SSM **WO2(SSM) J Kirkorian**

It has been yet another busy period for the Sqn. This month has seen the usual deployments and exs that we have come to expect as the norm. We welcome **WO2(FofS) Dave Clarke** and family, posted in from NI; and **SSgt Gary West** and family, posted in from 30 Sig Regt. The Sqn is currently busy preparing for the forthcoming Special Comms Assessment Course at the end of August. Good luck to all the prospective candidates.

MEDALS PRESENTATION

On the evening of 29 June, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig JE Thomas OBE**, visited the Sqn to meet the newly arrived staff and to present medals to members of the Sqn in recognition of their past deeds.

WO2(YofS) Steve Milne and **WO2(FofS) Monty Farrow** received their Long Service and Good Conduct Medals. **Sgt Gaz Wooley** received the Queens Commendation for Valuable Service in recognition of his work on OP VERITAS, and **Cpl Vernon** and **LCpl Yates** were presented with the official OP TELIC Pictorials in lieu of their OP TELIC medals, which will be presented to them on arrival.

Following the presentations and the purchasing of drinks by the recipients, a Bhat buffet was laid on by **Cpl Sundar** of 30 Sig Regt, and was enjoyed by all.

EX LEADING LYNX 04

EX LEADING LYNX was an AT ex held in the Lake District over the only sunny weekend in August. The aim of the ex was to get as many of the Sqn personnel away in the hills for a trek, and to try to balance the heavy operational commitment with a bit of relaxation and fun. The trek took the group from the campsite in Great Langdale to the summit of Bowfell at over 900m, and back via some of the most beautiful and spectacular scenery in the country.

The group comprised Regular and TA soldiers with a wide spread of experience, from hard-core mountaineers to the novice hill walkers. The first day finished with a BBQ and a few beers in Ambleside. Sunday was spent packing the camping equipt away and doing some sight seeing and retail therapy in Keswick, before heading back to the TA Centre.

EX LEAPING LYNX 04

EX LEAPING LYNX was another AT ex, this time held in Snowdon National Park. The idea for this ex was to get the Regular element of the Sqn away and build up some quality hill days in order to encourage personnel to attend MLT and ultimately the JSMEL Course.

The weather for the day on the hills couldn't have been worse! We managed to get over Crib Goch and onto the top of Snowdon in some seriously strong winds, heavy rain and very poor visibility. It was always within the ability of the group, so with some words of encouragement we cracked on to the summit.

A few hours later, we arrived back at the car park wet and windswept, but in good spirits. Similar hill days have been planned for the near future. It is the Sqn's aim to get away at least once a month if possible.

ITD WEEKEND

The ITD weekend was conducted at ATR Pirbright for both TA and Regular members of the Sqn, and was hailed a success. It began with the new APWT, which after some interesting shooting and eye patches for those who can only shut both eyes together, was passed by all. Following that, there was a pleasant walk in the woods and around camp, AKA the BCFT, covering both the TA and Regular versions. All attendees passed, with most of the TA members completing the 8-mile course along with the Regulars.

The last event of the day was First Aid, with a lesson given by **Sgt Vinny Walsh** and then the practical conducted by **Sgt Fawcett**. In the event, it was the Landrover that needed the Florence Nightingale touch - to get it out of the hole it became stuck in!

After a night visiting the local sights and sounds, Sunday morning consisted of that old-fashioned hangover cure, the Gas Chamber, under the watchful lenses of **SSgt Garry West** and **Cpl Gaz Hanna**. Then home to wash the CS out of the hair.

LCpl Yates reveals that she has just seen SSgt Gott in the showers

There is plenty for the Sqn to look forward to in the near future, with the Sqn summer BBQ and the Bde FTX in the pipeline to keep us busy, and to provide many interesting pictures.

SERVICE WITH SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS

1 RBY Sig Sqn is unique in the British Army, comprising both a Regular and TA element, with service on a voluntary basis. We currently have vacancies for Regular RadSysOps (Class 2 and above), SysEngTech and RSigs Electrician trades.

Volunteers are required to attend a 5-day SC Assessment Course, with the next two courses being held in January and May 05. Successful applicants will then be required to attend an 18-week SC course. Regular volunteers can apply using SOinC(A)'s PD No 206, Annex E, available through their Trg Wing.

There are also TA vacancies for RadSysOps, SysEngTech, ISOps and REME trades (up to WO2). There is also a vacancy for a Lt/Capt. Volunteers should contact the PSAO1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) (V) on Mil: 94240 8512 or Civil: 01908 638512.

7th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj Andy Percival**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Martin Walsh**

Not only is it the end of an era for all of the Sqn's CLANSMAN radios but also for **Maj Chris Ford's** reign over the Sqn. **Maj Ford** is posted to HQ SOinC(A) for a brief stint before taking up another posting, this time as a Lt Col. Congratulations from all the Sqn. We wish him, **Emma** and **William** all the best for the future. We also warmly welcome **Maj Andy Percival**, **Claudia** and family to the Sqn and hope that you enjoy your time with the Desert Rats!

BOWMAN SYSTEM MANAGERS COURSE (FORMATION) *– by SSgt Middleton*

3 May 04 saw four willing volunteers from 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207) travelling to RSS Blandford to attend the 5-week BSM (F) Course. These were **WO2(YofS) Kev Heaton**, **WO2(FofS) Ritchie Cleminson**, **SSgt Gaz Middleton** and **Cpl Mick Constable**. Westland Augusta/General Dynamics instructors, most of whom appeared to have been recruited from the Corps, delivered the course.

Weeks 1 – 3 consisted of the Advanced Signaller Systems. Week 4 - 5 gave the potential Systems Managers there first insight into the mammoth task of planning and creating the comms plan that will allow all users access to the system. This part of the course was both the most interesting and most valuable to the students as future managers. The information acquired was supported by a detailed publication for future reference - a document that has already been well thumbed by all in the Ops Room every time a question is posed.

EXERCISE INCA DIAMOND *– By Lt Aileen Grant*

EX INCA DIAMOND was a Level 3 AT trekking exped conducted in Peru during 3-31 May 04. The team consisted of **Lt Aileen Grant**, **Cpl John Ryan**, **Cpl Gary Westmoreland**, **Sig Sarah Kain** and **Sig Ross Heron** as well as **Sgt Will Robinson** (Bde Geo Sgt) and **Mr Andrew Quentin** (Mountain Leader).

The exped followed dedicated routes along the Huayhuash Circuit and Inca Trail, with altitudes ranging from 2,750 – 4,800m. This was the Sqn's first exped in Peru, and was chosen for its

The team at Macchu

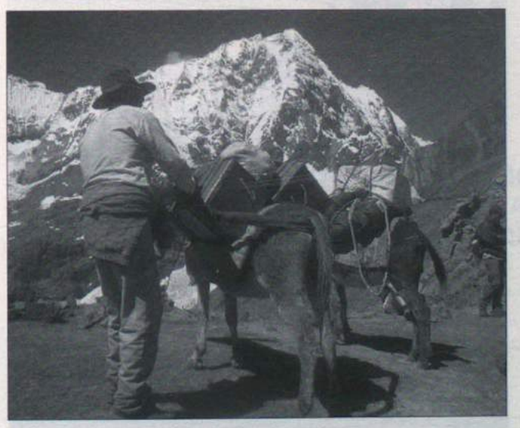
mountain ranges and cultural significance. It is also important to note that for many soldiers, it was their first experiences of a developing country, so they were able to witness the extreme poverty that was most evident.

The journey just to get to our departure airport was an exped in itself, but a tired and hungry group finally reached Heathrow for the 15-hr flight to Lima. We spent a couple of days in Lima finalising our plans and confirming transport arrangements, and on 8 May we departed Lima bus station for the long journey north to Huaraz, Peru's mountaineering Mecca. The journey was awesome, with scenery ranging from the sandy shores of the Pacific Ocean to the sparse high plateau of the Andes Mountains.

Huaraz lies at over 3,000m, so the next three days were spent acclimatising to the altitude to prevent Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), which is potentially life threatening. Huaraz was also where we met our guide, **Christian**.

The Cordillera Huayhuash is a small mountain range, only 30km in length, yet it contains several peaks over 6,000m, including Yerupaja, the second highest mountain in Peru at 6,634m. The complete Huayhuash Circuit circles the entire range, and covers a distance of 160km between altitudes of 2,750 and 5,000m, with more than 6,000m of climbing. The normal start point for the trail is Chiquian, a mountain village at 3,400m, but our exped started from Llamac, a two-hour bus journey from Chiquian, that saved us an extra day's walk.

It took us nine days to complete the trek, and we were fortunate to hire several *burros* (donkeys) to lighten our load. The donkeys needed two *arrieos* (donkey drivers) to look after them, and we were most grateful that **Luciano**, the chef, joined the team to look after us! Trekking was quite arduous, and we were all glad to reach our campsite at the end of the day. The scenery was breathtaking, and **Cpl Westy Westmoreland**, our budding photographer, took roughly about 500 photos of it. On completion of the trek, everyone felt a great sense of achievement, and the whole team celebrated with a few beers before saying goodbye to **Christian** and crew.



One of the arrieos loading up the burros for the day's trek

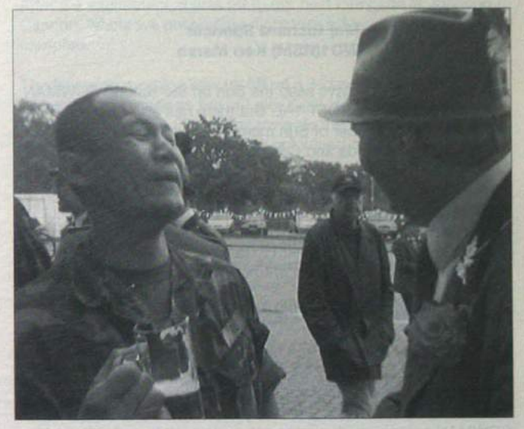
The return journey to Lima, although not as comfortable as the one north, saw us travelling through just as magnificent scenery. Then it was onto a plane for the journey south to the heart of the Inca Empire.

The Inca Trail is Peru's economy! It is so popular, that the number of people on the trail has to be closely controlled in a vain attempt to conserve it. The trek itself was much easier than we expected, although our previous trek had no doubt improved our fitness. Being short of time, we had to opt for the two-day trek, which although not the full 'Inca Experience', was still quite amazing.

All too soon, the whole experience was drawing to a close, and we were on our long journey back to Germany. Peru lived up to, and exceeded everyone's expectations. It is an inspirational country and an excellent venue for a trekking exped, with a good climate, spectacular, diverse scenery and amazing people.

BERGEN SCHUTZEN FEST *– by Cpl Constable*

It was that time again when the Sqn got its annual invitation to the local Schutzen Fest. As always, with the mention of free food and beer, there were plenty of volunteers. The day started with members of the Sqn parading under **Lt Grant** and **SSgt Giddens** in the courtyard of Bergen's *Rathaus* (Town Hall). The Sqn was then introduced to the members of the local Lodge and the first of many toasts. The fact that it was only 08.30hrs didn't faze anyone. Then the band started up and we continued marching through the streets and town centre.



Cpl Any Fu, the Birthday Boy

At the first halt, the free beer started to flow and the band struck up a very Germany version of *Happy Birthday* for **Cpl Andy Fu**. We then marched on to a very large marquee for lunch and speeches. After the meal, we all retired to a large garden, and with the help of the free beer and Ratzenputz we set about cementing Anglo-German relations. We would like to thank Bergen's Mayor and the Lodge for a very good day out, and we look forward to a repeat next year!

CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING *– by Sgt Williamson*

On Wednesday 16 June, Support Tp participated in a clay pigeon shoot at Fallingbostel Ranges. The idea was to get all the Tp members together and have a fun and relaxing afternoon. Because of work commitments, only 20 were eventually available to participate. After the initial safety brief it was straight into the cages for the first five firers. All managed to at least hit a couple of clays out of 25, except **Sig Sue Holland**, who only managed to scare a few trees. The overall winning team was the EDs with a REME VM ringer. Best shot of the day went to **WO2(RQMS) Maylett**, who obviously spent much of his previous Tele Mech days shooting at clays - or was it something to do with his upbringing in Moss Side!

ARTS FESTIVAL *- by Cpl Whelan*

On the weekend of 11 June 2004 Hohne Station Roundhouse held an Arts Festival, organised by the OC's wife, **Mrs Emma Ford**. The day was a great success and the money raised went to the Army Benevolent Fund. Local artists, including the 2IC's mum and many of the Garrison's school children, contributed to the art on exhibition. The most popular items on display were photographs taken during OP TELIC by **Maj Angus Beaton**,

whose photographs feature heavily in the book, *The Fight For Iraq*. Needless to say, everyone wanted a signed copy of the book. Over 100 copies were sold on the first day alone.

ECI INSPECTION – *by Sgt Hawksworth*

On 08 June 04, the Unit had its annual Equipment Care Inspection. The build up to this inspection involved many long hours and pre-inspections, just to get us up to a respectable standard post OP TELIC. Many thought this to be an impossible task due to the limited procedures and lack of historical data in place. But our grading was exceptional, with the QM Dept achieving a green in all areas and an overall grade of yellow being awarded to the Sqn. With all procedures now in place, our next ECI will be an easy unit green grade! This grade has now earned us the additional accolade as having kept best practice, and we can now advise other units how to achieve the required pass marks in all relevant areas. So give us a call. We can help you!

12th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj Richard Spencer**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Ken Marsh**

The last two months have seen the Sqn on the second BOWMAN Operational Field Trial (OFT 1A). But there has also been a chance to get a number of Sqn members away on AT activities, with expeds to Canada and Corsica, as well as mainland UK. August saw the departure **Maj Chris Paterson**, who leaves to instruct on the Intermediate Command and Staff Course (ISCS) at Shrivenham. He was also recently selected for promotion to Lt Col – many congratulations from all the Sqn. **Maj Rich Spencer** has just arrived to take the helm to guide us through the third and final BOWMAN OFT and then onto OP TELIC 6.

BOWMAN OPERATIONAL FIELD TRIAL

12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) deployed on the second OFT over the period 09-14 July 04. Prior to deployment, we completed a software upgrade (In Service Date Plus (ISD+)) to improve certain problems previously experienced with the BOWMAN system, such as poor passage of data and a limited situational awareness capability. The ISD+ upgrade was successful to an extent. The Bde was able to pass limited data over VHF, HF and the High Capacity Data Radio (HCDR) and to gain limited situational awareness from the two BGs also on the trial (1 R ANGLIAN and 1 COLDM GDS). However, there is still a long way to go, and the Sqn will be supporting more trials over the coming months to improve the BOWMAN capability further.

EXERCISE IRON TRIANGLE

12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) provided LOCON sp to EX IRON TRIANGLE over the period 18-24 Jun 04. Thanks to 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn for providing the admin sp for HICON and all the LOCONS at West Down Camp. Having reverted to CLANSMAN, the 6 Rad Ops finally realised the benefits of BOWMAN HF – no white noise. **LCpls Graham** and **Evans** quickly mastered the ABACUS system and managed to send the Bde Tps in the right direction, although they did lose a few on the way.

EXERCISE ACE THIRD STAB (DRAGON)
- by Cpl Andy Cooper

We knew that we were in for a hard fortnight when we landed at Calvi airport, on the north west coast of Corsica. The ancient Genoese port, and alleged (by Corsicans at least) birthplace of **Christopher Columbus**, is shadowed to the south and east by some of the most formidable looking mountain ranges that some of us had ever seen.

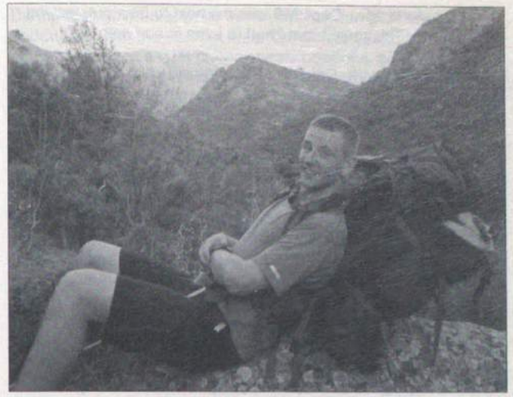
After a day and a half on the beach, acclimatising to the heat, the trekking began in earnest, with the village of Calenzana our start point. An 04.00hrs start was necessary, to avoid walking in the heat of the midday sun. The Sqn's eight intrepid ramblers, led by **Capt Chris Barker** set off, accompanied by four friends from 3 Para. **Capt Rich Smith**, leader of the maroon element, stated his main effort early on - to only wear one T-shirt for the whole of the next two weeks.

If the first day was a gentle warm-up, then the next few days were the real thing. A gruelling twenty-one mile tab, incorporating an eight hundred-metre summit, meant that no one had any trouble sleeping on the second night. The midday sun seemed to be our biggest foe as we descended into the beautiful bay village of Girolata on day three. This place was made all the more special by the complete absence of roads connecting it to the rest of civilisation - the only way in or out being by boat or on foot. We obviously opted for the latter!

By the time our party had ascended from the sea to the mountain resort of Evisa, we had lost several members to injuries and blisters. But 25 July also heralded the arrival of two birthdays. **Cpl Andy Cooper** and **LCpl Simo Simpson** were treated to some Corsican chestnut cake, topped with windproof matches for candles.

Cpl Andy Cooper's feet showing the strain

Later that day, the fit and able carried onto Col de Vergio and the start of the GR20 route back to Calenzana. This famous trek is renowned as one of the most difficult and challenging mountain walks in Europe. Now fully into their stride, with **Cpl Steve Michell** and **Cpl Chris Crabtree** leading the way, the final group of eight made swift progress. With the awesome Cirque de la Solitude crevasse conquered, it seemed as though only an act of God could stop them, and so it proved. A forest fire between Haut Asco and Calenzana meant that they where forced to extract back to Calvi, with the finish so close.



LCpl Simo Simpson's heavy Bergen takes its toll

That left four days for recuperation and sampling of the Corsican way of life. Sore legs and blisters were healed as we enjoyed a boat trip, a visit to the provincial capitol of Bastia and a visit to the French Foreign Legion Museum in Calvi.

Our final night was spent in one of the town's many restaurants tucking into pizza. This was a fitting end to two weeks of some of the most gruelling, challenging, but at the same time, satisfying mountain trekking that we had ever attempted.

EXERCISE RADIUM HOT DRAGON - *by LCpl Yuille*

EX RADIUM HOT DRAGON was a 14-day AT ex in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. The first part was the journey to Radium Hot Springs, which involved a 7-hr flight and a drive of approximately 4,000 kms. En route, we stopped in Calgary to pick up the last few items of kit that we needed. Calgary was buzzing, as it was the last night of the Stampede, an annual Wild West event.

On arrival at Radium Hot Springs, we booked into the campsite, pitched out tents, and then it was straight off on our warm-up, a 10km climb to the Kindersley Summit (2,395m). After admiring the views for a while, it was back down to the campsite to get a good night's sleep for the trek ahead.

After a mountain man breakfast *Husky's*, we booked in at the Ranger Station, and then proceeded to our start point. We were soon moving up Simpson Pass, heading for Scout Camp, where we saw our first black bear. After a few of the blokes had soiled their pants, the bear turned round and disappeared. The next 3 days of the trek we covered 80kms, seeing many magnificent views, especially Mount Assiniboine, standing out in all its glory. On our return to Radium, we headed to the Hot Springs to sooth our aching bodies, then it was back down to the campsite for a barbeque and a beer or two.

The next activity on our schedule was white water rafting on the Kicking Horse River. The first part of the river was quite calm, and here we practised the various safety and other drills. We then went on to do a couple of easy rapids, before hitting the big stuff. After the excitement, it was off to our next campsite at Johnson Cannon, where we passed the night with a few beers round the campfire.

The following morning saw us off on a 3-day trek of 34kms, going through such places as Egypt Lake, Lost Horse Creek and finally down the Red Earth Creek Trail towards the finish point. During this last part of the trail we nearly got wiped out by a bunch of mountain bikers bombing down the trail.

Next came the return journey - the 4,000kms route back to Toronto. During the journey, we stopped in Detroit, so that we could say we had actually been to an American City. Soon we were heading towards the spectacular sight of Niagara Falls. After a quick look around, we were back into the vehs heading for Toronto. The time in Toronto was designated as R and R and, after scraping together our remaining dollars and cents, we treated ourselves to a night in a downtown hotel. The evening was spent having a couple of beers and swapping stories of the last 13 days. The next morning we had time to shop for last minute presents prior to our flight that afternoon.

The flight home was on time, but we had been diverted to Edinburgh, which added another 2 hrs to our journey home. Finally we landed at Gatwick, and took the short journey back to Bulford. All in all, the trip was a fantastic experience, thoroughly enjoyed by all.

101st LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj TJS Allen**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Lothian**

MORRISON CUP 2004 - *by Lt EA Pointon*

The athletes of the 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (261) were pumped and ready to take on the rest of the Corps as we left Aldershot convinced in our own hearts that success in the Morrison Cup could lead to a call up for the Olympics later in the year.

Things did not get off to a good start when **Lt Pointon** was struck down with illness. Luckily for the rest of the team, the illness was resolved by some extremely dubious medical care, and she was back on form.

The team put in a valiant effort, and saw some awesome performances, including an impressive win for **LCpl Chambers** in the 800m event, for **LCpl Reynolds** in the long jump and triple jump, and for **Sgt King** in his Beefcake events.

Special mention should go to **LCpl Sarah Challis** for her amazing effort in the 5,000 metre race, when she even managed to stop to eat a burger half way around - hence coming in last. She looked good though. **Capt Keith** should also be congratulated for getting round in one piece.

The boys came in second in the Minor Units competition and the girls came in third overall – a result that everyone that took part can be proud of.

EXERCISE ENDURING HELP – *by WO2 Mac Macdonald*

EX ENDURING HELP is a sponsored 24-hr motorcycle endurance event for charity, held on Longmoor Training Area. The event is billed as one of the toughest events in the off-road motorcycling calendar, so not really a good place for our first ever event.

Things got off to a good start, with the team putting in an outstanding performance at the BBQ on the Friday night. 12.00hrs on Saturday, and things became more serious, as **Capt Maxwell-Stuart** stepped up to the start line. The start consisted of 3 rows of 30 bikes, which set off at 15-second intervals. By the first corner the field of 90 competitors was down to 89. **Capt MS**

put together a couple of blinding laps, and we started to move up the rankings.

Cpl Dale Petty was next up, and was instructed to do 3 laps. After his first, we realised that he had obviously mistaken ambition for ability, managing to crash at least twice but maintaining it wasn't his fault. The trees, rocks, stumps and other slower (more sensible) competitors were jumping out in front of him.

Things were running smoothly, with **Cpl Rick Turner**, **Cpl Dale Petty** and **Capt MS** putting in some good laps. Then it was the turn of **Sgt Kev Meek**. Well, what can we say about his lap (yes just one)? It started out well and was going well, right up to the point he hit the tree.

This, however, wasn't the cause of his early demise. No, it was the petrol tank, which just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time (right next to his leg) causing him to put a sizeable dent in it and having to retire injured due to not being able to stand, let alone ride. **Capt MS** was the next to bow out, leaving only 2 riders. This meant that I had to jump in and help out.

Once things got dark, **Cpl Dale Petty** provided us with a lap-by-lap commentary of the carnage out on the course. This lead to a decision to stop at midnight and resume at 04.30hrs.

At 04.30hrs, I was up, on the bike and out for the first lap of the morning, stopping only for a brew and bacon buttie, provided by the excellent pit crew, **Sig Stokie Stokes**. Two laps later and breakfast was done, so it was time to hand back to **Cpl Dale Petty**. Between the three of us and the excellent support from the Pit Crew, we managed to complete over 50 laps and suffered no major mechanical incidents.

1200hrs on the Sunday, and the event was over. The team managed to finish in 47th place out of some 90 or so teams. The team consisted of: **Capt Maxwell-Stuart, WO2(YofS) Macdonald, Sgt Meek, Cpl Petty, Cpl Turner** and **Sig Stokes**.

2nd (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Steve Roden**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Bruce Singers**

EXERCISE MERCURY SWORD

Once again, the momentous occasion was upon us. Finally, the Sqn was being deployed on its most hazardous operation yet (well, apart from TELIC) to the wilderness of the Cultybraggan Trg Estate, with the sole aim of thwarting the nefarious aims of the 'Bounties for NRPS' Militant Wing, who were known to be operating in the area. Yes, we were off once again for a cold (no doubt), wet (probably) and physically and mentally demanding (definitely) military skills/ITD weekend.

The weekend was all going well. Equipt had been packed into Bergens, rations and weapons issued, orders given and a successful embarkation on the coach achieved. Unfortunately, a wrong turn by the bus driver delayed the arrival at the drop off point. Fortunately, the DS had managed to arrange for last light to be slightly delayed, allowing us a fast tab through the RV points to the Harbour area. After some rehearsals on harbour drills, we swiftly moved into the treacherous loc, taking great care not to damage the rare local flora too much, and bedded down for the night.

Next thing we knew, it was time to begin the intensive trg package. A morning of low-level platoon tactics and field skills lessons soon got everybody warmed up, as well as severely bitten by the most dangerous of foes, the Scottish midge. After a fine lunch of biscuits brown and the like, it was into the ex phase, beginning patrols in the area. 1 Section were able quietly to observe the ill-disciplined movement of the enemy from their OP, though became a little worried that they might be discovered and trod upon. Our **Mulholland** brothers then both gained themselves Oscars, performing admirably as casualties for 2 Section to react to on their standing patrol. Luckily **Sgt Ginge McLean** had the Sqn's resident medical student present, **LCpl Jennie Millar**, were there to lend a hand.

Cpls Lyall, Wright, Carr and Krawczyk ready to strike while Sgt Mclean is thinking over his QBOs

During the dark hours, while the bulk of our intrepid Platoon were bedded down in the harbour area, **Cpl Davie Lyall** led a merry band to carry out a CTR on the enemy positions, getting close enough to untie their shoelaces, whilst remaining undetected. This showed the way for the culmination of the weekend, an early morning platoon attack on the enemy.

A right flanking assault neatly rolled through the first enemy position, allowing 2 Section to fight through and assault the second position, with **Cpl Krafty** showing his knowledge of the M16 by throwing away his empty mags. He found them again on the reorg, and gave an excellent demonstration of push-ups during the debrief. Once the battle had been won, we headed back to the Bergen cache. It was a tired and battleweary platoon that carried out the forced march back to Cultybraggan Camp, but all agreed it had been a valuable weekend, with their support for more of the same growing even louder, once **SSgt George Cowan** got the beers in on return to the TA Centre!

DUNDEE TO CORSHAM CHALLENGE

Recently 21 members of the Sqn took part in EX CORSHAM CHALLENGE, the Sqn's charity event for the year. The aim was originally to cover the distance from the TAC in Dundee to 2 (NC) Sig Bde HQ in Corsham, a distance of some 700 kms, with members of the Sqn in four-man teams on running, rowing and cycling machines, provided by one of the local gyms, with the hope of raising £1,000.

On the day of the event, those taking part put in a great effort, and in 10 hrs we managed to cover a distance of 1,400 kms - the equivalent of the distance from Dundee to Corsham and back again, raising £2,000 for the local Radio Tay charity, Caring for Kids.

SSgt Dave Honeyman, Sgt Ginge Mclean and Cpl Steve Wright contemplating who goes next on the bike

OPERATION TELIC MEDAL PARADE

Recently the Sqn held a OP TELIC Medal Parade and Families Day for the 12 members of the Unit who have served on TELIC 1 and 2. The presenting officer was the Lord Provost of Dundee and the Queen's Representitive, **John Letford**. The weather was kind to us, and the parade went off with great success - and the drill was good! The event was then followed by a barbecue and fun day for all Sqn members and families.

Also on the parade **WO2(RQMS) Bert Wright** was presented with a CinC's Commendation for Meritorious Service, and **Cpl Gordon Gerrad** the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate.

Medal and award recipients, OC Maj Steve Roden and Lord Provost John Letford

81 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Ian Calvert**
SSM **WO2 Alistair Carruthers**

EXERCISE TARTAN ROSE

856 Tp, commanded by **Capt Sebastian Philips** deployed to Imphal barracks in York during May - June 04, for EX TARTAN ROSE. This was late change to the original deployment to Dhekalia and Episkopi in Cyprus. The main task was the installation and termination of 2km of fibre optic cable for the Defence Vetting Agency and other customers, on behalf of the host client, 242 Sig Sqn. However, subsequent events saw the expansion of the main project to assist with installation work for the MoD Police in two other buildings on site.

The Tp advance party, led by **SSgt(FofS) Andy McEvoy**, along with **Sgt John Helm** and **Cpls Paul Chadwick** and **Robin Sanderson**, quickly arranged the project office, stores and supporting admin for the deployment. Tech support was given by **LCpl Steve Williams**, our resident fibre expert. The Tp Comd arrived with main party, along with **Cpl Ayre** and **Sig Seton**.

Additional numbers allowed the Tp to challenge the host unit, 242 Sig Sqn, to a football match. 242 Sqn, led by **SSgt(FofS) Kev Waring**, thought that 81 Sqn would be a walk over when the age and stomach profiles were revealed, but the 856 team stormed into a 2-0 lead. However, they wilted after half time, and allowed 242 back into the game, first to 2-2 then into a 4-2 lead. It was time for drastic action. **Cpl Ritchie Bannister** weaved and waltzed through the 242 defence to equalise. With the score at 4-4, 81 threw the kitchen sink and more at the 242 goal, but at the final whistle, the result was an honourable draw.

With the football ending in a draw, **SSgt Waring** lay down a golfing challenge to decide the outcome once and for all. So **Cpl Matt Holmes**, representing 856 Tp, was dispatched to Heworth Golf Club with orders to produce the ultimate victory. It all fell apart, when he 'felt unwell' and scuffed his shot on the first tee.

EXERCISE BLACK GROUSE

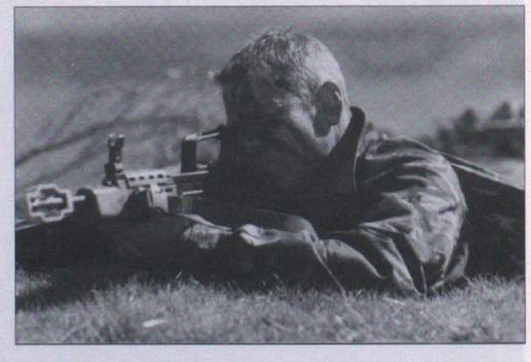
In the middle weekend of the project period, the Tp deployed to Wathgill Camp in the Yorkshire Dales to meet up with colleagues deployed in Scotland. This allowed a period of military trg, concentrating on radio skills.

The overall result was a very successful weekend ex, with a final attack on the enemy position in the early hours. Tired and emotional, the team returned to restart the project on the Monday morning. Our special thanks to **Lt Graham Clarke** of 10 Sig Regt, for his technical direction of the ex.

Capt Seb Phillips OC 856 TP. 'I love this, It reminds me of home!'

Towards the end of the deployment, the Tp was visited by **Lt Col Paul Glibbery**, CO 10 Sig Regt in Corsham. He offered positive feedback all round as the project neared completion.

To conclude, the main project was delivered on time for the original customer, with additional work being delivered for the second. The host Unit, 242 Sig Sqn were immensely helpful in all aspects of the tasking, and the Tp enjoyed a UK deployment for the first time in many years.



I know the Sqn Comd is around here somewhere

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (DIGBY)

CO **Gp Capt J C Rigby**
COS **Lt Col D Whimpenny**

1 SQUADRON

OC **Maj Steve Graley** Int Corps
2IC **Flt Lt Sammi McConnell**

There have been a few postings this month. **Sgt Hill** and **LCpls Askwith**, **Brown** and **Wheel** have all been posted to 2 Sqn; and **Sgt Lacey** has been posted to 3 Sqn. **LCpls Lacey** and **Taylor** have left the Sqn to go to 225 Sig Sqn NI; **LCpl Heron** has been posted to 14 Sig Regt (EW); and **LCpl MacNicol** leaves us on posting to 11 EOD Regt.

The families of **Cpl Hazelwood**, **Sgt Hill, JT Campbell** and **JT Porter** are all celebrating new arrivals and we wish them all the best. We should have a junior Sqn 5-a-side team some time soon.

The Sqn has been excelling in the sporting arena recently, and the CO's Cup Football competition saw us reach the final, in which we played the Station team. In a very tense and closely fought battle, which went all the way to a penalty shoot-out, we eventually lost but came second overall. The Sqn is now looking forward to our summer function, which is set to be a memorable occasion.

2 SQUADRON

OC **Sqn Ldr Colin Bruce**
2IC **Capt Lindsey Roberts** Int Corps

Life is finally getting back to some sort of normality after a very busy period for 2 Sqn. We welcome the new Sqn OC, **Sqn Ldr Bruce**, having finally said goodbye to **Sqn Ldr Lamont**, after his fifth leaving do!

Between 3 and 6 June, **Cpl McIlkenny** completed the coast-to-coast bike ride, 140 miles between Uphaven (Cumbria) and Tynemouth (Newcastle). Personally she raised £50, but the group total is still being calculated. All money raised went to Station charities.

Between 19 and 23 July, we sent a team from Digby (14 participants, including members of 2 Sqn) to the Nijmegen march in Holland. The team endured 100 miles of marches in 4 days in combat uniform and Bergens. They all finished and received their well-deserved medals.

Between 2 and 27 August, the Digby Summer Youth Activities Programme 2004 entertained the camp's children. This provided activities for children between 5 to 16yrs, ranging from day trips to the American Adventure and Pleasure Island theme parks, a trip to the Robin Hood Festival, and potted sports, Arts and crafts, Go-karting and watching movies. **FS Dave Turner**, **Cpl Sara Catterall** and **Jnr Tech Sarah King**, all from 2 Sqn are heavily involved in organising this event.

From 16 to 23 September whilst on the RAF Squash Tour to Lanzarote, **CT Shaun Roseveare** is attempting to run 120km over 6 days. This is in addition to a very heavy squash trg programme and evening tournament matches. He will attempt this challenge for the nationally recognised charity, ASPIRE.

This particular charity supports individuals who have spinal chord injuries attempting to provide a better quality of life for the individuals and their families.

3 SQUADRON

OC **Sqn Ldr R Walker**
2IC **Flt Lt T Parker**

NIJMEGEN MARCHES – *by Sgt Graham Norris*

Our intrepid Nijmegen team of 14 with their Captain, **Flt Lt Tony Parker**, set off on 17 July for Nijmegen. On the way, we spent a couple of days doing the tourist thing, with a day in Amsterdam, and a visit to the Airborne Museum at Arnhem. Then it was time for the marches to start.

The 03.00hrs start was a bit of a shock to the system. Breakfast was ham and cheese, then we lined up and set off. There were already people out on the street cheering us on. We skipped the first rest point, and so were ready for a break at the second. We enjoyed a nice bit if stew and a bit of a rest, and set off again. At the third rest point (or our second), we took another quick break and a brew, and set off on the final leg. The town was packed, and there was a real party atmosphere, which spurred us on until the last few miles, when were on our own. We got through the camp gates, which consist of a 20-foot pair of boots with an equally big helmet on top of them, and marched round to halt in the beer tent.

The Mummy returns!

On the second day, we were up early again, but following a different route. There were a few sore feet, but spirits were high. When we got back to Nijmegen at the end of the march, the atmosphere was even more electrified than before. It looked like the whole of the town was out supporting us and enjoying themselves.

On the final day, we slept in till 04.00 hrs! There was a fine selection of blisters and missing toenails amongst the team, so it was quite a slow start - but we soon picked up the pace again. The end was in sight now, and despite everyone being sore and tired, morale was high. We all agreed that, even if we had to carry someone, the whole team would cross the finish line. As the day wore on, the crowds got livelier and our feet didn't seem to hurt as much anymore. The crowds got thicker and louder as the miles slowly disappeared, and eventually we were on the final straight. People had lined the route and had been staking their pitches by the side of the road for the last week. Sofas and chairs were chained to trees by the road so that they could get the best view. At the last half-mile, and there was a piper waiting for us to play us in. This was a fitting end to the marches, a final morale boost to get us over the finish line. We got our hard-earned medals, and the team medal, and felt like we'd earned them.

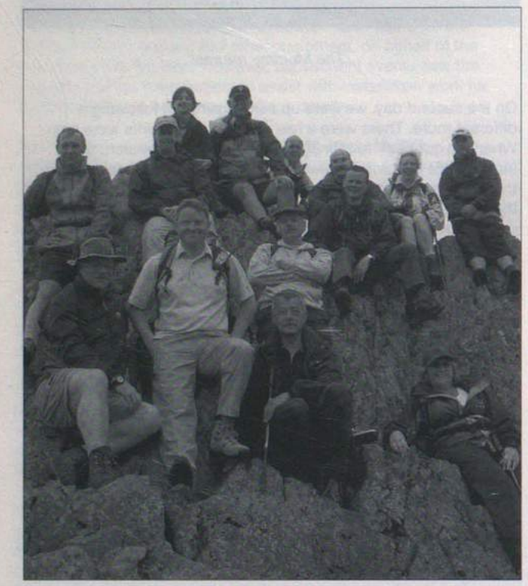
Opinions on whether it was worth it will differ, but we all agreed it was definitely an experience not to be missed. You learn about yourself and about your mates, and the team spirit that evolves is very strong by the time the event is over.

Sgt Stafford leads them home

DEFENCE CRYPTOSECURITY OPERATING AUTHORITY (DCOA)

EXERCISE LAKELAND VENTURE 04 - LAKE DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK - *by SSgt Martin Punchard*

Members of the Defence Cryptosecurity Operating Authority (DCOA) based at Copenacre and Basil Hill, Corsham, recently participated in an AT/team building event in the Lake District National Park under the watchful guidance of Royal Signals personnel. During the four-day period, all personnel were introduced to kayaking, mountain biking and hill walking. For most, it was the first time they had undertaken such activities, and for some of the civilians, it would also prove to be their last!



The Lakeland Venture 04 Group

The main group departed Corsham early on a wet Tuesday morning. By early afternoon, we arrived in Grasmere, and the weather had brightened up. Our accn was in the Butharlyp Howe Youth Hostel, and after the mandatory briefs, the group unpacked, had a brew, put on their walking boots and headed off on the first activity, walking the Grasmere/Rydal Water Circular. A tab of approximately 4½ miles, it was an ideal as an introduction to the type of terrain that would be covered over the following three days. En route, we passed Dove Cottage, home the poet, **William Wordsworth**. Further on, we passed another house in which it was claimed **Wordsworth** had lived, then another, and another. How many houses did he really have? Was he an early property tycoon? Eventually, we retuned to Grasmere and re-hydrated with water (which we discovered had been polluted with hops, yeast etc!) at a local hostelry.

Day 2 saw the group travelling to Lake Coniston for kayaking and mountain biking. We were split in to two groups, one for each activity. After safety briefs and drills, and some basic instruction on how to drive their craft, the kayaking group were soon out on the water. Throughout the morning this group participated in a number of confidence and team building activities, culminating in a number of team challenges. Meanwhile the mountain biking group headed off on a picturesque route chosen by **SSgt Martin Punchard**, that would overlook Lake Coniston from the base of Old Man of Coniston. After only 200 metres all, including the instructor, were forced to dismount and walk up a hill that seemed like the north face of the Eiger. As the hill became less steep, we

Lake Grasmere

re-mounted and continued the steady climb to the base of Old Man of Coniston. On the way, under the guidance of the instructor, we were set challenges. These included descending steep rocky areas safely, which for some was quite challenging enough just to stay on their bikes! Once the instructor was assured with everyone's ability, we continued uphill for a short time, and then began the descent. The instructor led the way, for about 30 seconds before being overtaken by **WO2 Pete Lamont**, who had thrown all caution to the wind, closely followed by **Lt Cdr Les Mitchinson** and **SSgt Martin Punchard**.

After lunch, the two groups swapped activities. Both activities proved to be as eventful in the afternoon as they had in the morning, with **Lt Cdr Les Mitchinson** in his kayak, being rammed by **SSgt Martin Punchard** at speed. **Lt Cdr Mitchinson** suddenly found himself a submariner, having to exit a submerged craft and swim to the surface.

The start of Day 3 saw the group ascended Helm Crag to follow a ridgeline overlooking the Far Easedale Valley. We soon became aware that the climb was not going to be as easy as had been anticipated. Within a matter of metres, we found ourselves tackling a series of very steep stone steps cut into the rock. Eventually, the steepness lessened and the going got easier. As we climbed, a number of RAF Tornado aircraft flew past in the valley below. On reaching the summit, we continued along the Far Easedale ridgeline. Descending down in to Far Easedale Valley, we made steady progress down through the valley admiring the many waterfalls that form a feature called Sour Milk Gill, and eventually arriving back at the hostel at 16.30hrs.

The ex was the first to be run by DCOA since its formation. It proved to be a challenge to all and was thoroughly enjoyed by all attending. Thanks to **SSgt Martin Punchard** for organising the whole event, **WO2 Pete Lamont** for leading the way on the hills, **Flt Sgt Ian McDonald** for doing 99.9%of the driving, and to **Mr Paul Castledine** for providing entertainment!

WORLD DUATHLON CHAMPIONSHIPS – GEEL, BELGIUM
- *by SSgt Paula Matheson*

Having suffered a hip injury for over a year and out of triathlon for nearly 2 years, I decided in October 2003 it was time to get back into the sport!

With a very erratic winter trg season, I decided to have a go at the Cambridge Duathlon in April 2004, a qualifier for the World Championships. My bike set-up was totally wrong, causing cramp that had me walking most of the second run, coming in at 8th place. But, with not many in my age group entering, I qualified just by turning up! There were still 8 weeks to train. With 2 weeks

in Cyprus with the Army Triathlon Association, I was confident that this intense trg would pay off.

In Belgium, watching the elite athletes race the day before our race was a huge boost to us all. The atmosphere in Geel Main Square was electric, despite the wet and dangerous weather. After a day of watching how the elites do it, it was back to our rooms to prepare our kit and prepare mentally for the next day.

The weather was very kind to us, dry but cool. Once we were off, the competitiveness started to kick in. The run course was excellent, with many loops allowing you to see where in the field you were, and how much work you had to catch up. At first, my legs felt like lead and didn't want to work. But I plodded on, coming in with a time of 42 mins 50 secs for the first run -14th in my age group.

A lot of work had to be done on the bike to claw some of those places back. I was happy with my bike set up and had no excuses. Despite my tri bars coming loose and falling off at about 20 kms, I had a great ride, gaining back some places. The course was flat but technical and very fast, and with a time of 1 hr 11 mins 41 secs, I was quite pleased; With only a 5km run to go.

The atmosphere was fantastic and the spectator support was invaluable. I had to keep telling my self that it was only 5km and the worst was over. Sometimes it was really hard, but pride and discipline soon got me through the final stages. A final run of 19 mins 44 secs gave me an overall time of 2 hrs 16mins 03 secs.

It had been an excellent race, very well organised and great for spectators and athletes alike. I was over the moon to have gained 8th place overall, as I had hoped for a top ten finish. A year ago, 8th would have given you a pre-qualification for the World Duathlon Champs for the following year, but the goal posts have changed, and you now have to be in the top 5. This gives me an incentive to work even harder next season.

SSgt Matheson with DCSA CE

660 SIGNAL TROOP 11 EOD REGIMENT

Tp Comd	**Capt DG Watson MBE**
Tp WO	**WO2(Supvr R) R Hare**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt S Bruce**

As always the outlying Sqns have been extremely busy over the past few months.

The summer is always filled with sporting events, parades and state visits across the country, which require our support. Our personnel are deployed on OPs TELIC and BANNER, and an odd few even get short trips to Gibraltar.

All this is done on a backdrop of licensing exs, duty callouts and new equipt trials. We welcome all new arrivals to the Sqns and hope they enjoy the large variety of tasks they will be called on to complete.

621 SQUADRON DETACHMENT, RAF NORTHOLT

ECM Adv	**SSgt L Ellaway**
T-Det SNCO	**Sgt D Hankin**

We welcome new arrivals, **LCpls Fraser**, **Rudd** and **Burchell**. They will certainly be busy in the future with a number of challenging courses to qualify them as EOD ECM Ops.

Congratulations to **Sgt Daz** and **Nikki Hankin** and to **Cpl Tel** and **Lisa Bacon**, who are now proud parents.

It has been quite a busy period again for 621 Sqn Det. The summer months were taken up with lots of events in and around London, including the Queen's Birthday Parade, where we regularly deploy in support of the marching troops. We have also had a number of annual sporting events to cover, including Royal Ascot and the British Grand Prix. There never seems to be a shortage of manpower when these events come around, and the teams enjoy pretty much unrestricted access to the venues.

The future looks just a busy, with the imminent deployment of **Sgt Hankin**, **Cpl Fyfe** and **LCpl Phillips** to OP TELIC, and **Cpl Kennedy** and **LCpl Mason** on OP BANNER. We wish all individuals a successful and safe tour of duty.

ROYAL ASCOT - *by Cpl Tel Bacon*

Members of 621 Sqn Det were deployed to Royal Ascot Races in June, to provide support to the Thames Valley Police. Two teams were deployed for the week, which gave everyone the chance to test out our new veh. We were split into two teams, one working inside the course with the EOD team, giving **LCpl Jim Gallagher** the chance to parade around calling himself 'Bond' on Ladies' Day. The other team was deployed outside Ascot and around to Windsor Castle, escorted by **SSgt (Supvr R) Ellaway**, using the new veh, with **LCpl Jamie Buyers** never removing his shades come rain or shine.

The week as a whole was very busy. Each day, the teams arrived at Ascot before 08.00hrs to attend the morning briefs given by the Police Search Team Advisor (POLSA), and enjoyed a lovely free breakfast, courtesy of the Thames Valley Police. The teams were rotated so personnel could work inside and outside the course. With the daily arrival of members of the Royal Family, the searches were under a heavy time constraint. It was another very enjoyable event, and working closely with the Police Search Teams is always a challenge.

NEWS FROM OTHER UNITS

2 SQUADRON ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SIGNALS

A BUSY WEEK FOR ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SIGNALS
– courtesy of NZ Army News; story by Barry Allison, photos by SSgt Eddie Paku

Sport, trade skills and a Princess Anne Banner Parade were on the agenda for the 140 or so Kiwi signallers gathered in Linton Camp (near Palmerston North) for RNZSigs Corps Week 19-23 July 04.

RNZSigs RSM, **WO1 Nigel Shields** said the idea behind the week was 'to get the Corps together, parade the Princess Anne Banner and incorporate activities that build *esprit de corps* – things such as sport, skill-at-arms and trade skills competitions.'

Thirty-five trainees from the School of Signals also took part. 'This gets trainees involved with the Corps family and feeling a part of it sooner, rather than later,' **WO1 Shields** said.

It was a busy week. Sport, and the chance to catch up with friends from around the country were high points for the soldiers. 2 Sig Sqn dominated the sport, winning the soccer, basketball, volleyball, rugby and touch, whilst a combined School of Signals/3 Sig Sqn team won the netball.

Unfortunately, the weather was bad for the Princess Anne Banner Parade. 'It began to rain when we marched on, and stopped as we marched off,' said **WO1 Shields**, 'but morale remained high throughout.'

RNZSigs Colonel Commandant, **Col Warren Tucker**, presented medals and awards during the parade, including the Cyril Basset VC Trophy to **Cpl Jonathon Waahi** of 3 Sig Sqn. This trophy is warded annually to the most outstanding corporal in RNZSigs. It calls for exceptional trade skills, leadership skills and performance.

The Princess Anne Banner is RNZSigs equivalent of Regimental Colours. It was presented to their Corps by HRH The Princess Royal in 1999 - Editor

Parade Comd Maj Liam Jones and the Banner Party salute the Reviewing Officer, Col Warren Tucker

A rain-soaked Col Warren Tucker presents the NZ Operational Service Medal to an injured LCpl Shannin Keeley. Capt Michling Werder looks on

SPORT

BOXING

– by Sgt Booth

Members of the Corps participated in 2 North West civilian boxing events recently. The first was held at Alford Sports and Social Club, the Phoenix club of Warrington.

Four members of the Corps boxed. First up was **Cpl Chris McGeorge** from 2 Sig Regt. An experienced boxer, **Chris** struggled against a fitter and stronger opponent to lose on points.

Second up was **Cpl Chris Kelly-Rutherford** of 216 Sig Sqn. He was stopped early in the bout by an over-zealous referee, who seemed to err on the side of caution after a lucky blow from **Chris'** opponent.

Next up was **Cpl Al Mousley**. This was his debut in the ring. After a disagreement with an opposing coach for cheating, he went on to box an opponent with 8 bouts under his belt. Although a novice, **Cpl Mousley** was an enthusiastic boxer. He listened to the advice given to him and stopped the bout early in the second round with a fast and furious flurry of punches that overpowered his Warrington opponent.

Last of our boxers was **Cpl Larry Collins** from 2 Sig Regt, an unbeaten strong heavyweight facing the more experienced **John Ward** of Wigan ABC. **Cpl Collins** unleashed fearsome blows to **Ward**, which at first rocked him. But **Ward** used skill rather than power to sneak through **Collins'** guard and catch him with a strong uppercut, dazing him. The bout was brought to an early end.

It was an entertaining evening, which showed how professional we are, when organising similar events in comparison with some civilian organisers.

33 SIGNAL REGIMENT SPONSORED TOURNAMENT

This event was held at the new BMW Halliwell-Jones stadium in Warrington, home of the Warrington Wolves Rugby Club. It was sponsored by 33 Sig Regt and was a dinner night, with over 350 guests, including **Capt Chris Hopkins**, **WO1(RSM) Mark Browitt**, local companies and the Warrington Wolves Rugby Team.

Initially, the boxing for the evening had 5 Army boxers competing, 3 of whom were Royal Signals. It was very frustrating for **Cpl Andy Fu**, who had travelled from 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in Germany, and **Sig Steve Turner** (Army Champion), who had travelled from Blandford, only for their opponents not to show up. Nevertheless, a good nights boxing was to follow. There were few hiccups to start with. There was one judge short, so I had to stand in; and there wasn't a bell, so I had to run across the road to the Red Lion PH and beg for one!

The first few bouts were junior bouts, with some up and coming young boxers of the future. The first boxer was **Cpl Danny Brooks**, RMP, who had been training and staying with 80 Sig Sqn for a month prior to the night. His opponent was keen to get away early for an engagement party, so their bout was early in the evening. He certainly got away early as requested, as **Cpl Brooks** knocked him out in 45 seconds. Hope it didn't spoil the party!

Bout 11 was **Cpl Johno Johnson** of 11 Sig Regt. He was matched against a very tough opponent with a lot more experience. **Johno** boxed well, but suffered from his opponent's strong right hook, and unfortunately lost on points.

The last bout of the evening was sponsored by the Regt, and turned out to be the best amateur bout I have ever seen. Boxing for us was **Pte Graham Hay** (Army Heavyweight Champion) of 2 Para, competing against **John Ward** of Wigan ABC. **Ward** had previously defeated **Cpl Collins** of 2 Sig Regt at our last club show, so he was feeling confident. **Pte Hay** brought with him a 9 win history - all knockouts, so we knew this was going to be a big hitting bout.

The action was explosive, with both boxers landing knockout punches in every round for the full 3 rounds. Both boxers felt the canvas on several occasions, both getting up and fighting back hard. **Pte Hay** won on points, to a deserved standing ovation.

The evening was a great success despite the initial problems and over £10000 was raised for charity.

THE FUTURE MONTHS

Planning is well under way for a tour of California in October of this year. A team has been put together from various Regts around the Corps. We will be entering a 2-day tournament, the Torrezz Californian Open Invitational. The team is made up of some very experienced and successful boxers, including 2 Army Champions, ABA Finalists and members of the Army team.

FOOTBALL

- by Capt Tommy Steele

ANOTHER MEMORABLE SEASON

Last season proved to be the best season the Corps has had in terms of success for many a year. Even **Lt Col Rik Licence** couldn't remember a better season! So the boys couldn't wait to start the new season to show that winning the Massey Trophy and the Quads was no fluke, and certainly not due to operational commitments for the other corps' sides. The season started off with 3 easy wins; the first game of the season saw Royal Signals comprehensively outplay the Corps of Army Music by 8 goals to nil, **Sgt Joey Collins**, **Cpl Stevo Stephenson** and **Cpl Al Moffat** each grabbing a brace, with **LCpl Lenny Lennard** and **Cpl Simmy Simpson** completing the rout! The second game was against Int Corps, who were still gloating about the last time they beat us over 2 years ago, and as they had cried off last season, it was very much a case of revenge! Well revenge was well and truly taken, with a 9 nil win to us, that saw **Sig Wood** score 4 and **Cpl Simpson** score a hat trick.

And so to the third game of the season - against APTC. Having already scored 17 and not conceding a single goal, it was disappointing to let the first one in. Still we managed to run out convincing winners by 6 goals to 1, where **Cpl Stephenson** and **Sig Wood** both managed a brace apiece.

The fourth game of the season was a real test against RLC, who were still smarting after having had the Massey Trophy stolen from their grasp last season. It was played at York. The game was a classic, with the RLC getting on top in the early stages with their aggressive tackling, but Royal Signals came back, and after 20 minutes, soon started to control the game with some delightful play. At half time the scores were level, but we were playing them off the park, and it wasn't long before we scored after the interval. **Sig Riz Rizza** scored after an excellent move, and **Cpl Wes O'Connor** doubled the score line with 30 mins remaining. These last 30 minutes were exhibition stuff, with Signals keeping the ball for long periods and making the RLC keeper work overtime to stop us scoring any more. The final whistle saw the game end 2 nil, and completed one of the best performances from Royal Signals I have seen.

The final game prior to the Christmas break was against Infantry at Pirbright. With 4 wins on the trot, we were full of confidence and looked forward to a tight encounter. The game was to prove to be a huge disappointment. Without any of our recognised strikers, we were short of ideas up front, and were unable to hold the ball up for any period of time. Infantry managed to get the ball far too easily, and used it to very good effect. Still, at half time we were still in, having conceded only one goal. Infantry increased their lead shortly after half time, before **Cpl Al Moffat** got one back. But after a dazzling spell of excellent football, Infantry scored 4 more to run out winners by 6 goals to 1. The biggest defeat for over 3 years was a harsh lesson to us all. This was to prove a costly loss, as Infantry went on to win the Massey Trophy. You live and learn; football can kick you in the teeth at any given time!

After the Christmas break we were eager to put the Infantry result behind us, but alas due to several late cancellations, we were not to play again until April. RAC conceded, and so our next opponents were Army Medical Services, a team we beat by a record margin of 15 goals to nil last season. Although we won the match fairly comfortably by 3 goals to 1, they were a much-improved side from last season. The next game was against Army Air Corps, and we ran out easy winners by 4 goals to 1. Our final game before the Quads was against AGC. This proved to be a real test. AGC fielded as many Army sprinters as they could find and it did the trick for them. We struggled to contain the speed merchants, and they pushed us all the way to a three all draw. Two more dropped points meant it was impossible to retain the Massey Trophy, but the Quads were to be an entirely different matter!

THE QUADRANGULAR TOURNAMENT

This season's Quads was held by RE at Chatham, and with no accn available, we had to stay in Aldershot and travel daily to the games. Having won the Quads for the last 2 years, we were optimistic at our chances of being the first Corps side to ever retain the Trophy. The first game was against the home side, RE. **LCpl Adam Pinchback** suffered a badly broken finger and was replaced in goal by **Sig Swann**, who was placed under real pressure by the Sappers. But he stood firm and produced a

breathtaking save to keep us in the game during the first half. At half time, the game was scoreless, but we felt we were in control. Unfortunately, RE profited from a high ball into the box, and with the first header they beat the keeper, to put them ahead. With 15 mins to go, a corner by **Cpl Wes O'Connor** was placed at the back post, and **Cpl Stevo Stephenson** headed the ball firmly into the top corner to equalise. The game then picked up, and the last ten minutes was frantic. Signals came close on a couple of occasions, but it was not to be, and the game ended in a honourable draw.

The next game, against RA, started off in a similar vein; fast and furious with both sides trying to impose themselves. Due to another injury, we had to replace the keeper again, this time with **LCpl Lennard**. The Gunners took the lead in the middle of the first half with a well-taken goal that only managed to stir the Corps side into life. It wasn't long before we took control and turned the match around. Goals by **Cpl Stephenson**, **Cpl O'Connor** and **Sig McGhee** settled the match for us, 3 -1.

With REME beating RE in the other game, the Competition looked within our reach. As long as we bettered the result of the RA in the last game, we would retain the Trophy.

Cpl Wes O'Connor collects the Quadrangular Tournament Trophy

We always look forward to the game against REME, because it is great to play real football again, after two bruising encounters with two very physical sides. The atmosphere was highly charged, because at this stage, either team could win the Competition. As usual, REME started the stronger, making us work extremely hard to keep them out.

Against the run of play, the REME skipper made a poor back pass to the keeper, and the ever-alert **Sig McGhee** was on it like a shot to round the stranded keeper, and put us in the lead. We were still celebrating, when a mistake of our own let REME in to equalise. If ever evidence was needed that you are always at your most vulnerable when just when you have scored, this was it! Shortly afterwards, REME took the lead, and looked as if they might go on and spoil our day. But we managed to equalise again just before half time.

The second half started off in a frantic manner, with REME twice more taking the lead, only to be pegged back with some spirited play and fine goals by **Cpl Al Moffat** and **Cpl Wes O'Connor**. At this point, with our game evenly poised at 4 all and RA being held to a draw by RE, we would retain the Trophy if we could just hold on until the end of our game. But suddenly with only a minute left to play, RA had taken the lead against the RE. Disaster! We had to score, and quickly. And Providence gave it to us. A throw to the six-yard box allowed **Cpl O'Connor** to flick the ball on to **Cpl Stephenson**, who managed to move the ball on to his favoured right foot before smashing it into the top right corner of the net.

What a fantastic finale to a wonderful game of football! The players and supporters went wild! We had done it. Winning the Massey Trophy and the Quads last year was special, but coming second in the Massey and retaining the Quads for the first time was every bit as special!

The end of season celebrations saw **Cpl Wes O'Connor** receive both the Players' Player of the Year and the Manager's Player of the Year awards in what was a truly outstanding season for him! Many congratulations to him from all players and staff!

Next Season can't come along quick enough!

SAILING

TEAM TAKES SILVER IN EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

The J24 *Hitch-Hiker,* skippered by **Lt Col (Retd) David Ellis**, and crewed by a majority of Royal Signals personnel, was part of the GB Team at the recent J24 European Championships in Malmo, Sweden.

There were 40 boats from many European nations, and a Brazilian team who decided to travel the distance for top competition. On 25 July, the National flag of each nation was raised and the 2004 European Championships were declared open.

There were light winds throughout the week, resulting in tough testing conditions for all crews. *Hitch-Hiker* excelled and gained top ten positions in all races to count with a 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 8th, and 10th. All races were nervously close, but *Hitch-Hiker* maintained consistency in their results to achieve 2nd overall, taking a podium position away from the Germans, Brazilians and Swedish, who were close behind.

The Crew were: Skipper, **Lt Col (Retd) David Ellis**; Tactician, **Miss Jo Burchell**; Trimmer, **Maj Simon Spiers**; Mast, **Lt Ewan Watson**; and Foredeck, **Lt Rachel Thompson**. Overall Results were: First, Italy; Second Great Britain; Third, Italy; and Fourth, Germany.

Hitch-Hiker returns to Britain to prepare for the National Championships, and with their current form, they head to Plymouth in September with high hopes for success. This result at the European Championships has confirmed their selection for the GB Team for the 2005 World Championships.

The successful crew

EXERCISE MERCURY SAIL - ROYAL SIGNALS DINGHY SAIL TRAINING WEEK AND REGATTA

The Royal Signals Dinghy Sail Training Week and Regatta was held at the Army Dinghy and Windsurfing Centre (ADWC), Netley from 21 – 25 June. The purpose of STW is to introduce novices to dinghy sailing and those with some experience to sailing with asymmetric spinnakers. Personnel joined from all over the UK, and included both Regular and TA soldiers. A total of 12 units were represented, 4 of which were TA.

After a short tour of the site, the groups were split up and introduced to their instructors. After a short rigging demo and issue of equipt, sailing started in earnest, and it soon became apparent that it was going to be an interesting course. The Novices were put through their paces by **WO1(YofS) Pete Goodliff** and **WO2(YofS) Ted Heath**, who demonstrated capsize drills and manoeuvres to get on and off the beach.

The Spinnaker Course was shown how to rig the Laser 2000 dinghies, and were soon on the water. Even at this stage, a friendly competitive nature was beginning to emerge. After a morning getting used to the boats, crews were shown how to rig the spinnaker and nothing now could stop them.

Tuesday provided some highly entertaining demonstration of how to swim and carry out numerous capsize drills, when **Capt Taff Owens** and **Mr Clive Grant** took the Laser 5000 out onto the water in Force 4 – 5 winds.

Wednesday brought about a change, as the wind conditions at Netley were deemed to be too extreme to allow sailing to continue. The whole course moved to Hawley Lake, near Fleet to try some 'puddle' sailing, courtesy of **Mr Keith Jarvis**, the Hawley Lake Sailing Club Manager and Principal.

Light winds caused a few problems

The sailing on the lake challenged all, with very shifty wind conditions testing the ability to anticipate wind gusts and point the boat in the right direction. All students were introduced to the skills required for racing starts and mark rounding, with some interesting interpretations from the Novice Course.

Everybody was set for the racing to start on Thursday, but the wind conditions at Netley were still too strong, so a theory and rest day was called. This gave students the opportunity to consolidate some of the practical lessons they had learned by linking the principles to the sailing technique.

On Friday, wind conditions had eased, and the first race started at 09.30hrs. With a decreasing wind, both the Courses found the conditions frustrating, with not much opportunity to fly spinnakers to full effect. **Capt Taff Owens** and **SSgt Andy Mount** made a tactical error when they decided to race the Laser 5000 in very fluky conditions, and they too could not sail the boat to its advantage, so they lost on handicap.

The Novice Class competing

The final race was completed at 13.30hrs, with only 3 races being sailed. But this was enough for a race series. **Cpls Stu Southan** and **Emma McIntyre** were convincing winners in the Spinnaker Course, and **Sig Paul Gardner** had a clean sweep in the Novice Class.

Cpl Stu Southan receives the Regatta Cup from the Commodore

Prizes were presented by Commodore, RSYC, **Col Ewbank**. Additional prizes for the most improved sailors went to **Sig Martyn Weston**, 71 Sig Regt (V) and **Sig Rhys Mountford-Jones**, 35 Sig Regt (V). Thanks must go to all those who participated and to all the staff of ADWC, Netley.

Final positions for the Regatta were:

Sig Paul Gardner receives the First Novice prize from the Commodore

Advanced Fleet

1st **Cpl Stu Southan**, 30 Sig Regt and **Cpl Emma McIntyre**, 39 Sig Regt (V)
2nd **WO1(YofS) Pete Goodliff**, RSS and **Lt Col Julian Bunce**, JHC
3rd **OCdt Rachel Clayton**, 35 Sig Regt (V) and **Capt Angela Aylward**, 33 Sig Regt (V).

Novice Fleet

1st **Sig Paul Gardner**, 71 Sig Regt (V)
2nd **LCpl Tracy Ardron**, RSS
3rd **Sig Melanie Hill**, 71 Sig Regt (V)

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

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President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: Maj Gen A H Boyle CB

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Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C P Conlon
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr P J Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

A very quiet time for Branches, as many do not hold meetings during the summer holidays. Our Branches depend upon support from RSA members. If you would details of your nearest branch, have a look under 'branches' on our web site www.army.mod/royalsignals/rsa Alternatively contact me on: 01258-482090 or e-mail rsa@rsignals.net

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Field of Remembrance - 11 November All members and their families are invited to join **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB**, RSA Chairman, at the Corps plot at the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on Thursday, 11 November. Please be in position by 10.30hrs. A senior member of the Royal Family will open the Field at approx 10.50hrs.

Cenotaph Parade -14 November RSA HQ holds a small quantity of tickets (free) for the Parade at the Cenotaph on Sunday 14 November. If you would like to march with the Corps contingent, please contact me.

Corps Carol Service - 20 December This year's Corps Carol Service will be held at St Stephen with St John, Rochester Row, Westminster at 18.00hrs on Monday 20 December. All serving and retired members of the Corps and their families are most welcome to join the Master of Signals at the service, and afterwards for sherry and mince pies in the Church Hall.

Annual General Meeting 2005 Not too early I hope, to mention the 2005 AGM. It will be held in the Victory Services Club, London on Saturday 2 April 2005. Coffee/tea will be available from 09.30hrs; meeting starts at 10.30hrs and ends around 13.00hrs. All RSA Life Members are eligible and most welcome to attend. Any points for the agenda must be with the General Secretary by 1 March.

OTHER MATTERS

RSA Car Stickers The RSA car sticker is 3.5" diameter, in Corps colours and shows the Corps badge in the centre. They self stick to the inside of a car window. These are available by sending a 50p coin and SAE to: Admin Officer, Royal Signals Association, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH.

Visiting the Eastbourne area? Lt Col (Retd) Ron Brodie (Hon Sec, Eastbourne Branch) is involved in the running of the Bay Lodge Hotel on Royal Parade with his daughter and son in law. They would be delighted to welcome serving and ex members of the Corps. Ring **Ron**, **Angela** or **Mark** on 01323 732515 for further details.

Visiting Cyprus? Maj (Retd) Clive Mason has retired to Paphos, Cyprus and would be delighted to receive a visit from any of his friends in the Corps who might be holidaying on the island. Contact RSA HQ if interested in a free brandy sour.

Union Jack Club Members may be interested to learn that the Union Jack Club offers a discount of 10% on accn charges to those over the age of 60 yrs.

Life Members We extend a warm welcome to those recently enrolled Life Members of the RSA shown below. For the last two years we have been prevented from writing to soldiers as they leave the Corps, to invite them to join the RSA. However, common sense has prevailed over PC, and we are now able to write again, albeit c/o the soldier's last unit. If you are a serving soldier about to leave, or have left within the last two years, and have not heard from the RSA, please contact RSA HQ for details on how to become a Life Member. Alternatively use the form on our website: www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa

Rank/name	*Service*	*Branch*
Maj Andy Cameron	1985-04	
Sig Bill Macey	1950-52	East Kent
Sgt Allan Wilson	1963-75	
Sig George Liddell	1950-60	
Cpl Nick Blanchard	1982-86	
Cpl Colin Ingledew	1965-76	260 Sig Sqn Assn
Sgt Peter Wheeler-Lilley	1966-80	260 Sig Sqn Assn
Sgt Andrew Jack	1959-82	260 Sig Sqn Assn
Capt Gordon Washington	1960-67	Leeds
Sgt John Raeburn	1975-90	
Dvr Jim Robertson	1942-46	Berwick
Capt Blaydon Morris	1998-04	
Capt Dave Sacree	1976-04	
Lt Col Paul Avison	1977-04	
Capt Graham Reith	1973-04	
Capt Steve Johnston MBE	1977-04	
Capt Tam Malley	1976-04	
Lt Col David Turner	1967-04	
Cpl Colin Brooks	1976-98	
Sig Chris Lees	1974-79	260 Sig Sqn Assn
Cpl Jim Coglan	1951-78	Birgelen Vets Assn
Cpl Robert Menzies	1989-99	
Cpl Bill Kingston	1943-47	AFSR Assn
Sig Trevor Lott	1968-71	260 Sig Sqn Assn
Sgt Butty Butler	1987-04	
Sig Terry Plows	1958-60	
Capt Mary Rogers	1977-93	
SSgt Jayne Lawrence	1991-04	
LCpl Jamie Thompson	1998-04	
Sgt Harold Wilson	1944-47	AFSR Assn
Cpl Jackie Bentley	1967-70	
SSgt Phil Newman	1977-04	
Sig Gordon Johnson	1960-63	Newcastle
Cpl Harry Bridger	1948-53	
Cpl Jim Brent	1967-76	
Sgt Eric Emmett	1944-51	254 OBA
Sig John Kennedy	1974-78	Norfolk
LCpl Chas Upfield	1971-78	
Cpl Michael O'Brien	1976-98	
LCpl Alison Barlow	1992-97	
LCpl Paul Brierley	1991-97	
Pte Bridget Wilson	1966-69	Harrogate
SSgt Peter Root	1960-85	Harrogate
SSgt Steve Major	1972-94	Harrogate
Sgt JF Lindsay	1956-78	Harrogate
WO2 Alex Kubu	1961-83	Harrogate
WO1 Richard Hall	1963-81	Harrogate
SSgt David Aldous	1964-87	Harrogate
Cpl Denis Allen	1966-90	
Cpl Mark Cook	1987-97	
Sig Jamie Hockley	1999-04	
Sgt Al Barker	1981-04	
Cpl Brett Ranford	1999-04	
Sig Keith Bate	1991-97	
Maj John Cork	1950-56	BEBA
WO2 Chris Conroy	1964-88	260 Sig Sqn Assn
Sgt Peter Ruff	1981-95	
LCpl Andrew Longhurst	1970-74	
WO2 John Ratcliffe	1964-88	
Sgt Rob Parr	1981-04	
Sig Pete Craven	1992-97	
WO1 Chris Davies	1981-05	
Fiona Smith	1992-date	
LCpl Kelly Acott	1992-97	
Sig Roy Backhouse	1952-54	Chesterfield
Sig John Curwen	1954-56	
WO2 Mike White	1987-date	Bristol
WO1 Baz Palmer	1971-96	
Cpl Manuel Cowie	1989-97	
Sig David Ayre	1993-97	
Sgt Paul Evans	1981-date	
WO2 Derek Peters	1981-05	
Dvr George Ingram	1949-54	
LCpl Terry Spencer	1975-85	
Cpl Tony Dawson	1996-date	
LCpl Walter Baynham	1943-47	AFSR Assn
WO1 Allan Keen	1981-04	
LCpl Mark Deary	1987-97	
Sig Jason Gilbey	1989-97	
LCpl Chris Downie	1983-94	
SSgt Mike Holland	1967-92	Birgelen Vets Assn
SSgt John Morley	1986-date	
SSgt Brian Green	1979-04	
Sgt Don Marsh	1943-59	
LCpl Mark Evenden	1992-97	
Cpl Graeme Gammack	1987-97	
Sig Roy Stafford	1960-63	
WO2 Dave Inman	1982-04	
Sig Andrew Downer	1988-96	
Sgt Gary Elliston	1974-04	
Sgt Ian Gilbert	1960-97	
Cpl Pip Williams	1942-47	
Cpl Caroline Hogg	1985-97	
Capt Guy Liddiatt	1942-46	
LCpl Roy Steele	1952-55	
Cpl John Copland	1957-59	Shetland
Sig Bobby Bremner	1956-58	Shetland
Capt Rip Wilson	2000-date	
Sig Bill James	1990-97	
LCpl Kevin Hawker	1993-97	
Sgt Eddie Mooney	1975-97	
SSgt Tom Brand	1978-02	
WO2 Paul Booth	1980-97	
Sig Steve Bargna	1986-97	
Maj Nigel Donohue	1981-04	
WO2 John Middleton	1973-97	
LCpl Paul Grundy	1991-97	
Sgt Alan Murphy	1981-97	
Sig Ernest Little	1946-49	
Sig Robin Scott	1986-88	
Sig Keith Taylor	1978-81	
Sig Craig Egan	1990-93	
Sig Martin Ashworth	1982-92	
Sig Iain Holgate	1993-97	
Sig Bob Malcolmson	1952-54	
LCpl Andy Chick	1987-97	
Sgt Tom Smith	1958-67	
Sgt Al Stratton	1972-97	
Cpl Scott O'Neill	1996-04	
LCpl John Brend	1980-88	Catterick
LCpl Ricky Paule	1998-04	
Sig Neil Rubin	1992-97	
LCpl David Cope	1989-97	
Sgt John Thompson	1973-97	
WO1 Dave Taylor	1972-97	
Pte Zita Evans	1982-87	
Cpl John Kinnoch	1999-04	
Sig Leslie White	1939-46	Sale
LCpl Mark Mathews	1984-97	
Sig Nigel Skelly	1992-97	
LCpl Phil Power	1984-97	
WO2 Ian Atherton	1973-97	
LCpl Tim Marchant	1993-02	
Maj Bill Turney	1953-80	

DONATIONS

Reunion of former 30 Sig Regt members	£55.00
Ron Smith	£70.00

Tony Sugdon	£10.00
Willie Cameron	£50.00
In memory of **Richard Carlton Whalley**	£390.00
Maj (Retd) Ron Fletcher, memory of **Col John Agar**	£15.00
Maj (Retd) J C Green, in memory of **Col John Agar**	£50.00
Mr PF Amos	£5.00
Ron Simmons	£10.00
Frank Stockdale, in memory of his wife, **Margaret**	£100.00
George Edwin Dean MM, from his will	£5,000.00
Maj (Retd) A Burns, memory of **Capt AG Maxwell**	£30.00
Guy Liddiatt	£20.00
Robin Scott	£10.00
Mrs J Wills, in memory of her husband, **John**	£50.00

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Ken Brown**
Secretary **Mr Phil West**

Brighton Branch contnues to provide a varied programme for members, with regular coffee mornings, Branch lunches and evening meetings. In June, the summer lunch was well attended and was the usual happy occasion. It was a pleasure to see our President back again and in good form after his recent health problems.

Our evening meeting in July was devoted fund raising to continue our sponsorship of a Gurkha pensioner. It was not possible to arrange for representation from the GWT, so our Chairman gave an interesting talk with some personal reminiscences as a Burma Star veteran. In recent years the target has been raised, but there is good support in the Branch for this very worthwhile cause.

The Branch supported the 884 Tp Summer Ball, and those attending had an enjoyable evening among the more active members of the Corps. Many of the Branch meetings are held at the Tp HQ, so the links the Serving and Retired Corps are maintained as far as practicable.

August is a holiday month with no Branch activity, but the Committee is still at work looking forward to the main annual events in the Autumn. It is good to be able to report that membership levels remain very stable, but as always a very warm welcome is extended to any signallers who are not yet members of the Association.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs J Barrett**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

46 Members attended lunch at the Grangemoor Hotel, Maidstone. It was preceded by a talk by a local historian, on the life and times of **Gen Gordon** of Khartoum, a subject not necessarily of great interest to the ladies, but perhaps **Gordon** himself would not have been happy with the end result of his life either.

In June, 25 Members crossed the moat at Hever Castle, Kent, in the footsteps of the great and the good of Elizabethen times. After wandering through the historic pile and admiring the trappings and ancient costumes, they piled exhausted into lunch at the nearby restaurant. The magnificently organised ceremonies in France to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the landings of DDay,and covered so well on TV, showed our own **Charles Skingle** in all his glory and heavily weighed down by his array of medals, talking to all and sundry to interviewers - and anybody who wanted to speak to him, be they British or whatever.

Twenty-six of us weathered the elements at Blandford for the Annual Reunion, and despite the inclemency, the usual good time was had by all. Neither wind nor rain deterred 11 Sig Regt on parade, who delivered as they invariably do, earning the congratulations of the new Master of Signals in his rousing oration.

Sunday 8 August saw the Annual Barbecue at the home of our Hon Secretary, **Maj Gen John Badcock** where over 100 of us enjoyed a magnificent lunch. This was preceded by what has by now become an annual commitment by the Committee, a sketch. This year we decided that it was to be our version of *It Ain't Arf 'Ot Mum* - and it was. A monsoon was never far away, but stayed over the coast out of harm's way, allowing the assembled throng to enjoy the magnificent buffet and the raffle, organized by **Marion de Rose**, which raised over £200. An incredible day,enjoyed by all, not least by the cast of *It Ain't Arf 'Ot Mum*, who expertly replaced any forgotten lines with appropriate ad libs, which went down just as well with the audience who applauded generously.

Peter Foakes and **Peggy**, who seem to be regular contributors to this column, are both progressing well, although they weren't well enough to attend the above mentioned festivity. **Elizabeth Hughes**, daughter of **Maj Charles** and **Rita**, was a welcome visitor to the BBQ. It was good to see her after a period of absence from functions. She has not been too well lately. **Pat Harlow**, daughter of the late **Maj** and **Mrs Tommy Thomas**, is currently in the Kent and Canterbury Hospital undergoing treatment, and we wish her well.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Paul Burton**
Secretary **Barry Greenwood**

We had our Branch AGM at the end of April and all the current Committee were voted back into office for a further year. Full details of the current committee can be found on our web pages (see below for details).

At end of June, our Secretary, **Barry Greenwood** and a contingent of 24 Members headed down to Blandford for the Reunion, where they were particularly impressed with the drill and turnout of the soldiers for the Parade on Saturday - despite the wet weather. They also saw the Standard Bearers contest, where our **Roy Bilby** received a Complimentary Award after reaching the final six. On Sunday, after attending the Drumhead Service, they reluctantly headed back home again.

No sooner had we recovered from the reunion weekend, than 20 of us took part in a Fun and Games Evening on 2 July in aid of the Great Ormond Street Hospital organised by the RSM of 36 Sig Regt with teams from the Regt, the East London Branch and the 4 Bn Essex Regt Old Comrades Assn. This was a thoroughly enjoyable evening, with events such as a Music Quiz and Horse Racing. It raised £738 for the Hospital, and to top it all, the RSA teams won a barrel of beer, which was saved and enjoyed at our July meeting.

We have had quite a lot of contact with Essex Regt Old Comrades Assn recently, with combined events etc, and in recognition of this they have extended an invitation to our Members to their Annual Dinner in September.

A trip to see the Royal Artillery Band at The Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch, in aid of SSAFA Forces Help has been organised for Friday, 24 September. Over the last few years we have had quite a few visits to see this band, and whilst they are not up to the standard of the Corps band, they are a good second best!

Following on from the last year's very successful Italian Supper and Dance, we will be repeating the event on Saturday, 2 October. Further into the future, our formal Dinner Dance will be held on 19 March 2005. **Paul Burton**, our Chairman, already has a guest of honour lined up, which he promises will be equal or better than the last guest of honour. Watch this space for further updates.

For details of our future events and other details of our branch, please see our web page at
http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/eastlondon/index.htm

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. We are aiming to be all-inclusive and would welcome, as Associate Members, serving or ex-service men and women from other Arms, Regts and Corps. Our meetings are held in the Sgts Mess of 36 Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 8pm on the fourth Tuesday of each month except December.

EDINBURGH BRANCH

Chairman **Maj Brian Murray MBE**
Secretary **Mr Ian McKay**

GIBRALTAR 2004

Earlier this year the Government of Gibraltar invited members of the Assn to Gibraltar to celebrate their Tercentenary. Four members of the Edinburgh Branch were lucky enough to be offered this trip. **John McGrath**, **Bill Cree**, **Helen Jephcote** and I travelled down from Edinburgh on 15 June to join the rest of the party and fly out the following day. We were met at Gibraltar by **Peter Canessa** and **Marielou Guerro**, the event organisers and had photographs taken for the local papers.

We were then transported to our accn for the week, formerly the Sgts' Mess at Lathbury Bks, now known as the Gibraltar Retreat Centre. After an introduction by **John Rodriguez**, we were allocated our rooms. After unpacking, we gathered in the bar for a quiet pint prior to the evening's activities – a memorial service conducted by **Rev Ken Bromage**, followed by a civic reception with the Mayor of Gibraltar.

Bill Cree, Ian McKay and John McGrath

At the reception, the Mayor gave a short speech to welcome us to Gibraltar, and the first of many presentations were made on behalf of the Assn. It should be noted that the Mayors' speech ended with '…we wish to remain British,' a theme that became increasingly more evident with every speech we heard during our week's stay. As the reception ended, we were all presented with a bottle of wine labelled 'Specially for His Worship, the Mayor of Gibraltar' before returning to our quarters.

Thursday 17 June commenced with visit to St Michaels Caves to see the Barbary Apes, followed by a tour of the Great siege tunnels. Engineered by one **Sgt Maj Ince**, these tunnels where dug by hand, and for his reward he was given a farm on the Rock, which remains to this day and is known as Ince's Land. Then it was off to *Minister's* restaurant for lunch hosted by the Royal Gibraltar Regt Assn, and in the afternoon a tour of the 100-ton gun, which never fired a shot in anger!!

On Friday 18 June, the activities included a tour of the Botanical Gardens, followed by a trip up the rock by cable car, and lunch at the top station. We then had the afternoon at leisure, followed in the evening by a Barbecue and a re-enactment of the Ceremony of the Keys performed by a group called *History Alive*.

The members of History Alive

Saturday 19 June found us all suited and booted, marching down the main street, with **Harry Hawke** carrying his Branch Standard, behind the members of *History Alive*, as we took part in the Ceremony of the Keys. As we marched past the Cathedral, the choir sang *It's a long way to Tipperary* and the crowds applauded - mainly, I think, for the Chelsea Pensioners who headed our contingent!

The parade was followed by Lunch at St Bernard's, hosted by the President of the Gibraltar Branch of the RBL. Then after an afternoon at leisure, we were taken out for dinner at *Bianca's* on the waterfront at Marina Bay.

On Sunday 20 June, a Church service was followed by lunch at *The Clipper* in Irish Town, followed by a tour of the WW2 tunnels. There are 34 miles of tunnels in the Rock, containing veh parks, Bde HQ, kitchens, in fact everything that was needed to survive the bombing during WW2. Interesting to note that there is a 'sterile' cave, known as '642 Sig Tp Cave', so named because a Royal Signals driver crashed into the wall of the tunnel and unearthed it.

Monday 21 June was fairly quiet day, with a morning visit to Trafalgar Cemetery and an afternoon's retail therapy. In the evening, we were invited to the Elliot Hotel for dinner with the Health Minister, who, before he went into politics, was CO of the Royal Gibraltar Regt.

Tuesday 22 June was dolphin watching excursion. I was delighted when there appeared eight or nine dolphins right alongside the boat. Everybody dived for their cameras to catch them on film as they surfed on the bow and stern waves. The excursion was followed by a trip to the museum and lunch. The planned evening activities had been cancelled, so we quietly made our own entertainment.

On Wednesday 23 June we departed Gibraltar, having had a fantastic week, thanks to the Government of Gibraltar and everyone else who was involved. We have made many new friends, and have many fond memories. I have already asked if I can go back again!

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **Ivanna Muir**

Members returned from the Blandford Reunion, having enjoyed the weekend despite the weather, and the items called off. This year was a new experiment for our intrepid travellers. We travelled down in a minibus, with two members sharing the driving, and frequent stops on the way down and back. **Bill MacNamara** the Branch Standard Bearer, was again in the last six qualifiers for the Standard Bearers competition, but was not the chosen one this year - although it was an achievement in its own to be among the best six in all the RSA Branches. Well done, **Bill**.

We enjoyed a visit to the Glasgow Police Museum in July, where the curator gave us a guided tour, and explained the significance of the many 'trophies' held in the Museum. This scribe has been informed that he will be required to make a speech, at the opening session of his Speakers club in September. This visit inspired the idea to make the speech on Crime and Punishment, entitled 'Executions in Glasgow from 1600 to 1960.'

In July, several Members made the trip to Erskine Hospital to see the patients and enjoy a games night. Although some of the veterans were in wheel chairs, it did not prevent them from joining in playing indoor bowls, card games, dominoes, and chats about their particular service, and places they served in. Branch Members were served with a buffet and beer, whisky or soft drinks, taken with the patients at individual tables, by dedicated members of the hospital staff. The patients were ready to be prepared for retiring around 9pm and one of the staff came to our table and asked the two men patients and one women patient, if they would like a whisky before retiring. This is to my mind a very civilised way to treat the veterans.

Branch Members themselves took items of books and games to be left for the benefit of the patients. Despite their ages and health problems, both the men and women who have seen service in one of the three Services, are all very cheerful and welcome our visits. The hospital itself is situated in beautiful immaculately kept grounds, in a peaceful setting.

MANCHESTER BRANCH

Chairman **Mt RPM Taylor**
Secretary **Mr H Ferguson**

16 Members made the annual pilgrimage to Blandford for this year's Reunion Weekend. All had a great time, despite the wet Saturday. At the very convivial get together with the Glasgow Branch on the Sunday evening, we were again victorious, beating our friends from the north 52-0 in the indoor Games (we think).

Sadly, **Christine**, the wife our scribe **Wyn Jones**, died on 9 February 2004. She had suffered from a severe liver disease, and died despite a transplant, at the age of 56 years. The Manchester Branch turned out in force for the funeral, and formed a guard of honour outside the church as the cortege moved inside. The Branch Standard was paraded by **Peter Halford**. We were grateful to **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** and Glasgow Branch Secretary, **Ivanna Muir**, for their kind condolences.

MIDDLESBROUGH BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs A Grainge**
Secretary **Mr R Grainge**

We visited Alnwick Water Gardens on 13 June, with 22 Members setting off at 09:00hrs on a very hot and sticky Sunday morning. On arrival at Alnwick and after our Chairman, **Audrey Grainge** had dashed off and paid for the tickets, 12 of the party decided a quick picnic meal wouldn't go amiss before setting off on a tour of the gardens. Although part of the gardens were still under construction, it is still a magnificent site and well worth a visit. The fountains are definitely a spectacle worth seeing.

Those with the staying power also visited the nearby Alnwick Castle, whilst those who had a little too much wine with their lunch, crashed out on the grass. Forgetting they were wearing shorts, they fell asleep for half an hour and suffered sunburnt knees. On the return journey it was felt that a fish and chip stop wouldn't go amiss, so we diverted to the Fish Quay at North Shields, where all ate heartily, and even had enough left to feed the gulls.

On Sunday 22 August, our Branch along with many others from Area 1, attended a Buffet Lunch and Social gathering organised by the York Branch at Worsley Bks TAC. After finding some extra seats, we settled down to an afternoon of merry making and meeting up with old and new friends. The highlight of the afternoon was, as far as our Branch was concerned, the raffle, as we managed to win 10 of the 16 prizes, followed by Newcastle taking 3. **Trish Carter** even managed to get a share on the longest game of bingo I have ever witnessed, using only one card. All our Members thank the York Branch Committee for an excellent function, and hope our Branch function in October goes as well.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Secretary **WO2 I Wolfe**

It does seem a little late to be reporting on the Blandford Reunion in June, but our notes for the August *WIRE* had to be submitted prior to the Reunion. Our new Branch Blandford Organiser, **Glen Greer** appears to have managed well, especially as for the first time, travel was by air rather than crosschannel ferry as in the past. Seven Members flew from Belfast City airport to Bristol, where cars were hired to transport them to Blandford. **John** and **Heather Loveday** again took their caravan across by sea. **Mark Barrass**, who now lives in Dorset but retains NI Branch Membership, joined the party. Many enquired about the late **Harry Stanley**, whose presence was missed. I understand the weekend went off well and was most interesting. Branch Vice Chairman **Jim Redly** paraded the Standard on the Sunday and on return, was pleased to receive a letter of thanks from the National Chairman. A nice gesture indeed.

Branch Secretary **Ian Wolfe** organised a very successful 'Night at the Races' in Clonaver's TAVR Centre. At our Branch meeting in August, we hope to have a speaker, whose topic will be Rorke's Drift (the Zulu war). This should be interesting.

A welcome awaits any serving or ex-Signaller at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the third Wednesday of each month. Why not check out our website for what's on.

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Pauline Tennant**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Hugh Nealon**

The highlight of our recent social calendar was the trip to Blandford for the Annual Reunion. Despite the weather, our delegation had a thoroughly enjoyable day, made even better when our Standard Bearer, **John Mumford,** won the Standard Bearers' Competition. Congratulations to **John**, whose picture appeared in the last edition of *The WIRE*, receiving the Cup from the Master of Signals.

Our other competition entry was to the Aldershot Branch Quiz in May. Despite fielding three teams, this was the first time for a while that we have not been amongst the prizewinners. Nevertheless, it was an excellent evening (and buffet), and our thanks go to all those at Aldershot Branch for organising it.

Earlier in May, we held a skittles evening at *The Gardner's Arms*, ably led by **Bill Lush,** who probably knocked down more pins, than any one else. Less stressful in June, was the garden party held at the home of Branch Member, **Brig Martin Roberts**. Everyone enjoyed the excellent tea organised by **Thelma Wakefield** and her team, the quiz organised by **Mrs Hanelore Roberts**, and nobody took any notice of the shower (of rain, that is). Many thanks to our splendid hosts and all those involved in organising the event.

There was a good turnout of Branch Members to our informal dinner at *The Phoenix Inn* in June. This is an annual event that is enjoyed by all those attending. However the format at The Phoenix has changed, and we may have to reconsider the venue before next year.

Last but not least, a party from the Branch attended the Commandant's Dress Rehearsal for the Sovereign's Parade at RMA Sandhurst on 4 August. Despite the heat, the parade was enjoyed by all spectators, and it was pleasing to see that despite the efforts of politicians and bean-counters, standards are being maintained.

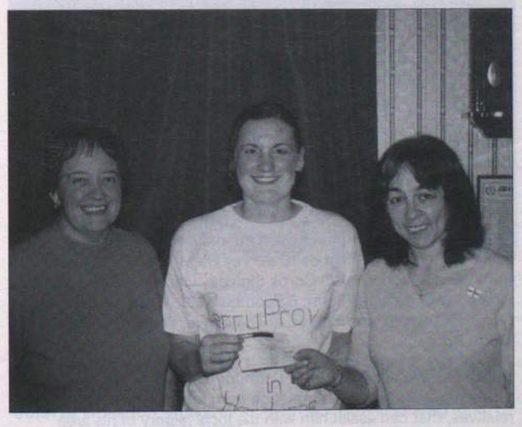
SCARBOROUGH BRANCH

Chairman **Mr DC Digby**
Secretary **Me S Jewel BEM**

On Saturday 19 June 2004, Scarborough Branch held a Cheese and Wine Evening at the TAC, Coldyhill Lane.

The event raised a sum of £250, which was presented to 18year old **Kerry Provins**, to help towards the sum of £3,800, she needs to raise to do a year's voluntary English teaching in Honduras.

Kerry is currently a student at the 6th Form College, and has chosen to go to Honduras for a gap year, organised by Project Trust.



Trudie Halstead, Kerry Provins receiving the cheque, Teresa Jewell

SHROPSHIRE BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) HJB Wall MBE TD JP**
Secretary **Mr ND Warner**

AWARD OF 50 YEAR BADGE TO BRIAN HARRINGTON

At our Meeting on 19 May, **Brian Harrington** was presented with his 50yr Badge for his long and meritorious service to the Corps by **Mr Duncan McCain (Ginger)** the famous racehorse trainer of Red Rum, and more recently Amberleigh House. **Brian** also received a framed Certificate and Congratulatory Letter from RSA Chairman, **Maj Gen AH Boyle CB**.

The ceremony was held in the WO and Sgts Mess Copthorne Barracks, Shrewsbury, where some 40 Members and guests enjoyed a buffet supper together with an amusing discourse on the racing world by **Ginger McCain**, who rounded off by speaking of his great respect for the British Army in which he has served, and his pleasure at being invited.

Brian Harrington receives his 50 Year Badge from Ginger McCain

A Founder Member of the old Shrewsbury Branch (now known as the Shropshire Branch), which was formed in 1958, **Brian** was called up for National Service in Royal Signals in 1953, and after initial military and trade training at Catterick, served as a Lineman in various parts of the UK. He then spent 3 ½ years in the Army Emergency Reserve, before being demobbed in 1955.

For years, the Branch ran a Grand National Draw on behalf of the Association as a whole, selling tickets to Branches throughout the UK, and to Royal Signals Units serving all over the World.

Brian, because of his knowledge and experience in Horse Racing was deemed to be our technical advisor, and has been a major force in helping the Branch raise thousands of pounds in aid of the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund.

BEVERLEY EXBOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

RETURN TO THE BIRTHPLACE OF 6 (BOYS) TRAINING REGIMENT

Tony and **Beryl Hull** travelled to Beverley for a presentation on Monday, 9 August, to Morrisons Supermarket, Beverley. Two large photographs and a shield were presented in memory of 6 (Boys)

Pat Browne, Peter Wong and Tony Hull

Trg Regt, which started its life in Victoria Bks, which was on part of the site where Morrisons Supermarket now stands. The presentation was made to **Peter Wong**, Manager of Morrisons, Beverley.

Sir Kenneth Morrison, Chairman of Morrisons Supermarkets, had given his kind permission for this event to take place and this had been arranged by **Pat Browne**, who had been an Education Sgt at Beverley, and knew **Sir Kenneth** personally.

Several members of the Beverley ExBoys Assn had travelled to Beverley for this occasion, namely, **Pat Browne**, **John** and **Anne Harrison**, **Peter** and **Rita Johnson**, **Jack** and **Judy Quigg** and **Trevor** and **Joyce McCarthy**.

It is with deep regret that we report the sad loss of **Capt (Retd) Alan Maxwell MBE**, who died on 3 August 2004. **Alan** was a SSAFA caseworker, and a donation was made to SSAFA by Beverley ExBoys Assn in lieu of flowers. The funeral took place at Loughborough Crematorium on 13 August.

260 (SAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

Chairman **John Seymour**
Secretary **Geoff Scott**

RSA WEEKEND

Heading down towards Blandford on the Friday for the start of RSA Weekend, little did we know what was in store for us - I mean the weather of course. Having arrived and met up with other 260 Sqn Assn Members, we did our section attack on the Princess Mary Hall and invaded **Peter Cuckow** and his band of willing helpers to be given our meal tickets, badges and a very welcome cup of coffee.

After our very successful 260 Sqn reunion weekend in Dortmund in May, some of us at the RSA Weekend decided to have a mini reunion, so some 26 of us made our way to the Crown Hotel for an evening meal, kindly arranged by **Peter** and **Liz Thompson**. The bar of course was the first port of call, and when everybody had gathered, we were ushered into the dining room for the evening fayre. The meal was excellent, and the evening was a great start for the weekend's activities.

We all awoke on Saturday morning to bright sunshine, and thoughts that the forecast bad weather would stay away were short lived. By mid morning, the clouds had loomed over the horizon, turning the day into shades of grey. As the parade started, the rain came, right on cue. But thankfully, the Master of Signals did what seemed a very quick inspection, his speech to all brought everybody's morale back up, and we all left Hawke Square in better spirits. The afternoon wasn't much better, and the day's activities came to a very wet end. Weather-wise, it had been the worst weekend we've had in 6 years. Let's hope the cycle continues, and we have 6 brighter years to look forward to.

The evening's entertainment was exemplary. The rain could not get us in here but we were definitely wetting our insides. During the evening Geoff Scott and George Holden were introduced to the Master of Signals and pictures were shown of them representing 21 Signal Regiment winning the Army Championship Athletics in 1970 this being the first signals unit to do it. The Master of Signals enjoyed this as he recognised quite a few of the athletes. Our reasonable hour (Cinderella's time) failed miserably and we returned to our B and B in the early hours of Sunday.

Getting out of bed a few hours later we all breathed a sigh of relief the weather looked if it was going to be a kinder day as we all made our way to the Regimental parade square for the Church service although the wind picked up giving the Padre's a little trouble when collecting and returning the Standards. The service passed off without further incident.

The final event of the weekend was March Past by members of the Corps Band, the soldiers from 11 Signal Regiment, Standard Bearers and the Officers and the Soldiers (Retd.) of the Royal Signals Association under the ever watchful eye of the RSM. After the parade we met our partners at the seating area and walked to the Regimental dining hall for lunch and then to say our final goodbyes till hopefully next year. For those of you who read this and have access to the internet visit the Royal Signals Web Site or better still come see for yourself at the next RSA weekend 2005, see you there.

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

28 BRIGADE SIGNAL TROOP MALAYA 1956-57

David Williams has sent in this photo of 28 Bde Sig Tp at Taiping, Malaya 195657. **Dave** in the front row, 4th from the right, and he would like to make contact with anyone in the photo. His address is:

16 Lea Close
Stratford on Avon
CV37 9JS
Tel: 01789299016

SIGNALLERS STATIONED AT WORTH, ARDINGLY OR BALCOMBE

Philip Etherton wishes to trace any former members of 8 Corps HQ (or its attached units) that were stationed in West Sussex near the villages of Worth, Ardingly or Balcombe in the spring/summer of 1944.

They may, at that time, have been attached to 2 HC Regt, 91 Anti Tank Regt, 112 LAA Regt or 10 Survey Regt, RA. Or they may have been attached to VII Corps Signals, which he believes were located at Greentrees Farm, Balcombe a little distance from the Corps HQ, which was located at The Grove, Wakehurst Place, Worth Priory.

Philip has lived at Greentrees Farm for over fifty years, and would be very grateful for any information from former signallers or their relatives, that can assist him with the local history of his area during WW2. He is happy to accept reverse charge telephone calls from readers.

His address is: Greentrees Farm
Balcombe Forest
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH17 6JZ
Tel: 01444 811319

ANDY OSBORNE

David Ings, who served with 24 Air Mobile Bde from 1988 to 89, is trying to trace **Andy Osborne**, who was a Cpl then and a SSgt in Cyprus in 1993-94.

Could **Andy**, or anyone who knows of him, please contact **David** at dave@ingsathome.fslife.co.uk

MADE CONTACT, RATHER THAN LOST CONTACT

The Darlington Branch have sent in the photo below in it are six ex members of the Corps, who during their service, (which totals 171 years), realised that during that service, they had served with one or the other in the group. As a result they decided to get together for lunch along with wives/ partners at a chosen venue accessable to all.

They are, from left to right, **Harry Davies** (York Branch), **Cyril Cooke** (Darlington Branch), **Henry Jennings** (Catterick Branch), **Geoff Biggs** (White Helmets Assn), **Frank Stockdale** (Sheffield Branch), and **Peter Byers** (York Branch).

Along with our wives/partners was **Mrs Jean Anderson**, widow of **Andy Anderson** (ex Catterick Branch), who was also known to one and all during our service.

A wonderful day was enjoyed by one and all. It was thought that writing about this get together might encourage members of other Branches, with similar circumstances to ours, to do likewise.

6 Ex signalers with 101 years' service

WANTED, A COPY OF MARCH 1978 WIRE

John M Charlton, who lives in Arkansas, USA is looking for a copy of the March 1978 *WIRE*.

John is doing a bit of family research, and has found out that his uncle, **WO1(RSM) Matthew Charlton**, and his cousin **WO2 Keith Bamforth** are both mentioned in this issue.

Anyone who can help **John** is asked to contact him at charlton@cableone.net.

ALMA TERRY

Mrs Connie Coatesworth (W) is trying to locate **Mrs Alma Terry** (W) last known to be living in Frimley, Surrey. Anyone who knows of **Mrs Terry's** present whereabouts is kindly asked to contact **Mrs Coatesworth** at: 3 Camberley Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR4 6SJ, or telephone: 01603 452391.

CORRESPONDENCE

GEORGE HOLDEN AND THE 21 SIGNAL REGIMENT TEAM OF 1971

From: **Geoff Scott**
2 Waverley Road
Elland
West Yorkshire
HX5 ONL
Tel: 01422 373075
Email: berylandgeoff@alfiesworld.freeserve.co.uk

Dear Sir

Following the letter published in the February 04 issue of *The WIRE*, I met up with **George Holden BEM** at Reunion Weekend.I hadn't seen him since 1971, and he hadn't been outside his house in the last four years because of his illness. We met in the Sgts Mess and had a good reminisce about the old days at 21 Sig Regt, and the Team that made history by winning The Army Championships in 1970. Later in the night we spoke to the Chairman of the RSA, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB**, who then brought over the Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**, who was surprised that we still had the photos of the event. Both of them named quite a few of the Team.

If both these officers could spare the time to talk about that historic event, where are the rest of the team, because **George** would love to hear from you. Yes, we do still have the team photo with the shield and the score board.

So come on lads report in to our Team Captain, George on 01325 256086, or email him at kathleen.holden@ntlworld.co.uk

Yours...

MAJOR STEVE BRESLOFF

Maj (Retd) Steve Bresloff has recently returned from hospital after having had a stroke in January. He is now making good progress, but knows it will take time. **Maureen** is doing a great job looking after him.

He phoned me to pass on his thanks to all who have sent him cards and best wishes. He apologises for not being able to write to them – yet. He sounded in good heart when I spoke to him.

Steve would very much appreciate a call from anyone who knows him. You can find his phone number in the Retired List. He requests that you take it slowly when you talk to him. He's getting there, but he's not up to speed yet.

Bernard Redshaw - Editor

KOREAN VETERANS GET TOGETHER

From: **Ron Larby**
178 Braemar Avenue
Neasden
NW10 ODS

Dear Sir

Following last years nationwide commemorations of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Ceasefire, it was decided by BKVA that 27 July, Ceasefire Day, would be commemorated annually at the National Arboretum, Staffordshire. This year was the first such get together, and quite a success it turned out to be.

The Arboretum staff had been told to expect up to 500 people, but they were overwhelmed by the sheer numbers that did turn up

on the day. No official figures are known, but the on-site cafeteria sold 1,900 cups of tea!

The programme commenced with a memorial service in the Chapel, followed by a march to the BKVA plot, where the Last Post and Reveille were sounded. Wreaths were laid, and then with fifty-one Standards (BKVA,RBL and Regtl Assns) the BKVA marched past. The salute was taken by the South Korean Ambassador, who was joined on the Saluting Base by the South Korean Defence Attaché and **Col George Gadd**, National Chairman of the BKVA.

The BKVA plot was naturally the focal point of the day, a raised garden laid out with red and blue flowering plants in the shape of the Korean Ying Yang, and tended by local Korea veterans. Appropriately, **Derek Hirst** (exRAMC), who organises this gardening party, received the BKVA Certificate of Appreciation during the ceremony.

As on all BKVA occasions, the Royal Signals were well represented with many a beret and/or blazer with their Jimmy badges. If this day is anything to go by, it's to be hoped that the coming years will be equally, if not more successful.

Certa Cito...

MEMORIES OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL AC EARL

From: **Keith Wheatley**
43 The Fairway
Dymchurch
Romney Marsh
TN29 OQG

Dear Sir

I was saddened to see in the July issue that **Lt Col AC Earl** had passed away.

I was a National Serviceman, trained as an OWL, and on passing out in May 1951, 1 was posted to 7 Armd Div Sig Regt at Verden, where the then **WO2 Earl** was FofS.

As an operator and later a crew commander, I had little initial contact with him. But in May 1952, through the good offices of **Lt Col Nettleship** and **Capt AR Wythe** (and being in the right place at the right time) I was promoted Sgt.

For an NSman of only 19 summers, this was a daunting experience. The Sgts' Mess had at that time many wartime soldiers of great experience, whereas I had had only 18 months. Naturally some resented my intrusion, but most made me welcome, and steered me in the right direction with help and advice. **WO2 Earl** was one of these.

In particular, his help, friendship and imparted knowledge stood me in good stead for my subsequent service in the AER, TAVR, TA and ACF. Through the years, I have seen **Lt Col Earl** mentioned in *The WIRE*, bringing to mind the memory of 7 Armd Div Sig Regt and the people I had the great fortune to serve with there.

I have no doubt that **Col Earl** will be sorely missed, and my sympathies go out to his family.

Yours...

LAST POST

Agar - Col JS Agar	*Served* 1946/81 *Died* 11/07/04
Beeching - Sgt TJ Beeching	*Served* 1940/46 *Died* 28/06/04
Bellshaw - Cpl D Bellshaw	*Served* 1966/75 *Died* 05/07/04
Bradley - Col DS Bradley	*Served* ????/?? *Died* 08/07/04
De Bretton-Gordon - Lt Col A De Bretton-Gordon	*Served* 1954/94 *Died* ??/07/04
Ellison - LCpl AM Ellison	*Served* 1944/48 *Died* ??/06/04
Green - Sig DHA Green	*Served* 1957/58 *Died* 01/07/04
Guy - Sig J Guy	*Served* 1942/46 *Died* 13/07/04
Hesketh - Maj TH Hesketh	*Served* 1940/74 *Died* 17/07/04
Irwin - Sgt AR Irwin	*Served* 1942/45 *Died* ??/07/04
Luscombe - Dvr FV Luscombe	*Served* 1940/46 *Died* 26/07/04
Martin - Sgt GH Martin	*Served* 1939/45 *Died* ??/??/03
Maxwell - Capt AG Maxwell	*Served* 1950/77 *Died* 03/08/04
Michie - Lt Col WJM Michie	*Served* 1954/85 *Died* ??/01/04
Richards - Sgt LE Richards	*Served* 1942/46 *Died* ??/07/04
Sanders - Maj RJ Sanders	*Served* 1966/01 *Died* 28/07/04
Skinner - Sig MH Skinner	*Served* 1941/46 *Died* 12/07/04
Spencer - Capt FN Spencer	*Served* 1940/59 *Died* 29/07/04
Stephenson - Col GWA Stephenson	*Served* 1945/77 *Died* 22/07/08
Stewart - Maj R Stewart	*Served* 1939/75 *Died* 07/06/04
Sylvester-Bradley - Col DL Sylvester-Bradley	*Served* 1939/74 *Died* 08/07/04
Tyler - Sgt J Tyler	*Served* 1965/84 *Died* ??/05/04
Vennall - Sgt HG Vennall	*Served* 1942/47 *Died* ??/??/03
Whalley - Capt RC Whalley	*Served* 1940/52 *Died* ??/07/04

OBITUARIES

McKIRGAN - Maj (Retd) Thomas McKirgan (Tom) died on 25 May 2004.

Thomas McKirgan, the son of a carpenter and joiner, was born in Glasgow on 16 December 1919. During the depression the family moved to London, from where **Tom** joined the Royal Corps of Signals in 1937. Following initial trg at Catterick, he was posted to India where initially, he served on the Afghan border and in Waziristan.

As a young soldier, he was posted to Jubblepore, where he met and married Francis, the daughter of a Police officer, who had served as an Army officer with the Royal Irish Rifles. In 1947 India gained independence, and Tom was posted from Poona back to UK, where he served in Catterick as a trade trg instructor, teaching NSmen; and then in Belfast, with the UOTC. There followed tours in Singapore and Germany. In 1957, Tom moved to Aldershot to join the Para Bde where, at the age of 38, he became one of the oldest soldiers ever to pass P Coy. His service with 216 Sig Sqn spanned 6 years, half as a WO2, and the remaining 3 years commissioned in the rank of Lt. In 1963 Tom was posted to 14 Sig Regt (EW) as QM. There followed a 6-month tour with the UN in Cyprus, then back to MOD and Procurement at Middle Wallop.

Tom retired from the Army in April 1972, and he and **Francis** established their own garden centre business in Cornwall. In 1990, the family moved to Taunton. He is survived by **Francis**, their two sons and 3 grandchildren. If anyone wishes to donate in honour of **Tom's** memory, his chosen charity is:

The Children's Hospice Southwest
Little Bridge House
Redlands Road
Fremington
Barnstaple EX31 2PZ

HALSEY – Lt Col SP Halsey ERD (Peter) died on 18 July 2004.

In 1940 **Peter Halsey** worked as a tester and inspector of carrier equipt for the Telephone Manufacturing Company at Footscray. He was then 16, and had joined the Home Guard at a time when it really was Dad's Army. In 1942 he enlisted in the General Service Corps, from where he was transferred to Royal Signals. He was trained as a line mech and became a LCpl demonstrator. The seed of his future was sown.

Posted to 3 Trg Regt, he was promoted Cpl and then Sgt. He was remustered as a lineman mech on 26 December 1946 obviously block leave was not then the norm. He was promoted SSgt in 1947, and was discharged from the Regular Army in 1950.

Peter then joined the Civil Service and became an Instructional Officer in1950 in what was later to become 8 Sig Regt. He moved progressively through the Instructor grades becoming the Chief Superintending Instructor in 1972.

Peter was to continue his military career in the TA. Initially he joined the Army Emergency Reserve (AER) in 1954 as a Lt(TOT). He served in 3 Sig Construction Regt and then 89 Sig Regt, and was promoted Maj in May 1966. When the AER was reorganised he was posted to 34 (N) Sig Regt (V). In 1976 he was promoted Lt Col, and retired from the TA in 1979, having exceeded the permissible age limit. For service in the AER he was awarded the ERD.

Peter was also well known in the world of higher education, being involved with Darlington Technical College for many years. Here he taught Maths during his early years in Catterick. He was also actively involved with City and Guilds and the Business and Technician Education Council, where he assisted in obtaining recognition for some of our courses.

We calculate that **Peter's** work influenced some 50,000 Regular soldiers' trg, and a large but indeterminate number of TA. All will miss his bushy eyebrows, his helpful and constructive attitude, his vast knowledge, his experience and his friendship.He will be remembered for his major contribution to Royal Signals Soldier trg.

SYLVESTER-BRADLEY - Col DL Sylvester-Bradley OBE (David) died on 8 July 04 aged 85.

David had a full and active life, in which many were touched by his generosity and *joie de vivre*. On leaving Bryanston School in Dorset, he was not sure what he wanted to do, but influenced by his godmother's fascination for radio, decided to take a course in radio engineering.

When war broke out he joined the Army. His personal qualities and outstanding flair for radio soon led to a commission and promotion in Royal Signals. His distinguished war record resulted in being Mentioned in Despatches twice. In 1944-45 he did detailed sketches and watercolour painting as a way to relax while driving the Nazis from Italy. When the war ended he accepted a permanent commission.

His home service was often at Catterick, but he was stationed mostly abroad. There were appointments in Germany, Cyprus, and Kenya, and also CSO during a secondment to Malaya. He was awarded the OBE for his work in Cyprus. He was a great organiser of grand events for visiting notoriety.

David's horsemanship was equal to his exceptional technical ability, and at various time he kept horses and polo ponies, hunting in winter and playing polo in summer, thereby managing to combine an exceptional amount of sport with his Army career. He played polo for Cyprus, Malta, Kenya, Selangor Kuala Lumpur and Tidworth teams, competing with, and often scoring many goals against teams from all over the world. He put an enormous amount of time and effort in to the development of Polo, founding clubs in Kenya and Cyprus.

He enjoyed skiing, he owned a succession of small yachts, played good tennis, squash, golf and croquet, during which his witty comments in support of fair play were invariably accompanied by much goodwill and humour. A huge number of people benefited from his example and encouragement, particularly the young.

After retirement, **David** moved to Lymington and, still a bachelor, came to live with yachtsman **Erroll** and **Daphne Bruce** - his twin sister. It was his habit to complete *The Times* and *The Telegraph* cryptic crossword before breakfast. As a New Forest District Councillor for the Pennington Ward, one of his main interests was housing issues.

He was Chairman of the Keyhaven Harbour Commissioners for many years. He became a member of the New Forest (then Rhinefield) Polo Club at New Park, Brockenhurst, later serving as Chairman then President. As Team Captain, receiving a trophy presented to him by **the Queen**, she asked him 'where exactly Rhinefield was?' and he informed her that it was in the New Forest, which put the club on to the Royal map! Later, he welcomed **HRH the Prince of Wales** and his team to compete in the New Forest.

In his later years, there was again time for painting. He also took up both creative and practical carpentry. He put together a golf group from the Royal Lymington Yacht Club, which he called The Southern League, and with whom he played at Hythe - typically sporting his choice of rather colourful ties. He was a skilled bridge player, and his small living room was often crammed full for a tournament.

David Sylvester-Bradley was the ultimate sporting bachelor, a gentleman of the highest standards with an incisive intellect. In addition, he was a good teacher and a person who brought fun and laughter wherever he went. He was one of those people who quietly put into the world far more than he took out of it.

RICHARDS - Lewis Edward Richards MBE MM KStJ died on 14 July 2004 with his family around him at his home in Gwent.

Lewis served in Normandy as a Wireless Op with K Section 50 (Northumbrian) Div Sigs and was personal signaller to **Brig Sir Alexander Stanier**, Comd 231 Inf Bde.

He was a well respected member of the Cardiff Branch of the RSA, and he will be sadly missed by all his many friends and associates.

His funeral service was well attended, and a Guard of Honour was provided by members of St John's Ambulance (of which he was a Commissioner), Members of the Cardiff Branch RSA, Normandy Vets Assn and the RBL.

HALLING - Sgt Ernest William Halling (Jim) died on 28 May 2004 aged 84.

Jim enlisted in Royal Signals early in 1940 and went on to complete over six years' wartime soldiering, four of which were overseas. After UK trg with 18 Inf Div, he moved with the Div Sigs element to the Middle East, to become part of 70 Inf Div. **Jim** saw action in Syria, before the Div was withdrawn to Egypt, and then moved in haste by sea to reinforce the besieged Tobruk in October 1941. Shortly after rejoining his parent unit near Cairo, he found himself with the rest of the Div embarked for India, where he arrived early in 1942. The next year involved **Jim** in many moves and duties, including riot control and intensive jungle trg,

as well as being promoted to Cpl. In the second half of 1943, **Jim's** unit became part of the Chindits, with whom he fought during the 1944 Assam and Burma campaigns. During this time he was promoted Sgt.

Early the following year, **Jim** returned to UK, to marry **Gwen** in Bishops Cleeve Church on 12 April 1945. He left the Army in May 1946, and became a successful businessman ending his working days as MD of a firm of builders merchants in Swindon.

Among many community activities, **Jim** was a keen member of the RBL, treasurer of his local Probus Club, and a founder member of the RSA Swindon Branch. Although a quiet and unassuming man, **Jim's** fine character impressed all whom he met. He will be missed by **Gwen** and his family, his many friends and the colleagues in the various organisations he supported so ably. We in the Association have our own memorial, as **Jim's** battered jungle hat with its original Corps cap badge is in pride of place in our display cabinet.

PURNELL - Sgt Michael Purnell (Mick) died on 3 September 2003.

Mick joined Harrogate around 1980 and moved to Garrets Hay in Loughborough to become a Spec Op. He served with 13 Sig Regt from 198184 and then with 9 Sig Regt from 198487. **Mick** did several tours in NI and one to the Falklands.

On leaving the Army in 1990, he went into business, obtained a degree and ran a successful computer company. **Mick's** passion was flying. He flew hangliders, gliders and fixed wing aircraft, and was in the process of building his own light aircraft. Whilst on his way home from gliding at Lasham in September last year, he braked to avoid an obstacle on the road, was thrown from his motorbike and died instantly.

Whilst he had lost contact with many of his former colleagues, **Mick** thought of them often, and his wife, **Lisa**, who wrote this obituary, would like people to be aware of his passing.

SANDERS - Col JES Sanders OBE MA (Cantab) (Jack) died on 1 April 2004.

Jack (Sally) Sanders led a long and happy life. Born in Devon, his youth was spent in the area of Newton Abbott. He attended Wolborough Hill School and Newton College. From a very early age, **Jack** had a passion for sport and an ambition to join the Army. In 1926 he entered RMA Woolwich, and was then commissioned into Royal Signals.

Jack's early military service first took him to various postings, and in 1931 to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where he gained his BA in Electrical Engineering. In 1932 whilst at Cambridge, he married **Elizabeth Howard** the love of his life.

Before WW2, **Jack** saw service with Air Defence Bde Signals, Tank Bde Signals, and as an Instructor at the School of Signals. **Elizabeth** and their daughter **Jane**, accompanied him when he went to the Middle East in 1938; and it was whilst they were in Palestine that WW2 broke out. **Elizabeth** and **Jane** were evacuated to South Africa with the other wives and children. **Jack** served the remainder of the war in various desert locations, as well as in Cairo, Eritrea and the Sudan. After a couple of years or so in South Africa, **Elizabeth** and **Jane** managed to rejoin him in Khartoum.

After VE Day, **Jack** and his family returned to UK to Southern Comd. **Jack** completed his MA in 1948, and was then posted to BAOR, where their second daughter, **Ann** was born. **Jack** received his OBE for his work as CO, HQ BAOR Sig Regt. The family came back to England in 1952, and **Jack** was placed in comd of I AA Sig Regt. His last years in the Army were spent as CI School of Signals in Catterick, and then at the War Office In London.

When he retired from the Corps in 1960, **Jack** took up a position at Welbeck College as Assistant Master. Here he taught mathematics, ran the College hockey team and along with **Elizabeth**, involved himself with many aspects of College life tennis, bridge, Scottish dancing, cricket, etc. He and **Elizabeth** were a wellknown sight when they were out walking the dogs of on their bicycles.

Every Welbeck boy who was either in his maths group or involved in hockey, was at some time invited up to Stable Court for afternoon tea or dinner. **Jack** and **Elizabeth** spent 13 very happy years at Welbeck before **Jack's** second retirement, and their move to Hillcrest in Wedmore, Somerset in 1973.

Retirement in Wedmore saw them once again involved in numerous village activities. They celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary there in 1992, and **Jack** remained at Hillcrest after **Elizabeth** died in 1995. With the assistance of neighbours, he managed to look after himself reasonably well until his final move into Glastonbury Care Home about 2 years ago, where he died peacefully in his sleep on 1 April 2004.

Throughout his life, **Jack** was meticulous in everything he did: he always kept his eye on the ball. He was a Member of the MCC for many years, and played cricket, hockey and tennis for the Corps, and hockey for BAOR. He was once Chairman of the Army Hockey Umpires Association, and umpired at international and Olympic trials, as well as many county hockey matches, before and after his time at Welbeck. So important was sport in his life, that his second daughter **Ann**, even had to rearrange her wedding plans around his hockey commitments.

Jack was noted for his stories and jokes. He wrote any that he fancied in a book. Irish jokes, of course, were written in green ink! His one regret in life was not scoring his century, and his one annoyance was his Corps cricket team Captain declaring whilst **Jack** was batting with 99 runs on his score - 99 not out!

He will be sadly missed by family and friends.

ADVERTISEMENTS

ANNUAL ROYAL SIGNALS AIRBORNE OFFICERS DINNER

28 October 2004
Officers Mess
Goojerat Barracks
Colchester

If you are a serving or a retired Royal Signals Officer who has served with Airborne Forces, you are more thanwelcome to attend

For further information contact:
Capt Jim Duncan
Tel: Mil 94651 2990
Civ: 01206 782990
Mobile: 07799477363
email: welfare216@fsmail.net

LIMITED EDITION SIGNED PRINT OF THE BANJA LUKA METAL FACTORY

32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) has recently secured a small number of the limited edition signed print, *Return from a Surge Op* by the award winning war artist, **Hugh Beattie**. The painting depicts a Chinook helicopter coming in to land at the BLMF HLS. Only 200 of these signed prints have been produced, and it will make an ideal present for anyone who has served in Bosnia as part of IFOR or SFOR.

The approximate dimensions are 37 x 59 cm. Prints are supplied unmounted, and the price is £23.50 + £3.95 p&p.

To order your copy, please send a cheque for £27.45 to PASO, HQ Sqn, 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V), 21 Jardine Street, Glasgow G20 6JU. Please make your cheque out to 'CBF 32 Signal Regiment,' and ensure that you include your full postal address, with BFPO number, if appropriate.

Quote Reference TG1

SVR
Scottish Veterans' Residences

SVR is a charity formed in 1910, which provides unique and unrivalled full board residential accommodation for our ex-service community. We now have accommodation available at our residences in Edinburgh and Dundee. Each resident has their own fully furnished accommodation, most of which are en-suite and full board is provided. We also have permenant residential or respite care available.

For further information about our accommodation or to arrange a visit contact:
Whitefoord House (Edinburgh) - 0131 556 6827
Murray Home (Edinburgh) - 0131 664 3037
Rosendael (Dundee) - 01382 477 078

Each year SVR takes care of the needs of some 300 ex-service men and women of all ages. Our philosophy is that our residents deserve the best quality of support, services, kindness and understanding we can provide. Dignity, privacy and respect for our residents are of paramount importance.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT - After all, with no Government funding, who else can we turn to? With your help we can continue to look after our veterans' needs.

Donate online at www.svronline.org
or send your donations to: SVR, 53 Canongate, Edinburgh EH8 8BS

SVR is a registered charity number SC015260

Supporting independent living for our ex-service community

THE Wire

December 2004

The Royal Corps of Signals

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER OF SIGNALS,

GENERAL SIR SAM COWAN KCB CBE

I have very much enjoyed my first year as Master. The highlights have been the opportunity to meet many of you and to see the Corps' professionalism at first hand. I have been hugely impressed. It has been particularly good to see so much of our valuable Territorial Army component, who are making such a significant contribution to our operational achievement. It has also been a great joy to meet many Association members, not least to thank you for laying the strong foundations that have ensured today's success.

Many senior officers have commented to me on the Corps' outstanding effectiveness on operations. Such plaudits are not easily earned. They do, of course, make me very proud of you but, much more importantly, they reflect great credit on your skill and commitment, and the leadership being given at all levels. Well done! Keep it going!

A very Happy Christmas and a successful 2005 to you all.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

BRIGADIER JOHN THOMAS MBE ADC

This is my first Christmas message as your Signal Officer in Chief (Army) and I am delighted and very pleased to have been selected for the job. 2004 has been a very busy year for the Corps, in which the Regular and Territorial Army elements of the Corps have contributed greatly to operational commitments worldwide. We should all be very pleased with what we continue to achieve in all facets of military life, often under the most difficult of circumstances. The professionalism, dedication and determination of the officers and soldiers of the Corps have stood out.

2005 offers no respite, indeed there are significant additional challenges to look forward to. The ongoing development and roll out of BOWMAN and its deployment on operations along with the In Service Date for CORMORANT will provide a key focus on the equipment front early in the New Year. More broadly the outcome of Future Army Studies and the TA element will be clear allowing us to move forward. As a Corps we are well poised to meet the future challenges but Christmas is a time for reflection and for our families and I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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Established in 1920

The Wire

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Editor Maj (Retd) B L Redshaw
Deputy Editor Miss D S Haselden

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FRONT COVER

There was a double celebration for Queens Gurkha Signals at Gamecock Bks, Bramcote on 24 September. It was 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn's Reformation Parade and the 50th Anniversary of Queens Gurkha Signals. Here our Colonel-in-Chief, **HRH The Princess Royal** inspects one of the many QGS Units on parade.

BACK COVER

For wildlife enthusiasts, the Falkland Islands is a dream posting. Many rare breeds of bird, such as the indigenous Upland Goose are common sights at MPA, whilst on the beaches many different breeds of sea mammals can be seen. In October, thousands of penguins return from the sea to gather in the many nesting colonies on the Islands. Here, we capture a group of them heading inshore from Bertha's Beach.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

RSA BRANCH HONOURS PARENTS OF OPERATION TELIC CASUALTY

The Guernsey RSA Branch honoured the late **LCpl Shaun Brierly**, who was killed on OP TELIC1, by inviting his parents for a break in Guernsey.

Using a long and convoluted method to fund their visit, the Guernsey Branch had **Christine** and **Peter Brierly** flown in from West Yorkshire to join them as guests of honour at their annual Liberation Dinner.

Read the Guernsey Branch report on page 531

THE FIRST GURKHA SIGNALS COMMANDO

Ever since he went on exercises in Norway with 3 Cdo Bde, **Cpl Sundar Serchan** has wanted to become a Commando. This year he had his chance. Whilst serving with RSS, he was able to enroll on the gruelling 9-week qualifying course in May July 2004. It was a tough course, but **Cpl Serchan** succeeded, gaining his precious green beret, to become the first Gurkha Signals Commando.

Read his story in RSS report on page 469

DOUBLE CELEBRATION FOR QUEENS GURKHA SIGNALS

There was a double celebration as all Queens Gurkha Signals officers and soldiers converged on Gamecock Bks, Bramcote on 24 September. It was 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn's Reformation Parade and the 50th Anniversary of Queens Gurkha Signals. The Parade was honoured by a visit form our Colonel-in-Chief, **HRH the Princess Royal**.

Read 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn's report on page 486

BOWMAN ABOUT TO GO OPERATIONAL

12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn having worked assiduously on BOWMAN for more than a year and having passed it through a series of operational field tests, are now gearing up to deploy on OP TELIC 6. It is expected that they will take BOWMAN with them, making it the first operational deployment of the new kit.

12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn have mentioned this only briefly in their report on page 523, but follow this story in our next issue.

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Corps of Signals or the Ministry of Defence.

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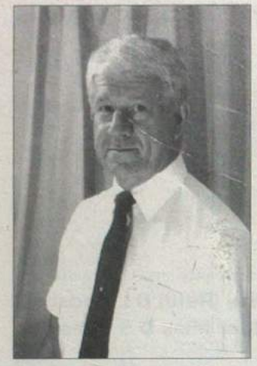


EDITORIAL

2004 has been a busy year for the Corps, both Serving and Retired. Despite being 100% manned, the Serving Corps has been hard pressed, numbers-wise, to meet its many operational commitments. But meet them, they have, and with great skill, dedication and a lot of ingenuity. In some cases, the TA has played a vital part in meeting some of the numbers shortfall, bringing a considerable range of extra skills and experience.

Operational conditions, particularly in Iraq, have become difficult and dangerous of late, but all of our soldiers have bravely faced up to these challenges and done the business. Disturbingly, as I write this, we have news of two Corps members, **Cpl Michael Brennan** and **LCpl Neil Heritage** being seriously wounded whilst serving in the Black Watch Battle Group AOR. Our thoughts are with these two soldiers and their families, and we wish them both a safe and speedy recovery, and *bon courage* for the long rehabilitation that lies ahead.

As for the Retired Corps, the RSA has made significant progress in recruiting new members. The increasingly longer lists of new members published in recent issues of *The WIRE* bear witness to this. Many more are now joining the RSA before they finish their service. And many more Branches are now forging links with TA or Regular Units, and are developing new activities to attract new Members. **Maj Gen Tony Boyle**, **Peter Cuckow** and all Branches are to be congratulated for the hard work they have put in this year.

I have made a number of Unit visits during the year, highlights being The White Helmets, 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, 11 Sig Regt, 14 Sig Regt (EW), the Northern Ireland Units and the Falkland Islands Units. I was made most welcome by all soldiers at each Unit, was able to explain to them my vision for *The WIRE*, and gain a greater insight into how each Unit operated. My thanks to the COs, OCs and all personnel of these Units.

I feel that we have made significant progress with *The WIRE* too. With the help of feedback received from readers, the strong links that have developed from the Units and Branches I have visited, and the efforts of my hard-working Deputy, **Dawn Haselden**, I do believe that we are now top of the Regimental and Corps magazines. Many of them are now nicking ideas from us! Our writers are now focussing more on their Units' or Branches' achievements, rather than domestic issues, and they are producing clear, concise and interesting stories, with good photos. All of this makes *The WIRE* a much better read to a greater range of readers. But we haven't finished yet. With your help and feedback, we will get even better in 2005.

And so, as the year draws to a close, *The WIRE* Office wishes all Units and Branches (and particularly those Units in operational theatres) a very calm, peaceful and enjoyable Christmas, and all that's best for 2005.

ARMY WIDOWS' ASSOCIATION

The Army Widows' Association has recently been established with two purposes in mind.

The first is to provide support, comfort and the opportunity to share experience and knowledge for recently bereaved widows and widowers.

The second purpose is to identify areas where the support provided by the Army works well or needs to be improved and to inform the chain of command.

Further information about the Association can be obtained from from **Sam Roberts** on 01274 595700 or from RHQ, Royal Signals on 01258 482082.

CORPS CAROL SERVICE 2004

The Corps Carol service will be held at 18.00hrs on Monday 20 December 04 at the Church of Stephen with St John, Rochester Row, Westminster, SW1.

Mince pies and sherry will be served afterwards at nearby Napier Hall, Hide Place, SW1.

BOOK REVIEWS

SIGNALS TO THE RIGHT ARMOURED CORPS TO THE LEFT - *by Ron Larby*

The author is a member of the West London Branch of The Royal Signals Association, and Vice-Chairman of the British Korean Veterans 'Association. He recounts his experience as a National Serviceman from 1950-1953, covering his early days as a recruit in Catterick and subsequently in Hong Kong and Korea. His book will stir the memories of those who passed through 7 Selection Regt, Somme Lines, and the subsequent trade trg as an OWL (Operator Wireless and Line) in 3 Trg Regt, catching the mood of National Service in Catterick.

After his trade training, **Ron Larby** moved to the Far East, serving first in Hong Kong and then South Korea, where he saw action with the United Nations. He captures that mixture of wit and defiance that epitomises the conscript British soldier, reflecting the view that many National Servicemen actually enjoyed their service, and experienced a camaraderie that obviously still continues.

The book is priced £8.00 including postage and packing for RSA Members, and can be obtained direct from the author at:

178 Braemar Avenue
Neasden
London
NW10 0DS

AWARD OF THE WHISTLER SUBALTERN'S TROPHY - LIEUTENANT CEJ DAVIES

As the Tp Comd, Kilo Tp, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn, **Lt CEJ (Jonathan) Davies** deployed as the comd of a multinational det in support of ops in Iraq. The det, which was based at Camp Babylon, some 80 km south of Baghdad, was responsible for providing Level 1 strategic comms to the Polish led Multinational Division.

His was the first NATO deployment of any kind to Iraq and, in addition to the normal challenges of an expeditionary op, he was faced with the added political uncertainty and lack of higher comd direction, caused by the political ramifications of a NATO deployment to the Middle East. Throughout, **Lt Davies'** professionalism and commitment were exceptional, as was his involvement in the development and sustainment of the technical solution for the bespoke CIS architecture. Once deployed, he was the only Royal Signals officer within the AOR, and ostensibly the senior British officer in loc.

He was personally responsible for independent liaison with the Polish Staff and for higher comd liaison to SHAPE and the Northern Region Signal Group. His enterprise and leadership, in often very trying conditions, was exemplary. Indeed such was the positive impression that he made on the staff at SHAPE, that they wrote personally to express their satisfaction of a job well done. Given his relative lack of experience, his overall performance was consistent with the very highest standards we expect of our Corps.

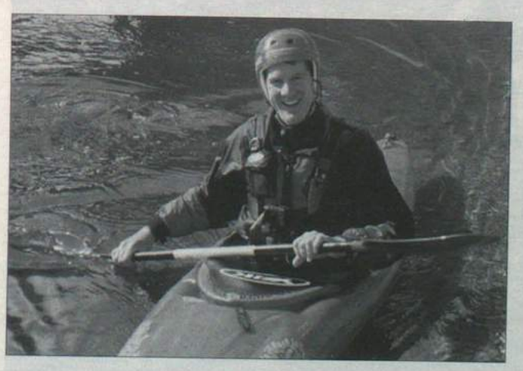
On his return from theatre, **Lt Davies** was at the forefront of the NATO led development and trg of the Polishled team earmarked to replace the 280 Sig Sqn det, and on numerous occasions briefed high-ranking delegations on the situation and the CIS requirements. In addition, he also demonstrated the highest standards of leadership and professionalism whilst commanding

his Tp on more routine activities, both on exercise and in barracks.

Lt Davies is a high quality young officer who has performed to the highest standards in a testing, multinational and combined, operational environment. As an ambassador for his Unit, the Royal Corps of Signals and his country, his achievement has been exceptional. For his outstanding performance **Lt CEJ Davies** is awarded the Whistler Subaltern's Trophy.

THE ACTON MEMORIAL TROPHY

Capt James Acton was tragically drowned on 22 February 2003 whilst on a kayaking expedition in New Zealand. A qualified instructor and one of the most accomplished expedition kayakers in Royal Signals, **James** was paddling on the involving and technical Waikaia River, when he was forced under water. Friends managed to secure a rope to his kayak but were unable to rescue him. **Capt Acton** graduated from Sandhurst in 1999, and was awarded the Queen's Medal for the highest academic achievement in his course. He was commissioned into Royal Signals and subsequently served in Bosnia and Kosovo, before becoming 2IC of 232 Sig Sqn, 7 Sig Regt.



Capt James Acton was a passionate canoeist

In memory of his life and achievements in Royal Signals and the sport of canoeing, his parents, **Robin** and **Ann Acton**, presented the Captain James Acton Memorial Trophy in a ceremony at Blandford. The Trophy is to be awarded annually to the officer or soldier who has contributed most to Corps canoeing.

The inaugural presentation was made by **Mr** and **Mrs Acton** and their daughter, **Catherine**, to **LCpl Mark Stafford** of 2 Sig Regt. **LCpl Stafford** is the most accomplished competitive paddler in Royal Signals, and represents Army in Slalom, Wild Water Racing and Freestyle at Inter-Service events. He was also Team Captain at 2 Sig Regt, from where he coordinated the Royal Signals efforts at the Inter-Corps competitions. On receiving the award, **LCpl Stafford** commented 'I am very proud to be awarded this Trophy. **James** was a leading light in a sport that I am passionate about.

LCpl Mark Stafford receiving the James Acton Memorial Trophy

I enjoy canoeing, as it is a mentally and physically demanding sport that offers great satisfaction when you do well. I also enjoy the organisational side, as it allows me to put something back into the sport by encouraging more soldiers to participate.'

CAYTHORPE 2004 – MARKET GARDEN REMEMBERED

– by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

On Friday 10 September, ex members of 1 Airborne Div Sig Regt (now members of in Airborne Sigs Assn) from all over the country descended upon the Lincolnshire village of Caythorpe. Some were billeted in private homes in the village, just as they had been in 1944. It seems a strange concept today, but billeting of soldiers had gone on for hundreds of years before 1944. Could it ever happen again? **Eddie Chandler** recalled being billeted with the **Porter** family. 'I returned after the war, and visited them for many years,' he said. 'The family has now moved, but I don't know where.'

Eddie Chandler chats to members of 216 Sign Sqn

Those who couldn't be billeted, found themselves accommodated in barrack blocks in nearby Beckingham Camp – 24 beds to a block. With as much as 60 metres to walk to the toilet and ablution blocks, they all revelled in the memories that this brought back to them. I even saw one of them making a brew on a WW2 Tommy cooker!

At first, Caythorpe looks like any other Lincolnshire village. But after a while, you notice streets with names like *Arnhem Street*, then in St Vincent's Church, you see a stained glass window dedicated to Para Signals, and you start to realise that there is more to this village than meets the eye. From 1943-44 the signallers of 1 Airborne Div Sig Regt were billeted here training, preparing and waiting to be deployed to Europe in what was to become OP MARKET GARDEN. During this time, many personal relationships developed between the troops and village families. And today this bond is just as strong. Village people are still keen to accommodate and look after the returning veterans. This year, the 60th Anniversary of OP MARKET GARDEN, they provided endless cups of tea, sandwiches and cakes, and by the Saturday

*Australian Cpls Daniel Reedman and Gino Cowin with Maj Gen Tony Dean-Drummond CB DSO MC**

216 Sig Sqn tug of war team in action

216 Sig Sqn leading the parade as Maj Gen Dean-Drummond takes the salute

evening they had set up the village hall for a commemorative dinner, and had richly decorated St Vincent's Church with flowers for the Sunday service.

On Saturday morning, high winds prevented a planned parachute drop by 216 Sig Sqn, but the programme continued with a village fête, and the Sqn was heavily involved it. There were stands displaying weapons and equipt, a junior assault course, and parachute swings for the children. Later in the day, the Sqn competed with village teams in tug of war and football.

Saturday evening saw a formal dinner, where the Sqn's chefs catered for 120 guests and veterans, using a portable kitchen deployed in a tent behind the village hall. Guest of honour was **Maj Gen Tony Dean-Drummond CB DSO MC***. After the meal, he presented British Para wings to two Australians attached to 216 Sig Sqn for EX LONGLOOK, **Cpl Daniel Reedman** RASigs and Cpl **Gino Cowin** 3 RAR (Airborne).

On Sunday morning 216 Sig Sqn joined with some 70 veterans in a memorial parade, and then formed a guard of honour for them as they filed into St Vincent's Church for the Commemorative Service.

After a huge lunch provided by the villagers, everyone made their way home. Although smaller than many of the OP MARKET GARDEN events held in UK and in Holland over this and the following weekends, Caythorpe had been both a joyous and a moving occasion for all who were there - village people, veterans and the serving soldiers of 216 Sig Sqn.

Maj Gen Tony Dean-Drummond leads the veterans to the church as members of 216 Sig Sqn line the route

AWARD OF AG'S COMMENDATION, WO2 (FofS) STEVE DAVIS

On Friday 1 October, the Garrison Comd, **Col Mike Dyer**, was delighted to present **Steve Davis** with the AG's Commendation for his extensive work on the conservation of Blandford Camp over the past 4 years.

Blandford Camp is home to 3 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 6 Sites of Nature Conservation Interest, and **Steve** has ensured that the high conservation standards imposed by official conservation bodies, such as English Nature, have been met. The areas of chalk downland here have some of the richest species to be found in the south of England.

Steve is a registered Wildlife Watch Leader, and has devoted a considerable amount of his free time to setting up a Wildlife Watch Club here on Blandford Camp. This is hugely popular with the children, who love any excuse to go outside and get wet and muddy - learning about bugs, bats and birds at the same time!

Steve completed 22 years service with the Corps earlier this year but, rather than trust anyone else to look after 'his' patch, he has taken on the post of Deputy Garrison Adjt, and now works full-time for the good and benefit of the Camp – particularly the chalk downland!

Col Dyer presents Steve Davis with the AG's Commendation

BEHIND THE LINES

*– by Maj Gen Tony Deane-Drummond CB DSO MC**

Towards the end of 1943, **L/Sgt Phillips** and **Sig Stewart**, whilst behind the lines in Italy, took part in a two month long operation to lead large numbers of escaped POWs back through the German lines to our own locations and then return many times for more. Both were recommended for a DCM and an MM respectively. This was personally scored out by **Gen Alexander**, CinC Allied Central Mediterranean Forces, who upgraded both Citations and stamped them, *'Granted an Immediate DCM'* and signed them. The General was well aware of the problems involved in moving through the very active fighting then going on between three different German Divisions and the Allied Forces in the mountains between Pescara and Ortona in Italy.

After the Italian Armistice on 8 September, the situation became very fluid. Many allied ex-POWs made for the hills, but those who stayed behind were quickly rounded up by the Germans. The Salerno bridgehead had been established on the West coast, with the 8th Army and 1 Airborne Div on the East.

In late October 1943, I was 2IC of 1 Airborne Div Sig Regt, and **Maj Gen Eric Down** had just taken over 1 Airborne Div. The Div had been tasked to help with the return of hundreds of ex-Prisoners. The trouble was that many had found comfortable

*Maj Gen Tony Deane-Drummond CB DSO MC**

billets in farm houses or buildings, and were reluctant to move through the patrolling German positions. Two parties of an officer and two soldiers each, found from Para Bns, were dropped by parachute with instructions to round up as many ex POWs as they could find and bring them back. Another eight small officer-led parties would be landed from the Adriatic, up to 100 miles north, to do something similar. A small HQ had been established by SOE at Termoli, just north of the 'spur' of Italy, but whose main task was in Jugoslavia. The difficulty with ex-Italian POWs was comms. I was despatched with two base sets and a number of suitcase type WT sets, normally only used by SOE agents. **Gen Eric** told me (with a smile) not to land in Italy but to help organise the extraction of exprisoners.

Lt Col Tony Simmonds SOE was in charge at Termoli, and I had a free hand to make use of his small fleet of boats. These consisted of two Italian E Boats complete with Italian naval crews, four Italian fishing boats with ancient diesel engines, and an LCI manned by RNVR. Most nights would see me aboard one of them on the way up the Adriatic, either to drop one of the parties from an inflatable, or to land and pick up a pre-arranged group of ex-POWs.

One day, an Italian agent came in with a message from one of the parties that had been dropped over a month previously. A radio set and operators were desperately needed to pass back information about ex-prisoners coming back through the lines. **Sgt Phillips** and **Sig Stewart** were selected for the task. They were a good team, expert operators and dead keen to do well. I rowed them ashore, but after a few days searching near the map reference I had given them, they were unsuccessful in making contact. **Sgt Phillips** then proposed to establish an escape team of his own. First they had to organise a regular flow of ex-prisoners, then find a route through the lines, and finally collect groups together to bring them back.

Every day, **Sgt Phillips** came up on the air with a brief message saying what was happening, indicating the locations of German units, and what he proposed to do. I asked him how he was keeping his battery charged up. Back he came with a masterpiece of understatement. They had set themselves up in an attic over an operational German HQ, and during the night they were putting their battery on charge with all those of the Germans!

Almost every night for over a month, **Phillips** and **Stewart** personally conducted parties of twenty to thirty exprisoners and then went back for more. The Germans got wind of their activities, and on three occasions the pair had to change their location and route. Towards the end, they only managed to clear out of one village at night by vaulting over some walls at the back of a farmhouse and dumping the radio set and battery in a pigsty. The Germans blew up the whole of that small hamlet and shot all the men who were left behind.

Routes through the lines had become too difficult to find, so at last they decided to return themselves. They had brought back a total of 481 prisoners and were by far the most successful of all the teams, the best of which had rescued 23. This was all the more remarkable, given that the Canadians were having full scale battles to capture Ortona over the same ground that **Phillips** and **Stewart** were bringing back whole platoons of ex-prisoners every night. Their initiative, endurance, field craft and tactical ability were exemplary, and in the most difficult conditions it is possible to imagine. Well did they deserve the Immediate DCMs that both were awarded.

Most unfortunately, about a year later, **Sig Stewart DCM**, then aged 21, was wounded by sniper fire outside the Hartenstein Hotel in Arnhem. He seems then to have been moved to St Elizabeth Hospital, where he died of wounds.

LIFE AT THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA - ALL WORK, REST AND PLAY?

Do not get the wrong idea. The Royal Hospital is not a hospital as such. This was the name given to almshouses in the days before hospitals were invented. The word comes from the same route as 'hospitable' and 'hotel.' The Royal Hospital is an old peoples' home – but a rather special one for soldiers who have served King, Queen and Country. We offer sheltered accommodation, care and for some, a hospice. A few of the In-Pensioners are aged under 65 and our oldest is 99. The average age of our 310 residents is just over 80.

The Royal Hospital has all the things that are required for a comfortable old age – all meals and accommodation are provided, as well as laundry, comradeship and security. Full medical and nursing care is available for those who need it. For many, a pleasant lifestyle is complete, with a visit to the Club to take in a concert or a game of bingo, a game of snooker, a trip to the library or just chatting over the papers.

And for those with more energy, there is more to Royal Hospital life. For some there is action. In-Pensioner **Jim McGovern** completed the 2004 London Marathon in less than 6½ hours (not bad when you are over 68 and in uniform), collecting over £8,000 for the charitable work of the Royal British Legion and the Royal Hospital's development programme. In 2002, aged 82, **Buck Taylor** went over the assault course at Pirbright, and he has been snowboarding in Germany. Earlier this year a party of In-Pensioners joined in the annual 12km walk at Soest.

However, not every In-Pensioner does such athletic things. The Bowls Club is very active and popular. There is a full programme

of matches, both home and away throughout the year. The putting green is always available for a quiet round with friends and family. Both are, of course, close to the 19th hole, the In-Pensioners' Club.

For those of a more practical and artistic bent, there is a fully kitted out Arts and Crafts Block, and all manner of pictures and objects are displayed at the popular annual Arts and Crafts exhibition, which is open to the public.

The more musical In-Pensioners can join The Royal Hospital Band. It plays at concerts in the Royal Hospital, for the Infirmary residents, and at local shows and carnivals. For the green fingered, there are allotments, the fruits of which often grace the tables of the Great Hall.

In-Pensioners also travel widely. Many go off on cruises or visit family all over the world. Organised trips are undertaken regularly. In 2004, it was to Gibraltar for the 300th anniversary of its capture, and more recently to the D-Day beaches and Arnhem for the 60th Anniversary of those momentous events. In 2002, a party went to Washington and met the President. Every Autumn a battlefield tour is undertaken. This year, taking the opportunity of recent international reconciliation, we go to go to Libya.

Some, however, prefer the more mundane, but possibly profitable ventures of going on one of the many trips to the races. These, like many other activities are organised by the wide number of people and organisations who support us.

For those with more sedentary interests, there is a computer suite, which is available for all to use. Tuition is no problem, and Internet access always on line.

Apart from pure pleasure, around 90 of the In-Pensioners choose to work around the Royal Hospital. This is not onerous, and allows them to maintain an interest in what goes on, meet people and, of course, receive additional income. In-Pensioners are valued as guides for the many tour parties that visit. They enthral the visitors with interesting and often lurid stories about the Royal Hospital (*soto voce* if the staff are around!). Others assist in the Chapel, Museum and Souvenir Shop, and in many other ways in the various departments. They make a considerable and valued contribution to the running of the Royal Hospital.

There are a few duties that each In-Pensioner is expected to perform. Attendance is required at the Annual Founder's Day, which is held in the second week in June, and occasionally each In-Pensioner has to attend the Governor's Parade, which takes place on Sunday morning before Chapel. Compulsory Chapel attendance ended some years ago, but many enjoy attending the Service.

The Royal Hospital is acting to ensure that it can continue to provide the most modern residential accommodation and care, maintaining the fabric of the buildings and tradition of the past. Work has now started to provide a complete new Infirmary building. This will offer state of the art medical and care facilities for up to 125 In-Pensioners.

Additionally, the In-Pensioner's accommodation in the Long Wards is to be improved to 21st Century standards. This will offer a much-enhanced quality of life within the historic buildings. Importantly, it will eventually allow accommodation to be allocated to eligible women former soldiers.

We welcome any former soldier who is qualified. If you would like to apply (or you know someone who may be interested) the criteria for admission are:

- You must be in receipt of a Service or Disability Pension awarded for Army Service;
- You must normally at least 65 years of age; and
- You must be free from the obligation to support a wife or family.

If you are interested in joining, please contact us through the Royal Hospital website – www.chelsea-pensioners.org.uk or ring 020 7881 5204 for further information.

The Royal Hospital is open to the public (entry is free) on most days of the year (not Sunday mornings, unless attending Chapel). If you are in Chelsea, take the opportunity to visit us and see the Chelsea Pensioners in action!

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, OCTOBER 2004

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Brig D Mcdowall	DCBM(A)
Brig JE Thomas	HQ SOinC(A)
Col P Parfitt	RSS
Lt Col AJ Botterill	2 Sig Regt
Lt Col RN Clapp	DCSA Strat and Tech Dev
Lt Col M Griffiths	EC CCII Horg
Lt Col RG Mather	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col Mather	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col JE Mullender	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Lt Col Robson	1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Lt Col IPF Vingoe	HQ Land
Lt Col Warne	30 Sig Regt
Lt Col SR Workman MBE	MOD Block
Maj TJ Carmichael	Shape Staff (BAE)
Maj MBE Ferris	SO2 Project Officer
Maj CA Ford	SO 2 O and D
Maj GJH Maloney	RMCS CD Academy
Maj CA Maycock	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt DJ Ashton	30 Sig Regt
Capt BM Bingham	MOD A Block
Capt TW Day	264 Sig Sqn
Capt CL Jardine	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
Capt GWA Johnston	264 Sig Sqn
Capt AT Lamb	RSS
Capt BG White	SO2 Comms OPS/MAN
Capt J Williams	33 Sig Regt (V)
Capt RA Wilson	RMAS
Lt LT Flannery	ATR Lichfield
Lt JPS McDonagh	16 Sig Regt

OFFICERS, NOVEMBER 2004

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col RJ Steed	Joint NBC Regt
Col MK Stretch	2 Sig Regt
Lt Col PM Kelly	NATO High Readiness Force (G)
Lt Col SK Macrostie	OCE HQ Land (Afghan MOD)
Capt SM Limbrey	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Capt PC Wettenhall	213 Sig Sqn 39 Inf Bde

RETIREMENTS

OCTOBER 2004

Name and Rank	*Date*
Brewin - Lt Col WE Brewin	04 Oct 04
Gorse - Maj JD Gorse	01 Oct 04
Gray - Maj IC Gra	25 Oct 04
Moir - Maj RS Moir	01 Oct 04
Welch - Maj PJ Welch	11 Oct 04

NOVEMBER 2004

Name and Rank	*Date*
Greig - Maj C Greig	27 Nov 04

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

THE FIRST GURKHA COMMANDO IN THE QUEEN'S GURKHA SIGNALS - *by Cpl Sundar Serchan*

The All Arms Cdo Course is conducted primarily to train personnel to serve with, or in support of the 3 Cdo Bde, RM. Members of all 3 Services can undergo trg which will develop the temperament, mental resolve, physical robustness and core military skills necessary in the demanding environment of expeditionary and littoral operations. Successful completion of the course entitles the students to wear the coveted green beret. The green beret is the distinctive hallmark of Cdo tps, indicating that those who wear it have attended and passed a gruelling and physically demanding test of endurance, displaying the Cdo qualities of teamwork and cheerfulness in adversity.

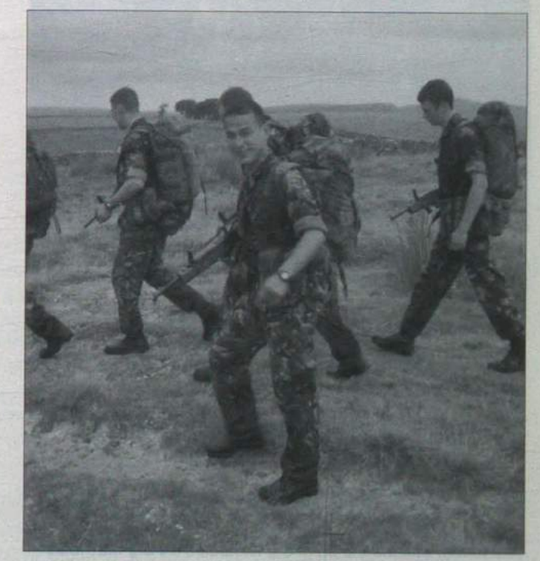
Ever since I went to Norway on an ex with the 3 Cdo Bde, I wanted to become a Commando, and earn the green beret. All Cdo trg is carried out at the Cdo Trg Centre, Lympstone, near Exeter. There are 4 courses run every year by the Trg Centre, RM (CTCRM). This year, having been posted to Blandford, I applied for a vacancy on a course. I was successful and was loaded on the AACC 01/04, which took place 30 May – 30 July. OC Sysex saheb, **Capt (QGO) Mahendra Limbu** was also keen for me to do the course.

The course was 9 weeks, conducted in 2 phases. It was preceded by a 1-week obligatory preparation course to ensure all students started at a minimum level of physical and military competence. Phase1 consisted of the inf skills and fitness trg in prep for Phase 2, which incorporated amphibious survival and heli trg, and culminated in the final ex and Cdo tests.

From the second week onwards, we completed one ex during each week. These involved map-reading (with plenty of night navigation), fieldcraft and core, and also involved sleep deprivation and completion of physical activities. When we were not out on ex, we faced the assault course, preparing for the Bottom Field Passout. This involved mandatory tests that we had to pass to continue with the course. Bottom Field Passout was at the end of week 5, after finishing EX HANGMAN, a patrol ex, where we had virtually no sleep. In our exhausted state, we had to pass the Bottom Field Tests, which included 30ft rope climb with 21lbs and weapon, a timed assault course, a 200m fireman carry with weights (also timed, and a full regain on the rope with weapon and weights.

Week 6 consisted of EX DIGGING MAN, which involved construction of trenches, defensive routines, patrolling and section attacks. Week 7 comprised a cliff assault, vertical assault trg (including abseiling), roping up, roller haulage and river crossing. This week we also had raiding drills using in-service crafts, heli drills, underwater escape drills and the survival ex.

The final ex on Dartmoor was conducted during week 8. The first 2 days covered the 40 km advance to contact, sweeping through enemy positions. This was nicknamed 'the death yomp.' 'When I woke up I thought I was dead', was a quote from one of the soldiers who had attended the course before us. It was definitely a very painful ex, but determination kept me going till the end.



Cpl Sundar looking fresh during 30-miler at Dartmoor

The final week was the Cdo Test Week and comprised a number of tests. These included the Tarzan assault course, a 6-mile endurance course, 9-mile speed march, and finally a 30-mile test with weights and weapon. It was at the end of the 30-miler that we received our green berets and Cdo daggers from **Col McNinch**, CSO, Log Support. At this time I felt most proud that I had completed the course. Out of 83 starters, only 41 managed to get through to the end.

The Cdo course was one big challenge for me, and now that I have successfully completed it, I feel very proud to have become the first Gurkha Commando of the Queen's Gurkha Signals. *Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals!*

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP's AWAY DAY
- by Corporal Tony Gallagher

The day began with an early start, as the thirteen of us loaded our kit into the minibus driven by **Sgt Jacko Jackson** for the drive down to the Tow estuary in north Devon. On arrival, we were given a short brief on the use of the life vest, and advised to put on full gore-tex, as we were going to get very wet!

We boarded an LCVP and were taken out into the Tow estuary, where we met two rigid raiders and their pilots. We were split into two groups of six, each group allocated to a raider. We then hung on for our lives, as the RM Cdos put the raiders to the test. **CSgt Jonnie Mathews** RM was on hand to take loads of pics from the LCVP as the raiders used their bow waves as ramps to jump off. Next we took a short trip to ATTARM, where we given briefs on the BARV (beach recovery veh) and the hovercraft, but unfortunately it was too windy for the hovercraft to go out. The day concluded with the driving of a Landover through the dip tank, which everybody managed to complete, apart from **Cpl Stevie Johnston**, who stalled it half way through and had to be towed out.

All that was left to be done was to book into our accn for the night and for the guys to sample the delights of Barnstable on a Tuesday night. It was a great day out for staff from RSG, and everybody would like to thank **CSgt Mathews** for organising the trip.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Graham Complin**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Simon Hadley**

The Regt welcomes the new 2IC, **Maj Ian Walton** and his wife **Kim**; and the new Asst Adjt, **WO1 McMenamin**.

This month, the Regt entered a team in an Adventure Race in Scotland - one of the ACE Race series. The team, lead by Adjt **Capt Adam Corkery**, finished in the top half of the field against strong competition, including a number of professional teams, over a distance of around 100km by bike, canoe and foot.

The ACE Race Team

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JC Boisvert** RCSigs
SSM **WO2 C Overton**

HARROGATE CUP BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT
- by Sig Bland

All three Sqns of 11 Sig Regt entered very capable teams into this year's Harrogate Cup Basketball Tournament. 1 Sqn, having never had success in the Tournament, felt this year could be their year to win, with the line-up of **Sig Nielson** 6'4", **Sig Mathews** 6'6" and **Sig Bland** 6'7". The rest of the team members were slightly shorter Gurkhas, and in reality they were the stars of the day. Captained by **Sig Binod**, the team demonstrated outstanding teamwork, resulting in a convincing win over 3 Sqn right at the start. After victories in the games that followed, the stage was set for a showdown between 1 and 2 Sqns.

The Tournament final took place the following evening, and spectators filled the gym to watch battle commence between the two teams. Both teams had been fully briefed by their SSMs on the consequences of losing the match! The game began very tentatively, with both teams missing easy baskets. 1 Sqn opened the scoring nearly three quarters of the way into the first half. 2 Sqn bounced back with two huge 3-point shots, and left 1 Sqn unable to penetrate their defence. Unfortunately we lost to 2 Sqn with a final score of 5 to 6.

EXERCISE HOLTON ENDEAVOUR *- by Cpl Jon Marshall*

EX HOLTON ENDEAVOUR is now an established annual event for 1 Sqn. It is a MACC ex conducted by us in aid of the Holton Lee Charity for disabled people. The charity is based in the coastal, wooded area of old East Holton Farm, near Poole Harbour.

Building the new path

This year, we had the task of building a large path through the middle of a floral forest area to enable wheelchair bound personnel access to the wilder areas of the forest. The second task was to construct a car park to facilitate better access. The weather was gloriously sunny which, unfortunately, made the task a bit more arduous than everyone expected. The Sqn had two work parties, one team gravelling the car park area (which had already been dug out), and the second team working in the cool canopy of the forest laying the shale onto the path. We had two road-rollers and a mini dump truck, similar to the one from *Bob the Builder*, which ensured we finished in record time.

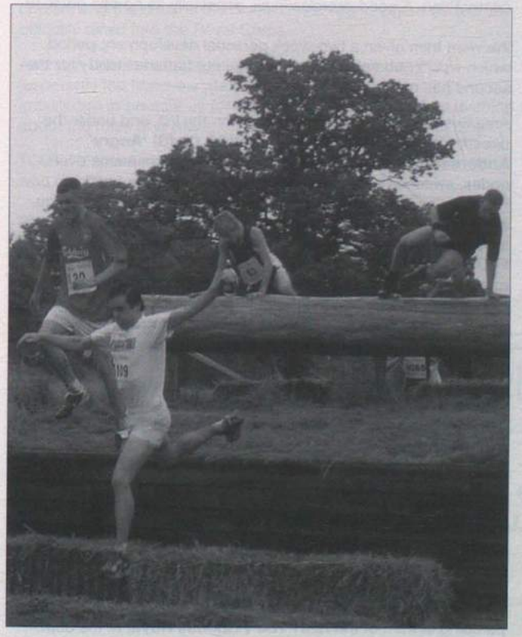
We suddenly had free time on our hands, so it was decided to organise a number of relay races because it just wasn't warm enough! The eight sections competed against each other in six races. Enjoyment and chaos ensued, with people getting tipped out of wheelbarrows, run over, and generally worn out. The Phase 3 upgraders proved to be far too clever for the Phase 2s, and didn't lose any of the races.

With most of the work done the previous day, Day 2 held a significantly smaller challenge, although **Cpl Jon Marshall** proved a biff in the kitchen area by making everyone breakfast and bringing a new meaning to crispy bacon.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj SSM Youngson**
SSM **WO2 EC Williams**

The Sqn welcomes **SSgt Hounsell**, from 1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt. The Sqn has been very busy recently, with such activities as the Harrogate Cup Basketball competition and the Badminton Horseless Trials. We walked away from both with lots of silver. Well done to the basketball team for retaining the trophy for the second year. Also congratulations must go to the six teams who ran the Horseless Trials, particularly for winning the Men's, U18's and Women's races.



Sig Paine (X20) clearing one of the fences – who needs a horse?

The Sqn has started boxing trg in prep for the Harrogate Cup Boxing Night in November. **Cpl Hopkinson** runs very hard trg sessions, ably assisted by **Cpl Ablott** and **SSgt Hounsell.** We have also deployed to Salisbury Plain for a tac ex, ambushing the enemy and miraculously surviving their ambushes. A special mention must go to **Sig Richards**, who was injured in his valiant defence of the platoon.

EXERCISE CATTERICK CONTOUR – A JAMAICAN SOLDIER'S VIEW– *by Sig Reid*

EX CATTERICK CONTOUR was a basic survival ex that took place over the weekend 18-20 September. We were taught basic survival skills, taking anything from nature and using it to our advantage to stay alive. For many of the young soldiers, this was their first survival ex, so some were unsure of what to expect.

In a survival situation, we were taught how vital it is to know where to set up camp, how to build a shelter, how to make a fire and how to improvise tools and equipt to stay alive. We all enjoyed learning the aspects of basic survival, and quickly discovered nothing should be taken for granted. Any equipt you have is considered a bonus; a survival tin could be a saviour. On the survival cooking stand, we learnt to bake, roast and even stew food using our improvised equipment. A deer and a pheasant were our food prize. Learning to navigate across an unknown territory back to civilization without map and compass was another lesson we were taught. We had the opportunity to practise our new-found skills with an orienteering ex, but a few people found this very challenging and got stuck in swamps and streams. The first day came to an end with laughter and a barbecue.

A new day brought a new challenge. The aim of this one was to let us young soldiers develop teamwork and again exercise our navigation skills. The scenario involved being trapped behind enemy lines with a need to navigate our way back to safety. We were dropped off miles away from camp at an unknown loc. We set off in three different groups and proceeded over hills, valleys, through mud and water. Everyone did work as a team, because no one was captured by the enemy who were closing in at mega speed.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Maj RM Jones**
SSM **WO2 TJ Ward**

EX HARROGATE FOLLY 2 – *by Sig Gallon*

I wasn't sure what to expect from the FIBUA ex, but was looking forward to learning new skills. We arrived on Friday night and were introduced to Copehill Down Village. The ex started with a complete safety brief, delivered in no uncertain terms by **Cpl Morrison**. On the second day, everyone did the round robin of activities, including lessons in methods of entry, section room clearance and defended house. We also had the opportunity to throw petrol bombs on the Molotov cocktail range and were introduced to the Confidence Course, which helped to build teamwork through clearing obstacles as a section. That was quite demanding, both physically and mentally. After our trg, we moved into the fully tactical phase, patrolled into our harbour loc, and from there we mounted recces throughout the night on some loud, undisciplined enemy with small arms.

The final day saw us conduct a Coy-level attack, assaulting the village and clearing it of enemy. This tested us in everything we had been instructed on, and was exciting and enjoyable, not least for the SSM, **WO2 Ward**, who was in his element setting things alight and blowing things up. The final attack was a complete success, and through a lot of battle noise, pyrotechnics, ammunition and adrenalin, 1 Blandford Rifles saved the day.

The weekend taught me new skills, which I may use in the future, but most of all was enjoyable for everyone. Thanks to the permanent staff cadre for delivering a quality exercise, hopefully more will follow.

BRAEMAR GAMES - *by Sig Bartlett and Sig Moon*

On 2 September, the 11 Sig Regt Tug of War team and Relay team left camp on the long drive to the Highland Games in Braemar. Tired and weary, we arrived two days later at Braemar Golf Club, where the manager had kindly let us pitch our luxurious 9x9 tents for the Games.

After the Krypton Factor-style challenge of setting up, we headed into the village for an evening meal of fish and chips. **Sig Dye** impressed us all by doubling his body weight after devouring his king sized cod.

The following morning we were weighed in for the Tug of War competition. For our first match, we were against 17 Port and Maritime Regt RLC, which we won 2 ends to nil. However, after our promising start we failed to win any of our other pulls.

Our final pull was against the RAF with 2 members of the Blue Peter crew, who found it extremely hard work and exhausting. The 11 Sig Regt team were awarded Blue Peter badges, which got us more attention with the locals than the winning team!

The Relay team did themselves proud and competed well in a strong field. Overall they finished in third place with a particularly strong performance from **Sig Pease**.

The 11 Sig Regt Tug of War team

TROOP COMMANDERS COURSE 057

Troop Comds Course TC59 began in May 2004. The course is 20 strong and includes freshly commissioned, young, keen, fit officers, and several old sweats who've had a little longer at their units and a chance to deploy with their troops on ops. We also welcomed two Lts from the Kuwaiti Army who are expanding their knowledge of comms, as well as learning what a 'jack brew' is!

So it was with hearts full of a desire to learn and a thirst for socialising, that TC (tented circus) 59 began our journey towards becoming Tp Comds. Comd Trg Wing was the first port of call, with lessons from **Capt Parke** and **Capt Jackson**. Here we were taught about the Royal Signals' rank structure and the different paths soldiers can take during their careers. This prevents embarrassing mistakes such as referring to the Yeoman as a Foreman and the RSM as a Q.

We then moved into CIS Wing and relied on the teachings of the once wise **Robin Lavies**. General confusion reigned for the first few days as LANs, WANs, BITs, BYTEs and other such terminologies were discussed. It all eventually became clear as mud, and the course was tasked with preparing individual networking problems as a final test of three weeks' work.

In the meantime, other duties of the young officer were put into practice as TC59 – with a little help from TC 58 – played host to 20 French young officers for a week. This included a formal dinner, a game of football and a night out in Blandford! TC59 takes no responsibility for any French officer who may or may not have been seen swimming in the pond outside the Officer's Mess!

Following a little more from Comd Trg Wing on CR and Defence Writing, we began Radio Systems Group (RSG) with several fascinating lessons on antennas and propagation from **Capt Lyons** and **WO2 (YofS)** – or maybe he's a foreman – **Hutchinson**. We then put this theory into practice and attempted to put up 12m masts and fiddling with SURFs and TURFs. Despite a few crooked masts and botched antennas, comms appeared to work - which is always a bonus! The combination of classroom and practical work was put to the test in the fourth week of RSG with EX SEARCHING GLANCE. Here we were given comd appointments and had to plan and deploy assets into the Dorset area to provide an all informed net. Again, comms worked - most of the time anyway!

The following week we attempted to keep other officers awake by giving presentations on our Units. Most of us succeeded! Also this week, we deployed into the field – which one I'm not sure – for a 36-hr battle camp with a group of SATTs. We planned and delivered lessons on various soldiering skills, from ambushes to map reading. There was also a night navex and a mil skills competition. A good exercise in all, especially as no one got lost!

We were then given a two-week personal development period, which was a good chance to recharge our batteries ready for the second half of the course.

Area Systems Group (ASG) was next on the list, and under the direction of **Capt Taff Owens** and **WO2 (YofS) 'Angry' Anderson**, we were led into a whole world of confusion over nodes, switches and remote masts with phone numbers! However, as time progressed, confusion turned into knowledge, and we finally figured out what a node is! After a few days in the simulator suite, we were ready for Week 5 of ASG, which was EX FINAL FLIGHT. Again, we were given comd appointments and had to plan and deploy the different PTARMIGAN assets around the Dorset countryside. We managed to get comms in most of the time, but must apologise to **WO2 (YofS) Anderson** and **SSgts (YofS) Tucker** and **Rogers** for the stress they experienced!

The next week of the course was a chance for us all to get away from the office for a while, as we embarked, literally, on a week's AT exped. We were to sail the Solent in three 35-ft yachts. Expert instruction was provided in the form of **WO2 'AT' Driver** and **Sgts 'Windy' Gale** and **Sangster**, and after familiarisation on the yachts, we set sail. It was slightly breezy on the first day, and it took a while for certain people to find their sea legs. Despite the rocky waves, everyone had a very enjoyable time and the Course worked well as crews.

Meanwhile, back on dry land, the five Queen's Gurkha Signals (QGS) officers from the Course were busy eating lots of curry and parading in front of the **HRH The Princess Royal** at the 50th Anniversary of the QGS. Well done chaps!

So it was back to Blandford for the final push. We were introduced to the wonderful, but a slightly freaky world of Electronic Warfare (EW), under the guidance of **Capt Humphries** and **WO1 (Supvr R) Jordan**. We were taught about the different

End of Course Nepalese party

systems available and the importance of EW on the battlefield, as well as studying Naval and Air Force systems. The week finished with a simulator ex, presentations and an exam.

After EW Wing, TC59 have two weeks left until we depart Blandford and return to our Units to make our SSgts' lives a little more stressful for the next two years. Between now and then, we will take part in EX SPEAK EASY, which is the final test of all the knowledge gained throughout the Course. There is also a Health and Safety module and several formal social functions to look forward to.

One of these is the Leadership Dinner, which marks the end of the course, and the other is the Corps Guest Night, where we will be officially dined into the Royal Corps.

Although it feels to some that we have been here forever (especially the Mess bar staff) we have gained a lot of vital knowledge to prepare us for life as a Tp Comd, as well as learning about the roles of a young officer in a unit or in a social setting!

TC59, for those of you who did well, well done! For those of you who didn't do so well, well done anyway!

2Lt Steve Vaughan of 30 Sig Regt was awarded Top Student of TC59. At the culminating Leadership Dinner on 6 October 04, he was presented with the Evis Memorial Sword by **Brig JE Thomas MBE**, the incoming SOinC(A).

Brig Thomas (R) presents the Evis Memorial Sword to 2Lt Vaughan

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

2nd (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

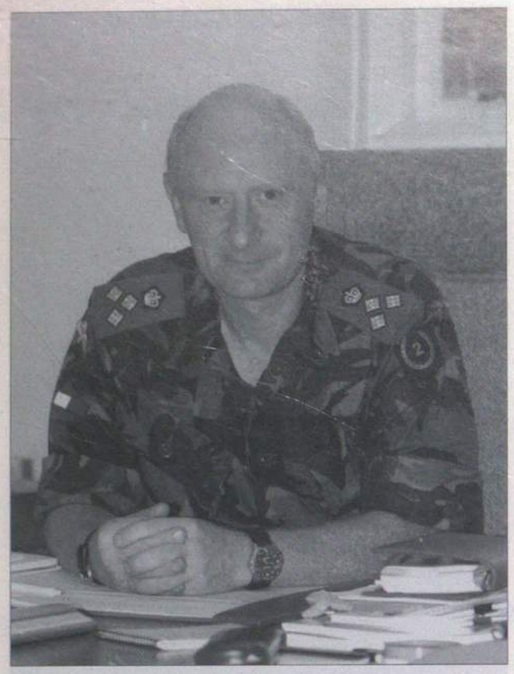
ARMY

Comd	**Brig M Lithgow CBE**
COS	**Maj J Rowley**

Summer being over, the swallows depart for warmer climes - and so did **Brig John Thomas**. In his case, to the hot seat as SOinC(A). We welcome as our new Comd, **Brig Mike Lithgow**.

Those of you who aspire to comd should be aware that it is vital to drink the right tea. Typhoo does not do at all. We have sent on to Blandford, **Brig John's** Earl Grey, but are still learning how to make **Brig Mike's** green tea.

We have also said farewell to **Capt Chris Biddulph**, **Capt Peter Baker** and **YofS Clint Barker**. With **Peter's** departure, we have finally eliminated all the Bakers in the HQ - down from 3 last year. New in are **Capt Lindsey Courage** and **YofS Bob Warburton**, so we have a shiny new Ops team. We have also been collecting Lt Cols – **Lt Col Eric Blyth** and **Lt Col Ray Wilkinson**. We



Our new Bde Comd, Brig Mike Lithgow

enjoyed **Lt Col Eric's** company so much, we have found him a job in Basrah. Our Staff Asst, **WO2 Tony Heeney**, is off to Pristina to avoid the Corsham delamination, and we wish both of them well for their tours.

EXERCISE HORSESHOE 5

To cap off the trg cycle, the Bde deployed all across Great Britain (and even to the Isle of Man) for a 15-day FTX. The ex started with a test of the Unit's plans for Rapid Compulsory Mobilisation (RCM) - to prove we can deploy our high-readiness assets in support of ops in UK. Units went on to build up their trg over the first week, while the storm clouds of the scenario gathered.

With the inevitability of a well-oiled MEL, all kinds of incidents began to occur that brought into play the Bde's numerous comms assets. These were also on show to VIP visitors at Donnington, where the Bde HQ set up in the Robert Cook building for the duration. AIRWAVE was found to work even better than advertised, and as the rollout to UK Police Forces continues, it is sure to be centre stage for ICP operations.

The Bde Ladies' night provided the opportunity to dine out **Brig John** and enjoy close-quarter pipe music. DComd **Col Nigel Beacom** gave the address, and presented the outgoing Comd with a pen stand to remember us by.

The same piper regaled the assembled officers and Hon Cols for the annual Horseshoe Reunion Dinner. This was held in the marquee, altogether more suited to pipe music. During dinner, a harpist provided a soothing background, and allowed reminiscences to flow uninterrupted. We were honoured by the presence of the Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**. To round off the evening 97 (BRITFOR) Sig Sqn (V), currently deployed to Banja Luka, sent the Master birthday greetings .... and the piper proved he knew that tune as well.

The Presentation

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

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

CO **Lt Col DG Robson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) C Bruce BEM**

The change round of COs has found **Lt Col David Robson** firmly at the helm, although we have all been assured that he does not do sailing! We have also have a new 2IC Regt, **Maj Barry Spiers**, and we wish his predecessor, now **Lt Col Simon Purser** all the best for his posting at JHQ. All this and a couple of new OC Sqns, namely **Maj Lee Kiely** and **Maj Katy Caie** as well. Things have changed!

FAREWELL TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER

The Regiment recently said a fond farewell to its CO, **Lt Col Andy Bristow**. The day started with a swift turnaround from EX RHINO CHARGE, followed by some frantic boot polishing. The RSM had the day planned, starting with a Regtl Parade to give the CO his last chance to present some prizes and address his troops. Commanding for over two years and deploying the Regt to Iraq, found the CO a little emotional as he gave his farewell speech, which was given straight from the heart.

After an exchange of presentations, **Lt Col Bristow** had a couple of beers with the Regt and was escorted from Hammersmith Bks in an appropriate form of transport made by the QMSI and Gym staff.

The CO will be greatly missed, and all ranks wish him all the best in his new appointment as Comd Army Presentation Team. Sir, thank you.

EXERCISE RHINO CHARGE - *by LCpl Rimmer*

EX RHINO CHARGE enabled the GOC to exercise his Bdes and Div staff, and to give them a flavour of what would be expected of them if deployed on ops. The Regt went out to show what we can do, and also to improve what we do best – Comms and Brew making - hopefully in that order.

Day 1 was set up day - we moved into loc and began the set up. Because we were exercising on private land, there was no normal bivvie site, but a nice farm complex with a friendly German Baron watching over us! We were co-located with 212 Sig Sqn and had Div Main and HQ DSG next to each other. Either we were too far back or the DSG were to far forward! Once complete, we did the other thing were good at – sitting and waiting. But the sitting and waiting was to be short lived, as Wednesday saw the first dribs and drabs of Staff Offrs drift out of Wentworth Bks and on to the ex.

It was soon into shift pattern and war had begun. The following week flew by, while the Staff did their thing and we did ours. The two weeks in one loc was starting to take its toll, and ENDEX was nice to hear! With the Staff deploying back to PTL, our last remaining job was to tear down and get out as fast as possible. As usual, that didn't happen so quickly. As soon as we had torn down Diamond 1, we had to help 212 Sqn tear their kit down!

Loading the train wasn't a hassle, as we had all day to do it. How exciting can it get sat at the railhead all day? The load marshals arrived, and it proved to be the longest rail load in British Army history, not what you want after a long day at ENDEX. With EX RHINO CHARGE finally over, bring on EX ARCCADE FUSION.

MY GAP YEAR AT THE PREMIER REGIMENT
- by 2Lt Paul Keating

After the initial experiences at RCB, I thought I knew what I was in for over the coming months. Just a fast paced, but not too difficult, four weeks at Sandhurst and then off on a brilliant Gap Year. Well I was half right. I'd got the first bit wrong. Sandhurst was a brilliant experience and I'll remember it for a very long time.

Sixty-nine Gap Year officers arrived at Sandhurst on a very pleasant Sunday morning in September, all very eager but quite unsure of what was about to happen to them. Over the next four weeks, we were marched, drilled, marched some more, and taught the basics that we will need as Gap Year officers. Our weeks there gave us an excellent opportunity to see what the real officers go through, and to bombard our CSgt with questions about anything and everything. Even though we'd been there only a few weeks, I felt a sense of pride on our passing out parade, as did everyone else. We had made it!

I was finally off to live in Germany with 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. I had been there roughly 4 hrs when I was invited to go on a weekend's sailing trip to Denmark with some of the other officers in the Mess. This, I thought, was going to be a brilliant year. I was to be attached to 211 Sig Sqn for the duration of my time here, and I would shadow the Tp Comds of the Sqn, in between my AT!

Soon we were soon off to Kiel Sailing Club. Eventually we got around to the sailing part of the trip, and we headed off to Sonderborg in Denmark. The sea was a little choppier on the way back to Kiel, so I spent the majority of the journey hanging overboard feeding the fish. It was a good start to my sailing career, and to what the sailing club had to offer.

Next on my schedule was the Regtl Offrs' and WOs' battlefield tour to Frankfurt and Berlin. It was an excellent trip, covering the history of the Russian invasion of Germany and the fall of Berlin in 1945.

The Offrs' Mess Christmas Ball was a truly memorable evening. I ended up leaving at 05.00hrs, realising I needed to be up at 06.30hrs to go skiing in Austria with some of the livers-in. So off we went on the 8-hour minibus ride listening to Christmas songs and comedy tapes. We finally arrived in Austria after a few dramas on a snowy hill. The snow was awesome there, and the next day we got straight into it. I had never snowboarded before, but I picked it up pretty quickly and was soon scaring myself with my speed on the slopes. I have definitely got the bug. It was a fantastic week.

After Christmas leave in UK, I couldn't wait to get back out to Germany in January. It was straight in to more skiing - EX WINTER WARRIOR, which was excellent. Everything you could need is provided for you, from food and accn to all your kit and ski passes. If like me, you have never skied before, then this is an

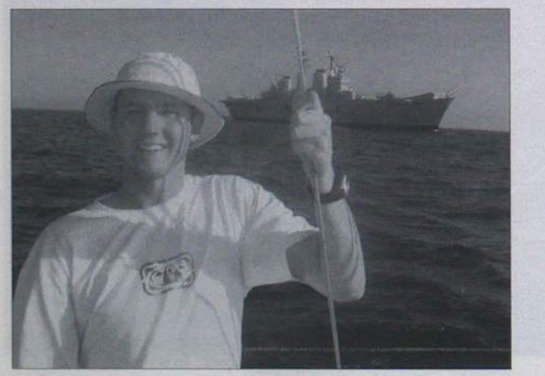
excellent course. The tuition is first class, and after only ten days I was awarded my Advanced Ski Proficiency.

In February I got my first glimpse of the Regt in the field. It was a Regtl ex, and it was freezing. Aside from the cold. it was a good experience. I got to do some live firing on the ranges as well as travel in the back of the 436s.

Almost as soon as I had returned from ex, I was back to the trg area, but this time on my Basic Freefall Parachute Course. Parachuting was absolutely amazing. I managed to get only four jumps in, because once again it snowed - not good! If you are to do a parachute course, I recommend waiting until at least the end of March in Germany!

On terra firma at last!

At the end of March I went on a five-day competent crew sailing course at Kiel Sailing Club, where we revisited Sonderborg. On my return to the Regt, I only had two weeks to wait before seven of us, including the CO, **Lt Col Bristow**, set off for Miami, USA. Here we would find the CO's yacht, *Atlantis*, and we would be sailing her back to Germany, yes, across the Atlantic Ocean! It was a huge exped, and a once in a lifetime experience. We slipped from Pier Sixty Six in Fort Lauderdale, and were on our way into the Big Blue. Our CO, the skipper, is a very experienced sailor and this was his 13the crossing, so we had no worries as to what he was doing. I was seasick for only six days. After that I was fine and could actually start enjoying the awesome wildlife we saw, the sunsets and stars and the fact that we were miles from any work for a long time. One of our crew members got quite ill, so we sought medical assistance. The closest ship in the area just happened to be *HMS Invincible*. They were very happy to help and sent a Sea King helicopter to airlift the casualty back to their ship. We thought we had said good bye to **Sgt Stu Reynolds**, but he's very stubborn, and *HMS Invincible's* doctor said that he was fit enough to carry on the journey. The ship's Captain then changed course and rendezvoused with us, about 300 metres away!



The day I met HMS Invincible

It was another nine days before we reached Falmouth, and it had been 36 days in total. The trip had already taken longer than expected, manly due to days of little wind and our engine breaking down after only five days.

On my return I deployed onto another Regtl ex. The weather was considerably warmer, but it still rained. I was appointed as OC Support Tp - another brilliant experience, where I got to know my soldiers even better. I also got the chance to work in the back of a Panzer for a few days, really getting into the comms side as a whole, and really beginning to understand what goes on.

All in all, it has been an amazing year. From sailing the Atlantic Ocean to sleeping in the back of a cold panzer, I will hold the memories and experiences of this with me for a very long time, both the fun and games and also Army life and what my role will be if I choose to sign up after university. No matter how you explain what it's like to your friends back at home, they will never really know unless they experience it for themselves. I have had a fantastic year, and I would and will recommend giving it a go to anyone and everyone.

INTER-SQUADRON TUG-OF-WAR - *by Lt Colin Northridge*

The Regimental Inter Squadron Tug of War competition was held on Friday 8 Oct 04 and consisted of two teams from each of the Sqns, giving a total of eight teams competing against each other.

The unlucky 211 Sqn A team, anchored by SSgt Scott McKenzie, that narrowly missed out on a final place

Competition was fierce from the start, and it was clear which teams had previous trg and experience as they began to dominate the less experienced teams. It was a gruelling experience for all involved and as fatigue set in, it became a true test of tenacity and guts to determine who was the winner as the day progressed. By noon, the finalists had been determined, namely 201 Sig Sqn A and B teams, HQ Sqn A and 211 Sig Sqn A.

Cheques were presented by Lt Col Robson and WO1(RSM) Bruce BEM

The Semi finals proved to be equally fierce, with no quarter being given by either of the 201 Sig Sqn teams in their inevitable face off. Eventually 201 A emerged victorious to face HQ Sqn A team in the final. The final was well fought, but 201, with greater experience carried the day, beating HQ by two pulls to none. The day's competition proved to be a great success, highlighting what a gruelling, yet technical sport Tug of War is. All who took part thoroughly enjoyed the experience and the sport now enjoys a bright future in the Regt.

The Trophies for first, second and third along with medals for the winning team were presented by the CO, **Lt Col Robson**.

DOING OUR BIT FOR CHARITY

After many months of bill paying and counting donations from the Herford Station Summer Fete held back in June, it was time to donate all the profit raised to charity. Three charities were to be donated to: The Great Ormond Street Hospital, Army Benevolent Fund and Schattenkinder e.V. (a local German children's charity).

A presentation to representatives from the charities was held on Wed 6 Oct 04 by the CO, **Lt Col Robson**. **Barbara Crowther**, ABF coordinator for BFG and **Frau Riegemann**, Schattenkinder were there to receive cheques for their charities. A total of over £9,000 was raised at the summer fete.

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

ARMY

CO **Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Dick**

The Regt has just bid a fond farewell to **Lt Col Stuart MacRostie MBE** and **Jenny** and wish them good luck for the future. In turn we have welcomed **Lt Col John Botterill** and **Jill**. **Col John** is of course looking forward to the challenge of taking the Regt forward into the CORMORANT era.

The CO's farewell ride

Even with the last of the PTARMIGAN equipt having been handed back, the Regt continues to keep itself busy by preparing for the introduction of CORMORANT. The first big test of this new capability will be EX JOINT VENTURE being held in South Cerney at the end of November. The importance of this ex for the Project should not be underestimated, and a full report will be included in the next issue.

The Freedom of York Parade

The Regt has also been busy with other events, including the Freedom of York Parade, which has allowed **RSM Dick** one final opportunity to get a Regt on parade for some square bashing.

Splashing about in the Lake District....

...with a distinct sinking feeling.

There has also been an AT Camp in the Lake District, and special mention goes to **SSgt Collins** who organised what was a very successful 3 weeks.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SA Clarke GM QGM**
SSM	**WO2 Gratrick**

The Sqn recently bade farewell to the SSM, **WO2 Haughton**, who has made the long trip across to the sleepy backwater of 219 Sig Sqn for a spot of R and R, and we welcome his replacement, **WO2 Gratrick** from Sheffield UOTC.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tp Comd	**WO1 (FofS) Batley**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Cartledge**

We welcome back **Cpl Mark Archer** and **LCpl Stu Pickup** from Qatar. And welcome to **LCpl Nikita Chisholm**, who has immediately started boxing trg, but due to her previous experience nobody will spar with her – male or female!

Last but not least we say goodbye to **Sgt Bernie Lovick**, who is posted to NI, having sold his house and apparently left his girlfriend homeless.

MT TROOP

MTO	**Capt SO Kelly**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Baker**

Firstly we would like to say good bye and good luck to **Capt Matt Nuttall**, **who** has moved to Sqn 2IC, and welcome to **Capt Stan Kelly** and his family, who takes over as MTO. Also welcome to **Sgt Geordie Ferry** and family from 102 Log Bde and Sig Sqn and **Cpl Neil Grainger** from ATFC. Good luck to **Cpl Simm** on his retirement as a Driving Instructor to Civ Div. Congratulations to **LCpl Leroy Thewlis**, who recently got married to **Sarah**. Welcome back to **LCpl Abbott**, **LCpl Calladine** and **LCpl Garbutt** on the successful completion of their Class 1. Also congratulations to **Cpl Pierrpont** on his Dvr trg road safety campaign, which came 4th place in the MOD Road Safety Award.

TRAINING WING

The Regtl Training Wing has had a very busy period over the past couple of months. The arrival of CORMORANT is now imminent and the never-ending stream of courses rolls on relentlessly. There have been 300 people trained to date by the Team, and that number will increase to in excess of 350.

We farewell **Capt Si Tyler**, who leaves us on posting to Blandford; and **Sgt Stevie Sparrow**, who limps into retirement. We welcome **Sgt Pete Mason**, who arrives from 30 Sig Regt. Welcome back to **WO2 (SSM) Si McGaw** and to **Capt (Tfc) George Hume MBE**.

214 SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM	**WO2 Cooper**

Maj Stu Gillespie has departed for PJHQ, making way for our new Sqn OC, **Maj Mel Rayner**, who has spent most of her first few weeks in sports kit, leading the Regtl Orienteering Team to some solid victories at the Corps competition. Most of the Sqn has been gainfully employed on the continuing CORMORANT trials at the LSRC in Blandford. The trials do seem to be going quite well at present, which bodes well, as we are intending to use the new equipt on exercise next month!!

Admin Sgt, **Sgt Lee Glaves** and the rest of the team have never laughed as much as when they mount the fun bus down to Blandford every Sunday afternoon to man the TALON Det that is working in support of the CORMORANT trials! Another CORMORANT tasking that has fallen to the Sqn is manning the UK Node at Oakhanger. Currently holding the fort at the epicentre of the world are **LCpl Tim Earp** and **Sig Chris Jobber**.

A large proportion of personnel from the Sqn attended the recent Regtl AT. A packed week of activities kept everyone rather busy, and was definitely enjoyed by all. Even though the ex took place in September, no one had quite anticipated the gale force winds that were blowing on top of Scarfell Pike! Notable events were **Sig Nevin** and his record breaking slowest ever ascent of Bowfell - but he still made it to the top. **SSgt Dougie Icke**, **LCpl Sharp** and **LCpl Wyllie** spent the entire three weeks instructing our willing volunteers.

The Regt competed in the Corps Orienteering Champs in Mytchett in September. Of the 15 people in the Regt Team, 11 were from 214 Sqn. The men had a good show, but it was the ladies who came back with the silverware. OC Sqn won the overall Ladies' Individual event, and **Sig Pennington** picked up the Junior Ladies prize - not bad for a novice! These two were accompanied by **LCpl Donu**, the 214 Sig Sqn Clerk, to make the winning ladies' team. All in all, a pretty good trip for the Sqn and especially for the Ladies.

A number of the Sqn are away at the moment preparing for the Cambrian Patrol Competition. The Regtl Team are trg under the watchful eye of 214 Sqn's **Lt Scott MacPherson** and TM Tp's **SSgt Cartledge.** A full report of the pain, sweat and tears will follow in the next edition!

As usual, we have a number of Sqn personnel away on ops. The guys have just returned form Qatar, but work still continues in Iraq, Tampa (that one must be tough!) and the Falklands. For the remainder, after a fairly quiet period over the last few months, everyone is now looking forward to EX JOINT VENTURE, which promises to be the largest Sqn deployment since OP TELIC 1.

Finally, welcome to **Lt Andrew Stannard**, who has transferred in from the AAC, and to **2Lt Damien Corcoran**, who has arrived straight from RMAS. Farewell to **Cpl Geordie Gough**, who moves on promotion to Sgt to 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DJ Duggan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Haughton**

It has been relatively quite in the Sqn as we await the impending arrival of the new CORMORANT assets. There has however, been a certain amount of restructuring in the Sqn, which has kept everyone on their toes.

At the recent Regtl AT Camp, **Sgt Jenks Jenkinson** became a dab hand at capsizing during the canoeing, so much so, that the Canoe Instructors are considering putting him in for the World Capsizing Championships!! The cold had a big effect on **Sig Bob Marley**. After the first dunking whilst canoeing, he got a severe case of the chunters for the rest of the week. All in all though, it was an enjoyable week and a good rest away from York and the pressures of work.

We say goodbye to **Maj Rab Young**, who is off to 30 Sig Regt. We wish him all the best and welcome our new OC, **Maj Dave Duggan**. There have been more changes at the top, with **SSM Haughton** taking over from **SSM Abson**, who has moved on to become RQMS (Gen). **2Lt Olivier** takes the helm in Eagle Tp.

Sadly the Sqn must say goodbye and good luck to **SSgt (SQMS) Andy Egan** and **Cpl Nick Trethewey** on his posting and promotion. Many congratulations to **Sig Craig Reed** and his wife **Antonia**, on the arrival of their baby son, **Joe Michael**.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AJ Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Pritinarayan Rai**

After a successful HO/TO from 16 Sig Regt, part of the Sqn has been providing support to the Operational J6, ranging from Staff Officers to 3-stars at various locations in Iraq. Working with multinational forces has been a key experience to all personnel, who are gaining valuable operational experience.

The remainder of the Sqn back in the UK was heavily involved in EX CENTUAR'S CHARGE by providing 2 x Trunk Node in support of 7 Air Defence Bde. The Sqn also celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Queen's Gurkha Signals by participating in the Cap Badging Ceremony at Bramcote.

Special thanks go to **Cpl Dev Sherpa** for organising a trip to Disneyland Paris during the summer leave. The best part of the experience was trying the French cuisine, frogs' legs.

We congratulate **Sgts Dhiraj**, **Kiran**, **Pravin**, **Suresh**, **Kubir** for their well-deserved promotion, and **Cpls Karna** and **Bahini** for safely delivering their first baby son **Aditya**.

Finally we said goodbye to **Capt Faraghar**, **Capt (QGO) Budhibahadur Gurung**, **Capt Webber** and their families, and welcome **Capt Alan Foote** and **Lt (QGO) Purna Gurung**, **SSgt Shanker Gurung**, **Cpls Lalit, Akash**, **Sundar**, **Ajay**, **LCpl Ranjit**, and their families.

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col GR Norton**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Manktelow**

EXERCISE ARRCADE FALCON

EX ARRCADE FALCON is an exercise that occurs in Germany every two years, involving 7 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt and the TA.

This year, in addition to the deployment of the Elmpt based Regts, a further 750 members of 33 Sig Regt (V), 34 Sig Regt (V) and 35 Sig Regt (V) arrived in the port of Emden with 415 vehs ready to be dispersed throughout Germany. They arrived to carry out a relief in place of the already deployed regular unit's trunk nodes and SAN groups, allowing the G2 battle picture to move south in the peace keeping and peace-enforcing scenario that we were following. Eventually allowing all assets to convene at the newly-formed 'UN Conference Facility' at Elmpt.

All those involved agreed it was a highly successful ex, with more being achieved than the two previous FALCON exs added together. The integration between the TA and Regular units was highly impressive, making the whole experience a valid trg encounter for the TA units and a very testing introduction to the ex season that now starts with a vengeance for 7 Sig Regt.

SILVER CHILD MAKES A DIFFERENCE

On 8 September 04, a new facility in *Dizzy Daisy's* Elmpt Station, was opened by the Station Comd, **Lt Col GR Norton**.

Soldiers of 7 Sig Regt have recently dedicated their time to give something back to the community of Elmpt Station. Just six weeks ago stood three empty rooms in the Station's Crèche, *Dizzy Daisy's*. Now these rooms are a child's haven, a well furnished and decorated playroom, equipped for approximately 20 children aged 3 – 6 years old. Two smaller rooms have been converted into Sensory Centres for children with special needs. The special equipt, including vibrating beds, soft light patterns and sound systems, all offer the vital relaxation and stimulation that these children crave.

None of this would have been possible had it not been for the local community raising 44,000 for SILVER CHILD IV, a charity that supports both our Forces' children and Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital. All around the play centre on the walls are fantastic paintings drawn by **LCpl Risi,** that took him nine days to complete. **Mrs Sandra Hislop**, whose husband is currently serving in BATUS, devoted her time researching products and decorating. Other key personalities were: **Sgt Beatty**, **Cpl Fisher**, **LCpls Onley**, **Jackman**, **Maidment** and **Rowan**.

The inspiration for the project came from **Capt Chris Hymas**, who started SILVER CHILD some fourteen years ago. SILVER CHILD V is now ongoing, raising money for Elmpt Station and JHQ area. The current project will be completed next May.

ASCOT DAY – 12 SEPTEMBER 2004

The 7 Sig Regt Ascot Day is an annual horseracing event, which takes place at the Krefeld racecourse. Despite the Regt moving to Elmpt, the event continues, due to our historical connection with Krefeld. The race day is one of the year's main civilian horse racing meetings, but 7 Sig Regt hijack the event and turn the day into a big Anglo-German celebration, with a military marching

band, lots of union flags flying, a very popular Old English Beer Garden, and, in the tradition of Royal Ascot, a ladies' hat competition. Responsibility for the set-up and smooth running fell to 232 Sig Sqn, led by **WO2(SSM) Littlefield**. With most of 232 Sig Sqn deployed on ex, Delta Tp, led by **SSgt Stew Hulse**, provided the main effort. They built an old English beer garden consisting of a traditional fish and chip shop, an ice cream parlour, a Pimms bar and, of course, a beer trailer. They also converted a function room into a joint Offrs' and Sgts' Mess. The Sgt Maj concentrated on the serious business of trg the Honour Guard who would be responsible for a flag raising ceremony.

On the day, the guests began to arrive from 12.00hrs, and by 13.00hrs, the racecourse was full. The event was started with a speech from the 2IC, who coped very well, considering large parts of the speech were in German. The Krefeld Bergermeister also said a few words before handing over to **WO2(SSM) Littlefield** for the flag raising ceremony. Firstly the German Flag was raised as the band played the German National Anthem, followed by the Union Flag, which was raised in time with the British National Anthem.

Following the ceremony, the Offrs and SNCOs retired to the Mess, where the chefs had done us proud with an excellent buffet of cold meats, salmon and prawns with salad. The lads did not go without, and each received a portion of fish and chips on the Regt. The beer garden was by now filling up with both British and Germans. The Germans loved our fish and chips, and managed to drink all the Pimms within the first few hours.

The first race was sponsored by 7 Sig Regt and was set off around 14.00hrs. The racecourse ran a tote betting system, and members of the Regt placed their bets. **Maj Mason** presented prizes for the winning owner, trainer and jockey. As soon as the prize giving was over, bets were placed for the next race. The races were spaced about thirty minutes apart, which added to the excitement of the day. The weather was perfect, the beer was flowing, and whether you won or lost the day was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The last race ended around 18.00hrs, and the racecourse began to empty. Once vital equipt and the day's takings were secure, 232 Sig Sqn OC, **Maj Ingram**, invited all ranks into the Mess for a drink to thank them for all their hard work. Around 23.00hrs we were eventually asked to leave by the racecourse staff. Having had more than enough to drink by then, we went quietly, knowing that we had to return the next day to clear up.

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT/GERMAN KSK EXERCISE
- by LCpl Moorhead

From 3 to 24 September, **2Lt Mikulla**, **Cpl Vallance**, **LCpl Moorhead**, **Sig Shennan**, **Sig Marshall**, **Sig Heydon**, **Sig Mitchell**, **Sig Telford** and **Sig Neilan** were sent to work with the German Fernmeldekompanie KSK.

The ex started with a BBQ to welcome us to their Company, and was enjoyed by all, allowing us to meet the Company personalities. The next few days were spent learning the KSK comms equipt and weapon system, which was followed by a long drive north to Jägersbruck. Once there, a three-day live combat range was conducted, in which **Cpl Vallance** and **LCpl Moorhead** showed the KSK guys some British pairs fire and manoeuvre. After the live range, two Sea King helicopters were brought in to take the troops north to Puttgarden on a small island in the Baltic Sea, to secure an area for the next stage of the ex. Upon arrival there, an aggressive patrolling phase started, involving a 17km march in six hrs, culminating in a final attack. After the ex was over, the KSK guys produced another well-enjoyed BBQ, in which compliments were swapped. We then returned to Elmpt Station.

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col PW Glibbery**

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

As ever it's been an extremely busy period providing ICS support to HQ Land Comd, and with delamination knocking at the door, we are still feverishly making plans to transfer some of our services to DCSA next year. That said, the Sqn continues to find time for sporting and charity events, and life remains a balanced mixture of work and play.

SAILING - A YEAR IN REVIEW *- by Sgt Bernie Steadman*

This year the Sqn has had an active part in the Corps offshore sailing events. In April, **Sgt Bernie Steadman** and **Cpls Ginge Davies** and **Steve Henderson** took part in the Royal Signals Sail Training Week, each building on prior experience, whilst **Sgt Neil Jones** completed and passed his Day Skipper qualification.

This was shortly followed in May by the Sqn fielding 4 members to the Army Offshore Regatta, **Sgt Steadman**, and **Cpls Davies**, **Henderson** and **Hogg**. **Cpls Davies** and **Hogg** raced in the Corps yacht *SkyWave*, whilst **Sgt Steadman** and **Cpl Henderson** raced in a JSASTC Victoria. Both teams just missed out on prizes at the end of the week.

Things didn't stop there. In June, the Sqn entered a team in the Royal Signals Seaview Regatta, comprising **Sgt Steadman**, **Cpls Henderson** and **Hogg**. **Cpl Davies** entered the race crewing for the Corp Bosun **Sgt Windy Gale**. The Sqn put up a good effort, but managed 3rd place out of 6. Then a team was then selected for the triangular race against RA, and R E. **Cpl Davies** raced for Signals, but, as RA were 3 places short, the remainder of the Sqn team filled in their shortfall. As is well known, the Corps won the regatta and RA was 3rd. (No we didn't sabotage them, but the thought did cross our minds!!)

The pace has now slowed due to work commitments, but **Cpls Davies** and **Henderson** took part in the Cowes to Falmouth Race. This is a qualifying race for the Fastnet Race 2005, and they came a very respectable 14th overall and 3rd in the *Elan* class, despite ripping the main sail.

ROYAL SIGNALS ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS
– by WO2(SSM) Neil Jennings

The Royal Signals Orienteering Championships took place in the Aldershot area on the 22-23 September 04. It was a 2-day event; Day 1 being a 60-minute individual score event, and Day 2 a Harris Relay, which was a team event for 3 runners.

WO2 Jennings laid on some trg prior to the competition to hone the skills of the team, as a few of the team members had not orienteered for a few years; especially **Capt Andy Garrett** the Sqn 2IC. He took the team to Pernham Down, Tidworth for an afternoon of trg, which proved very worthwhile. After running through the basics, we all felt quietly confident for the league event the following week, which was to be used as additional trg prior to the Corps Champs.

The league event was held at Sandhurst on Wednesday 15 September and 243 Sqn Team consisted of: **Capt Andy Garrett**, **WO2 Neil Jennings**, FofS **WO2 Bho Pradhan**, **SSgt Jim Robertson** and **Cpl Dave Stevenson**. The 2IC, SSM and the FofS decided to show off by doing the A course - a big mistake. CP15 was the Achilles heel for both of them, and they failed to finish. The reminder of the Team all finished, and some excellent times were achieved, especially by **Cpl Stevenson**.

The Team that finally went to the Corps Championships was **WO2Neil Jennings**, **WO2 Bho Pradhan**, and **Cpl Stevenson**. Unfortunately, the others had to withdraw due to work commitments. On Day 1, all of us did reasonably well, but competition was extremely strong. On Day 2, the Team event was to be our finest hour - we came a very respectable third in the Minor Units. 251 Sig Sqn watch out next year!

3 PEAKS CHALLENGE *- by Sgt Ian Hamilton*

On 19 July members of 243 Sig Sqn attempted the 3 Peaks Challenge (to climb Mt Snowdon, Scafell Pike and Ben Nevis within 24 hrs) for the charity *Headway*. This charity is an organisation that gives support to people who have suffered head injuries and to their families.

The event was organised by **Sgt Ian Hamilton**, and the intention was to travel to Penn-Y-Pass as our start point to climb the first peak Mt Snowdon, then onto Scafell and finally Ben Nevis. **Sgt Hamilton** deemed we should attempt the summits in this unconventional order because 'anyone can do it the easy way.' To achieve the challenge in less than 24 hrs, we needed a good support team. **Sgt Bernie Steadman** provided this and all the succour we required, by acting as our mother for the challenge, and was ably supported by **LCpls Kerry Stewart** and **Jimmy Wilson**, who were our drivers and nav support.

The climbing team, **WO2(FofS) Matless**, **Sgt Hamilton**, **Cpl McMillan**, **Sig Day** and **Sig Long** had already had previous experience of climbing in Austria and Italy, so were confident that the challenge was easily attainable. However a programme of physical trg was set up and administered by **Sig Day** prior to the event, to ensure we were fit enough to climb continuously over the 24 hr period.

After a good night's sleep at HMS Indefatigable, the team set off to the base of Mt Snowdon, where **Sgt Steadman** put out posters and charity collection tins. The morning was bright and sunny - until we took our first steps up the mountain. Then black clouds appeared from nowhere, and the weather set in for the remainder of the challenge. The team set off at a brisk pace, reached the summit in 1 hr 21 mins and then ran down to complete the first mountain in just over 2hrs - much to the surprise of the support team, who quickly made excuses as to why our lunch and cups of tea weren't ready! After a good stretch off and change of clothes, we were off to Scafell Pike in Cumbria. Each climber had their own area within the minibus to stretch out and make themselves comfortable ready for the next climb.

Although Scafell is the smallest peak, it turned out to be quite demanding, with an initial steep ascent that sapped everyone's strength. The wet weather, combined with recent soil erosion, made for a difficult climb on the direct route we were taking. It was slow progress up, and even slower coming down, but we made it down within the allotted time with an hour in hand, and were on schedule to take on Ben Nevis.

We arrived at the base of Ben Nevis at 05.00hrs bleary eyed, but **Sgt Hamilton** had us all out of the minibus and raring to go for the final phase. Although the climb is normally an easy challenge for men of our calibre, the ascent felt very demanding and at times difficult to put one leg in front of the other. After climbing two mountains prior to this, everyone could feel the pain. Horizontal rain and gusts of up to 50 miles an hour did not deter us, but it made the going particularly difficult. As expected with a very touristy mountain, we saw many climbers of differing nationalities completely unprepared for the weather and they were

The Team on Ben Nevis

encouraged to descend. When will these people ever learn? We reached the summit in good time to complete the challenge, but decided to try and get back to the base within the allotted 24 hrs, which we succeeded with 2hrs to spare.

The handover of the cheque to Headway

This has been a successful endeavour and all team members are proud of their achievement. Raising a substantial amount of well-needed funds for the charity *Headway* was most gratifying and was made more poignant by visiting the Charity at Swindon to meet the staff and clients. Although this was an opportunity to hand deliver the cheque, all the team members able to visit enjoyed seeing just how their fundraising could help. This also leads me to think that if this was just our small part that we played, then what could we do next time? Congratulations must go to **Sgt Ian Hamilton** for organising and co-ordinating such a successful event and instilling in us all a charitable disposition.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Nik Beecher**
Sqn SSgt **SSgt Pete Nealis**

Delamination is now finally underway, with the techs on a mission to refresh the world with new IT equipment. **Sgt Richie Bryan** went to Gosport to learn how to be a Battlefield Casualty Drills Trainer, after spending a week in a Navy Mess he now expects breakfast in bed with a pressed copy of the Times every morning.

CORPS ORIENTEERING

251 Sig Sqn hosted the Corps Orienteering Championship, a two-day event at Mytchett. **Capt Colin Mackay** was the main driving force, aided by **SSgt Colin Holcombe** and **Sgt Andy Dobson**. These 3, along with **Cpl Kev Hebenton** came first in the minor units event. Doing all the work but getting no credit was the Admin Team of **Sgt Ian Welsh** and **Cpl Rich Teale**.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col RD Meinertzhagen**
RSM **WO1 M Jolly**

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj CN Cooper**
SSM **WO2 Burrows**

In August members of 226 Sig Sqn departed for the Tri Hill Challenge in Wales. The aim of the challenge was for the participants to conquer the peaks of Snowdon, Cadair-Idris and Pen Y Fan in sixty hours. The clock started once the minibus left the camp gate. The event was in aid of the Paul Sartori Hospice Foundation and the Army Benevolent Fund. The weather for the first peak was terrible, with visibility down to 10 feet. The intrepid party carried on, and was amazed to see many civilians attempted to conquer the peak in shorts and T-Shirts. After Snowdon came Cadair-Idris which again was affected quiet badly by weather. The challenge culminated in the climb of the most famous peak in Wales, Pen Y Fan. Whilst at the top of the fan, **Maj Yardley** and **Maj Cooper** conducted their handover/takeover. All personnel thoroughly enjoyed this challenging experience and look forward to completing it again next year.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Paul Flavell**
SSM **WO2 Tobell**

EXERCISE FOXES SPEAR

After a brief period in camp sharpening spears, 237 Sqn were thrown onto Sennybridge Trg Area for Battle Camp. All personnel were given the opportunity to practise key military skills appropriate to the Sqn role, with activities on the camp tailored to the defence of a det, action on compromise or attack and the live firing skills that these require.

Despite unusually warm and balmy weather for the first 4 days, it was replaced by Brecon business as usual for the remainder. So good was the weather and the farm accn that the SSM was expecting a bill.

LCpl Wetherall briefs his section on attack

FofS Robinson and **YofS Mount**, in addition to their normal duties, acted as David Bailey and Steven Spielberg in recording the highlights of the camp. So enthusiastic was the FofS, that whenever he turned up in a loc during the tactical part of the Camp, the det used it as a combat indicator that something was going to happen. How they managed to achieve that footage from the target end of the live firing range will remain the Director's secret. Evidence of the quality will adorn the Sqn lines for years to come.

LIVE FIRING

Sgt Woodall's thorough detailed planning of the range package came to fruition. Despite sleepless nights during the planning phase, the live firing was extremely successful with a number stating, 'That was the best thing I've ever done in the Army.' Credit must go to those who have arrived in the Sqn not having done anything like it, yet committed to getting the most out of the trg.

Sig Claughton in action

A BRIDGE TOO FAR

The range phase was rounded off with a march competition designed by the SSM, during which groups were required to complete a series of stands and culminating in the infamous Sennybridge obstacle course.

2Lt Snelgrove's encounter with the infamous Brecon baby's heads left him hobbling for the remainder of the Camp. Ever cheerful, he soldiered on.

A 24-hour dash to Blandford during a lull in battle provided **SSgt Pengelly**, **LCpls Seager**, **Kubiscek**, **Cobb**, **Boulton**, **Meany** and **Sig Fox** with the opportunity to bring back silverware from the Corps football, which they did as winners of the Plate. Not bad for a Sqn team representing the Regt.

Reconnaissance patrolling was used as a vehicle to appreciate the vulnerability of an ESM det and was conducted as part of a two-sided force on force activity. **Lt Allen** as Ops Offr throughout, provided the coordination role for the whole of Battle Camp with flair and skill.

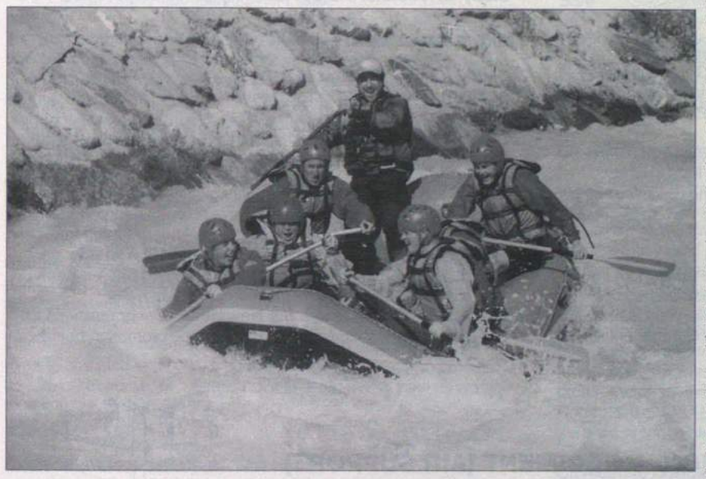
The final activity was the extraction and living off the land phase, during which **Sgt Potton** hatched a cunning plan to extract personnel using agents and RVs, whilst keeping them alive with rabbits, mushrooms and fish. Or that was the plan – in the end carrots and potatoes had to do. A tremendous amount has been achieved from the Battle Camp. All participants can use the experience as a stock on which to draw, whether it be on future exs or ops.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SL Copley**
SSM **WO2 Smith**

EXERCISE CHAMONIX DRAGON

On 4 September members of 245 Sig Sqn departed from the overcast skies of Brawdy for the summer climes of Les Contamines in the French Alps for some AT. The highlight of the week for most was the white water rafting. We started at a high point on the river and followed it through Chamonix town, being picked up at the bottom. Halfway down, we stopped and all had a little swim in some of the tamer rapids, though the water was ice cold.



Sig Graham, Cpl Gibbons, LCpl Black, Instr Pierre, LCpl Gabriel, Sig Boggon

There were also two days of rock climbing, where everybody attempted a number of climbs all varying in ability. This was followed by two days of hill climbing. On the first day of walking, some went up to the top of Mt Jolly, which stands at over 2,500m. Others walked up a neighbouring mountain, which included a little dip in the lake for those brave enough. Some members of the group, and in particular **LCpl Morse**, had to resist temptation to jump on to the cable cars, saving their legs for the nightly dance off with the locals at the discotheque.

The week was a great success, and was rounded off with a BBQ, which was enjoyed by all, and gave everyone a chance to let their hair down before the long drive back to Brawdy.

I would like to express the gratitude of the whole group to all those involved in the making the week a success with special thanks to **Sgt Timewell**.

EXERCISE FREEFALL DRAGON 2004 - *by Sgt Shaw*

In order to try to encourage more anticipation in Skydiving, I organised an exped with the aim of taking eight members of 14 Sig Regt (EW), who had never even seen a parachute before, let alone contemplated using one, to California and putting them through a programme of instruction to qualify them as parachutists.

After some initial trg in UK, the exped party left for California, where the weather is ideal for parachuting. We were literally dropped in at the deep end, jumping for the first time from 12,000 feet, assisted by two instructors. After two hard weeks, we had almost completed the course, but there were still several jumps to go.

The final jumping day was long and emotional, with all the jumpers becoming intermediate skydivers. No more student status for us. The celebrations were hilarious, with everyone jumping into the DZ pool, fully clothed after the final de-brief from the instructors. Amazingly, some of us had had to do 7 jumps on the last day in order to qualify, but just managed it. A night out at a Brazilian Steakhouse was rounded off with a party on board the DZ's aeroplane to celebrate. Plans for the next exped were discussed over a drink or two, but we all decided that we definitely need to be there next year.

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col M Baines**
RSM **WO1(RSM) J Renshaw**

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Collyer**
SSM **WO2(SSM) C Batley**

TRUNK NODE 014

Tp Comd **Lt S Clifford**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Baxter**

After having much-needed leave after OP TELIC 3, TN 014 reformed on 23 August 04, and was given the task of transforming a Tp that had not previously been tested on exercise for years, into a operational body in 2 weeks. After many long hours, hair loss and hard graft by all members, TN 014 was ready for deployment within that time.

On moving into out first loc after the first of many U-turns, the Node set up for the first time and did well, considering that most of the crews were new to their jobs. Comms were slow to come in, but after **Sgt Ralley** leant his weight and experience, going 36 hrs without sleep, the links started to drop in.

The most entertaining moment of the ex must go to **LCpl Miller** and **Sig Larkin** for setting up their Radio Relay in the most condensed set of cow pats ever seen. The Tp is now looking forward to EX ARRCADE FUSION and are looking to perform well.

TRUNK NODE 015 - *by Sig Watts*

Tp Comd **Lt K Bates**
Tp SSgt **SSgt I Strachan**

TN 015 deployed on EX ARRCADE FALCON on the 06 September 04. This has been the first ex for the new Tp since we returned from OP TELIC 3. The Tp came on in leaps and bounds during the ex, with the older members passing on their knowledge to the younger and newer members.

After a weekend in bks for turn around, the Tp was straight back out on EX RHINO CHARGE. This was a two-week ex attached to 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. This is where the Tp had to prove themselves to their Sqn hierarchy and to the Regt that we were the best Tp for the job.

TRUNK NODE 016

Tp Comd **SSgt Miller**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Parkinson**

After reforming TN 016 in August 04 we deployed on EX SUMMER SALES for 3 weeks. During this ex, we were deployed to a number of places, including Bielefeld Ridge and Haltern Trg Area.

This ex was to determine that we still had the capabilities of deploying as a TN, to provide effective PTARMIGAN connectivity after such a long gap during the Regt's deployment in Iraq. The exe was a success, and we established a solid PTARMIGAN connectivity network.

The next ex we deployed on was EX ARRCADE FALCON, in which a number of TA regts took part. After a long drive, we set up in a loc full of thistles and stinging nettles, so we had to set to and clear them.

We had trouble getting the comms in across the terrain. But after a lot of hard work and moves by everyone, we established our secure network. Overall it was a success and everyone is now looking forward to EX ARRCADE FUSION on 25 October 2004.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj M A Scholfield**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A Morris**

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tp Comd **WO1(FofS) Paterson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Hindson**

TM Tp has been busy over the last few weeks in sporting competitions and exs. **LCpl Chalery** participated in a basketball trg camp held by 7 Sig Regt in preparation for the forthcoming inter-Corps Championships commencing late October. Other members of the Tp have been trg hard for Regtl football, hockey and rugby. **SSgt Hindson** did well in the BA (G) Fishing Champs, or so he would like to think.

September has always been a busy month for the Sqn when we are deployed on many exs. These were EXs ARRCADE WARRIOR, CHARGER and FALCON.

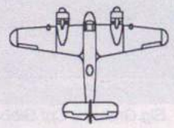
The Tp welcomes **Cpl P Browne**, who has joined us from NI. We farewell **Cpl Mike Haydon**, to NI; **Cpl Keith Knight**, posted to Ashchurch; **Cpl Emily Letchford**, posted to Civ Div; **Cpl Matt Bibby**, to N Ireland; and **Cpl Iain Young**, posted to 264 Sig Sqn.

QM (T) DEPARMENT

QM(T) **Capt M S Tivey**
RQMS(T) **WO2 P Storey**

After a very successful tour on OP TELIC, it was time to get back to normality with a very busy period in the QM's Dept. The Board of Officers and LSI prep has begun. After being away from our families and friends for 6 months, we now find ourselves in the middle of the ARRC ex period and have recently returned from a couple of weeks in the north of Germany. After returning from Iraq, we have sadly said farewell to **WO2(RQMS) Ironside**, on promotion to WO1; **Cpl Pullen**, **Sig Hamid**, and **Sig Toshack** who is off to 15 Sig Regt. We welcome **Cpl May**, **Sig Westwater**, **Sig Yates** and **Sig Newstead**. Congratulations to **Cpl Davies** after successfully coming off the promotion board.

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)



CO **Lt Col DG Halstead**
RSM **WO1(RSM) GC Smith**

EXERCISE RED BEAUFIGHTER 3

The development of the Regt's main role of Air Support was exercised again on EX RED BEAUFIGHTER 3 in September. The Regt doctrine of 'Olly's Army' was established again, as every able person and every nearly able vehicle rolled out of the gate bound for Longmoor Trg Area. For the first time in living memory, the deployment net caught even the Training Wing, deploying as EXEVAL (Exercise Evaluation). Not many members of the Regt were sure of the EXEVAL task, but they were occasionally spotted hiding in trees as det and HQs moved into and out of loc.

The deployment was a Regtl first, as 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn deployed fully in their PTARMIGAN role with two trunk nodes and OSC in tow. Happy in the knowledge that trunk are the only locs with their own cookhouses (and Ech of course!), the Sqn was well prepared to deploy for its first Regtl level test ex. Whether the local wildlife will ever be the same is debatable.

Our initial deployment via Aldershot and into Longmoor seemed to scare off our exercise foes, the Walonian Economic Redistribution Movement or 'WERM' and they moved up to STANTA trg area in East Anglia. Sure enough, we followed, soon realising that they had used the cunning defence of putting as much traffic on the M25 as they could in order to slow us all down. With each packet taking around 5hrs for the journey, everyone was looking forward to the ex slowing down a little. Wrong!

The ex continued at the pace that has rapidly become the norm for 21 Sig Regt (AS), with the out dets being bounced around the ex area. After 48 hrs of almost constant movement, setting up and tearing down, assets were rolled through an echelon staging area in the field. The LAD and techs were (for once) a welcome sight, but not as welcome as the sleeping area for the enforced rest period in preparation for the long convoy move home.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj SJ Morgan**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A Burdus**

SPORTSMAN'S DINNER

21 Sig Regt (AS) held its annual Sportsman's Dinner on Mon 20 September at Bath Rugby Club. The purpose of the occasion was not only to enjoy an excellent evening of food and wine in a superb setting, but also to celebrate another year of sport in the Regt. It also served as an ideal opportunity to award Regtl Sports Colours to those deserving sportsmen and women. It was also an ideal opportunity to raise money for charity by way of a raffle and auction.

The winners of awards in each of the categories were as follows:

Best Novice Award **Sig Atherton** for her efforts in Canoeing.

Junior Male **Sig Young** for Triathlon.

Junior Female **Sig Jones** for Athletics and Cross Country

Most Contribution to Sport **Sgt Hannah** for developing the BeaufighterClay Pigeon Club.

Sportswomen of 2004 **Cpl Tagilala** for Athletics, Rugby and Volleyball

Sportsman of 2004 **Cpl Beart** for Rugby

Overall Sports Personality **SSgt Morgan** for developing Regt Rugby into a recognised club

This year's organiser, **WO2(QMSI) Clash** exhausted all of his sporting contacts to collect together an array of sporting memorabilia for the eagerly awaited auction. Several Premier League Football Shirts were donated, along with two Bath Rugby Shirts (one worn by **Ollie Barkley** which still had mud on!). **Mr Bert Appleton**, the current GB Triathlon Team Manager, donated a Team GB Olympic Games Blazer. **Steve Backley's** size 17 collar Olympic Games 2004 shirt was also donated. Top prize to be auctioned was a genuine Wales Football Shirt worn by **Christian Edwards**. The shirt had, of course, been signed by all players and staff, and included **Ryan Giggs**, **Mark Hughes** and **Robbie Savage**, to name but a few. This item alone raised £350, and the total money raised for the Army Benevolent fund from the auction and raffle was £1,540.

This will continue to be a regular fixture in the Regtl Forecast of Events, and next year if we are lucky, Bath Rugby Club might just be playing at home, so we may have an even better view as we tuck into our Beef Wellington!

EXERCISE LION BEAUFIGHTER

EX LION BEAUFIGHTER was a Regtl level military trg ex that took place during 26 – 30 July 04. It was designed to provide all members of the Regt with the opportunity to revise and practise basic and more advanced military skills. It was organised by a Regtl Trg Wing team, headed by **WO2(Trg WO) Stallard** and **SSgt Barrass**. The ex was also an induction for the new Trg Offr, **Capt Baker**. The plan was simple, 3 days in-bks trg, revising low-level mil skills and carrying out continuation trg, followed by a 30-hr patrol competition over the demanding terrain of Dartmoor Trg Area. The Colerne-based trg phase included skills such as practical map reading, veh anti-ambush drills, cross country driving and numerous other activities, all designed to take the soldiers to a standard of training well beyond basic ITD level.

With the in-bks trg phase completed, the Regt was ready for deployment to Dartmoor. Unlike most Regtl patrol competitions, this was not designed to be an inter-Sqn affair. Teams were rapidly forged from all ranks across the Regt, offering a large number of SNCOs and JNCOs the opportunity to take on key comd appointments with unfamiliar subordinates. The Regt arrived at Dartmoor in good order; the teams were then ferried out to their start points ready for the fun to begin! The patrols were required to navigate across the moors, visiting various stands at which military tasks and tests were to be carried out. In total, the teams were required to cover 25 miles on foot carrying their full kit.

The ex started under grey skies and, in the course of the next 30 hrs, the weather managed to cover all four seasons, no surprise to Dartmoor veterans! An early evening deluge proved particularly testing for those soldiers not yet skilled in the art of field admin and, following a short night of sleep in bashas, a pea-soup mist challenged nav skills. However by the end of the ex, the teams left the trg area in bright sunlight! During the competition, the patrols endured visits at various locs by the CO, RSM and OC Sqns, and were blessed with an uplifting visit from **Padre Milsom**.

The winning patrol team was led by **SSgt Bhola** of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn, fighting off stiff competition from some very high quality teams - a credit to his leadership skills and on keeping his team focused throughout.

The prize giving took place back at Colerne over a Hog Roast and some well-earned liquid refreshments, with the CO presenting the awards. EX LION BEAUFIGHTER proved to be a great success, with many basic skills being improved and new ones learned. It is very likely that similar exs will be conducted in the near future!

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Lovett**
SSM **WO2(SSM) D Taylor**

Since the last edition of *The Wire*, the Sqn has had a very busy period. August block leave was over-shadowed by the threat of fire strikes and the possibility that the majority of the Sqn would be recalled to conduct OP FRESCO trg.

OPERATION FRESCO TRAINING – *by LCpl Redburn*

In late August, members of 220 Sig Sqn deployed up to Donnington to conduct fire fighting and driver trg for OP FRESCO. On arrival, all the drivers were given an overview of the fire engines that would possibly be used. We were then let loose to familiarise ourselves with driving the fire engines. It took a while to get used to driving a veh containing 50,000 litres of water. On completion of driver trg, we were then instructed how to operate the pumps and control the flow of water. We were also shown how to take water from other sources in the event of water loss from the fire engines. The final element to the trg involved being taught the roles and responsibilities of the Breathing Apparatus Control Officer (BACO), a very demanding job, because it meant we were responsible for the safety of our fire crew.

On return to Colerne, we were informed that the fire strike had been called off and that the skills that we had learnt would not be put into practice, which was quite a disappointment to all concerned. Overall, the experience was extremely rewarding and if OP FRESCO were called, we would have been very confident in our ability to provide a good service.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj L Golley**
SSM **WO2(SSM) M Brown**

THE THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

On 6 October after a few quiet beers at the 244 Sig Sqn function, 7 members of Charlie Tp departed camp to take part in the 3 Peaks Challenge. This involves climbing the 3 highest peaks in Britain in less than 24 hrs.

The team left camp early on Wednesday morning to make the trip up to Ben Nevis, the first of our peaks. We arrived at 18.30hrs and the group decided to make the climb straight away in the dark. It took us a total of 3 hrs to climb the mountain, a quick stop for a photo, and a further 2 hrs to descend. After a brief admin period to get some food, we then continued our journey through the night to Scafell Pike.

On arrival at Scafell Pike, we had a quick breakfast and set off up the mountain. This peak took a total of 2 hrs to reach the top, then a further 2 hrs to reach the bottom. Then it was onto the bus for the journey to Snowdon.

We arrived at Snowdon at 16.00hrs, leaving us 3 hrs to complete the mountain. This peak proved to be quite hard, because we were now starting to face fatigue and hadn't slept very much on the journeys. However, we made it to the top of our third and final mountain, with the time at 18.15hrs completing the challenge in time of 23 hrs 28 mins.

It was then off to Bangor for a night on the town to celebrate, and then a quick sleep before we started our journey back to camp.

A very well done to **Cpl Spry**, **Sig Finch**, **Sig Grace**, **Sig Bean**, **Sig Polhill**, **Sig Beale** and myself **Sig Robertson**, for completing the Challenge, and for raising a large sum of money for the Army Benevolent Fund.

ARNHEM 60th ANNIVERSARY REMEMBRANCE PARADE
- by Sig Airstone

A Charlie Tp organised trip to Arnhem was planned so that a group from the Regt could join in with the commemoration of the Battle of Arnhem. The battle took place between 17-26 September 1944, resulting in a British withdrawal with heavy losses. On the first day we visited the Harstein Hotel, now the Arnhem Museum in Oosterbeek and then walked to the Arnhem war cemetery to pay our respects. Later we headed into Arnhem centre for a few social drinks. The next morning most of the group went to Ginkel Heath to watch the airborne drop of 4 Para and 10 Veterans from the original jump. This was to re-enact the original drop of 1 Airborne Bde. After watching the jump, we headed back into Oosterbeek, to watch the race to Arnhem Bridge. This also involved a parade of WW2 military vehs through the streets of Oosterbeek. In the evening there were marching bands performing a wide range of music in the town square. When everyone met up that evening, it was time to return to UK, in glorious style - by minibus.

The Arnhem tour group at the Oosterbeek War Cemetery

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JA Kennedy**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Ganesh**

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON REFORMATION PARADE AND QUEEN'S GURKHA SIGNALS 50th ANNIVERSARY

On 24 September, the vast majority of serving Queens Gurkha Signals Officers and Soldiers converged on Bramcote for the 50th Anniversary of the QGS Cap-Badging and the official reformation parade of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn. The parade was conducted in the presence of the Colonel-in-Chief, **HRH the Princess Royal**, The Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**, the SOinC(A), the Colonel of the QGS, CO 21 Sig Regt (AS) and many former members of QGS.

With the help of the Band of the Bde of Gurkhas, the parade was a great success, with even the 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn Officers and **SSgt Curry's** uncontrollable medals managing to compose themselves enough on the march past. Indeed, such was the sharpness of the drill, that according to neutral observers, 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn were clearly in different league from those other QGS units!

Following the parade, a sequence of official events took place, including a Nepali Mela, where **Sgt Nar** stole most of the raksi. After farewelling the Colonel-in-Chief, the QGS hordes then prepared for the next item - an all-night BBQ and cultural show. Clearly 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn was the only GSS to pay more than lip-service to the all-night concept, as the next day was a shabby one in the short but brilliant history of the Sqn. In the sports competition, the Sqn was robbed by a combination of dodgy event manipulation and a 250 Sqn Tug of War team that reminded many watching of the baddies from the *Karate Kid*.

Sporting activities over, the Beating of Retreat was performed by the Bde band and the QGS Association Dinner commenced. The following day saw the official farewell to **Lt Col Paul Vingoe** as Comd QGS with yet another Bhat feast, a cultural display and a farewell Mala. Then when the final tear had dried from **Lt Col Vingoe's** eyes, the Sqn returned to Colerne for some much needed rest.

248 Gurkha Sig Sqn leads the march past at the Reformation Pde.

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col Warne**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Hancock**

Over the past few weeks the face of 30 Sig Regt has changed considerably. Fond farewells to **Lt Col IPF Vingoe**, who leaves us on promotion; and to 2IC **Maj R Patrickson**, who leaves us for Glasgow; Ops Offr **Maj D McTaggart** has gone to the TA in Sheffield; **Maj Rich Moir**, who goes to Civvy street.

Welcome to their replacements, **Lt Col Warne**, **Maj Rab Young**, **Maj Bill Adsett** and **Maj Jon Harrington** respectively.

The Regt has a history steeped in the glory of some 54 different ops since the Falklands Conflict in 1982, all of which have been well recorded in the pages of this, our Corps historic publication. In support of our operational commitments and tempering our readiness to deploy, here are some of our recent 'No Soft Options' approach to Regimental Life here in Bramcote.

THE COMMANDING OFFICER'S ITCH HE NEVER SCRATCHED – *by Maj Jon Duckworth*

An erroneous comment by **Lt Col Paul Vingoe** in the summer resulted in all Offrs and WOs taking to the Brecon Beacons for a 'Study Day' ably assisted by **Capt Gary Johnson** and his 264 Sig Sqn crew. Having 'studied' the Penn Y Fan test route march in some detail, quite a few very convincing times were put in by the young and not so young members of the management team. It was a fantastic day and many thanks to all those to helped see us safely over the hills.

WO2 Mick Patey, SSgt Brummie Taylor, Cpl Paul Kemp, Capt Sean Keilty

TRAILWALKER (UK) 2004 – *by Capt Russ Darlington*

256 Sqn entered two teams into this prestigious event, taking on the 100 km South Downs course. A phenomenal effort by Team Cygnet Ladies, winners of the all female team event, smashed the course record by some 2½ hrs in a time of 15 hrs 54 mins. Our mature team, with a combined age of 145 years, gave it their all in a time of 14 hrs 13 mins. Special mentions to **WO2 Mick Patey**, who led the way through injuries which would have ended a lesser man, and to **Cpl Paul Kemp**, who had joined the team two days prior to the event. More importantly, both teams are well on course to raising £3,000.00 for Oxfam and Gurkha Welfare Trust.

THE LONDON TRIATHLON – *by Capt Sarah Pittaway*

Along with 8,500 others, **Capt Sarah Pittaway** took part in the London Triathlon on 31 July 04. In glorious sunshine, dressed head to toe in rubber (with no danger of being arrested!) the competitors were set off in batches of 450. The 750m swim was followed by a 20km bike ride, and the final 5km run was made even more challenging by the fearsome sunshine beating down.

Capt Sarah Pittaway cooling it

Exhausted but happy, **Capt Pittaway** finished the sprint race in 40th place (of 450) in a time of I hr 26 mins. Most importantly though, over £400 was raised for Edale Mountain Rescue, who rescued **Sgt Andy Campbell** after his climbing accident in April this year.

GREAT NORTH RUN (WITH A DIFFERENCE)
– by Cpl Nick Tipper

The 25th running of the Great North Run Half Marathon saw a six-man team, ably driven and administered by **Cpl Holly Glen**, arrive bleary eyed at the mass start with over 50,000 other competitors. Suffice to say our running kit of boots, combats and Bergens of varying age, raised a few eyebrows. The age-old saying of 'When in Rome...' translated very nicely to 'When in Newcastle', with the team enjoying the hospitality and support of the Geordie faithful. **Cpl Nick Tipper** even managed to enjoy the warmth of a visit to Wallsend. The team cracked the course in 2 hrs 24 mins, cheered all the way by both spectators and fellow runners in awe of our efforts. Special thanks to our fellow runner, **Charlie Dimmock** of Ground Force fame, for her supportive cheer of 'You lot are ****ing mad!' Er, thanks for that, Charlie! Suffice to say, an excellent weekend was had by all, topped off with a £1,200.00 donation to our chosen charity, Get Kids Going.

SERJEANT JH GOODE MM – *by WO2 (RQMS) Daz Sheerin*

Working on a tip off from **Mr Kevin Robinson**, ex YofS of 30 Sig Regt, the grave of **Sjt John Henry Goode MM** Royal Signals has been located in the local Chivers Coton Cemetery. **John** served in WW2 and was awarded the Military Medal for intelligence services in the Middle and Far East. In September 1944 he saw action in Arnhem, where he was injured and repatriated to UK. Sadly he died of his wounds on 29 November 1946 aged 32. Through an appeal in the local press, **WO2 (RQMS) Daz Sheerin** (a keen military historian) has managed to make contact with his surviving relatives. Through this contact, and in agreement with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the upkeep of the grave will now be carried out by Support Sqn personnel, a duty we are very proud to carry out.

Capt Sean Keilty and WO2 Daz Sheerin at Sjt Goode's grave

EXERCISE RAMPANT LION 2004 - *by Cpl Alward-Smith*

On the evening of 5 July 2004, thirty members of Support Sqn departed for of Alderney for the annual EX RAMPANT LION. The aim of the ex is to maintain and strengthen Regtl ties with the Island (the Regt enjoys The Freedom of Alderney) and to participate in a range of community projects during the mornings, whilst in the afternoon competing in various sporting events against the Islanders for The Gamecock Cup.

We arrived at 09.00hrs on 6 July after spending the night travelling across the Channel *Saving Private Ryan* style on a prehistoric landing craft - which made for a wet night, as the waves crashed over the side soaking all those sleeping out on the deck.

Support Sqn arriving in Braye Bay Harbour, Alderney

The first day was spent setting up the 'tent city' that was to be our admin area and accn for the duration of our stay, and getting in some football practice ready for the big match to take place later in the week. The evening provided our first chance to get a look at the local nightlife. Ibiza should start worrying (not)!

The second day was to be the beginning of the community projects, which saw the soldiers divided up into three groups, for the three different tasks. The first group was to work at Fort Doyle under the leadership of **Trevor Davenport**, the resident expert, on a German Resistance nest compound, which had 60 years worth of growth and disuse since WW2. The long-term plan is to refurbish the complex as an example of life on the island during the Occupation.

The second group built a path and driving range at the Golf Club. This would more or less complete the golf course. Clearing an area of rough land by hand, shovel and digger made the final product well worth the effort.

The third group was to dig out a WW2 German bunker for use by the Royal Alderney Militia in their trg exs under the steely command of **Col Walters MBE MC***.

That evening provided the first of the events of the Gamecock Cup: the Darts and, more importantly, the dominoes. Our darts team, struck down with injury and plagued by bad karma, lost all but one of our games. And as the Islander's dominoes champion poured his fifth kilo of snuff up his nose, we knew that it could be over. Our team played bravely, and after a bitterly-contested battle, lost all of their games hands down. The shape of things to come.

The next night was an opportunity to extend our winnings, with our pool team taking the field, and our nails team competing for their glory. Again, we were cheated. Our pool team had their drinks spiked with alcohol, despite their strict no alcohol diet in the week running up to the match. And the nails? Well, what kind of game involves trying to hit a nail into a tree stump with a ball hammer anyway? All games were lost, apart from the OC, **Capt Keilty**, who put up a fantastic performance.

The next few days were spent carrying out the community tasks and practising for the future sporting events, football, cricket, snooker and golf. Sunday provided our first opportunity to get our own back and start winning some events, namely snooker. A combination of badly designed snooker tables and more drink spiking, led to yet another abysmal performance with the

Islanders cleaning up and winning all the matches. We were beginning to think there was some foul play going on.

Monday brought our first chance at a real sport. Our cricket team strode onto the pitch, with winning their one thought. After an exciting game, watched over by the CO and OC to boost morale, our cricket team was to leave the field all out for 125, compared with the Islanders' 163. Congratulations should go to **Sig Brookes** for his inspired leadership, and **Pte Parkinson** for his inspired batting. A special mention to **LCpl Broomhall** for his enthusiastic support.

Tuesday afternoon's football brought our finest hour. Led by **Cpl McNeal**, we creamed the islanders 2 – 0, after a heavily contested game. The goal scorers were **Pte Parkinson** and **Cpl Redfern**.

The final night was our last chance to show off our sporting prowess with a Tug of War contest between the Army and the Islanders. Again, we suspected foul play, with what looked like the Norwegian International Tug of War team being flown in especially for the event. We never stood a chance. After a very nice barbeque and a very generous donation behind the bar by the States, the Gamecock Cup was awarded to the Islanders for another year.

Throughout the ex, another activity that was going on: the trg of the Royal Alderney Militia, the local cadet force by **Cpls Glen** and **Alward-Smith**. **Cpl Glen** oversaw the signals trg with some voice procedure and radio trg, whilst **Cpl Alward-Smith** taught the cadets how to use the service rifles, and some infantry tactics. All this trg led to a final ex held at Fort Albert, where the cadets had to storm the fort, putting all the trg into practice, with members of the Regt acting as enemy.

The ex went very well and the kids had a great time. Credit must be given to the safety staff involved, and to **WO2(SSM) Coupland**, without whose vision, the whole thing would have never become a reality. BBC TV filmed the event. Just how many crates for being on national television?

All who went to Alderney enjoyed the ex, and felt that they had gained something from the experience. For some, it was the simple pleasure of dominoes, for others it was a chance to hone their escape and evasion skills followed by conduct after capture, and for the rest it was simply a chance to meet people from different areas of their own Sqn and work with them for a few weeks. All that remains to say, is that we will be back to claim the Gamecock Cup next year. And despite all of the events that we lost to the Islanders, there is one thing that they cannot take away from us, the most important thing of all, beyond pride, beyond honour. We won the Football...!!

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col RJH Sutherland TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Ironside**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Phil Donegan**
SSM	**WO2 Norma Sproul**

In late July, the Sqn welcomed its first female subaltern in quite a while, when **2Lt Lorna Craik** passed off the square at RMAS on Saturday 31 July. **Lorna** is the first officer in the Regt to have come through the TAOC system, and we wish her well as she heads off to the post of Tp Comd at 52 Sqn.

Much of August was spent preparing for Annual Camp and then closely followed by the ECI and LSI. There was however an opportunity to get in some socialising.

The main event of the year, Annual Camp, commenced on Saturday 11 September, where the balance of the Sqn headed off to Culty, where, surprise, surprise, it was raining. Within a couple of days, elements of the Sqn were touring all corners of Scotland, as they attempted to effect repairs and maintenance on Regt equipt. The Camp culminated in a platoon (almost a company) attack on the evil Al Kabosh (aka **WO2 Mick MacEvoy's** Mincers) terrorist positions, lurking just outside Culty Camp, of all places. The initial recce was conducted by **Maj Phil Donegan** and **Maj Steve Holt**. The OC estimated that he would get about 19 people to conduct the attack. In the event, about 40-50 turned up.

The Sqn now looks forward to a healthy diet of shooting over the next couple of months, followed by Armistice and the Christmas celebrations. We will also be saying a temporary goodbye to **LCpl Kev Currie** of the LAD, who heads off to Iraq on OP TELIC for 6 months. We wish him well and look forward to his return in March 2005.

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Andrew Thompson TD**
SSM	**SSgt Davie Riach**

The Sqn farewells its former PSAO, **Capt Norrie Donald** who now becomes a Lt Col for a role with ACF. The Sqn will also miss its departing SPSI, **SSgt Minorchekes**, who leaves us on his promotion to WO2. We welcome **Capt Bennion**, ex-RN, as the new Tp Comd, 513 Tp. Meanwhile, we welcome two new members of the permanent staff: **WO1 Postlewaite** becomes our new PSAO, while **SSgt Chris Mulligan** joins us as SPSI. The Sqn extends its best wishes to **Capt Lynn Bertram**, following

SSgt Sorely asks the cameraman for advice

her mobilisation to the Balkans. We know she will enjoy her staff posting and the chance to wear civilian clothing. Additional wishes go to **LCpl Gillian Grant** who will shortly be in hotter climes. The best of luck to both of them.

Congratulations are extended to the following on their recent promotions: **SSgt Davie Riach**, our acting SSM, **SSgt Burnett**, **Cpl Hunter**, **Cpl Bakewell** and **LCpl Tony McLaughlin**.

On annual camp CST-514 we were using a little creative Highland thinking to solve a major dilemma. Just how do you erect a fifty-odd metre long dipole in an area of steeply rising ground half the area of a badminton court? **Sgt McKay**, **Cpls Bakewell** and **Davidson** along with **Sigs Rae** and **Duncan** managed to erect an impressive dipole involving one mast, three windows, five cables, two rooftops and (of all things) a bin shed! Well done to them, especially from **Sig Rae,** who was sat on set throughout the entire erection process and saw the whole thing. There is also a rumour that they got comms in, but this is, as yet, unsubstantiated.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

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

EXERCISE SALTIRE DEFENDER

EX SALTIRE DEFENDER was a long awaited Sqn military skills weekend, held at Garelochead, and the soldiers were keen to get in amongst it. Early in the ex, the SNCO curse started. **Sgt Sam Wilkie** hurt herself during the move into the harbour area. If the medical form is to be believed, **Sgt Wilkie** fell down a hole the size of the Grand Canyon carrying the kind of weight normally found in the hold of a C130. This ignited a chain of events that saw every SNCO below the rank of WO2 injured. **Sgt Gillan** fell off of the back of a 4 tonne truck, and the PSI had his perpetual bad back problem. **Cpl Brown** was heard to mutter 'Thank the Lord I am not a SNCO. I'd be a goner by now.' Meanwhile the OC took the SSM and **Capt Helen Jephcote** out to Area A to brief them on their role as enemy. They were designated an area they had to patrol, but unfortunately had not brought their swimming costumes. They had to wade waist deep across part of the trg area. Sunday morning started with some instruction on room and house clearance by the OC. **WO2 Swan** and **Capt Jephcote** were somewhat confused by the term house clearing, and started to sweep the house out and tidy things up! The ex closed with an advance to contact over some steep and ankle breaking ground. The final attack used so much pyro, that the tactics resembled shock and awe rather than the manoeuvrist approach. Thanks must go to the medical staff at CSB Faslane and the Royal Alexandria Hospital, Paisley for dealing with a seemingly unending line of SNCO Casualties.

EXERCISE HORSESHOE 5

As this article is being written, a battle is raging between the protectors of the UK and those who would destroy our sacred way of life, the Al Kabosh. That's right, its annual camp and the 2 (NC) Sig Bde FTX. The Sqn conducted a mobilisation ex on the morning of 11 September, before deploying to the Regtl concentration area at Cultybraggan. Sunday saw the Regt carry out battle procedure of orders, inspections etc and a PACEX to train in equipt not yet used by many. The Sqn rose at 04.30hrs and paraded, bleary eyed but enthusiastic, by their vehs, ready to deploy to Kirknewton Airfield outside Edinburgh. Once deployed, we were given full use of the compound, which meant accn, showers, TV room for off-duty personnel. Inevitably, once word travelled about this loc, the more undesirable elements of the Regt, RCP, decided to descend on Kirknewton to enjoy the pleasures. For some, this was not as easy as they had expected. The Adjt, **Capt Colin Alexander**, arrived without having furnished himself with the password. Entry to the site was almost impossible as **Cpl Miller** refused him entry until a responsible officer or SNCO could be found.

Our next location was slightly less salubrious - the Balado Bridge site near Kinross. This turned out to be a green field site with the perfume of chicken carcasses wafting gently from the poultry farm next door. The site was made even more luxurious by the constant barking of the MGS guard dogs as they patrolled the station grounds. The newly promoted Sgt **Phil Brown** fell head first out of a NCRS trailer and **Sgts Tam McDonagh** and **Jackie Main** hurt their backs rescuing a fleeing 12 x 12 tent. One other incident of note was the birthday of **Sgt Carol Vaughan**. Guesses of her age ranged between 21 and 'older than the hills.'

How old do you think I am?

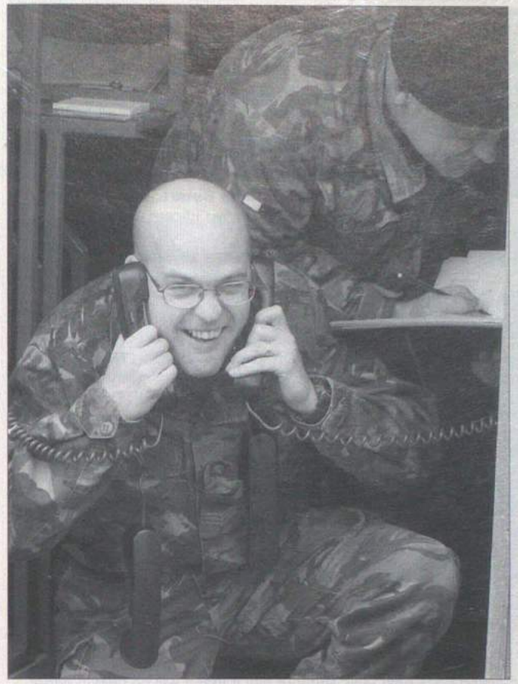
An uneventful night move to the quagmire of Trg Area A of Garelochead was made more interesting, when armed units of the MOD Police prevented any movement from the site because of a real-time security incident. Someone tried to break into the PSI's wallet.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC Maj Andy Brace

The last couple of months have been fairly busy for the Sqn, with the main task being the build up to Annual Camp and Ex Horseshoe 5. Camp started well with a mobilisation ex followed by the swift deployment of the CST team to Barry Buddon to help the Scottish Transport Regt find some missing terrorist weapons. Meanwhile, the rest of the Sqn waved goodbye to **Capt Peter Campbell** and trundled north to Cultybraggan, where it inevitably started to rain as the convoy got within 10 miles of the camp gate. It wasn't long before the CST was reunited with the Sqn and then off to RM Condor for a bit of living in the field. Gutted to find no hot water in the sports pavilion, the Sqn soon upped sticks and moved back to Cultybraggan to set up a fairly permanent Network Management Centre, ready for the Bde ex. To keep us on our toes, the Ginger Trio of Power kept throwing little 'what-ifs' into the ex play, only for them to become 'do-nows'.

Strapped for manpower, the Sqn pulled some crazy shifts, with **Sgt Cook** at one point manning 4 radio nets, supervising three NCRS wagons, and hosting a technical inspection at the same time.



Sgt Cook operating 4 nets at once

Strengthening our link with the local AAC Flight, we had our usual complement of helicopters on camp, with **SSgt Bob Harvey**, providing instruction on how to wave informatively at helicopters.

SSgt Harvey preparing an underslung load

The first ex saw the Gazelle flying round with a net full of tyres as an underslung load as trg for what was to come later in the week. After recent flooding, a mudslide wiped out a large chunk of the A85 to the west of Cultybraggan, and the civilian contractors had requested help from the Army in moving some hard core to the damaged road. Taking two recruits with him, **SSgt Harvey** was soon responsible for a few fair tonnes of hard core moving around the Scottish Highlands. **Sig Young** and **Sig Sommerville** had a cracking time hitching up the loads, and even getting a flight back to Cultybraggan after it was all over - although some fairly hefty static shocks dampened the enthusiasm to do it again.

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

CO	**Lt Col Lt Col D Somerville MBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) M Browitt**

80 SQUADRON ADVENTUROUS TRAINING 6-8 AUG 04
- by Sig Taylor

This year's AT was a bit different from the usual water-sports and outdoor activities. We had the amazing opportunity of a free-org day in a quarry in Fairborne.

Saturday saw an early start, and after a long drive, we in Fairborne. Once we had lugged our kit up a steep path, we realised that it was going to be absolutely scorching day. We were split into groups and given our first activity of the day. For me, it was climbing. Not a problem I told myself, that was until I saw the horrifying 20ft sheer slate quarry side.

Our group was of mixed ability; some of us needed more encouragement than others. Not one to be put off, **Sgt Caroline Patton** took up the challenge and after overcoming a brief spell of concrete feet, was making good progress until the slate she was holding came away and she slipped. That was it; final straw, bottle gone, a rather terrified **Caroline** was lowered back to the relative safety of the ground. Needless to say, after that, my bottle had gone too. The abseil was slightly less eventful. With an average amount of nerves and a few colourfully descriptive words, it was a quite evenly matched affair.

After a quick picnic lunch on a hillside with a lovely view of the sea and beaches of Barmouth, we donned our warmer clothes, safety hats and head torches and headed off down into a slate mine. It was cold, damp and dark in the mine, and we all took a bit of time to reflect on the working conditions of the mineworkers compared with our own. We were then lowered through a tiny hole into the abyss below, deeper into the mine. I don't think I was the only one who screamed.

After a small walk we were then faced with climbing back out again, up a wet slate wall. It was definitely an achievement for some of the less confident climbers like myself. Once we'd all gathered at the top, we left the cave and were hit by a wall of heat. Sweaty and tired we made our way back up the hillside to the top of the quarry where the other two groups were eagerly waiting to share their stories whilst getting changed into suitable attire for the zip line that awaited us.

And there it was, a zip line 33ft from the top of the quarry, rocketing people into the cool and inviting clear blue lake. The easy bit was getting down. The hard part was not swallowing the lake as you screamed when you hit the water, and trying to avoid

A more relaxed moment. Stress completely gone

the brown trout as you swam for the side. It was great fun, and **Maj Simon Mason** enjoyed it so much he had a second go! Then it was on the bus into Bangor for a few fizzy drinks and a healthy kebab or two. Saturday night in style!

Sunday was a more sedate affair, with the choice of an indoor climbing wall or a leisurely walk up the Welsh mountains. The whole weekend was fantastic, and we owe **SSgt Barton** a great many thanks for giving us all the opportunity to take part in the activities and share the opportunities.

DEFENCE TRAINING CENTRE BOROVETS, BULGARIA

- by 2Lt Matthew Trump

This year's CIOR (Inter-allied Confederation of Reserve Officers) Language Academy was held at the Defence Training Centre in Borovets, Bulgaria from 12 – 24 July. Once again, it was supported by 33 Sig Regt, who provided **Capt Richard Koss** and **2Lt Matthew Trump** to serve on the staff.

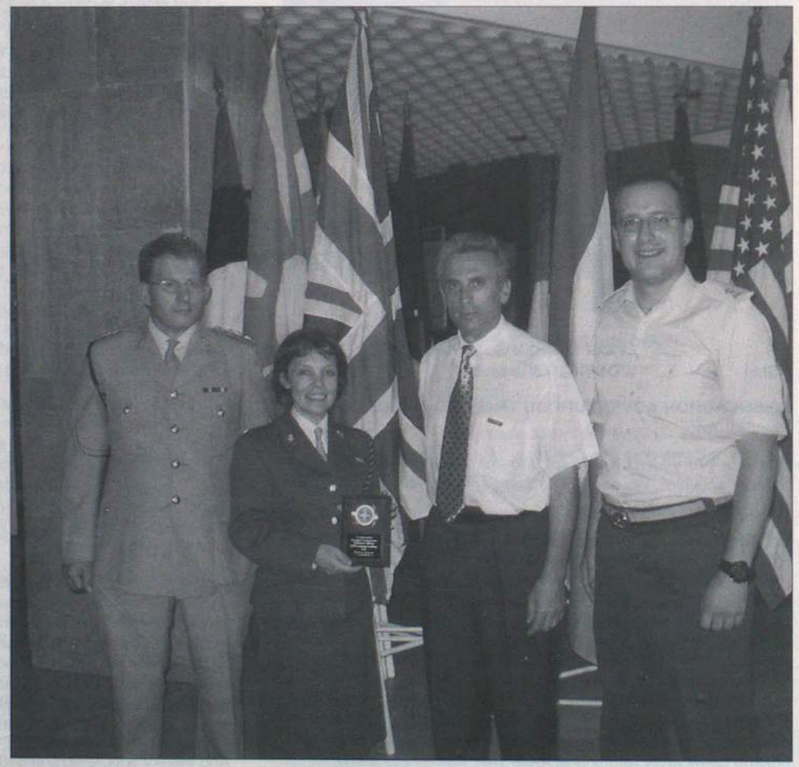
Forty-six students from 12 countries participated as students, and reserve officers from UK, Canada and USA served as instructors. **Capt Koss** was joined on the teaching staff by **Maj Lin MacLean** from Tayforth Universities OTC. **2Lt Matthew Trump** worked on the PR team and provided IT support to the teachers and staff. Students were reserve offrs from Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Col Gen Prokopiev, President of the Bulgarian Union of Reserve Offrs and NCOs, welcomed the 46 students and 10 instructors to the course. It was good to meet up with the many students who attended last year, including **Col Miha Butara**, the president of the Slovene Reserve Officers Assn.

The PR effort this year centred on a VIP day at the Rakovski Defence Staff College, which showcased the course to senior Bulgarian military officials, diplomats and the Bulgarian media. Among the distinguished guests were **Col Gen Prokopiev**, **Maj Gen Manev**, Comdt Rakovski Military Academy, the Romanian Ambassador, and UK Deputy Defence Attaché, **Lt Cdr Mark Warlow**. The VIP day allowed me to build on the skills that I learned last year on the Unit PRO's course.

Many thanks for **Col Atanas Stefanov**, secretary of the Bulgarian Union of Reserve Offrs and NCOs for his hard work both before and during the Academy. He was assisted by **Col Lyudmil Haralanov**, a UK sponsored student at the Academy held last year in Slovenia.

With the Academy going from strength to strength, I hope I will be invited back next year. Rumour has it that it will be held in either Budapest or Bucharest.



Capt Koss, 2Lt Trump and members of the Defence Training Centre

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NEWS FROM THE GULF

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT DETACHMENT SBMR-I BAGHDAD

Maintaining our shooting skills

- by Lt Sarah Panting

Tp Comd **Lt Sarah Panting**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Liam Tosh**

The past few months have been fast and furious for the Tp, and now we've got a few minutes to look back at what we've achieved since we deployed in July. Comms in Baghdad are looking a lot healthier now since **FofS Paul Hughes** and **YofS Mark Allen**, under the guidance of the Sqn OC, **Major Ade Clewlow**, have made some changes, resulting in a faster and more reliable service to the Staff in Maude House, the US Embassy and Al Faw Palace.

There have been a few late nights and some bleary-eyed mornings, but the troop remains in good spirits, especially now the R and R plot is well under way.

We've found some time for non-comms activities too, notably the range day organised by **SSgt Tosh** and **SSgt Bharat**, with the help of **Sgt Brett Doyle**, who showed off his skills with a rifle, but didn't quite live up to expectation at the quiz nights!

We've also celebrated the 50th Anniversary Capbadging Parade of the Queen's Gurkha Signals when QGS soldiers past and present were reunited at Maude House from Basrah, Shaibah and Baghdad. **Lt Gen McColl CBE** took the parade and it was a memorable affair, not least for the reunion of two sons with their father who had not seen each other for several years.

I would not be forgiven for forgetting to mention the Tp's victory in the first Baghdad International Football Tournament. After 4 gruelling matches, the Imphal Tigers walked away as champions of the tournament, having beaten such sides as the British Embassy and other esteemed teams. **Cpl Sharp** has been on Soccer AM nearly every Saturday since!

Over the last month, we've said goodbye to a couple of the star footie players, **Cpl Ashley** and **Cpl Malcolm**, who will both be missed as two of the Tp's quieter members (!), but we have welcomed into the fold **Sig Wood** and **LCpl Robbie Kerswell**, who are settling into the Baghdad pace of life.

The QGS 50th Anniversary Parade

The Tp's successful football team

HQ MND (SE) J6

Following the departure of 16 Sig Regt, the stalwarts in J6 Branch of HQ MND (SE) continue to determinedly strive on against the now-obligatory tirade of abuse and howls of anguish from Staff, units and contractors alike. Thankfully, we've not gone native yet and had Sharia Law imposed, otherwise there were occasions where we'd have definitely lost something a bit more painful than a link!

There has however, been a noticeable improvement of late, both in the provision of comms and the tone of our detractors...especially since Ch J6, **Lt Col Calvin Owen** has managed to get them to make the logical connection that the comms mostly go down when the air conditioning fails i.e. when the generators go down.

Eventually it was realised, that if the generators are provided by J4 Infra, then perhaps the lack of comms is actually J4 Infra's fault! The result is that J4 Infra have pulled their socks up and improved the power situation. Combined with the weather cooling down a tad, things have become a bit more stable all round - just in time for the next round of Mahdi-manifested madness and mayhem, doubtlessly inbound with Ramadan this month.

A dawn patrol ready for action

Elsewhere, rockets and mortars landing amid the contractors, and frequent trips as Top Cover in the SNATCH downtown to the Basrah City Telephone exchanges has kept everyone else sufficiently fizzed so far.

These metropolitan excursions are intended to help rebuild the local Iraqi public telephone infrastructure, and will also provide some trunk capability for Government work. Both SYNERGY and **Capt Paul Denning's** PMR projects are keeping **Sgt Maj Sid Crowton**'s installation teams busy, whilst **Maj Lee Smart** frustrates **WO2(Q) Musgrave's** and **Capt Ross Collins'** best attempts to cure his Midas touch with their computer systems.

J6 Support Tp, under **Capt Simon Bristow** and **WO2(YofS) Johns**, are all a little bit happier after the Muqtada Militia returned their toys in one piece. Still, it keeps us all busy and out of mischief until the next round of arabesque antics hits the streets.

J6 SUPPORT TROOP, HQ MND (SE)

SO2 J6 (EW)	**Maj Peter Hale**
J6 Supt Tp Comd	**WO2(YofS) Lee Johns**
J6 Supt Tp FofS	**WO2 (FofS) John Collins**

J6 Supt Tp was formed in November-December 2003 as part of PROJECT LOCKSMITH, whose aim is to counter the threat of RCIEDs in theatre. The Tp was initially located in the basement of Basrah International Airport, but in May 04 moved with HQ MND (SE) to the newly refurbished Hotel.

The first tranche of Tp personnel have now returned to their parent units after setting the groundwork for us to follow. We wish them all the best. Congratulations to **Cpls John Whalley** and **Dave Weatherstone** on being selected for promotion to Sgt.

The Tp is based on similar lines to Romeo Tp in NI, and we have some current R Tp personnel, some ex-R Tp personnel, and personnel with no ECM experience at all. We deploy to all locs where there are UK personnel, including Baghdad, Basrah City, and other camp locs. We install the equipt into numerous types of vehs, and for most of us, it is a steep learning curve.

The Tp is split down as follows:

Ops Cell, comprising **Maj Peter Hale**, **WO2(FofS) John Collins**, **WO2(YofS) Lee Johns** and **Sgt Leigh Tyrell** (Tp Sgt/Stores);

Team One, comprising Sgt **Neil Hemley**, **Cpl Dave Weatherstone**, **Cpl Scott Deas** and **Cpl Monty Burns**;

Team Two, comprising **Sgt Mark Collins**, **Cpl Lee Nicol**, **Cpl Lee James** and **Cpl Kath Carbery**; and ECM Advisor to TF-Black, **SSgt Matt Booth**.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D Mitchell**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj D Deegan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) AV Gill**

HAND OVER TAKE OVER OF THE COMMANDING OFFICER

Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts took over comd of 15 Sig Regt from **Lt Col NP Metcalfe MBE QGM** at 12.00hrs on Friday 17 September. The incoming CO has recently come from SO1 Weapons EC-CCII at MOD.

HOTO of the COs

EXERCISE FINAL FLING – CO'S LEAVING FUNCTION
- by Capt GMA Wills

EX FINAL FLING was an all day event for all of the Regtl Offrs from 15 Sig Regt, to say farewell to the CO, **Lt Col NP Metcalfe MBE QGM** and OC 233 Sig Sqn, **Maj Stewart McConnell**. The Mess Secretary, **Captain GMA Wills** organised the event, which fortunately did not include Mess Kit! The form was an afternoon's Karting, followed by a curry.

Thirteen Officers were suited, briefed and ready to go. The racing took part on a split-level track in Ballymena, and we opted for the Grand Prix scenario, whereby an eventual top three would be decided. With some fearsome competition, it was clear to see that the CO had obviously been watching *Driving Miss Daisy* and not **Michael Schumacher**, as after two heats he was placed well and truly last. Some of the LE Offrs were moaning about their joints and arthritis, but **Maj Wright-Jones** was looking good on the track, until he was unceremoniously spun off by the very keen and eager **Captain Wills** (his low centre of gravity helped!).

In the Grand Final, it was to no surprise that the CO was not there, and that **Maj McConnell** was in pole position. With little opposition in his way, he sped into a commanding lead, quickly followed by **Maj White** and then **Capt Wills**. Whilst everyone was spinning and shunting away behind, the front three stayed as they had started.

A few bottles of Champagne and some leaving speeches, which were a bit off the wall, preceded the meal in the evening. The more traditional thank you and 'aren't you great' was given to **Maj McConnell**. This was then quickly followed by a 'This is your life' style presentation for the CO. Various pictures of *The Professionals*, Capri cars, blacked out eyes and isolation tents were accompanied by various stories that had the CO both in stitches and with a look of amazement on his face.

The day was a huge success, and we all went away with full stomachs and stories of Karting - some with more embarrassing stories than others! We wish **Lt Col Metcalfe** the very best of luck in his new job as Chief G3 in HQNI, and look forward to seeing if he drives his car faster than he does a Go-Kart!

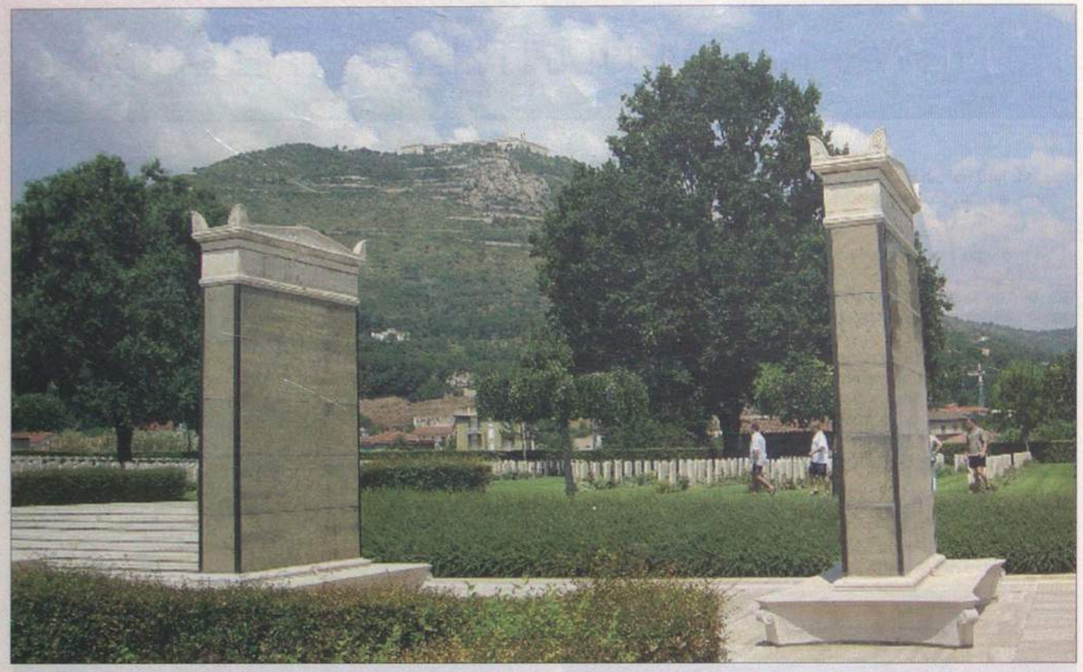
The Winners

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj M Hanby**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) TJ Lappin**

EXERCISE SHINGLE FINN *- by Cpl Whitfield*

EX SHINGLE FINN was the 15th Sig Regt Battlefield Tour, conducted around the Anzio and Monte Cassino battlefields of WW2. The ex was organised by 2IC 233 Sig Sqn, **Capt Jones**,



The Cemetery at Monte Cassino

with expert guidance provided by tour guide **Mr Patrick Mercer MP**, an Ex-Infantry Colonel now Shadow Spokesman for Homeland Defence. The NATO CIS School (NCISS) Latina provided the accn for the Tour. Many thanks must go to **WO1 (RSM) Alger** of NCISS Latina, for his help and assistance throughout the week.

After arriving late at night, the following day was to be spent sorting out admin, and once this was completed, everyone took advantage of the 30-minute train journey into Rome, the Eternal City. The Burberry caps of **Sig Richie Kingston** and **Sig Bickerston** mingled with the crowds enjoying the culture of Rome's many attractions.

On Day 2 and 3 the party moved to the Monte Cassino Battlefields. After an early start and some particularly dangerous driving on the Italian motorways by **SSgt Ian Bald,** we arrived on the outskirts of the town, with the group dressed in shorts and sandals, **Patrick Mercer** was in boots and trousers, and it soon became apparent why. **Patrick** bounded up a near vertical rocky hillside – a probable wartime OP, while we slipped and scrambled after him. This was to give us a general overview of the town and the situation at the time.

Many of the group had been given subjects to present on specific aspects of the campaign, and these were delivered throughout the week. Of particular note, was **Sgt Lynn Stevenson**, whose accent for many of the group was too broad to understand without an interpreter.

The party atmosphere became a bit subdued in the searing heat, and whilst half way up to Monte Cassino Abbey, we realised just exactly what the Allies had accomplished. The enormous hill towered over the valley, and we were told of vicious hand-to-hand fighting and great loss of life. The sombre mood was also apparent every time we visited the immaculately kept and eerily silent war cemeteries of all nations.

On the Saturday evening there was a free concert outside the Coliseum to celebrate our arrival, with Simon and Garfunkel performing to over 1 million people. The group descended on Rome with the intention of visiting the concert, but not many made it after pizza and a lethal local spirit called Grappa, which the Italian waiters took great delight in serving up.

Days 4 and 5 were spent around the Anzio area, with **Patrick Mercer** teaching the Scousers a thing or two in the art of trespassing, as the locals now inhabit many of the battle scenes.

Inside one of the infamous wadis at Anzio

The highlight for many was the much-anticipated trip into the Anzio wadis, deep overgrown ravines untouched for years where fierce CQB took place.

Once in the wadis, the War was brought to life with numerous finds of unexploded munitions, shrapnel, grenades, barbed wire and trenches all untouched for 60 years. Even the tour guide was impressed with the amount of finds.

The tour ended with a humbling wreath-laying ceremony at the Anzio War Cemetery, and everyone was genuinely moved after spending four days visiting battlefields and listening to stories of death and hardship.

The last night party passed with the grappa flowing freely, and some of the women in the group getting a personal invite to the House of Commons from **Patrick Mercer**

The Exercise co-ordinator did an awesome job, and everybody had a great time. The group returned safely to NI, only for **SSgt Bald** to think that the ATLO would pick him up personally from outside the airport, while the rest of us followed the correct procedures.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AR Fawcett**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Wakeling**

EXERCISE LEMMING FINN - *by Sig Norwood*

EX LEMMING FINN was a skydiving exped to California. Novice students were to take part in an intensive trg package to qualify them to skydive on their own.

The course consisted of eighteen jumps in total, eight progressive levels, and ten solo jumps. For each jump, we had to perform a number of skills and drills in the minute of free fall we would get. Should any mistakes be made, then this would result in us failing this level or jump.

On Friday 10 September we flew to London Heathrow, and were then taken to Netheravon Bks, where we commenced our Phase 1 Accelerated Free-Fall (AFF) ground trg. This involved lessons in various body positions whilst falling and Emergency Reserve Drills (which hopefully we wouldn't need to use).

We flew to LA on the Sunday, and were then taken straight to Perris Valley, California. We were given a full briefing on what the AFF course entailed, then were shown to our accn at The International House of Parachutists (IHOP). On Monday we continued with some more ground trg, followed by jumping early Monday afternoon. Before my first jump, I was extremely nervous, and the rush of adrenaline was overwhelming. But after that jump, I was hooked. By the end of the week most people had managed to get 4 or 5 jumps in, and were feeling much more confident.

Over the weekend, some of the group went to San Diego for some R and R, whilst the rest lived it large in the gambling capital Las Vegas. During this time, every one got a chance to experience something different. Some people decided to rent a Dodge Viper, whilst others decided to try some oxygen at the Oxygen Bar to cure their hangovers. The most fortunate of the group were invited to a Vegas wedding. By Sunday night everyone was back, some complete with a few stories of how they either made it big, or like most of us, lost it all.

Cpl Matt Caddy leaving the aircraft

It was back to work on Monday. Everyone continued were they had left off, with the majority completing Level 7. This was the first time we had jumped solo. I was very nervous about this, but it was fantastic to be allowed to jump out without any instructor guidance. By the end of the day, most people had done Level 8, which was a solo dive at, 5,000 ft - get stable and pull in 10 seconds. This gives you a Cat 8 qualification. We then started on the 10 consolidation jumps needed to qualify for your Category 'A' Licence. By Wednesday I had finished it all, and was now qualified with my 'A' Licence. The instructors got the rest of the group through, and by Friday morning everyone was qualified.

On Friday evening to celebrate we went for a meal in an 'all you can eat' steakhouse. Everyone enjoyed this, but we left there fairly stuffed. **Jeff**, the owner of the DZ in Perris then powered up the jumbo jet for us and we had a bit of a party on it before heading to the *DZ Bar*, where everyone made the most of the last night out together.

On Sunday morning we were given a final briefing, said our good byes and left for our return to UK, where it was back to work and back to reality.

8th INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC	**Maj AJ Parsons**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) KJ O'Neill**

8th INFANTRY BRIGADE MARCH AND SHOOT
- by Sgt Gilmore

The March and Shoot is part of a competition run annually in NI for the Royal Signals units to compete for the Mercury Cup. Trg for the Sqn Team began a month prior to the actual competition. It began with a gentle programme of gym work and four mile runs, progressing onto six and eight mile forced marches carrying 20kg. The Team trained four days a week, whilst the rest of the Bde were still tucked up in bed, but they began seeing the benefit as everyone's fitness slowly improved.

Trg on the ranges was conducted by the training wing, **Sgt Doyle**, **Cpl Mercer** and **LCpl Lane**. They even managed to arrange for two of members of the Army Shooting Team to coach the team.

This proved useful, as it opened their eyes to a few cheeky tricks and improved everyone's shot.

On the day the Team comprised **2Lt Reid**, **Sgt Gilmore**, **Cpl Margrie**, **LCpl Huber**, **LCpl Lane**, **LCpl Murray**, **LCpl Potts** and **Pte Bassinger**. They ran a great race, coming 4th and with a respectable 4th in the Fire Team Assessment shoot. Their position did not reflect how close their scores were to the teams in front. Although we returned back empty handed in terms of trophies, the 8 Bde March and Shoot team should be commended for their great team spirit and endurance. Well done lads!

Only the blast walls between us in the Green Zone and the remainder of the City

OPERATION TELIC 3
DEPLOYMENT - *by Cpl Margrie*

In September 2002 I was posted to 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in Ebrington Barracks, Londonderry, as a Cougar technician, and this is where I thought I would be spending the next two years of my career. Little did I know what was in store for me.

In the first week of February 2004 there was a Province wide trawl for an experienced Cougar technician to deploy on OP TELIC 3 to install a Cougar Net infra structure in Baghdad. I and a couple of others put our names forward. After a few days' anxious waiting, I found that I had been accepted. I had one day to sort out all of my admin, before starting two weeks of pre-op trg in UK.

Two weeks later I had finished my trg and was off to the Gulf. After a short delay at Akateri and a night spent in Basrah International Airport, I arrived in Baghdad International Airport, with only the name of my new Tp OC and the loc of where I was to be going. After a couple of hours waiting, I was met by members of 2 Para Regt, who took to me to where I would be living for the next 6 Months.

I was met by **Capt Keily,** who would be my Tp Comd for the next 4 months, and after the initial greetings I was shown around the Baghdad Support Unit (BSU). Although BSU is a very small camp, there are some very good facilities including the Internet, welfare phones, television and DVD facilities, and a gym. I was very surprised as I had been told the horror stories of what people had to endure during OP TELIC 1. So it was a great relief to me. Another relieve was that I also managed to settle into life with the lads very easily.

One of the first things I noticed was the heat. An even bigger shock, was to find at about 23.59hrs on my first night, mortars being fired into the Green Zone. As the time went by, it became the norm to be woken up by them. Sometimes it became so bad, we had move into hard cover.

My initial task was to install the Cougar Net infrastructure. Once it was in and working, I had to issue the radio equipt to all British Military in the Baghdad area. Once my initial jobs had been completed, I took over the ECM from **Cpl Buckingham**, and I also started to work along side the other Techs from 16 Sig Regt as well as maintaining the Cougar net.

I also had time to take part in the Swimathon, organised by **Sig Cunnington** for a local Charity. I managed to get to get a week R and R at the end of June and when I arrived back 16 Sig Regt I had only a fortnight left to push. A week later, the replacements from 2 Sig Regt arrived to take over, with **Maj Clewlow** as the Sqn OC and **Lt Panting** as my Tp Comd. Again I was accepted into the Tp with open arms and felt welcome, which is something I was very grateful for.

After a month had passed, it dawned upon me that my time was nearly up in Iraq, so I started writing my HOTO notes for **Cpl Fox**, my replacement from 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. After a week, my hand over had finished, and so was my time Iraq. I wish all the best to everyone at 2 Sig Regt, and many thanks to all from both 16 Sig Regt and 2 Sig Regt. You made me feel very welcome. Finally, good luck to **Cpl Fox** for the remainder of his tour.

The techs. Front : Sgt Local, Cpl Margrie and Cpl Sharpe. Top: Cpl Fox

40th (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col SD Hodges**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Henry**

EXERCISE BENFRO REFORGE 04

MILITARY SKILLS PHASE - *by 66 Sig Sqn Joint effort*

The main event of EX BENFRO REFORGE was the mil skills trg competition. Whilst some soldiers spent their time back at Penally camp on various courses the gung ho element deployed into the field at Castlemartin Trg Area. The ex was written by **SSgt Al Finn** and with his hand picked DS from both regulars and TA they turned Trenorgan Farm into a palace fit for a prince.

Troops were split into two platoons, the sections being made up from all Sqns, with the comd appointments being given to individuals irrespective of rank. The ex troops arrived at Trenorgan Farm on Sunday afternoon and were briefed on the tasks ahead. These included anti ambush drills, NBC, BCDT with evening lessons in weapon theory and PRR. Throughout the week, a comprehensive range package was in place, including the IBSR. The Monday morning weather was rough, horizontal rain and lots of it. This had an effect on the zeroing, which in turn had a knock-on effect for the rest of the day, with some soldiers having to re-shoot on the Tuesday. Concurrent activities included fire and manoeuvre, target indication and fire control orders - all good basic soldiering skills that we seldom get to practise. Once all soldiers had passed their APWT, they moved onto the MMTT and burst fire ranges. On Tuesday there was a night shoot. The Queens Royal Lancers, using Range West at the same time, put on a bit of a night firing show with the Challenger 2 and chain gun. Our night shoot results showed that if we ever go to war at night in the wind and rain, God help us! A lesson well learned.

During the Tuesday and Wednesday, each platoon moved to Templeton Airfield, where they were tested in NBC, BCDT and anti-ambush drills, they also slept rough on the evening before the tests, which made the troops appreciate the veritable palace at Trenorgan Farm. On returning from Templeton Airfield, the troops deployed on the Platoon Assault, which would test them in all they have learned during the week. All elements of the ex were marked with the prize for best section going to 2 Section, 2 Platoon commanded by **Cpl Johnny Booth** of 66 Sqn.

MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION
- by 66 Sig Sqn Joint effort

Friday a reasonable day dawned, with no wind or rain. It was March and Shoot day. The results of this annual event go towards the XL Trophy, the inter Sqn competition. The March and Shoot competition consisted of a 5.2km march, followed by a shoot at 200m. Points were awarded depending upon march time and shoot scores. The march was timed by **SSgt John Webber**, and the shoot was marked by **Sgt Sanlon**. The results were; 66 Sqn, fourth; Sp Sqn, third; 69 Sqn, second; and 85 Sqn, first. The whole week was excellent! It was clear that a great deal of thought and detailed planning had gone into all aspects of trg and as a result, the soldiers acted positively and maintained their enthusiasm and good humour throughout.

EXERCISE BENFRO REFORGE ADVENTURE TRAINING

COASTEERING - by Maj Craig

'Barking' is the word that springs to mind when referring to this activity. Apparently, launching oneself from a 40ft cliff face into the swirling surf below only to be flung against the rocks by

'Can I ask a question?' Lt Irvine on the range

A little encouragement from the rear by the SSM

rampaging waves is fun. At least according to **Maj AJ Smith** it is. But then the Trg Maj and normal brain function don't sit well in the same sentence. Luckily, the group comprised all ranks, and this brought up the average intelligence level to an acceptable minimum to undertake our coasteering adventure around the Pembrokeshire shoreline.

For those not in the know, coasteering involves a mixture of swimming, climbing cliffs, jumping off them and scrambling over the rocks at the sea-land interface while trying not to get pounded to pieces by the waves.

The first group to attempt this activity, under the leadership of **Maj Smith**, put on a pretty good show, with just one fall from the rocks by **Sgt Sanlon**. Fortunately, he is well ballasted, and only partially damaged his hip. The FofS, **Andy Dawson** seemed to morph into a limpet as he attempted, with every shore-bound wave, to perch himself as high as he could up the rocks. **LCpl Graham** is worthy of a mention, for overcoming his obvious reticence for the whole mad business and joining the ranks of the insane. After the two hours allotted, we exited the water, leaving a Trg Maj protesting that he had not had his head sufficiently slammed off the rocks and wanted more of a tidal beating. Professional help required, I think.

HORSE RIDING - *by Cpl McMillan*

Eleven members of the Regt went to East Nolton stables for a day's horse riding. Some, like **Cpls Jackie McKeown** and **Suzanne Small** were experienced riders and were looking forward to a gallop on the beach. Others were just hoping to stay on. After being sized off with our mounts, varying from sixteen-hand chargers with flared nostrils for the more advanced, to rotund Thelwell ponies for those more used to sitting on sofas, we set off on a gentle amble around country lanes. It was all very sedate and relaxing, but a few of us got the opportunity to have a bit of a canter through the woods to try a few jumps.

After lunch, we headed for the storm-lashed beach to canter our mounts through the tide. **Cpl Colleen McBride** managed her first ever canter, although the sack-of-potatoes riding position could do with a little more work. At the end of the day, we were all walking like **John Wayne**, tired, but smiling, especially after **Sgt Wendy Cush** demonstrated how not to dismount.

PAINT-BALLING - *by Cpl Smith*

Nineteen of us participated in this activity. It was not as adventurous as some of the activities on offer, but, being soldiers, we thought it would be quality trg to run around a forest shooting at each other with balls full of paint. The fun started when **Sgt Palmer** started a left-flanking manoeuvre, in which he found out that running into trees hurts as much as being hit by paint-balls. Ammo conservation was not high on **Sgt Colhoun's**, priority list. He used so many paint-balls that the organisers had to change his gas bottle three times. It all ended with a free-for-all, with lots of bruises and lots of laughter.

The intrepid coasters led by the TM and FofS

REGIMENTAL SPORTS DAY - *by Lt Irvine*

After enduring 3 days of AT activities such as diving, kayaking, climbing, windsurfing and coasteering to name but a few, we found ourselves ending the second week of Annual Camp with a Regtl Sports day. The competitive edge was added by running it in the form of an inter-Sqn competition, with scores counting towards the XL Trophy. After carrying out a recce of Castle beach in Tenby, the organiser, **WO2(SSM) Jim Clasper** found it suitable to organise volleyball, football, find the stick, and that other favourite beach game, darts. But the most enjoyable event by far even for the non-participants, was the sandcastle building competition which, after some very dubious judging and a lot of nail biting, was deemed to be a draw. This meant there was a tie for first place between 66 and 69 Sqns. A dig-off therefore followed, with 66 Sqn digging the deepest hole and winning the overall event. This particular competition is being replaced next year by a teddy bear throwing event with both Sp and 85 Sqns volunteering to organise it. Surprisingly, for the first time in years, there were no serious injuries to report, which can't be bad.

THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

– by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

The Falkland Islands are quite a remarkable place. The terrain is flattish, but with many high features, such as the now well-known Tumbledown, Mt Harriet and Mt Longdon. It's rather like parts of Wales. There are no trees, just tussock grass. There are many tarns, even on high ground, and their waters are stained brown from the underlying peat. Underfoot, the going is often very difficult, with 'babies' heads' (hard slippery moss plants the size of babies heads) and many boggy patches. Many rock screes run down from the higher ground, but the rocks in them are very large, often 2 metres long, or more.

The indigenous population (C. 1,200) are involved mainly in farming. Sheep and beef cattle are spread very sparsely over this land, and the farmhouses are very isolated. They are strongly British, as is reflected in their local currency, which is identical to UK currency, but with Falklands designs on the reverse side of the coinage. The same British feeling is very apparent in the local newspaper *Penguin News*.

The Military community are almost all located in the Mount Pleasant area, clustered around the recently built Mount Pleasant Airport (MPA). The MPA complex area is quite extensive. 3 messes and 2 large accommodation blocks are well appointed and centrally heated. There are two gyms, a cinema, swimming pool, library, Internet facility, several recreational clubs and a bowling alley. All of these buildings/facilities are linked by covered corridors, so that in extreme weather, no one need venture out.

There are also a number of married quarters, a school, a hospital, dental surgery, supermarket and police station, as well as excellent sports grounds and a children's play ground. And the humorists have been at it with some of the street names: The Medical Centre is in Balsam Crescent, and the Police Station is in Letsby Avenue (think about it).

There are two tri-Service units at MPA that contain Royal Signals personnel, Joint Communications Unit Falkland Islands (JCUFI) and Joint Services Signals Unit Falkland Islands (JSSU(FI). Postings to these units is normally for 4 months.

I was delighted at the reception I received during my visit. I was able to speak with most of the Royal Signals personnel there, mostly at their workplaces, so that I could see and understand what they were doing. They were all in good heart, and spoke most enthusiastically about the Falklands posting. I went out with Forward Repair Teams (FRTs) to visit relay stations on a number of hill sites. On the Sunday, I participated in a battlefield tour of Mount Longdon. I was also included in a number of social events, for which I am very grateful. All of this has given me a much greater insight into the Falklands theatre, both past and present. The following are comments from some of the people I spoke to.

For **Cpl Sarah Cooper** is from 242 Sig Sqn. Her stint of 4 months with JCUFI is her first overseas posting.

'This place is a lot bigger than I had imagined. It's vast, it's desolate, but it's beautiful and unspoiled.

'The job is great. The people are all fantastic and great to work with. The facilities are first class. There's a pool, two gyms, bowling alley and a cinema. There's also go-karting and horse riding.

'I've learned just so much more since I've been here. I used to work just on PCs, but now I'm learning about exchange equipment and becoming quite competent.

'The inter-Service working is also an education. The RAF and RN are all different, but there is a great comradeship throughout. 'This is a very worthwhile posting. I would recommend it to anyone.'

Cpl Sarah Cooper

SSgt Rob Lowe of 3(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt has been with JCUFI for 3½ months. He is their UQMS.

'The jointery of this Unit impresses me. Each Service has its own language, way of working, and traditions, but we all work well together and do the business. As Army, we also have a very

SSgt Rob Lowe

strong relationship with the current infantry Bn, 1 RGBW as well as the local Falkland Islands Defence Force.

'The facilities here are fantastic. I am a keen water polo player, and although the competition here isn't very strong, I am able to keep up my fitness ready for when I return to UK. It's a really good pool.

'There are social events on here almost every night. And the battlefield tours each Sunday are really interesting. They are all run by experts, who know their stuff. Then of course there is adventurous training, such as abseiling, rock climbing and canoeing.'

Birmingham born **LCpl Jim Tibbetts** from 1(UK) Armd Div and Sig Regt, is 2 months into his JCUFI posting.

'The weather was a bit of a shock. I came from a German summer to a Falklands winter, with a major blizzard in my second week. But now it's improving.

'I really like the posting and the job. You get a lot of responsibility, and all the help you need to do your work. I'm on a Forward Repair Team (FRT) and I'm on a very short NTM.

'But I still get time for sport and other recreation activities. My game is football, and there is a game every Monday night.

'Then there are loads of facilities for almost every hobby or activity you can imagine.

'My lasting memories of this place will be the wildlife. You see so many rare birds almost daily.'

LCpl Jim Tibbetts

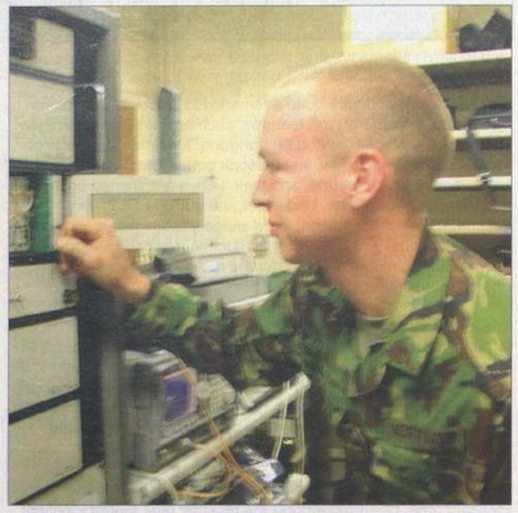
LCpl John Mortimer, from 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn is also on a FRT at JCUFI. He's 2 months into his 4-month posting. It is his first overseas posting.

'It was my posting of choice. My ambition is to get into 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. So here I have a lot of opportunity to really build up my fitness. I also like the wide open spaces here.

'I really enjoy my work. I'm on high readiness. You need to be very self-reliant in this job. On one occasion, I was snowed in for three days on Mt Moody, but my training equipped me for this, and it's all part of the job.

'I have worked on much more equipment here than I have before, and I really enjoy the responsibility that I get.

'So far, this has been a most worthwhile experience that I wouldn't have missed for anything.'



LCpl John Mortimer

LCpl David Brown, from JSSU Digby is currently with JSSU(FI).

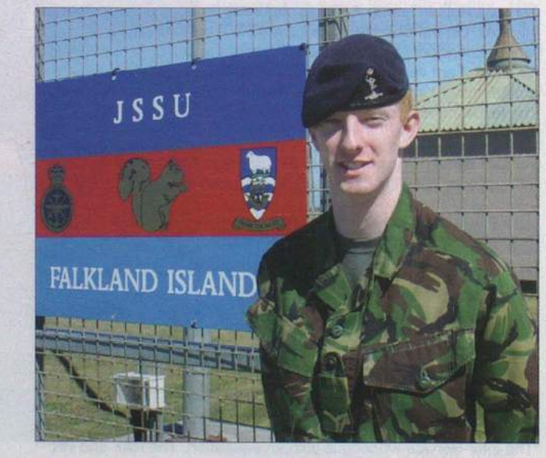
'When I first arrived, I thought the place was very barren and desolate, but I soon found that there was a lot of life in MPA. There are loads of things to – in addition to your work, of course.

'There are about 5 or 6 Unit or inter-Unit events a week, ranging from sports to meals, to bowling nights. 'The gym must one of the best in the British Army, and the pool is not far behind. There are facilities to cater for any need you can think of.

'In particular, there are excellent FE facilities. You can study for qualifications, such as NVQ, and learn further trade skills.

'Outdoors, there's fishing, sailing, cycling, kayaking and clay pigeon shooting, to name a few.

'My lasting memories will be of space, fresh air and the opportunity to do so many things outside of work.'



LCpl David Brown

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

OC **Maj Paul Anderson**
USM **WO2 Mick McDonnel**

We wish **Maj Malcolm Emslie** and his wife, **Phillippa**, a happy retirement and the very the best of luck with their new project in Wales. **Maj Emslie** leaves the Army after a career spanning 35 years. **WO2 Dani Thwaite**, former USM, departs the island and is replaced by **WO2 Mick McDonnel**. **Lt Lindsey Gallacher**, formerly OC B Tp, departs and is replaced by **Lt Joe Long**.

RADCON - *by Cpl Monaghan*

This has been a busy period for RADCON. At the moment the team consists of 7, 1 Sgt, 1 Cpl, 2 LCpls and 3 Sigs. The team provides vital comms back to MPA from a potential crash site in the event of a national air disaster. The team would also be expected to deploy in the event of an invasion, to provide comms back to MPA.

Because of RADCON's vital role they have 2 CODs (Crash Out Dets) on permanent 15 mins' notice and 30 mins NTM respectively, during work hours. Out of working hours the NTM is 30 mins and 1 hr respectively. Therefore it is always necessary to have a duty crew who can be called out when needed.

The day to day routine at RADCON consists of maintaining the CODs and the supporting equipt of these vehs, making sure that the comms equipt is fully serviceable at all times, and the vehs themselves are maintained to Royal Signals routine inspection levels. The Team carries out ongoing checks all over the Island to make sure that there are not any areas where they would not be able to maintain comms back to MPA.

RADCON also has the ability to deploy personnel by helicopter with man portable comms equipt. To that end, all of this kit has to rigorously tested on a weekly basis, to ensure its effectiveness when needed.

As well as this RADCON is also responsible for the care and maintenance of a Seismic machine that monitors movement under the ground, and results from this machine are sent back to the UK for analysis on a weekly basis.

Recent months have seen RADCON involved in the annual MPA invasion simulation ex, EX CAPE PETREL, which involved 24hr manning of RADCON, and some of the Team being deployed on the ground to defend strategic guard positions. The Team also provided safety comms for the RIC (Roulemont Infantry Coy) live firing ex in October this year. They provided man portable radios on the ground for the Staff running the ex, and HF comms back to RADCON in case of emergency. The lads also frequently use INMARSAT and IRIDIUM telephones back to RADCON when needed.

Despite this busy period, the Team finds time to participate in extra curricular activities, and if often regarded as by far the fittest section in JCUFI. This was shown in the charity bench-press competition, when 2 members of RADCON, **Sgt Justin Jenkins** and **Cpl Ben Monaghan** won the team event comfortably. The team also had a recent bowling tournament won by **Sig Brown**, which resulted in **Sgt Jenkins** having to buy the whole team a NAAFI break.

MARCH AND SHOOT - *by WO2 (USM) Thwaite*

On Friday 3 September, two teams from JCUFI set off on the March and Shoot organised by 1 RGBW (Falkland Islands RIC). The girls' teams was a true Tri-Service team, led by **Lt Lindsey Gallacher** with **Sgt Debbie Ames** RAF, **Cpl Sarah Cooper** Royal Signals and **OM Caz Kaiser** RN. The other team was made up of **Flt Lt Stu Rhymer** RAF, **WO2(USM) Dani Thwaite**, **Sgt George McMinn** and **Sig Steve Brown**. We had Falkland Islands weather, with the wind blowing, but we had no rain, which was lucky. The ground was 'baby heads' and when it wasn't, it was bog and marshland! Both teams did extremely well in the shoot, and completed the tab in good time. Although there were a couple of groin strains and the odd blister, everybody had a good time, and we were met at the end by OC, **Maj Paul Anderson** **Flt Lt Dave Kerrison** RAF, and **SSgt Rob Love**, to name but a

The girls march...

...and shoot

few. The day was ended with a presentation in the RIC Bar, a few beers and for those that could, a dance.

LINE SECTION - *by LCpl Forrester*

The past couple of months have been really busy for us mechs. With numerous projects taken care of under the watchful eye of our Line SNCO **Sgt Doick**, and with our never-ending workload and with Falkland Forum just out of the way, you could say that we have been working pretty hard.

There was a Fitness Week in September as part of a health drive for the Forces, what with numerous events happening in the gym and also in the cookhouse, where the chefs thought it would be a good idea to put some salad on the menu! Of course Line Section competed in the quiz at the end of the week! Out of 12 teams, we came 10th.

FITTEST SECTION - by LCpl Mortimer

Two years after the Falkland conflict, a JCUFI section was formed, known as FITTEST (Falkland Island Trunking Telephone Exchange Support Team). This section was to be responsible for maintaining and repairing the bulk of the radio and associated system equipt throughout the island.

In 1984 **Mr John Nichol** arrived to become the resident Marconi Engineer, offering a wide range of technical knowledge - and he still remains to this day. Between 1985 and 1987 the huge task of installing the system began, providing comms all round MPC and to all the mountain sites. 1990 saw the arrival of the duty rat-catcher, **Lister**, who devotes all his time to looking out for vermin-intruders from his chair location.

It's not all hard work though, and the Section partakes in other activities, such as the recent March and Shoot competition. **Cpl Cooper** joined the JCUFI female team that came first in the female event. Another major event everyone took part in was the large scale ex, EX CAPE PETROL, in which a full-scale island defence was put into action to repel the threat of the invading Orangelanders.

The FITTEST era came to an end on 12 October 2004, when the section became amalgamated with SysCon, becoming FRT (Forward Repair Team). However, the job remains the same: being ready to go at any time to be carted off anywhere to fix the many faults encountered.

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

OC **Capt A Sutherland**
2IC **WO2 J Porter**

MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION – *by LCpl Dave Brown*

The official aim of the Falkland Islands March and Shoot Competition is to 'demonstrate the ability to advance to contact and engage the enemy.' However, the JSSU(FI) team knew that their own aim was much more serious than that, namely to beat the JCUFI teams at all costs, especially since the OC had promised them a slab if this should happen! So it came to be that a band of four steely-eyed killers found themselves at the Pleasant Peak start point on the morning of 03 September, with the prospect of a 20km route ahead, interspersed with some 'guns and ammo.'

After one day of intensive trg, the team was looking like a well-oiled machine and all involved were raring to go. The competition started well, overtaking 2 teams within the first half-hour. At this point spirits were high, only to be cruelly dashed due to a 'minor' navigational error, which added a further 2km, two deep river crossings and knee-deep marshes. The ultimate morale booster was the sight of two RIC members waving from the opposite side of the lake indicating that the team had gone astray. Thanks lads! Despite this error, an impressive shoot followed, highlighted by **LCpl Dave Brown** hitting the bonus falling plate with his first shot. Despite the previous navigational setback the JSSU(FI) Team still managed a respectable time of 3 hrs 28 mins, only 30 minutes behind the winning team, finishing in sixth place overall out of the twenty eight teams who took part. More importantly, the JSSU(FI) Team finished well ahead of our JCUFI rivals and true to his word, the OC administered some instant morale in the form of a slab of Australia's finest.

The JSSU Team, with no JCUFI in sight!

Thanks must be given to the RIC, Kohima Coy, 1RGBW, for organising the event and congratulations to the winning team, the Falkland Islands Defence Force. Lastly, well done to the JSSU(FI) Team which comprised three Royal Signals members **LCpl Dave Brown**, **LCpl Tony Cheers**, **Cpl Si Hodgson** and **Sgt Adam Smith** AGC(SPS).

CADETS

MERSEYSIDE ARMY CADETS

ARMY CADETS SAMPLE SCOTLAND

510 Merseyside Army Cadets attended Annual Camp in Scotland. The cadets aged between 12 and 17, male and female, were from all over Merseyside, and included 3 Royal Signals dets.

To cope with the numbers, there were two camps, one for 274 first-year cadets at Cultybraggen, Perthshire, and the other for the senior cadets at Barrybuddon. The first camp was for 8 days and the senior one was for 12 days. The programme included assault course, abseiling, first aid, watermanship. map and compass, shooting, AT, initiative tests, plus fieldcraft and an exercise.There was also a Signals course run by a Regular Army trg team.

One of the Royal Signals dets with their Det Comd, Lt Michael Morgan (L)

The first part of the week was very wet and the programme had to be modified. However their spirits were very high, and as they progressed, the weather returned to summer, enabling them to complete all their trg.

Among the visitors over the period, was **Col Alan Waterworth**, Hon Col and Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, who was full of praise for what the cadets had achieved. He aso thanked to the Officers and Instructors who had volunteered their time to attend the Camps. Scotland proved so pop ular, that a request has already been put forward to return there next year.

HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT ARMY CADETS

The highlight of the calendar of any Army Cadet Force year is undoubtedly for both cadets and adults the summer Annual Camp. 2004 was no exception to this fact and early in August we moved to Wretham Camp, STANTA.

The camp itself would not win any awards in a hotel guide for creature comfort, however the surrounding area affords excellent training facilities. The well maintained trg area is highly suitable for all manner of military and adventurous training.

A new and very popular innovation for a few days this year was the arrival of the Royal Signals Motorcycle Experience team. We are most grateful to **Maj Keith Russell**, **Sgt Elliston** and especially **Sgt Butterfield** for making this team available to us.

The soldiers from 7 Sig Regt supporting **Sgt Butterfield** were shining examples of soldiers serving in the Corps and immediately struck up a great rapport with our cadets.

A special feature of our Annual camp was the attendance by a group of cadets from Lithuania. They settled in very well and one was delighted to receive and display his Royal Signals tee-shirt.

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight ACF pyramid

Signalling is an aspect of military training which Hampshire and Isle of Wight ACF is proud of. At camp, in addition to the full range of our normal military and adventurous training, we ran two Signals courses and about 40 cadets gained their crossed flags badges. They were first in the queue for the Motorcycle Experience. Thanks to 36 Sig Regt (V) for providing the testing team.

Earlier in the summer a group of cadets from Eastleigh and Romsey took part in EX SUMMER WINE, a 24 hr HF radio operating competition. The team was relatively inexperienced, but gained a creditable place in the final scoring.

Altogether it has been an active year and we are looking forward now to planning our 2005 Annual Camp at Castlemartin, Pembrokeshire and hope that the Motor Cycle Experience Team

Cadets from Eastleigh and Romsey preparing for EX SUMMER WINE

OTHER UNITS

NEPAL SIGNAL TROOP

EXERCISE DOUBLE-EDGED DRAGON
- by Capt Ben Howarth QG Sigs

Being only a stone's throw from the Himalayas, it would have been really rude for us not to pay a visit. The plan (always a good military word) was to for ten men to trek a loop of some 200 kms taking in Mera and Island Peaks, and crossing the Amphu Lapcha Pass along the way. Ambitious, audacious - or just plain stupid? Why, when most self-respecting trekking companies had closed for the monsoon season, would we want to climb two 6,000m peaks?

We collected a whole range of winter climbing kit from the stores in Pokhara, looked at it in wonderment, tried it on in temperatures exceeding 30°C and rapidly put it away in our borrowed rucksacks. The snowline comes down to only around 5,000m, so we wouldn't be needing it for a while. As with all expeds, at first it seems you have ages to prepare, and then time has rushed by and you're sat on a small plane and on your way - which in our case, had to turn back halfway. We made it on the second attempt, but as we emerged into a light drizzle at Lukla 'Gateway to Everest', was someone trying to tell us something?

On the top of Island Peak. Maj Tarquin Shippley, LCpl Dipak Gurung, Capt Ben Howarth and WO1 Warren Colclough

The first few days were damp, with the odd leech bite, but otherwise uneventful. An occasional glimpse of scenery peeked out around the corners of our umbrellas, but mostly it was onward and upwards, as our legs got used to the trekking routine and we tried to max out on rice and pasta. As we got higher, it was noticeable that the number of people (none of them tourists) was diminishing rapidly. We had tried to skirt round the Maoists by detouring early on, but bumped into them on the fifth day, when they shook our hands, smiled, and asked for a 'donation' to the Party. The original request for 3,000 Rupees a head was plea-bargained down to a mere 1,000 Rupees (£7) on the grounds of extreme poverty (ours not theirs – we were living in tents). Then we were able to continue on our journey without further harassment.

We pressed on up the valley to Khare, from where we got our first feel of the snow and ice with a day's trg on the glacier some 300m higher up. The techniques we learned and revised were to prove invaluable later on. By now, some of the party were taking a combination of Diamox and Paracetamol, which comes highly recommended. Others were on Lomotil and not enjoying their frequent trips to the smallest tent – this comes less highly recommended.

But somehow, we all summoned up the strength to tread boldly on to the virgin snow, and up towards Mera Peak. In high season, this becomes a well-worn, firmly compact path; but for us it was the start of Slush Puppy walking.

Nine of us reached Mera Peak itself, on schedule if not on time. In truth, we reached only the summit ridge, as we were too inexperienced to chance a crossing of a very large crevasse some 25m short of the summit. We did however, stand tall (and gasping) with 6,437m not so bad an effort. By now we were nearly halfway through the trip and some of the team were starting to feel the sheer exhaustion, which comes with operating at this altitude. Undeterred, we continued up the Hongu Valley and crossed the main obstacle, the Amphu Lapcha La. We crossed from South to North, which meant we ascended to 5,800m in the snow, and then quickly came off the snow on the far side and onto a steep and fairly precarious shale path. This pass was the most technical phase of the trip, and fortunately our *sirdar* waited until we were safely down before recounting a series of tales about the climbers and porters who had died attempting that crossing. Two months previously, the snow had been chest deep; for us it was no greater height than our knees. So perhaps there was some method in our summer madness.

By the time we reached Island Peak Base Camp, a combination of altitude and sickness had sadly weakened a couple of the team such that they opted not to attempt the climb. The remainder of us moved on up to High Camp, a nice valley stroll followed by a sharp left turn and a vicious hike up some 400m. We spent the late afternoon and evening in our tents, conserving energy, but despite our best efforts at hydration with a range of tea, soup, water, hot chocolate etc and the odd ORP meal, by morning another two of the team were too sick to continue and had to head down. The approach to Island Peak is up a winding, rocky path, across a knife-edge and onto the snow. One of the team had been very slow over the rocks and now decided that he too had to turn back. Sadly, that meant we lost one more individual to accompany him safely down. So then there were four. The relatively short trek across the glacier to reach the foot of the climb to the ridge seemed to take an age, and despite being lower than Mera, sapped a lot of energy. Two climbing *sherpas* led and broke trail, and we paused for some time whilst they set a fixed rope into increasingly soft snow and unyielding ice. We then hauled ourselves skywards and emerged just metres from the summit in closing weather. The sensible decision, after the photo call, was to abseil off and head down to Base Camp for tea, if not medals.

The last couple of days were spent recovering, along the Everest Base Camp main trail, to Lukla. The weather held, and we arrived in Lukla footsore but happy, after some of the longest days on our feet of the whole trip. We had to wait a day for the mist to clear so the plane could land, but this meant we could watch the debacle between England and Portugal on the small flickering screen in the teahouse. In conclusion, this expedition was a real adventure. I will always remember the time spent in the snow and on the Peaks, the cry of 'Tea, Tea' from the kitchen staff, which signalled the start of another testing day - and the earnest discussion about whose GPS really was correct.

NATO SATELLITE GROUND TERMINAL BALADO BRIDGE

Station Comd	**Capt Chris Gill**
FofS	**WO2(FofS) Mick Lingard**

The past 12 months has seen a huge turnover in personnel, which has a big effect on such a small unit. Those leaving include **FofS Richie Paterson**, on promotion to 16 Sig Regt; **Sgt Simon Hurst**, to Blandford in preparation his FofS course in 2005; **Cpl Fraser McCallum**, also to Blandford on his Class 1 course; **LCpl Paul Fisher**, to 2 Sig Regt; and **Sgts Polly Poulson**, **Stu Sanderson** and **Mark Wilson**, and **Cpl Phil Gavan** to 1 Civ Div. We have also lost **Sgt Mark Spittles** and **Cpl Jim Carlin** to medical discharge. We wish them all well.

Cpl Nick Priestman collects empties to support his Buckfast dependency

Joining us have been **WO2 (FofS) Mick Lingard**, along with **Lisa** and their 2 girls; **Sgts Jim Harrison**, **Dave Morgan** and **Fin Struthers**, **Cpls Dave Cooke** and **John Edge**, **LCpl Chris McKeen** and **Sig Emma Needham**.

In April 2004, our role changed from being a part of the overall NATO SATCOM Network to being in direct support of NATO HQ in Afghanistan. This saw the dish having to move the furthest it has ever had to move in 20 years! Despite some teething problems we have now settled into a reliable steady state.

The *T in the Park* music festival on the former airfield opposite the site went off without incident again this year, and was enjoyed by many members of the Unit. That was until the boss dragged some of them out to clear up some of the mess missed by the event's own cleaning teams.

This year the unit continued to support the local Children's Hospice Association of Scotland (CHAS) with a donation of £1,400, and we also raised £2,000 for the Scottish Community Foundation through the Caledonian Challenge (see next picture).

CALEDONIAN CHALLENGE – *by Capt Chris Gill*

Following on from our efforts in Trailwalker 2003, we decided this year to do a similar event, but much closer to home. The Caledonian Challenge, which took place over the weekend of 19/20 June 2004, is a 54-mile walk/run starting at Fort William and heading south, following the West Highland Way (WHW). The finish line is on the east bank of Loch Lomond at the old settlement of Ardleish, from where competitors are ferried across the loch to the admin area at Ardlui on the west bank.

Team composition was very much in the balance until just before the event, but was finally **FofS Richie Paterson**, **SSgt Mark Robinson**, **Sgt Dave Morgan** and myself. Learning from last year's Trailwalker, we made sure that this time we did a lot more prep. With the WHW almost on our doorstep, it made sense to use it as much as possible in trg, but we mixed in sessions in other areas, including the Loch Ard Forest in the Trossachs. Not

Capt Chris Gill hands over a cheque for £1,400 to Nicki Brodie of CHAS (photo, courtesy of Dunfermline Press Group)

only did trg on the WHW prepare us physically for what lay ahead, but it also gave us valuable local knowledge of the course. But I'm not actually sure that was such a good idea!

The day before the event, we travelled over to Fort William with our support team of **Sgt Spike Milligan** and **LCpl Paul Fisher**. On the Saturday morning we were dropped at the start line for our 07.00hrs start, under gloomy skies with drizzle and about 5 million midges in the air! The start was welcomed more for getting us away from those damned midges than for anything else! We set off at our planned 4mph pace and settled into fourth place for much of the first leg, 12 miles to CP1 at Kinlochleven. Towards the end of the leg, another team overtook us and, despite our getting ahead of them for half of the second leg, they stayed ahead of us for the rest of the event. The second leg (10 miles) is a long climb from Kinlochleven up to the top of the Devil's Staircase, then a drop down into Glen Coe and alongside the A82 to the Glen Coe Ski Centre and CP2. By the time we reached CP2, **Richie Paterson** was suffering with a sore knee, so from that point on we did very little jogging. CP3 was at the Inveroran Hotel, where we were overtaken by a team that had started 2 hrs after us, and who went on to win the overall event.

Those 20 miles were fairly straightforward, with just a small climb from the Hotel over a spur on the way to Bridge of Orchy. Along the way we encountered some drizzle, some heavier rain, and a chilly breeze. A pretty ordinary Scottish summer's day! Having carried out the last replenishment and adjustments at CP4, we set off on the last 12 miles, but this includes a nasty surprise for those not in the know.

The climb around Crianlarich has the steepest parts of the course, and there are several ups and downs to keep you guessing. Not what you want when you're cold and knackered and not expecting it, but thankfully we were, so it was heads down and plod on. The last 3 miles is also not quite what you expect, but the sight of a marquee and the finish line banner in the twilight was very welcoming. Our time for the 54 miles was 15 hrs 27 mins.

Having finished on the east bank and had a cup of warming soup, we were ferried across the loch in a small, flat-bottomed boat, sat on bales of straw. At the admin area, our support crew told us that we were in with a chance for the prize for the First Armed Services Team, as other military teams ahead of us had all lost people along the way. Feeling highly encouraged, we had our first, and very welcome, hot meal of the day before setting off for home.

The following morning, Sunday, I headed back over to Ardlui to see the prize giving, which began at 12.00hrs. To my delight, we were announced as the winners of the First Armed Services Team prize! Not bad for a motley bunch as we were, and especially with a Foreman who was doing an impression of John Wayne for over 40 miles! So I guess we'll have to return next year to defend our title...

SSgt Mark Robinson, Capt Chris Gill, Sgt Dave Morgan. Inset WO2 (FofS) Richie Paterson

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34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col Garry Hearn**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PV McGarry**

VISIT IN THE FIELD BY THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER

On Tuesday 14 September 2004, the Regt hosted the Sixth Duke of Westminster during EX ARRCADE FALCON. Firstly he was introduced to the personalities in the Regtl CP, which included the CO, **Lt Col Garry Hearn** and the newest TA Officer, **Capt Jay Croslegh**. He was briefed upon the role of 34 Sig Regt during the ex, and a number of issues facing the modern TA soldier. The Duke was especially interested in the latter, namely operational tours and residual capability.

WO2(SSM) Carrick briefing the Duke of Westminster during his visit to EX ARRCADE FALCON

CHARITY FOOTBALL MATCH – 24 AUG 04

- by WO1 (RSM) McGarry

2004 saw 34 Sig Regt form a partnership with the Bankfields Association, a local community group looking after the welfare of the residents of Eston. The partnership was formed to foster closer relations with the local population and raise the awareness of the TA. **LCpl Stu Stainthorpe**, affectionately known as 'Wheels', is the CO's driver, and is a local lad who has taken the lead with the organisation. The Regt helped earlier in the year with the opening of a new children's' playground, and more recently offered to take on the locals at football.

CO Lt Col Gary Hearn presenting a memorial plaque to Middlesbrough's Bankfields Association

The day was a great success, with most of the Eston locals turning up, despite bad weather, to support the event, and the Regt came away winners, 4-1. The star of the day was without a doubt **WO2 Brian Blackburn** our RAOWO. Without his stirling performance the result may well have been different. Overall the day was a great success raising money for local charities and the ABF.

UK/US EXCHANGE PROGRAMME SEPTEMBER 2004

- by WO2 (SSM) Stimson

Following my successful and thoroughly enjoyable exchange visit to the USA, it was time for the return match. **SSgt Alfonso Villarreal** of the Indiana National Guard touched down on English soil on the morning of 10 September 04. He was greeted in the great British manner with 'Oy, over here!' and we set off in a northerly direction to Hartlepool.

After a boat ride to Brugge and a coach trip to the north of Germany, we started the first week of EX ARRCADE FALCON. **SSgt Villarreal** was astounded by the quality of food laid on by **WO2 Neil Berry** and the fact that there was more than one choice. He also noticed that our officers were not afraid of getting their hands dirty when setting up and tearing down comms sites, a point he said he would bring up when he got back home. During the ex, **SSgt Villarreal** visited each of the Sqns for a day so he could see how the rest of the Regt worked.

After the first week of the ex we travelled to Javelin Bks in Elmpt Station to meet up with 33 Sig Regt and the 2 members of 138 Sig Bn US National Guard, to commence a lightning tour of local battlefields. Our first stop was Arnhem on the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Bridge. There was an abundance of people dressed up in Para uniforms with jeeps and vehs of all descriptions. Our American friends were amazed. The next day we ventured on to the battlefield in Vimy, France, and then over the border to Waterloo. A good day was had by all.

We then returned to England. We started the rest of the tour with a trip to the Corps museum at Blandford and then to London. We

US exchange offrs visiting Arnhem. SSgt Villarreal, R

had been invited by the Chief Yeoman Warder to witness the Ceremony of the Keys at 22.00hrs in the Tower of London, and the next day saw the rest of the Royal Palace. The Americans were in awe of our history. We watched the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace, then a quick tour of London, ending up on *HMS Belfast*. Of course they insisted on seeing the nightlife in London, and as their host, I could not refuse.

Finally we said our goodbyes at Heathrow airport, and with a tear in my eye and the smell of burning rubber behind me, I headed off north to home.

49 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Mark Finch**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Mark Carrick**

THE JOURNAL OF A FIRST TIMER ON CAMP
- by Sig Sarah Carlisle

Saturday. Reveille 04.00hrs. We move into vehicle packets and head for Teesside. The vehicles are loaded on to the ferry. **LCpl Cranswick** and **Sig Downes** start their voluntary boat guard. Sqn photograph. Move to Hull to board the luxury ferry.

Sunday. Reveille 05.30hrs. **Lt Ross Anderson** tries to use Zulu Time but scraps it after much confusion. At 09.00hrs we board coaches and travel through Holland and Belgium - very flat! Arrive at Emden at 17,00hrs to meet 33 and 35 Sig Regt. Have a few briefings and then sleep.

Monday. Reveille 0300hrs - 2 hours earlier than planned! Move to the port to meet our vehs Move to the first loc. Packet One puts Relief in Place of TN016. Packet 2 hurry up and wait!

Tuesday. Comms are now fully established. TN 016 moves out at 19.00hrs. News of bad winds, so we prepare for the worst! **Sig Jo Ferris** moves her bed from the middle of a field!

Wednesday. Radio Relay Charlie moves out to provide relief for 33 Sig Regt to move south. SCRA(T) moves to the west to provide communications for the SAN.

Thursday. Packet 1 moves at 22.30hrs south to Calaban to provide a vital link between TN 032 and 033.

Friday. Packet One arrives at next loc. Due to a 3 GW HF transmitter, the loc is untenable! But thanks to **Sig Bryant's** excellent German comms skills with the site caretaker, we didn't have to wait for Packet 2 to arrive. All move as one convoy to second loc. But, not wishing to join in with the German pheasant shoot that evening, we returned to Munster Rastplatz!
Saturday. Our chefs **Sgt Stuey Keys** and **Sig Mark Clarkson** provide BBQ breakfast in the car park. Move in convoy to Ascheburg to establish the vital link. CO 16 Sig Regt complimented our excellent convoy drills

Best Signaller Kev Downes, restraining journal author, Sig Sarah Carlisle

Sunday. More vital links are established in early hours. No portaloos, so a lot of toilet runs!

Tuesday. Bad weather! Take away pizza for tea. Due to a terrorist attack in Westminster, we have movement orders.

Wednesday. RNR- Move to Javelin Bks for veh turnaround, then to JHQ at 16.30hrs. Squadron mainly head to the Gravel Pit! Rain!

Thursday. Some soldiers manage to take advantage of the cheap shopping in Monchengladbach.

Friday. 08.30hrs move to Javelin Bks to collect vehicles. Police escort us to Rotterdam Ferry Port.

Saturday. Final turnaround and then home! **Sig Downes** gets Best Signaller on Camp - well done!

50 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JD Bailey**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Howe**

The Regt! Charity Weekend saw members of 50 Sqn taking part in 'Brambles Ramble', with an impressive turn out from both Tps. More of a long slog and less of a ramble, volunteers stagged on over a 24 hr period, successfully navigating and climbing Eston Nab for 3 Charities, including the Army Benevolent Fund and Zoë's Place.

Members of 742 Tp attended the International Sunderland Air Show on 24 - 25 July, in order to recruit further young blood for 50 Sqn. Although the weather seemed to be nearing sub zero temperatures at times, there was plenty of impressive action from the Red Arrows and various display teams to boost Tp morale! The seaside was thoroughly enjoyed by all, with enough fish and chips, ice cream and cuddly toys to keep the Tp occupied in between scouring the crowd for potential recruits.

50 Sqn 'enjoyed' their first ITD weekend of the year Catterick Trg Area. A soggy but splendid time on the range was had by all, and resulted in some very good groupings. In true Army fashion, the sun came out to dry, and subsequently melt, everyone's boots just in time for the CFT. Success reigned as the whole of the 50 Sqn contingent passed, defying the blistering heat to soldier on.

THE EDINBURGH MILITARY TATTOO 2004
- by SSgt Russ Heynes

Operating at just over section strength, a patrol of members from 34 (N) Sig Regt (V) deployed north from Debdon Gardens TAC Newcastle to the FMB at 61 Sig Sqn, Edinburgh. The main effort was to conduct a CTR on the Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Prior recces had confirmed that with Edinburgh being highly populated over this period, the patrol should breakdown into 2 – 3 men teams, in order to gather as much intelligence on the withdrawal as possible.

This task was performed well. After the de-brief it was time to advance to the lay up point and witness what transpired to be a truly fascinating military spectacle.

This year the Tattoo was supported by a host of other nations, including the Bamboo Dancers' from India, the Liberation Army of The People's Republic of China, and the South African Naval band. Without doubt, the lone piper and the illum in the form of fireworks were the highlight of the evening. As with all OBUA ops, use of cover back to the FMB was crucial.

This was achieved with the use of PH's conveniently placed along the Royal Mile and Princess Street. During the wash up phase, it was agreed by all patrol members, that the Edinburgh Military Tattoo was an amazing experience and an excellent opportunity to bond prior to EX ARRCADE FALCON 04.

90 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Richard Lenton**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) L Stimson**

This year's summer camp, EX ARRCADE FALCON in Germany, provided the opportunity for 90 Sqn to make new friends and develop new skills.

The Sqn gained an expert understanding of operating with digital and satellite dets as well as working with their regular counterparts, comparing notes and helping each other throughout the exercise period.

As the exercise continued, 741 Tp found themselves taking in some of the sights of Germany. This was whilst participating in the only move that they managed to get all ex. Upon arrival in their new location **SSgt Evans** managed to take the award for the fastest set up of an admin area. Single handedly he emptied the admin wagon into the cooks' tent, before placing the chef behind the lit cooker! A very well deserved round of applause was received by this undisputed superhuman!

However, **SSgt Evans'** exceptional performance did have one floor - a concrete one into which tent pegs didn't penetrate! That evening, during hurricane conditions, personnel from 741 Tp had to be rapidly scrambled to resolve a rather moving situation. **Sig Murphy** manages to rescue all of the compo food and thus saving the troop from starvation!

Upon completion of a very entertaining ex, 90 Sqn met up for rest and recuperation. **Cpl Metcalfe** demonstrated his generosity in more ways than one, when he kindly introduced **Sig Eke** of 704 Tp to the classier areas of Monchengladbach, enjoying an evening of entertainment, complete with traditional gyros to follow!

Having taken very seriously the work hard play hard approach, 90 Sqn managed to demonstrate once again, their professionalism in a successful ex, and having a great deal of fun whilst doing so.

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) RG Dalton**

ARE WE NEARLY THERE?

As I began my long journey to Teesport, I found it hard to believe that it was almost two years since we had our last ex excursion to Germany on a full-blown ARRC ex. This time it was a little different, as it was a G6 controlled ex that would involve only the comms elements of the ARRC. I haven't quite decided which elements of the ARRC or the UK National elements where involved in the complex movement plan, but it even bewildered our normally calm MTWO, **WO2 Mick Docherty** and his fine movement team. As I have alluded to in my intro, the Regt found itself deploying on the first leg of this magnificent tour through Teesport on the outskirts of Middlesbrough (a port that is dominated by the largest Chemical industry in Europe, but equally close to the beautiful Cleveland and Hambleton Hills and the Yorkshire Moors beyond). Even though the movement plot only had us transiting through, it was good briefly to see my hometown and breathe in that unique combination of sea air, country air and sulphur, but a visit to the relatives was out of the question!

After enduring a 10 hr journey, we gingerly loaded our vehs on the freight ferry and then boarded coaches to take us on to our next leg of the journey down to Hull to connect with the Hull-Zeebrugge overnight passenger ferry. At least things were looking up, and despite the poor forecast for the sea crossing this was beginning to be quite a leisurely start to EX ARRCADE FALCON. As we boarded the ferry, I could detect that morale throughout the Regt was extremely high and we were all looking forward to the a la carte meal, followed by a good nights sleep with an early call for a full English breakfast.

Loading the Freight at Teesport

The following morning the *Pride of Hull* manoeuvred its way into Zeebrugge Harbour, and it was time to disembark as foot passengers, which felt unusual as our vehs and personal kit, less the sleeping bags that we were carrying, were about to dock 300 miles away at Emden.

After a quick disembarkation and the issue of a luxury nosebag, we were once again herded onto a fleet of coaches for the 7 hr journey to Emden to be reunited with our vehs and equipt. The journey itself was largely uneventful. By now we had been travelling for over two days, and it was a welcome relief when we

Happy to wait around – LCpls Claire Samuel and Marieanne Meek

finally arrived at Emden. Here we stayed overnight with all other Regts for ex briefings before finally been reunited with our vehs and the rapid deployment to field locs early Monday morning - some of which were a further 150 miles away!

EX ARRCADE FALCON

The ex scenario was set in a fictitious country somewhere in Europe, where the Calabans were experiencing increased tension with their neighbours and common enemy, the Zagros. The Zagros, who had become extremely nationalistic, were threatening to ethnically cleanse the Muslim population that was in a so-called safe haven between the two countries. EX ARRCADE FALCON tried out many new concepts to deal with this situation, and once again the Regt rose to the challenge, achieving its usual high standards of comms, movement and re-supply over a wide area that centred on Westphalia. As well as returning to some well known locs, such as the Bielefeld Ridge and the famous Point 309 and some comfortable bks, the Regt found itself in many new areas, with dets on the Lubbecker Ridge, Eikener Egge and Werther, to name but a few; while the RAO staff found themselves stranded over 150 miles away at Dietrichsfeld. Here, **Maj Mark Whittingham** and **Capt John Middler** and their staff of **Pte Dawn Gibbs** and **Sgt Paul Vickery** found themselves either watch-keeping for 1 Sig Bde, or carrying out other duties as well as ensuring we were all paid and got our duty frees.

LCpl Rhys Mountford-Jones of 58 Sqn establishing Comms

Meanwhile, back at the Lubbecker Ridge, **Lt Paul Rodenhurst** who was commanding TN 037, found himself in the wrong loc and quite rightly moved both his TN and the associated empty portaloos to the correct loc about 2km away. This was fine until ENDEX, when the contractors insisted that the portaloos, or 'Dixies' as they are referred to by the Germans, had to be returned to their original loc for recovery. This unexpected Schizenfest required the expertise of **SSgt Matt Evans** who, together with **Cpl Billy Dawes**, acted as SO2 Sewerage. They expertly loaded the now full portaloos onto the back of their POL wagon and returned them to their original loc, as **SSgt Ade Stowell** looked on passively.

Visitors to the ex included Comd 143 Bde, **Brig Chris Murray**, who took time out to visit all Regt elements throughout the ex area, and the Honorary Colonel, **Col Brian Foxon**, together with a host of journalists from the *Birmingham Post and Mail*, *Shropshire Star* and the *Rugby Advertiser and Review*, who ensured we were treated to some excellent articles on our return to the UK.

Very fortunately, because health and safety considerations were rigidly applied, injuries on the ex were relatively light, with **Cpl Carol Dilley** sustaining a fracture to her right arm. Elsewhere,

Comd 143 Bde – not convinced with WO2 Mick Kearney's dish of the day

Sgt Ian Davies had a narrow escape on the return leg from Bruggen to the Hook of Holland when an artic clipped his Landrover causing it to spin out of control, overturn two or three times, wrecking the front and rear. Kicking his way out through the windscreen, **Ian** calmly walked away from the carnage without a scratch and by all accounts has recovered very well from his ordeal, but is not looking forward to completing the FMT 3.

Despite these injuries, EX ARRCADE FALCON ended on a high note with all elements arriving back at their home TACs and families without any further incident and happy memories of a hugely successful Commex that may not be repeated for many years. Finally 95 Sig Sqn would like to express their sincere thanks to those members of 33 Sig Regt who returned the Landrover they accidentally left behind in Germany – enjoy the photographs!

AN HONOURABLE PROFESSION

During his visit to 89 Sig Sqn on Tuesday 12 October, Comd 143 Bde, **Brig Chris Murray** took the opportunity of presenting medals to **Cpl** (soon to be Sgt) **Jason Curley**, LS and GC Medal (Military); 2Lt **Alan Lunn**, **Sgt Dave Wright**, **Cpl Clive Smith** and **Cpl Daniel Stacey**, VRSM for long and efficient service in the Volunteer Reserve Forces; and the Iraq Medal to **LCpl Peter Cater**, who served on OP TELIC 2 June -November 2002. All are to be warmly congratulated on their awards.

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col SJ Richardson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KP Innes**

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Capt AJ Powell**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Horton**

Annual Camp is an enjoyable, challenging and productive time for all. Or at least that is what you are expected to believe, but when you start camp with drill, drill and more drill the 'challenging and enjoyable' part starts to be questioned.

But it worked. The RSM's endeavour to get each Sqn working as a team paid off for 64 Sig Sqn when it won the Regtl Tara Cup for military skills and the CO's Sqn Challenge Trophy for overall best Sqn in the year.

The Tara Cup result was almost a foregone conclusion, with both of 64's teams finishing in the top three. That was after the administrative Snafu, where 87 Sig Sqn were awarded the Cup and then deprived of it as second and first places were transposed by an apologetic but suitably embarrassed RSM.

87 Sig Sqn compete in the Tara Cup

The acting OC, **Capt Andy Powell**, was so surprised that the Tara Cup had been won whist he was holding the reins, that he even put his hand in his pocket and donated some cash towards the purchase of drinks for the troops. That must be the first time that his wallet has seen daylight in some years!

Highs and lows come for all on camp, but the classic had to be the Sqn **OCdts Dave Lowbridge** and **Mark Randell**), mislaying their room key during the Section attack practices on the sports field. It took four hours of searching the field on hands and knees and an uncomfortable night on **Lt Steve Stacey's** floor, only to discover the key in a jacket pocket, reinforcing the view that OCdts are a danger to themselves and others when left alone.

The ex phase was an interesting part of the camp. Of particular note, was the legendary det that travelled from Edinburgh to Rugby to send 8 messages in a week, two of which were due to a LCpl making corrections after not knowing what day it was. The comd team alternated between the DS role and the Comd role. Needless to say the DS role was the better performed! **Lt Steve Stacey** and **2Lt Emma Kelly** featured heavily in the DS role and some said they squabbled like a married couple (which would be news for **Emma's** boyfriend, **Lt Hamish Fell**).

For the recruits there was Gap trg (part 3 of Phase 1 training). A fun filled week of shooting, shooting, shooting and, allegedly, NBC, first aid and map reading. The night navex was fun filled for members of 64 Sig Sqn as, to quote 'it taught all team members about making decisions (such as whether to take direct routes over undulating terrain or to follow tracks) that would have an effect on everybody, and also to take responsibility for decisions which end up being the wrong choice!'

Our one and only day off was spent carrying out a range of activities, some visiting the sights of Edinburgh, some playing golf and some decided to visit the bars and clubs. Those who chose to enter the Annual Regimental Golf Competition to play for the Batchelor Trophy, had a great day's golf but were once again outplayed by the CO, **Lt Col Steve Richardson**, who regained this trophy having lost it to **WO2 Paul Parker** last year. This is the second time that he has got his name on this trophy and we will not hear the end of it.

Capt Les Jordan (R) presents the Batchelor Trophy to Lt Col Steve Richardson

Other winners for the afternoon event were, **SSgt Tim Bishop**, who claimed first prize, **SSgt Jas Wood**, who came 2nd and **Maj John Pearson** who came 3rd. Prizes for the Longest Way Round went to **Sgt Benny Behenna** and **Cpl Graham Blyth**.

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JP Ahern**
SSM **WO2(SSM) S Coburn**

DRIVER TRAINING WEEKEND

The driver training weekend held at Swynnerton, 23-25 July, provided an excellent opportunity for new and experienced

members of the Sqn to put their driving skills to the test. After some basic reversing lessons, we were let loose on the off-road course. First time round was with an instructor, and then you could go on our own. Considering most of us hadn't driven Landrovers before, this was no mean feat! **Cpl Steve Taylor** won the competition for the most times around the course, although the OC was not far behind.

The Bedfords (uncannily driven by **Sgts Kev** and **Babs Bedford**) were then taken around the bigger (and somewhat deeper!) course and everyone got the chance to be a passenger. There were some hairy moments to say the least as we dropped over the knife-edge.

A sweepstake was held for the first person to bog a vehicle in. Unfortunately, there were no winners, despite valiant efforts by Recruits **Mayfield** and **Watson** who had never driven before! These two also got a chance to gain some quality tuition in the PSAO's Corsa from our resident driving instructor **SSgt Mick Hallam**.

ADVENTURE TRAINING WEEKEND – 13-15 AUGUST

For one of the most eagerly awaited weekends of the year, we headed off with 46 Sig Sqn to Halton Camp for a strenuous weekend of AT.

On Saturday we were given the usual military choice of walking, climbing, kayaking or mountain biking. Whilst the walkers raced off after **Capt May** to conquer Ingleborough, the climbers followed their leader, **2Lt JJ Lampier**. He managed to convince us that climbing blindfolded really was the best way to learn to trust your fingerholds! After some abseiling tricks in the afternoon, we were all hooked and keen to return the next day.

The obligatory night out in Lancaster followed, and then most people headed off to Blackpool on Sunday. Two important golfing events also took place: an 18-holer (for the PSAOs and more mature members of the Sqn) and the inter-Sqn miniature golf championships. Rumour has it that they were all so bad that nobody deserved to win. As for the keener elements of the Sqns, we just carried on climbing...

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col AH Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PJ Hatton**

Since the last publication, we have said farewell to **WO1(RSM) Jim Stillie**, who left us to take up the position of Welfare Officer in the rank of Capt in 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. We welcome his replacement, **WO1(RSM) PJ Hatton**, who arrived on promotion from 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

On Tuesday 5 October 2004, we welcomed the initial visit of **Brig M Lithgow CBE**, the newly appointed Comd of 2 (NC) Sig Bde. After a short presentation, the Comd was shown the temporary accn, and the visit concluded with **Brig Lithgow** meeting the soldiers on parade and afterwards in the All Ranks bar.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj RR Loveridge**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) A Simpson**

LIGHT AID DETACHMENT REME

OC **Maj SJ Greenslade**
AQMS **WO2 G A Peet**

WEEKEND WARRIORS *- by Cfn Annan*

Over the weekend of 8-9 October 2004, 9 members of 39 Sig Regt LAD REME deployed to 9 Supply Regt RLC in Hullavington, to assist in the repairing of various vehs. We turned up at Buckley Bks in a jovial mood on Friday evening, and headed straight for the NAAFI for a briefing and debate.

After breakfast on Saturday morning, overalls donned, hands barrier creamed, ready for a long day's work. Each VM was given a veh to attend to, with a list of faults and spares placed with the veh. The Craftsmen undergoing trg and supervision by the Class 1 VMs, all thoroughly enjoyed the challenges and fulfilment of the various tasks given. Vehs worked on were JCBs, Bedford 8 ton and 14 ton, Landrovers and various trailers, all in one large, well equipped workshop.

After breaking for lunch and dinner, we worked until 20.00hrs on Saturday, getting through the jobs in hand. After a much needed shower, it was off to the NAAFI. Sunday was spent completing all remaining tasks and cleaning up the workshop. At the end of the morning the CO, **Lt Col Dunn** and **Capt Miller**, OC LAD congratulated us on the work achieved and presented us with their Regtl plaque.

The weekend was extremely enjoyable and successful, in both completing a list of outstanding work, and for us, some much needed on the job trg. Special thanks to 9 Supply Regt RLC, who were very accommodating and organised. Buckley Bks was a pleasure to spend time at, and the time there will be remembered for quite some time.

5 (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj RM Empson**
SSM **WO2(SSM) RD Hall**

We welcome our new SPSI (Ops), **SSgt Jason Garner**, on promotion from Latina, Italy. In turn we bade farewell to **SSgt Dinger Bell**, who leaves us for 21 Sig Regt (AS) in Colerne.

We have effectively distracted ourselves from the lack of summer weather by recruiting, trg and even travelling to France. Some of our number has even tried escaping the country totally, but we are unconvinced they will be met with improved conditions on their tour in Bosnia.

Best wishes from the Sqn to all those deployed with 97 Sig Sqn, **2Lt Mike Curtis-Rouse**, **LCpl Nick Thompson and Sig Louise Penfold**. Have an excellent tour.

Well done to all the new recruits who have passed their TAFS1 and 2 weekends: **Sigs Wragg**, **Walker, Burgess and Pte Hone**. We also welcome **Sig Wayne Robinson** ex RAF and the son of **Ex SSgt Robby Robinson**.

EX HUSSAR WARRIOR, proved an excellent experience, organised by **2Lt Alex Orr** on Yardley Chase, with the able help of all the young officers in the Sqn – as the enemy – and also giving the orders. Well done to Section Comds **LCpls Steve Bennett** and **Ossie Osborn** – their experience and commitment ensured a very successful weekend.

OC, 2Lt Orr and SSM - The Enemy

The Sqn continues to put maximum effort into the recruiting and recruit trg process, and the 'Look at Life' Weekend was a great success. Four keen potential recruits were introduced to the wonders of ex life, participating in field craft, a camouflage ex, weapon familiarisation and section attacks. At the end, they were quite disappointed to go home.

We also welcomed our Honorary Colonel, **Col John Bridgeman**, who visited the ex and enjoyed the excellent fare provided by the combined magic powers of **SSgt J-C** (Master Chef) and **Sgt Sharon Scutt** who can turn a box of compo into a 5 star meal with an apparent wave of the wand!

Capt Jones receives his VRSM from Col May

EXERCISE RIFLE WOOD

30 members of the Sqn departed to France for the unveiling of the memorial Rifle Wood. **Col Tim May CBE TD DL**, Chairman Oxfordshire Yeomanry Trust spoke movingly in French, to remember the fallen from the QOOH at Rifle Wood. We were also proud to initiate links between the Fort Garry Horse, a Canadian Reserve Cavalry unit, who are the successors of the Canadian Cavalry who fought and died with the QOOH at Rifle Wood on 1 April 1915. The Sqn formed part of the parade, commanded by Sqn OC, **Maj Ruth Empson** at the unveiling service – and for once we were the largest contingent on parade.

Following the parade **Col May** presented **Captain Dai Jones** with his VRSM.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj WP Ruthven**
SSM **WO2(SSM) M White**

The Sqn have been busy during the last few months, with its AT (Leadership and Character Trg) Weekend! The event took place on the Isle of Wight, and was well attended and enjoyed by all. Activities included sailing, surfing, cycling walking and deep-sea fishing. The view of **OCdt Sarah Trevelion** on the joys of cycling, are noted below.

Congratulation must go to **WO2(SSM) Mike White** on taking up the mantle of SSM. Congratulations also to **SSgt Richard Sharp**, **Sgts Emma Wells**, **Karen Hodges** and **Helen Winterson** plus **LCpls Paul Allaway**, **Cassie Downs**, **Michelle Prosser** and **Christopher Walker** on their promotions.

The OC congratulates WO2 (SSM) White on his appointment as SSM

Welcome back to **Capt Jim Bloomer** (again) from Afghanistan, and **Sgt Sue Palfrey** from her somewhat lengthy FTRS Tour! Best wishes go to **Sgt Roger Theyer** and **LCpl Paul Wylde** on OP TELIC. we wish them well and a safe return.

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING - *BY OCdt Sarah Trevelion*

On Saturday 3 July, 7 intrepid mountain bikers from 57 Sig sqn set out to cycle around the Isle of Wight. The team consisted of **WO2 (SSM) Mike White**, **SSgt Chris Klass**, **LCpl Cassie Downs**, **LCpl Venetia Nash**, **LCpl Paul Allaway**, **Sig James Green** and I. When we were asked to select our activities some weeks prior to the trg, many of the members of the group were misguided into thinking that biking would not be too arduous, because after all, did the Isle of Wight actually have any hills, let alone mountains? Little did we know that our illustrious SPSI **SSgt Dave Langridge** had actually planned for us to cycle all the way around the island! This was to come as a shock in the briefing on the Friday night. Saturday morning dawned and it looked like we would experience good weather. This turned out not to be a blessing in disguise, because when the sun shines on the IOW, the tourists turn out in great numbers. Hence we spent the majority of the day weaving in and out of tourists cars up and down, you guessed it - lots of hills!!

For those who have not cycled on IOW before, there are two pre-designated cycle routes. One route goes clockwise round the island and the other anti-clockwise. The route is supposedly signposted all the way round, and we were given a map. Unfortunately the map was little more than a trace of the island with a red and green line marked around the outside to symbolise the cycle route. We managed to cycle for 2 hours before we got a bit navigationally challenged Being an OCdt, I thought it best to stay as far away from the map as possible so as not to add to the confusion, but unfortunately it wasn't long before the group were heard to say 'Which way do you think we should go Ma'am?' I'm still convinced that it was all an elaborate set-up by the OC, **Maj Bill Ruthven** and the PSAO, **Capt John Cullen** to test my map reading skills! After convincing the group that we shouldn't just cut straight across the island, we managed to find our way to the pub for lunch, and would you believe it, that's just were the OC and PSAO found us.

We realised that we had little hope of making our way all round the island, so opted to meet the water sports group and catch a lift back to camp in the minibuses. Unfortunately upon arrival, we found that we would have to carry our bikes down the cliff and back up again. However, buoyed by the thoughts of ice creams at the bottom and minibuses at the top, some of the group managed to move quicker than when they were riding the bikes! With time, I am sure that the memories and the pain will fade. The Sqn is already looking forward to seeing what next year's AT holds, but please let there be not a mountain or a bike in sight!

The bikers take a well earned (extended) lunch break

71st (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col HJ Robertson TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PR Curtis**

265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Keith Wrate**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Stephen Shelley**

EXERCISE SHARP EYE - *by Sig Voce*

On 4 June 2004, members of 265 Sig Sqn and 70 Sig Sqn took part in an infantry ex at STANTA, Thetford. The aim of the weekend was to enhance infantry skills at section and platoon level.

We arrived at 01.30hrs, after encountering a mix up with the coaches and many sheep. We set off into the wilds of the trg area to find the darkest harbour known to man. Eventually we bedded down or went on stag.

Saturday began with a refresher on patrolling. All was going well until 2 Section lost **Sig Inns**. After retrieving him, we moved on to do a lesson on CTR. 1 Section carried out the CTR, while 2 Section offered support at the FRV. **Capt Woodhams** gave a lesson on the Orders process, where everyone was amused and highly impressed by his clever use of flip charts in the field.

Following lunch, we were given our Orders by **Cpl Alsop**. Our afternoon was spent patrolling, getting attacked and yes, you guessed it - more patrolling. The two sections later split up to carry out their respective CTRs. 265 Sqn was led by **Sig Kenny Green**, who with **LCpl Jo Parente** as 2IC, took us to our FRV in the vicinity of the airfield in order to carry out our CTR. After cunningly hiding behind the largest hedge known to man, we sent forth **Brett Dodgeson** and **LCpl Pare** to keep it all together.

Finally the wait was over, and our guys returned. After a moment's rest, **Sig Green** had us on the move again, yet more patrolling and diving into stinging nettles. We got closer and closer to the harbour area. Finally the time had come to attack the enemy (floppy hatted cadets) who were believed to be at the airfield. We moved into position, 1 Section leading the assault and 2 Section giving cover. After much shouting, shooting and running, we ended up on the airfield with the enemy in our sights. Suddenly floppy hats were spotted from behind. Also spotted was a DS in a light coloured T-shirt carrying only a camera. He came in handy, as we used for our fire control orders.

At this point, **Sig Brett Harries** decided that we could 'take them' and was further encouraged by **Sig Green**, who suggested it was time for automatic. Just when we thought it was all over, it was time for the highlight of the weekend, the river crossing. A race to the finish where a cold shower awaited us. We enthusiastically threw ourselves into the river to the amusement of the DS.

All in all a hard yet rewarding weekend

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

20th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj SJP Spiers**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Crawford**

AFV 430 ARMOURED VEHICLE COMMANDERS COURSE
- by LCpl Simms

During the two weeks of 30 August to 10 September 04 an AFV 430 armd veh comds course took place at 200 Sqn. The idea was simple: with the help of three instructors the Sqn was going to attempt to change 10 'wheelie puff's' into full armd 'pack-rats' ready for deployment on EX RHINO CHARGE.

The course got off to a good start on the bank holiday Monday. While the rest of the Sqn slept in late and enjoyed the day off, **Cpl Hendrey** and the rest of his staff had the course in at 08.00hrs. After the initial shock of having to work on a day off, we got down to business. The first week was a bombardment of facts and figures, with plenty of engine diagrams just to make it more confusing. We were soon to learn that keeping a 436 on the road was a lot more complicated than our beloved Rover fleet. We finally managed to get our heads around oil tank capacities, liquid cooling systems and engine flow diagrams, and thus considered ourselves ready to progress to the second week.

10 students would be let lose on the roads and trg areas of Sennelager to do their best with 14.75 tons of metal. After the tedious facts week, it was a relief to be out of the classroom and commanding at last. For the next three days, we were instructed in how to command the 436 on public and private roads. The week ended with a practical test on the final day. All ten course-members managed to pass, which probably means that the instructors did a good job - or perhaps they had excellent students to begin with.

All aboard the panzer

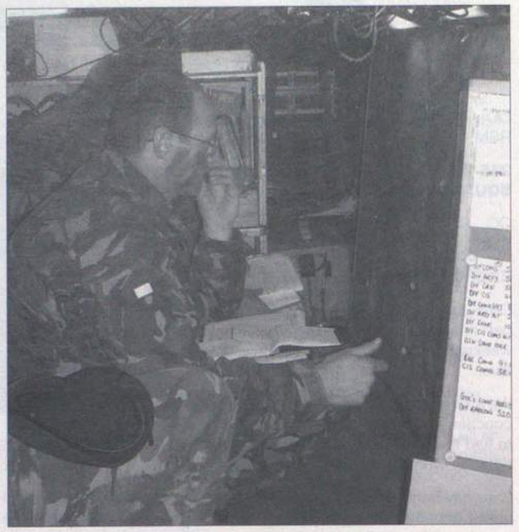
EXERCISE RHINO CHARGE - *by Cpl Langley*

The Sqn deployed with the HQ on an ex in conjunction with 1UK Div. It took place over a large area of Hameln, Paderborn and Sennelager, which proved to be a major test for our somewhat ageing AFVs, and even a more testing time for the LAD.

Monday morning arrived and as is the manner of the British Army everywhere, the entire Sqn was in camp for 02.30hrs to get us in the mood for a two-week ex. Weapons collected and bums to seats, we set off. The plan was that the Sqn would travel to Hameln, collect our AFVs and then deploy to our first field locs. However, as everyone knows the best-laid plans do not survive first contact. Whilst driving up the autobahn, my co-driver **Sgt Rich Tiley** commented that perhaps we should have turned off. Nearing the outskirts of Hanover, **Sgt Walsh** decided that we had gone a little too far, so after a 50 km detour we finally got to Hameln.

Once the ex had started proper it was set at a fairly steady pace for the first week, with everyone ensuring that their wagons and equipt were up to a really high standard. This was in preparation for the second week, which promised to be a fast moving hectic week, including a river crossing on a pontoon bridge built by the Sappers. True to form the weather, was abysmal for the entire period.

After two weeks of praying nightly to The God of Relay to send a dragon over the hill to nick our scam 12 masts, ENDEX was finally called and a 40km drive back to camp was all that was between me and the Sqn bar. It was during the drive back that my wagon decided that I was not going to get off so lightly and gave up the ghost, thus leaving me with not the fondest memories of the AFV 439.



We also did some comms

4th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Maj Addley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Lloyd**

4 BRIGADE SPORTS AND OPEN DAY

This year, the annual 4 Bde inter-unit sports event took place on 21 August on the Garrison Sports pitches in Osnabruck, with the afternoon set aside for the Bde Open Day. 50 lucky members of the Sqn took part in a gruelling cross-country race, while others were involved in an orienteering competition. Particularly successful were the tug-of-war team, under the coaching of **SSgt Smith**.

The team made it all the way through to the final, where they were narrowly beaten by QDG. The last event of the morning was the chain of comd gun run, with OC **Maj Addley** leading the team to a respectable 4th place, which conveniently avoided the final, and therefore the need to run round again!

In the afternoon, the sports pitches were opened to the public for families and the local German community to watch military demonstrations in the main arena, and view some of the military equipt on display. On the Royal Signals stand, **Cpl Dibbert** spent an afternoon teaching the local children (and some of the adults – Sqn 2IC included) the intricacies of the Personal Role Radio.

Meanwhile, on the equipt stands, **Sigs Spence** and **Stroud** spent the afternoon hoisting children in and out of the Armd Radio Relay, whilst **Sig Bedford** ensured that none of the parts went missing out of the back of the SAS/MC.

OPERATION TELIC PREPARATION - *by Lt Fulthorpe*

After a month of well-deserved summer leave, it was back to the grindstone of Quebec Bks and preparation was well under way for deployment onto OP TELIC 5. This began with, a 2-day series of briefings at Sennelager, which including mine awareness, law of armed of armed conflict and a brief from the Bde Comd, **Brig Gibson**, on what the Bde will be doing in theatre.

The next week was the range package, which was well run by RRW. The initial shoots included weapon zeroing, application of fire, and APWT. The RRW then put us through pairs fire and movement, and also put on some interesting convoy and sangar shoots. Some very high scores were recorded, particularly **LCpl Tucker**, who hit every single one down, although I still think somebody was shooting at his target. The final day was a 2-mile march and shoot, in which the Sqn performed very well.

The following weekend was pretty much non-existent, as it was off to Munster on Sunday for a teaching package run by RDG, including urban and rural skills. The trg was varied; public order trg, base security, VCP drills, and convoy drills. The trg was very well run and should stand the Sqn in good stead out in Iraq.

This week was rounded up on Saturday, by EX DRAGOON RAT. This consisted of a series of stands, where we were tested on the skills and drills we had learned over the previous week. The stands included first aid, weapon handling and our old favorite, public order. The award for best demonstrator goes to **Sig Ben Stroud**, an animal on the base line with several confirmed casualties!

With only a few days left of our OPTAG trg package left, it was off to Sennelager, for the urban test phase where once again the Sqn put in an excellent performance.

Having finished the trg, the main focus prior to deployment is on physical fitness, which I think will please the RSM, **WO1 Lloyd**. Lets hope everybody has a good tour, and stays safe.

SURVIVAL ARABIC LANGUAGE COURSE
- *by Lt Holly Richardson*

'As Salaam Alaykum Silaah il laasilkee il malakee' (Greetings to the Royal Signals)

204 Sig Sqn are practising their Arabic prior to deploying on OP TELIC 5 and as part of the trg, **Cpl Jeff Howard** and I were lucky enough to attend the 10 week Arabic language course at the Defence Language school in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire.

The course was designed to teach basic level Arabic to enable interaction with the Iraqi population. This sounded simple, but it proved to be challenge. The Arabic language is difficult to learn, and my inability to roll my Rs was a sticking point that had to be overcome. However after intense teaching and late nights studying, we achieved breakthrough. After that we took great delight in conversing in Arabic and converting English song titles into their Arabic equivalent.

In addition to giving us an understanding of the language, our Middle Eastern instructors gave us a fascinating insight into their culture. A visit to the Regents Park Mosque and an Iranian restaurant in London was an enjoyable break from our studies.

The Defence Language School is a joint force centre. In addition to RAF and Navy, there are a large number of foreign students to interact with, making the school a unique environment. The school runs courses in a variety of European, Middle Eastern languages, and I would recommend to them to anyone. The short course I attended was demanding, but a great opportunity to learn something new.

7th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

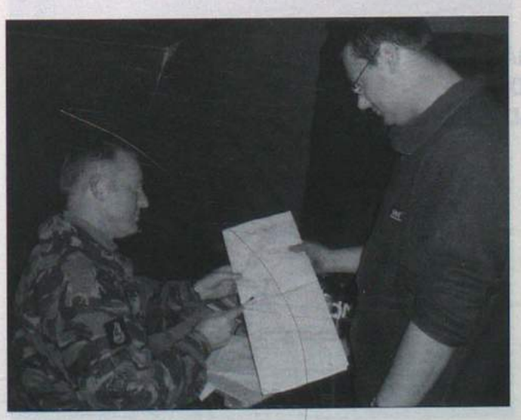
OC **Maj A Percival**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Walsh**

EXERCISE RHINO CHARGE

The Sqn has returned to barracks after a well-deserved summer break to prepare to partake in EX RHINO CHARGE 04, a full Divisional CPX less 4 Armd Bde, who were unavailable due to operations. With all the Sqn's vehs away at Ayrshire Barracks, awaiting BOWMAN conversion, the management team were set the conundrum of how to deploy and ensure that we were able to play a full part in the ex, minus our armour, whilst maintaining some dignity in soft-skinned vehs!

The first problem would be the tent that the Staff would work out of we didn't have one! The QM and the RQMS did much sucking of teeth and sharp intakes of breath when posed that one. 2 Bn REME came to the rescue, converting an 18 x 24 into a planning tent in double quick time.

The MT, under the guidance of Sgt Williamson, worked their socks off to get vehs on the road and fully loaded to G1098 requirements. Ensuring that all the bums had seats would require careful planning. It involved pantecs, coaches, cars and the odd green fleet vehs thrown in just to make it vaguely resemble a military deployment. As Murphy's Law would have it, the one veh that we did not want to have a drama with was the one that was declared VOR 10 mins prior to deployment. After a one-way conversation with **Sgt Williamson**, the lame veh was duly hooked up and we were off towards the River Weser to set up at a disused ammo site. Oh what fun we had setting up the tents in winds of 30 mph and horizontal rain.



The *QM tasking LCpl Dickenson*

Five hours into the set up and no sign that the rain and wind had any intentions of moving off to hammer another loc, it became obvious that the morale of the lads and lasses was not as low as expected! They were glad to be out of camp and free from the constraints of working in bks. For many, this was their first deployment into the field, and they were up for it. A key lesson identified was that certain skills had faded. When faced with a loc that we did not know in detail, such as where the earth spikes were to be located, siting the HQ was not a straightforward task. In good soldiering style, the management team achieved the aim by the time the Staff, and more importantly the OC, descended upon us. The OC was not happy with the Staff sleeps 18 x 24 being sited on the roof of a disused building, but we explained the elements had sited it for us! I still think he had his doubts!

The exe was literally a breath of fresh air, and offered much food for thought before the Sqn goes into its trg year with the eagerness that BOWMAN will demand. Whatever the forthcoming year will bring, Support Top will be there come rain or shine to ensure sustenance and the odd outbreak of humour.

SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING

This year's summer AT took place in Obertsdorf in Bavaria, and we could not have hoped for a better start, thanks to the glorious weather that the first week was to afford us.

The activities on offer were the normal - hill walking, kayaking and rock climbing, but even this proved tough as the decision to conduct the AT was taken at short notice (BOWMAN conversion slippage providing yet more freedom in the trg programme). We only had two weeks in which to organise the event! Eventually instructors were found and pulled out kicking and screaming from behind their desks. The package was to consist of two identical one-week packages.

On arrival at the lodge (Hubertushaus, which is thoroughly recommended) we were met by the friendly staff and kit was issued for the following day. Afterwards, we all retired for a much-needed drink after our epic trek to get to Bavaria (the air-conditioned, CD playing, sat nav'd minibuses helped of course).

Day 1, Week 1 got underway, and the students were on a round robin trg programme; two days hill walking, one day kayaking and

one day rock climbing. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, and judging by the numbers of red faces that night, there had been a bit of sun about. That night, the town was subjected to the Sqn en masse in the Irish Bar.

The rest of the week seemed to go the same way; lots of sunshine, great views over the Alps, and a few scaredy cat walkers up on the ridges. Some great outdoor climbs in the town of Fussen overlooked by the Chitty Chitty Bang Bang Castle, and plenty of dunking for the kayakers (although they were compensated with plenty of sunbathers out around the lake.) The week flew by and before we knew it, it was time for the guys and girls to head home and send the next bunch of victims down for **Sgt Smith** to kill on the hills.

Unfortunately for Week 2, the conditions were not quite as good. The weather closed in and the climbers were forced inside, but they all enjoyed themselves never-the-less. For the kayakers, it just meant they were wet before they even got in the water. As for the walkers, well it did not deter **Sgt Smith**, who still managed to take people over ridges, across scree, and above the clouds.

However miserable Week 2 was weather-wise, it did not interrupt everyone getting stuck in and enjoying themselves. The facilities at the lodge were great, and the views around and about could still be appreciated. Because of this, many soldiers are now seeking to complete instructor courses, and hopefully by next year we will be able to offer a greater variety to the programme.

Adventure Training in Bavaria

Our thanks and appreciation go to the instructors who gave up there busy schedules in the Sqn to help make this a success: **SSgt Gaz Middleton**, **Sgt Daz Smith**, **Sgt Jase Hawksworth**, **Sgt Stu Hall** and **Cpl Jay Preston**. Biggest thanks go to **Sgt Scott**, who organised a great two weeks against the odds and the clock!

CRICKET NEWS – *by Cpl Stanham*

A depleted Sqn Cricket team traveled to JHQ to take part in the Minor Units' Cricket Final. Our opposition, DCSA(G), won the toss and we were put in to bat. Not having had the practice we needed, the team struggled to clock up runs, and despite excellent innings by **Sig Nelson** (32 runs) and **Sig Nickie** (37 runs), 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn were bowled out for 112. The Team worked hard to defend that total, but the opposition had a couple of real stars and DCSA(G) won with 7 overs to spare. As a civilian team, the DCSA(G) couldn't progress any further in the competition, and so it was 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn who arrived in Aldershot to play QRL in the Semi-final of the Army Minor Units competition. Once again, we were first in to bat, **Sig Nickie** and **Sig Carter** put up a solid stand initially, which was later built on with good scores from **LCpl Baxter** and **Cpl Preston**. Unfortunately, the innings ended in a batting collapse and the runs totalled just 103. The team remained resolute, and an excellent effort in the fielding saw us bring QRL to 88 for 7. Unfortunately, their tail enders were big hitters, and in two more overs, the game was polished off. Although we were disappointed not to have made the final, everyone had fun, and we have something to build on next year.

NETBALL NEWS – *by Sig Beckett*

The Sqn has had a recent run of success on the netball court. Firstly, the team represented 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn at Fallingbostal, winning the tournament over all. It was a major achievement for the girls, being the first event played as a team and having carried out very little practice. We also represented the Sqn at JHQ, where we came third overall, despite **Sig Beckett** being charged by a 'Rhino' (the phrase she used). She lived to tell the tale, and this just added to morale within the team. **Cpl Cornfield** must have had springs in her trainers, as she was scoring when her opponent was at least 10ft taller than her. She also did very well to be selected for the BA(G) team in Cyprus. Well done, **Cpl Cornfield**! We are very pleased with our success so far, and hope to continue to do well in future games.

19th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj MS Dooley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Forrester**

The Sqn bids farewell to **Maj Greg Wilson**, after 18 months in the OC's chair. His time in the Sqn was busy as he deployed it to Sierra Leone as JTFHQ2 and to Basrah Palace on OP TELIC 2. We wish him all the best and good luck as he attends two years of Staff College, with no train set to play with.

Maj Mike Dooley has stepped confidently into the breach. In the short time he has been in comd, he has already asserted his direction and gained the respect of all with his superhuman displays on PT. With a busy ex period and transition to the trg year, it is safe to say that the new OC Sqn will ensure the Sqn is a well oiled and sharp toothed fighting machine.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Paul Whillis**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Brian Heslop**

The Antipodean influence on Alpha Tp faded at the start of September with the departure of **Lt Glen Bellingham**, our resident LONG LOOK Aussie. He professed to have enjoyed his time in Catterick, visiting 7 and 14 Sig Regts in the process, along with London, Paris and most of Europe. He even managed to take a philosophical view of the Lanyard Trophy, its rigours seeming to be appropriate training for his marriage in December.

Alpha Tp welcomed **Cpl Pennock** and **Sig Moseley** in mid August, and bid farewell to **LCpl Parker** to civvy street and **Sig Rankin**, who leaves for 216 Sig Sqn. **Sigs Westbury** and **Bostock** re-appeared drained but enthusiastic after their five-week stint on an RFA ship in the Gulf. **Cpl Johnston** and **Sig Eldridge** also returned to the fold after a hard-working attachment to PCD, with **Sig Canning** returning from JCUFI just in time to miss a Falklands summer.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Jim Chatman**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Beattie**

There have been a number of personnel changes within the Tp of late. **2Lt Johnny Paulin** has arrived on his attachment before attending his Tp Comds' Course. **Sgt Wayne Bramwell** has taken up the appointment of Rear Link Sgt at 4 Bn REME.

With exs looming all hands are to the pumps preparing the vehs and ensuring that the garage door will never open again. But it hasn't all been hard graft as recently the Tp took aim with a more unusual weapon. **Sig Neil Bielby** organised an afternoon on the Archery range, and after initial scepticism, everybody got it to spirit of it and enjoyed themselves. **LCpl Matt Lutkin** proved to be the deadeye shot, walking away with free beer for his efforts.

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Gordon Wills**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Wain Ratcliffe**

We farewell **Capt Liz McLellan**, off to HQ Land; **SSgt Lee Calvert**, to CivDiv; **Sgt Andy Gleadall**, to NI; and **Cpl Jim Cowan**, off on his T1.

Taking their place at the helm, we welcome **Capt Gordon Wills** from 16 Sig Regt and **SSgt Wain Ratcliffe** from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. We also welcome into the workshop **Cpl Dawson**, fresh from his T1;' **Cpl Tom Madden**, from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt; **Cpl Phipps**, from 7 Sig Regt; and **Cpl Prow**, from 14 Sig Regt (EW); **LCpl McKenzie**, from 7 Sig Regt; and **LCpl Armstrong**, on promotion from RSS.

With a lull in the ex period, the opportunity to participate in sport has been grasped by all with full gusto. **Sgt Billy Evans** and **Cpl Dawson** went sailing. **Cpls Cairns** and **Castledene** have represented the Sqn at the Corps Football 7s, where the Sqn managed to reach the final, only to be beaten by 7 Sig Regt. **Cpl Castledene** has also been selected for and has represented the Army at Under-21s level, as well as at Corps. **Cpls Gill** and **Madden** are currently away in the USA representing the Corps boxing interests abroad.

Sig Westbury and Sig Armstrong on a dry run

JNCO CADRE 2004 – *by Sig Armstrong*

The aim of the Sqn JNCO Cadre was to realise the leadership and comd qualities from all potential JNCOs. The course started with 32 Signallers and 2 chef LCpls. After a serious lecture input, there was arduous assault course.

Day 2 was the range day at Warcop. The day was broken up into 3 stands, with the main effort placed on the live firing section in defence range, run by **SSgt Paul Beattie**. The other two stands were OPs/CTRs and casualty evacuation under fire.

The next two days were the field ex phase. During this period we used the skills taught previously. Many members of the Sqn had to refresh their memory of patrol SOPs. The last night of the ex was the main attack. This is where it counted – everyone in position, alert, still and poised for action. POP – WHOOOSH! There goes a trip flare. The enemy beaten, there was time to fit in a BCFT back to camp to and a spot of weapon cleaning.

The course was very beneficial to the soldiers involved, who all agree more of the same medicine should be administered to the rest of the Sqn. The results were announced to the Sqn on the Monday after the RSM's parade. **Sig Rob McGuire** attained best field soldier and 3rd place overall. **Sig Nick Urwin** attained 2nd place and **Sig Armstrong** was awarded Top Student.

Top Student Sig Armstrong

GARRISON HOCKEY COMPETITION – *by SSgt Heslop*

The Catterick Garrison this year held its inter-unit sports competition in September. The Sqn entered teams into the football, rugby and hockey events. The hockey team was pulled quickly together by **SSgt Heslop** and **Cpl Engleby** after advertising on Part 1 Orders and one or two phone calls to Bde HQ for anyone who had held a stick! Eventually the team was formed from a mixture of young, old and very old. The majority of the team hadn't played since we won the Garrison minor units competition last year, so we had a good excuse to get some practice sessions in, instead of the highly interesting Sqn PT. So with a couple of hour's trg we were ready to take on the world.

This year saw all the minor units (i.e. 209 Sig Sqn) placed in the same pot with all the major units. Matches were to be played 10 minutes each way. Our first opponents were 5 Regt RA. They gave tough fight, but we proved too strong and won the match 2 - 1. We then faced 1 Kings - yet again another hard match but the Sqn were the only team to find the back of net with a 1 – 0 win. The final match was against 5 Bn REME, who were out classed by a better team, and a 2 – 0 win capped a fantastic afternoon, leaving 209 Sig Sqn to lift the silver.

GARRISON RUGBY 10s COMPETITION – *by LCpl Mc Dermott*

In similar fashion to the Sqn hockey team, the rugby team was the only minor unit enter into the Garrison Rugby 10s Tournament. The first game saw us placed against 5 Bn REME and within 2 mins **Pte Q Borisi** crossed the line for the opening try. A trend was set, and by half time **Lt Jim Chatman** and **LCpl Paul Gowdy** had added to the points tally.

An easy victory was recorded, and the team were now energised on by a newfound confidence. Game 2 was a more challenging affair as the team were run close by a determined 5 Regt RA. Despite tries from **LCpl Matti Bakani** and **Lt Jim Chatman**, the key deciding points came from the boot of **LCpl Daz McDermott**.

However a win is a win, and the Sqn now faced 1Kings in the final. Despite brave efforts, the Sq team was outclassed by a very good side and were forced into the runners up spot. In all, it was a successful day for the fledgling team, who left the venue with their heads held high.

CORPS ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS - *by Sig Cassidy*

The Sqn Orienteering Team was relatively inexperienced, but determined to avoid navigational embarrassment at the Corps Orienteering Championships at Mytchett. Lacking the outlandish strips and gaiters of some of the regulars, the contingent of **2Lt Whillis**, **Sig Armstrong**, **Sig Godfrey** and **Sig Stafford** considered their keen navigational awareness and reliable compasses to stand them in good stead.

Sig Armstrong performed tenaciously on Day 1, displaying a determination to finish the 60 min score event in as late a time as possible. **Sigs Stafford** and **Godfrey** wisely used their time to master the basics, ensuring that they would be prepared for the team event the following day. In this, the team performed far more successfully, completing an interesting course with considerable panache and perspiration. If we narrowly missed consideration for silverware, then at least the occasion marked a solid foundation on which to build. More importantly, an improvement in navigational skills was evident, and the determined efforts shown by all team members matched the enjoyment that all extracted from the races.

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC **Major JS Gunning**
RSM **WO1 K Weaver**

The Sqn has had a busy, memorable, and definitely most successful, past few months. We have won the Lanyard Trophy; participated in both the Normandy and Arnhem 60th Anniversary jumps; produced excellent sporting results; while still managing to assist in developing Apaché Attack Helicopter continuation trg in a successful ex.

LANYARD TROPHY – 25th ANNIVERSARY

The endurance of this competition (no pun intended) has surprised everyone, and no one more than the officer who started it 25 years ago, **Lt Col Richardson**, who was on hand to witness how his creation has grown from a one-off event in 1979, to one of the most prestigious events in the Corps calendar. He kindly started the competition and gave a few words of wisdom at the prizegiving to the competitors, some of whom had not been thought of when the first competition took place.

The race started at 05.00hrs in low cloud and rain on the wrong side of the Brecons (and 40 miles of tabbing), but still the turnout was well over the 300 mark. Despite harrowing conditions, 11 hrs later, the 216 Sqn Team crossed the finish line in first place - an excellent result! It was a well trained and experienced team that won the competition for the Sqn, but it was standing at the finish line some 13 hrs later (24 hrs into the competition) watching a last minute entry with no prior trg helping each other over the line. I have witnessed how this competition has gained such longevity, and have seen the support of the underdogs who enter, not to win, but merely to say: 'I've completed the Lanyard Trophy.'

Congratulations to the 216 Sqn Team and all who took time out of their busy schedules to support the competition. A special mention must be made to **Cpl Kemp**, who had flown back from EX LONG LOOK in Australia the day before the competition to compete with the 216 Sqn Team; and to **WO2 (RQMS) Read** from 7 Sig Regt who completed his 10th Lanyard Trophy this year.

NORMANDY 60th ANNIVERSARY PARACHUTE JUMP

Everyone saw the 60th Anniversary of the invasion of Normandy which began the liberation of Europe in June 1944 either first hand or on television. However, a lucky few members of the Sqn (**SSgt Page**, **Cpl Sherlock**, **Cpl Porter** and **Sig Lamswood**) were fortunate enough to participate in the memorial parachute jump into Normandy watched by **HRH The Prince of Wales** (from the DZ), veterans of the campaign, and the rest of us who enjoy the freedom that those brave men won for us.

CAYTHORPE WEEKEND – *by 2Lt Macklin*

Caythorpe, a little known village near Lincoln has become the spiritual home for the Royal Signals Airborne Community, as it was where the 1 Airborne Div Signals planned and mounted its support to OP MARKET GARDEN. The weekend was originally intended as an Annual Reunion, organised by the Sqn, to commemorate those airborne members of the Royal Signals who were involved in OP MARKET GARDEN, but it has grown into a Reunion for all past members of Airborne Signals. This year was particularly poignant, as it marked the 60th anniversary of the jump into Arnhem. The weekend began on the Friday night with the chance to have a few drinks in the local pubs and meet those veterans who had arrived early. It was particularly good to see how well the younger soldiers mixed with the 'old boys'" and an enjoyable night was had by all.

The next morning started early at 04.00hrs, a little too early for some, for those airborne members of the Sqn who we due to take part in the commemorative jump. The rest of the Sqn, along with a couple of hundred local spectators gathered in a local field to watch the jump go in. The event was also attended by **Maj General AJ Deane Drummond CB DSO MC***, one of the founding members of Airborne Signals, and the current Bde Comd, **Brig JD Page OBE**. Unfortunately with gusts of up to 23 knots, the jump was called off and we were treated to a fly past instead. Those on board though were not as appreciative of the pilots' low flying ability.

Undeterred, focus swung onto the next event, the village fête. This time the weather was on our side, with a beautiful sunny summer's day. A whole host of activities were laid on. The villagers had set up a variety of stalls with games such a welly throwing and raffles. The Sqn set up its Bde Tac HQ and ran a number of other stands including; parachute trg, an assault course for children, air rifle range and pitch and putt. The main events of the day were the tugofwar and football competitions. The tugofwar was between the Sqn and members of the Red Lion pub. After winning the first pull with relative ease the Sqn surprisingly lost the second. Following a few words of encouragement from the RSM, the Sqn managed to turn it round and win the third and decisive pull.

The Football also proved to be a much closer match than had been anticipated. Caythorpe took the lead with a particularly good strike, which our keeper could do little about. After sustained pressure, and coming close from a free kick, the Sqn managed to equalise, with **LCpl Edwards** scoring, to make it 1 -1 at half time. Both sides very nearly scored again in the second hal,f but it finished 1 -1, which was probably a fair reflection on the game.

That evening there was a dinner for the old comrades and some members of the Sqn, and a BBQ for the rest. Then it was off to the pub to swap more war stories and have a couple more drinks.

On the Sunday the Sqn got into Service Dress and was led by OC, **Maj Gunning**, in a march past through the village centre. All then attended the church service to remember those who had been lost. After the service **Maj Gen AJ Deane Drummond CB DSO MC*** laid a wreath at the Falkland Stone, in memory of those who died in that campaign. Then it was on to the final part of the weekend, lunch in the village hall for the Sqn and Veterans. This was provided by the local villagers and was of excellent quality. It was finally then time for everyone to go their separate ways and look forward to coming back next year.

Special thanks go to **Capt Jim Duncan** for organising the weekend on behalf of the Sqn and also the people of Caythorpe and the Airborne Signals Association for hosting the Sqn, without whom none of this would have been possible.

EXERCISE LIGHTNING CHARGE - *by Lt Jagger*

Seventeen members of the Sqn, comprising of Bravo and Charlie Tps, recently deployed on EX LIGHTNING CHARGE. The aim of the ex was the continued trg on the Apaché Attack Helicopters, building up to EX EAGLES EYE, the major Bde ex for the year. Our role was ground forces, in which we conducted three missions. Coordinating the missions between the Chinook crews, Apaché crews and fixed wing aircraft was **Lt Jagger**. The missions comprised a downed pilot rescue, the seizing of a black box captured by enemy forces, and an assassination mission. Two highly capable ground force sections, commanded by **Cpl Wootton** and **Cpl Stevens**, successfully achieved all three missions under very limiting time constraints. The members of the Sqn spent the week being flown around in Chinooks and escorted by Apaché, all done in true Hollywood style. The ex has been deemed as a huge success, with Apaché crews gaining valuable trg as well as the Sqn members having a bloody good time 'brassing up' the enemy.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FLY FISHING
– *by WO1 K Weaver*

The culmination of the Army Fly Fishing Sseason drew to an end in early October, with two members of the Corps, **WO1(RSM) Karl Weaver** from 216 Sqn and **Cpl Paul Calvert** from 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn both being selected to represent Army at the Inter Services Championships, both qualifying for the National final to fish for England at Bewl Water in Kent and both qualifying to represent England at the Team International final held at Rutland Water in Early October. After being narrowly beaten by RAF at the Inter Service Championships with **WO1(RSM) Weaver** being runner up in the Championships, things got off to a mediocre start. The International Final went well, with **RSM Weaver** taking centre stage, with the Sky Sports programme covering the event (he was seen hooking and bashing a few old trout!). With a freezer full of fish and the end of the trout fishing season now upon us, **RSM Weaver** has now switched his sights to the game shooting season, just to make sure it's not too long before he kills something and to see him through to the start of the fishing season in April next year.

12th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC Sqn **Maj Richard Spencer**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Ken Marsh**

Whilst BOWMAN remains the Sqn focus leading up to the end of the year, we are also concentrating on gearing up for OP TELIC 6 in April 05. The BOWMAN BCIP 04 capability, which we are in the process of receiving, should be the capability we are taking out on ops. The Sqn is thus particularly focused towards making it work. Military trg is also a high priority. A Battlecamp, EX DRAGON SPADE, straight after summer leave, has been followed up with numerous continuation trg packages, as we gear up for Iraq. There is much planned for the coming months, which will culminate in an excellent OPTAG package in January 05.

EXERCISE DRAGONS SPADE - *by Cpl Andy Cooper*

Friday afternoons are usually the preserve of long journeys home on grey windswept motorways, followed by several cool ones in the local. However, 03 September was a very different matter. The two coaches of highly motivated soldiers (allegedly) pulled into Hythe in the late afternoon and got straight into the series of lessons that had been set up.

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For the next two days, the impressive Hythe range complex was used to great effect, testing every aspect of rifle and machine gun firing imaginable. The rather cheeky fire team assessment stand kicked things off with a two-mile tab in full CEFO, followed by a full rifle and GPMG shoot. It was touch and go for the mighty 2 Sect, with **Sig Bleach** doing his best impression of **Paula Ratcliffe** in Athens just a few weeks earlier. Later we tackled the IBSR, MMTTR and fire team in defence.

The next day the tempo was upped still further. The veh anti-ambush was enjoyed by all except **Cpl Eldridge**, who managed to stall the rather tatty looking G-reg Escort even before being engaged by the Al Qa'eda freedom fighter figure 11 targets! The CQB (Urban) fire team patrol that followed, proved to be a highlight of the week. After running around like headless chickens for forty minutes (aggressive patrolling), and being mocked by the talking and moving local dummy population, we were then treated to further humiliation by watching the whole thing on video, complete with commentary. **Alan Hansen's** post match assassinations on *Match of the Day* have nothing on being ridiculed by the QM for taking five minutes to take out a gunman precisely ten metres in front of your position!

The long journey to Sennybridge capped the day's activities, and we all managed to be sleeping soundly in our beds by 01.00hrs. With the slightly sterile environment of Hythe replaced with the 'open rolling moorland' of central Wales, we were now in full rural mode. Section attacks, both dry and live were conducted over the next few days, the former being the first that many of us had attempted. Storming buildings was the order of the day on the FIBUA TEWT stand, as we all lived out our Iranian Embassy SAS fantasies! Basic skills, such as first aid, orders and map reading finished off in preparation for the highly secretive final ex.

All sections deployed early to numerous locs in the Sennybridge Trg Area on Thursday morning. Cam cream was applied, weapons

prepped and the fighting 2 Sect were ready to go. What followed was 26 hrs of arduous tabbing from stand to stand, where all the skills learned over the past week came to the fore. Morale was boosted mid afternoon, as we stormed past 1 Sect who started off an hour before us (losers!).

Blisters and fatigue notwithstanding, everyone made it to the final assault on Friday, when the dreaded Welsh rain finally decided to fall. Village 1 was liberated from the evil Centastan forces, after which tea and medals were duly distributed. Particular mention must be given to **Sig Carlos Dacosta**, who single-handedly managed to disregard all previous trg and concern for personnel safety, to clear the whole of the first floor of the building on his own!

Overall, the 2004 Battle Camp week was a challenging and ultimately rewarding experience in preparation for our deployment on OP TELIC next year. Thanks go to **SSgt Donnelly** and all at the Trg Wing, who made this a refreshing change from the normally staid annual military trg package.

ALPHA TP

Tp Comd	**Lt Zoe White**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Roderick**

A warm welcome is extended to **Cpl Beattie** and **Sgt Roderick**; a very fond farewell goes to **SSgt Fogg**, **Sgt Piper**, **Cpl Bonham and Cpl Hitchmough**, who all have all left on posting. Our best wishes go to **LCpl Brittain**, who recently got married without even going to his own stag night. There has been much to keep the Tp and the Sqn busy over the last few weeks, and we now have more than half an eye on our impending deployment on OP TELIC 6.

We have also had more time to focus on our sporting expertise although, for the football and rugby teams, the new season seems to have started the same way the last one ended – that is with a number of defeats. Things are set to change, however, as recently promoted **Sgt Webster**, who heads up the football team, and **Sgt Connolly,** heading up the rugby team, are working their magic. I'm sure glory will not be too far away! It has also been A Tp's turn to run the most recent OC's Challenge, though despite seamless organisation victory once again went to Support Tp.

OC's CHALLENGE *- by LCpl Yuille*

This time it was Alpha Tp's turn to run the OC's Challenge. The event was based on a cross-country run with the first half taking the form of a team run and the second half being an individual best effort.

The Tps lined up at the start point, with Support Tp being split in two because of its size – a whippets' squad and a tortoise squad. After a first chaotic few hundred metres, the Tps settled down into their squads with Support Tp whippets leading the way. Once all the squads had reached the halfway CP, a quick 2-minute break was had before the individual effort began. The final Tp scores were calculated by averaging the overall times, and it was great anticipation that everyone awaited the final positions, as **Lt White** made the final calculations. The result, unfortunately came as no surprise, as Support Tp once again secured victory, closely followed by A Tp, then B Tp. There are many suspicions that certain Support Tp members are taking performance-enhancing drugs – we'll have to wait until the next CDT!

DEFENCE COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY (GERMANY)

FOOTBALL

Cpl Dave Graham recently received the opportunity of a lifetime. He was selected to take part on an Army Football Association Tour to Mauritius and Rodrigues. Twenty-two players from UK and BFG took part in the five-match tour from 19 June to 5 July 04.

After a couple of trg sessions, Army's first match was against Maersk Mauritius Ltd/Expats. Two days later, the squad took on the Rodrigues Select XI, in the presence of the Chief Commissioner of Rodrigues and 2,500 spectators. Returning to Mauritius, the Team then played ASPL 200, and Mauritius Police Force, before their final match against Mauritius FA. In these five matches, Army won three, drew one and lost one.

The squad was also involved in Football Workshops for school children in Mauritius and Rodrigues. Three hundred children from 8-14 yrs old attended the day, a National day off granted by the President of the Island.

On this, his first main Army Football tour, **Dave** said, 'From a personal point of view, the highlight of the trip was to see the faces of the kids. I've never experienced anything like it before. It was a unique privilege to be there, and I may not get that opportunity again.'

NIJMEGEN MARCHES – 19-23 JULY 2004

In December 2003, **Sqn Ldr Phil Slee** and **WO2 Gaz Steel** decided they would enter a team from DCSA(G) for the Nijmegen Marches in Holland. So a trg programme was compiled, and a team of 12 unsuspecting volunteers were entered. Joining the two instigators were **Capt Adie Knight**, **Sgt Eddie Stojanovic**, **Sgt Michael Routledge**, **Cpl Jeff Hirst**, **Cpl Brian Morgan**, **Cpl Phil Hall**, **Cpl Marie Oxley**, **Cpl Jackie Kane**, **Sig Si Edwards** and **Sig Pete Shaw**. Trg included a 50-mile qualification march over two days, which had some team members questioning their sanity.

Cpl Dave Graham proudly wearing his trophy shirt

The first day commenced at 05.00hrs, and saw no problems encountered by team members. But the second day was not so problem free. **Sgt Routledge**, **Cpl Morgan** and **Sig Shaw** were retired by medics. Two were suffering from heat exhaustion and one sustained knee ligament damage. Furthermore, on return to camp, **Capt Knight** was forced to pull out with a huge blister on his foot.

The third day saw **Cpl Kane** forced to retire with knee ligament damage just before CP 2. During this day we encountered some rather steep hills. Who said Holland was flat?

The remaining 7 members awoke at 02.00hrs on the final day for a 04.00hrs start, fully determined to get through the day intact. There were no more retirements and we were especially happy to see a McDonalds opposite the finishing line!

Congratulations must go to all the team members, regardless of whether they completed the 4 days or not. It took a lot of hard work and dedication to take part in this gruelling event.

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS)

CO	**Lt Col IG Standen**
SSM	**WO1(RSM) SK Cook**

INTER SQUADRON DRIVING COMPETITION 2004

To promote safe driving and foster good inter-Sqn rivalry, the Unit MT organised an inter-Sqn driving competition. Open to all ranks, the events were spread over two days, and consisted of various stands at which certain standards had to be achieved and were marked upon. The stands were many and varied, including lashing and securing of loads, first working a veh, fork lift operating, trailer reversing, fault finding and go-karting, with teams of two working against the clock.

SSM Balmforth and Sgt Johnston and the section of minimees

Despite complaints lodged over the fact that **WO2 (RQMS) Goldsworthy** and **SSgt Brian Sheard** had an unfair advantage with their experience in trade, the competition was close until the end, where it was all decided on the Karting times. Despite not looking much like a woman, **WO2 (SSM) Balmforth** definitely drove like one, and his team was therefore beaten into second place (Apologies to all women drivers out there in reader land – but it had to be seen to be believed!)

The CO, QM and SSM with the teams and trophies

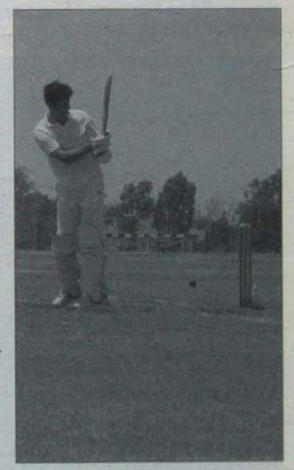
EXERCISE BOOT CAMP 2004

During the summer holidays, the Unit Trg Wing took upon itself the task of entertaining the children for a week with a mini boot camp. Under the care of **WO2 (SSM) Balmforth**, ably supported by **Sgt Jonno Johnston**, the children were instructed in the many arts of soldiering, including the delights of square bashing, basha building, weapon handling, cam and concealment, and the compo ration box. The week culminated in a pass off parade, where the children were piped on to the parade square by a piper and inspected by the SSM and CO.

OFFICER MESS v SNCOS MESS CRICKET 2004

With the gauntlet thrown down, the two Messes agreed to do battle on the cricket pitch, and a fine summer's day saw both teams draw the battle lines and unleash the hounds of war. Well almost...

Once the rules were finalised, the Sgts' Mess went out to bat. Some fine stroke play saw the scoreboard ticking around at a healthy rate, and despite losing wickets at irregular intervals, the SNCOs clocked up a healthy 175. The reply from the Offrs was initially alarming, if you were a SNCO, but once the early breakthrough was made by **SSgt Roger Thompson**, it was all over bar the shouting. At the end, the SNCOs rolled out comfortable winners; but when all was said and done, it was the spirit in which the match was played in that counted – oh that, and the honour of the SNCOs that was maintained.



Capt Bob Vowles watches as his wicket tumbles

660th SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt DG Watson MBE**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Bruce**

721 SQUADRON DETACHMENT

ECM Adv **SSgt Mitchell**

EXERCISE DEMON BEACON

EX DEMON BEACON is the licensing ex that the Sqn runs twice a year to allow EOD and ECM operators to be assessed on their skills. It involves all kinds of scenarios that may be encountered by police and military while dealing with an Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), ranging from finding suspicious packages to dealing with post blast areas and forensic collection.

August saw the second EX DEMON BEACON of the year pass off without a hitch. Warwickshire, South Wales, South Yorkshire, and Wiltshire Constabularies were amongst the many police forces that took part in the ex. We had a clean sweep, with all 10 bleeps passing their licensing, which allows them to continue working in the UK. The end of the ex saw the last official duties of **SSgt Mitchell** prior to his deployment to Iraq. In his place, **Cpl Bickers** picks up a well-deserved A/Sgt, as 721's new ECM Advisor.

LCpl Gaz Driscoll passed his High Threat course with flying colours, but has a few months to wait before he goes on detachment, which is good for him, as it has enabled him to attempt his JCLM course. **LCpl Routledge**, and **LCpl Amanda Giltrow** will also be attempting their JCLM this month.

Lastly we welcome **Cpl Stu McGowan** from 14 Sig Regt (EW), and **LCpl MacNicol** from JSSU Digby to the Unit. Pre course trg rounds off this month for them, prior to their IED Disposal course.

SPORT

SAILING

24 HOUR DINGHY EVENT AT SOUTHPORT

Once again the Le Mans 24hr of the dinghy sailing world took place over the weekend of 18 – 19 September 2004. As in the previous 2 years, the Army Sailing Association (ASA) entered a boat and their top sailors in this event. The culmination of 3 Years work by **Capt Taff Owens** came to fruition with the takeover of the Army team by Royal Signals personnel. Only two members were non-Royal Signals and they were both civilians, so they don't really count.

The weather forecast for the weekend was not good. Remnants of the many hurricanes that wreaked havoc in the Caribbean had chosen Southport as their European port of arrival. Force 4 winds were forecast, with gusts of 5 to 7. By midnight Friday, the final team members had arrived from Blandford, having spent 3 hrs on the M6 stuck in traffic.

Quite easy early on, but...

Saturday morning saw the team recovering with bacon sandwiches prepared by the duty chef, **Sgt Stu Suthan**. The boat, an *Enterprise* (ex Royal Signals) was again supplied by **WO2 (YofS) Ted Heath**, and a full check and tune was carried out.

The Race was due to start at 12.00hrs on Saturday. We started in the fourth flight of the 88 boats entered. With this number sailing a 2 mile course within an hour, it was difficult to work out how well we were doing. But after 1½ hrs, we were 56th, which wasn't too bad.

At least 20 boats had already capsized, luckily not us (yet). The afternoon went with out hitch, until around 17.00hrs, when **WO1(YofS) Pete Goodliff** emerged from behind one of the islands being towed, minus the mast. A steel shroud 4 mm thick had snapped (you can pull a Bedford with them). Luckily we had a spare, and after 30 mins we had the boat back on the water. This brought home to the team just how difficult the conditions were, and we still had over ¾ of the race to go. Would we survive?

As darkness approached, we were lying around 55th despite our mast mishap, and during the night and caught up a few places. Then the rudder broke, but like all good Le Mans teams, we had a spare. At first light, we had made it up to 51st, even though the boat had been out of action for about 45 mins during the night. Daylight saw a scene of carnage and destruction, with dinghies broken and abandoned along the waters' edge. We were lucky; being constructed of fibreglass had saved the boat from being holed.

The morning progressed steadily until 07.30hrs, when again the boat was seen being towed in, with another broken rudder. Unfortunately that was our last one, but with a bit of fibreglass resin, a running repair was made to the earlier damaged rudder, and the boat was back in the water in 20mins - without our losing our position. The boat held up for another 4 hours, and we finally finished in 51st place. Overall only 77 out of 88 boats finished, with 15 of those not crossing the line.

On the face of it, our position was not as good as last year. However in 2003 only 74 boats entered and we came 46th. If you use lots of arithmetic, we actually did better by 3 positions this year. Honestly - ask a tech.

It had been a great weekend. There is not enough space to mention the social side of this event, but this was the sailing dinghy social event of the year.

The final position lists and photos can be found on the Web at www.wlyc.org.uk.

If you are interested in dinghy sailing or sailing generally, please contact your unit rep. Alternatively call **Capt Owens** (who is a qualified Dinghy Coach) on Blandford Mil 94371 2182 or Civ 01258 482182. He will be more than happy to speak to you. Additional information can be found on the RSYC website: www.rsignalsyc.info.

TRIANGULAR REGATTA

This year's Triangular Regatta, held at Seaview, Isle of Wight, marked the last of the innumerable sailing events in which **Lt Col David Ellis** has represented Royal Signals. He has brought a great deal of success to the Corps and has done much to foster the sport at all levels.

In this Regatta, RA, RE and Royal Signals have competed for the Glover Trophy since it was presented by **Lt Col Eric Glover** Royal Signals in 1963.

David Ellis first sailed in this event in 1976, and has captained the Corps Team since 1980. He retired shortly after the event and it is fitting that he should receive the Trophy on this his last Triangular.

His distinguished sailing record includes joint service representation and participation at international level.

Well done, **David**. The Corps sailing fraternity salutes you!

Hon Rear Commodore RSYC, Brig JF Blake (R) presents the Glover Cup to Lt Col David Ellis, Captain of the victorious Corps Team at this year's Triangular Regatta

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB OFFSHORE (RSYC(O)) SAILING

The RSYC Offshore Section has had a busy and successful season, trg and racing in both home and foreign waters. There are currently two Sail Training Weeks per year held in April and October respectively. These have proved increasingly popular, and by the time this article goes to print, 48 personnel will have benefited from the Autumn Sail Training Week 11 – 17 October 2004.

No fewer than eight skippers were able to make themselves available to crew the two UK based Corps Yachts, *Skywave* and *Petasus*, and an additional six Victoria 34s were provided courtesy of Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre, Gosport. Students from a variety of units, Brigadier to Signaller and Regular and TA, had the opportunity to qualify as Competent Crew and Day Skipper, with continuation trg also being provided for those not yet ready to qualify at the next level. A thank you to **Sgt Windy Gale**, Corps Bosun, for his usual hard work; to all skippers for their time and effort; and in addition, all Chains of Command for releasing skippers and students alike.

Spring Sail Training Week 2005 will take place 11 – 15 April, and details will follow in

Skywave *and her crew, Cowes to Falmouth 2004*

the New Year. Winter continuation trg will take place over five weekends between January – March 2005. Any interested personnel should contact either **Capt Elisabeth McLellan** (Secretary Offshore) on Mil: 94331 3731, Civ: 01722 433731 email: elisabethmclellan@yahoo.co.uk or **Sgt Windy Gale** on Mil: 9380 65668, Civ: 01705 765668, email: rsigsyc@tiscali.co.uk.

The Corps has been represented in a number of regattas with *Skywave* with her trusty crew gaining some very credible results. The Royal Signals Yacht Club offshore race team has participated in every event outlined in the 3-year race plan, encouraging a mixture of all ranks and abilities to take part in the fast and furious sport of offshore racing. The team is now focused upon achieving the first goal of a successful Corps entry on *Skywave* into the Fastnet 2005 Race.

The last race of this season, the Royal Ocean Racing Club Cowes to Falmouth race of 165 miles is worthy of note. The crew had learned from past mistakes and had been carefully learning to tune *Skywave* throughout the season. Cowes – Falmouth was to be the final test of the season.

This race contributes to one of three qualifiers for the Fastnet, and provides valuable experience in long distance racing. 35 yachts took part in the event, 8 yachts in class. However, with just under nine hours for the race to go, to the utter disbelief of the crew, the mainsail began to rip. It was extremely frustrating to watch yachts that had been specks on the horizon sail past towards the finish line.

The disappointment was evident throughout the crew. The line was crossed 13 hours after the mainsail had blown out, an additional 4 hours beyond the planned finishing time. However, it was with a mixture of both excitement and disappointment that the crew learned it had come 16th overall and 4th in class among the high calibre fleet, most of whom had participated in Cowes Week.

Finally, a thank you to **Captain Michelle Worden** who has recently handed over the posts of Secretary Central Committee and Secretary Offshore Committee. She is thanked for her very hard work in ensuring the smooth running of both committees for a period of time.

All Offshore members are requested to ensure that the Secretary Offshore is informed of any change of contact details at the earliest opportunity. **Capt Elisabeth McLellan**, SO3 G6 Ops/Cts, G6 Branch CBM Div, HQ LAND, Erskine Bks, Wilton, SP2 0AG. Mil: 94331 3731, Civ: 01722 433731 email: elisabethmclellan@yahoo.co.uk.

ROYAL SIGNALS SAIL TRAINING WEEK 2004

The Royal Signals Sail Trg Week was held in the Baltic Sea in July. A total of eleven yachts (1 Najad 331s and 10 Comfortina 35s) were chartered on behalf of RSYC from the Kiel Trg Centre.

AT 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 Royal Signals personnel.

The STW consisted of trg towards the Competent Crew qualification under the supervision of qualified skippers, followed by offshore racing. 67 personnel took part, with 29 arriving as novices and leaving with the RYA Competent Crew qualification.

During the offshore racing phase, each day consisted of a passage of between 25 and 115 NM. The weather conditions varied from a flat calm to Force 7.

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:

Team	Skipper	Yacht
1st ATR Litchfield	**Mr Angus Ferguson**	*Petral*
2nd 36 Sig Regt	**Sgt Windy Gale**	*Widgeon*
3rd 39 Sig Regt	**WO2 Terry McIntyre**	*Curlew*
Novice Skipper CSDC	**WO1 Mark Gouwd**	*Greeb*
Passage Race 36 Sig Regt	**Sgt Windy Gale**	*Wigeon*
Round the Cans 39 Sig Regt	**WO2 Terry McIntyre**	*Curlew*
Homeward Bound Trophy 39 Sig Regt	**WO2 Terry McIntyre**	*Curlew*
Spirit of Event 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt	**Mr Richard Plaster**	*Pochard*
Best Improved 14 Sig Regt (EW)	**SSgt Stephen Roberts**	*Pintail*

FOOTBALL

BLANDFORD SEVENS TOURNAMENT - *by LCpl McGregor*

200 Sig Sqn entered the Signals Seven-a-Side Tournament in Blandford, not only with a new team but a new set of coaches in **SSgt Kidd** and **SSgt Alford**. We left Sennelager at 08.00hrs and it was after 19.00hrs by the time we arrived in Blandford. With the lads all tired and a long day ahead of us on Friday, it was a few cokes, a shower and off to bed.

Our first game was a nervous affair against 608 Sig Tp, in which we had numerous chances squandered by **Sig Langford**, who made up for his misses with a goal in the last minute for us to win 1-0. Second up was a tie against 2 Sig Regt, who we competed with and nearly won the game in the dying stages, but a 1-1 draw was a fair result, our goal being scored by **Sig Callaghan**.

The last game in the group stage was against 15 Sig Regt, and we needed to win to stay in the main competition. With the game still a draw and one minute remaining, our goal keeper **LCpl Bolton** had a moment of madness letting the ball go through his legs from a back pass. We therefore lost 1-0 and went into the Plate Competition.

Our initial tie was another easy affair, which we won 3-0; goals being scored by **Sig Langford**, **Sig Magill** and **Sig Callaghan,** which moved us on to a semi-final tie against 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. All the lads were feeling tired, but seemed to give every last bit of energy when they played. We should have won the game by at least 2 goals, but unfortunately the game finished goalless and penalty kicks were to decide the outcome. 4-3 was the final result with, **LCpl Bolton** making up for his mistake in the game against 15 Sig Regt with 2 superb penalty saves. Our only miss was from **SSgt Kidd**, which was a back pass, not a shot (unlucky). And so onto the final, a hard fought game decided in the last three minutes when14 Sig Regt scored their two goals and won the Plate competition.

Overall, the competition was a success and thoroughly enjoyed by the team members. We now look forward to a crack at the main competition next year.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: MajGen A H Boyle CB

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RHQ Royal Signals
Blandford Camp
Blandford Forum
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DT11 8RH
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals

Welfare Secretary
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Tel (civ) 01258 48 2089

Membership Secretary
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General Secretary and Treasurer: Col GN Donaldson OBE
Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C P Conlon
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr P J Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

NEWS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

On behalf of us all here in Association HQ, may I wish all RSA Members and their families a happy Christmas and a healthy, prosperous New Year. May I also thank all Members for their continuing support to the Association during 2004. A special thank you to Branch Committee Members, without whose valuable contribution, the Association could not continue to thrive.

Branch Affairs John Horne is the new secretary of the 19 Sig Regt Assn and can be contacted at: 36 Arden Rd, Henley in Arden, Warks B95 5LF.

I had the pleasure of attending the Area 1 Branches get together in Middlesborough in October. Around 100 members enjoyed lunch and afternoon events. It was good to meet many old friends, and new. The taxi driver taking us to the station turned out to be an ex Denbury Junior Leader – I should have given him an RSA car sticker!

Reunion 2005 The Chesterfield Branch is organising a coach party to stay in Bournemouth for a week and will take in the RSA Reunion over the weekend 25/26 June. Accn is in a good hotel in the centre of town. The coach departs Chesterfield on Monday 20 and returns on Monday 27 June. Anyone interested in taking one of the few spare seats should contact **Dennis Croot** on 01246-271089.

Internet Site Don't forget to check the Notices page on the RSA web page for the latest items of interest.

Those of you who remember RHQ Royal Signals from its time in Regency Street in London, will be saddened to hear of the death of **Jack Judge**. **Jack** was an In-Pensioner at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea and made frequent visits to the London office.

Life Members We welcome the following recently enrolled Life Members:-

Rank/Name	*Service*	*Branch*
Cpl Andy Westlake	1986-97	
LCpl Paul Tailford	1990-97	
LCpl Mark Williams	1988-97	
WO1 Kevin Innes	1984-date	Sheffield
SSgt Gordon Hardaker	1958-05	Leeds
Sig Alex Jones	1992-97	
Sgt Len D'Rozario	1975-97	
WO2 Bob Pullan	1972-96	
LCpl Geordie Shepherd	1977-89	
Cpl Frank Page	1962-66	
WO1 Paul Fleming	1980-02	
LCpl Scott Brown	1994-date	Hull
LCpl Bill Daglish	1956-68	
WO2 Andrew Allan	1979-03	
WO1 Rod Whateley	1972-94	
Sig Steve Maynard	1992-96	
Sig Keith Dodds	1979-87	
Cpl Roger Hartley-Booth	1945-48	Reading
Sig Nathan Acott	1988-99	
Sgt Steve Sparrow	1981-04	
Cpl Martin Gillett	1992-04	
SSgt Mick Openshaw	1983-05	
WO1 John Ramsdale	1981-04	
LCpl Stephen Sharp	1998-04	
SSgt Kev Roberts	1981-04	
WO2 Harry Harrison	1981-date	
LCpl Mark Bloxham	1986-96	
WO1 Kev Parker	1973-97	
LCpl Brian Whitehead	1985-97	
Sig Mark Curry	1989-97	
Cpl James Nesbitt	1982-97	
LCpl Rob Jukes	1987-97	
SSgt Alistair Mackenzie	1974-89	
Sig John McBain	1970-80	260 Sig Sqn Assn
Cpl Alf Mercer	1944-55	Catterick
Cpl Michael Biglin	1964-88	
Cpl Alex Petrie	1964-74	
SSgt Lee Calvert	1981-04	
Cpl Bob Loveridge	1972-88	
Cpl Wayne Skelton	1984-97	
Sig John Harris	1975-83	
WO1 John Brooks	1972-93	
Cpl Gary McKenzie	1983-97	
Maj Richard Moir	1989-04	
Maj Paul Connors	1966-04	
Capt Cath Stephens	1996-04	
Capt Angie Hilborn	1979-04	
Maj Fred Payet	1971-04	
Capt Gareth Kemp	1997-04	
Maj Ashley Stocker	1984-04	
Capt Richard Sellwood	1992-04	
Sgt Steve Farrar	1971-84	
LCpl Frank Battison	1985-97	
WO1 Paul Meadows	1977-00	
WO2 Brad Hogg	1981-05	
Cpl Mark Wright	1989-97	
Sig Jim Fleming	1958-64	East London
Cpl Colin Hoare	1985-98	
Cpl Lee Watson	1991-97	

Sig Johann Braund-Smith	1992-97	
Sig Mick Bower	1958-60	Chesterfield
Sig Graham Wain	1955-57	Chesterfield
SSgt Phil Price	1977-05	
Sig Thomas Gilbert	1976-80	
WO1 Frank Roberts	1982-04	
SSgt George McIntosh	1962-88	
Cpl Michael Westbrook	1983-97	
Sig Ron Butler	1949-55	
LCpl Martin Pearce	1998-04	
LCpl Nev Hanley	1975-80	
SSgt Alastair McEwen	1959-81	
SSgt Sean Kelly	1988-date	
Sig Francis Talbot	1943-48	
Cpl Stephen Keay	1993-04	Nottingham
LCpl Lee Hyland	1984-91	
Sig Tony Dobson	1973-80	
Maj Keith Goodfellow	1975-05	
Cpl Les Prance	1984-97	
Sgt Mick Blakley	1969-98	
LCpl Phil Davies	1996-03	
Sig George Dedridge	1958-60	Beverley Ex-Boys Assn
SSgt Frank Patterson	1960-92	
Cpl Barbara Gibbon	1961-64	Harrogate
Sgt Colin Gibbon	1961-77	Harrogate
Sgt Scott Fitzsimmons	1970-93	Harrogate
WO2 Rick Levett	1965-99	Harrogate
WO1 David Lewis	1959-81	Harrogate
Lt Col Benny Newell	1949-91	Harrogate
Maj Ron Hails	1961-97	Harrogate
SSgt John Davidson	1976-94	
Sig Kelvin Davies	1965-70	
Lt Col Graham Complin	1979-05	
Sig Tom Kirkpatrick	1942-47	
Sig Andrew Garner	1990-98	
LCpl Tim Harrison	1987-98	
Cpl Clive Spear	1951-53	
Sig Rachel Thompson	1998-00	
Cpl Eddie Bennett	1959-68	
Sgt Derek Smeaton	1976-04	
SSgt Kenneth Harlick	1957-82	Royal Hospital, Chelsea
LCpl Terry Fox	1970-74	
Sgt Keith Licence	1973-96	Darlington
Sgt Bob Lawson	1985-99	Darlington
Cpl Paul Harding	1974-98	
Sig Allan Baxter	1988-98	
Cpl Richie Glass	1989-98	
Cpl Alistair Wales	1987-97	
LCpl Jon-Paul Jones	1989-01	
Sgt Michael Brown	1969-91	
Cpl Jimmy Frew	1971-93	
WO1 Ged Keane	1982-04	
Maj Peter Grainger	1970-04	Sheffield
Sig Jonathan Copeland	1994-98	
Sgt Fiona Baker	1986-98	
Sgt Mark Cuddy	1986-97	
Sig Scott Napier	1992-98	
Sig Neil Farnsworth	1990-00	
SSgt Brian Tanner	1966-91	

DONATIONS

George Marshall Hyde, from his will	£1,000
In memory of **Col John S Agar**, cheques totalling	£645.00
S Daw, in memory of **Doreen Gordon**	£10.00
Norman Henry, in memory of **Doreen Gordon**	£20.00
Sheila Miles, in memory of **Doreen Gordon**	£10.00
Reading Branch RSA	£150.00
J Michael Wright	£250.00
David Cannon	£100.00
TW and **JP Watkins**, in memory of **Doreen Gordon**	£10.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Peter Mills, in memory of **Sig Stanley Hardy**	£30.00
Winchester Branch RSA	£200.00
Louis Haig	£25.00
N Beaton	£10.00
West Wales Branch RSA	£36.00
The Middlesex Imperial Yeomanry Lodge	£500.00
John Coney	£10.00
Paul Hawkyard	£10.00
RH Blizard	£307.00
Mr J Seabrookin, in memory of **Mrs Jessie Seabrook**	£15.00
Mr and **Mrs M O'Connor**, in memory of **Mrs Jessie Seabrook**	£25.00
Joyce Harding, in memory of **Doreen Gordon**	£200.00
Estate of **Augustine Kenrick**, in memory of **Cpls Derek Wood** and **Robert Howes**	£820.00
Maj (Retd) David Chappell	£100.00

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Jane Knight**

As we feel the shades of Autumn we look back on a full social calendar.

Those of us who attended the Reunion enjoyed a weekend of great hospitality and a very impressive parade by the resident Regt. Painshill Park, our July event, came as a great surprise, as it excelled all expectations of a country house visit. The weather was good and we were afforded an extensive guided tour of the grounds and a very good exposition of the Park's history.

Attendance at the Final Rehearsal of the Sovereign's Parade at Sandhurst has been our established August event for some years past, and again this year we were joined by many friends from Branches near and far - from Kent and Southampton, not forgetting some from other cap badges.

The Cadets were appraised by many an old soldier with a critical eye, but were not found wanting. We had a very hot and sunny day and following the Parade, enjoyed a picnic in the grounds. In the evening we attended a very fine concert at Kneller Hall, preceeded by a jolly picnic party in the grounds.

On our visit to Denbies Winery, we were not so fortunate with the weather, but it still was enjoyable and informative. There was the added attraction of an impressive film, after which we enjoyed lunch in the restaurant

We feel great sadness at the loss of **Jean Hicks**, who died in October as the result of an accident from which she failed to recover. **Jean** was a bright spirit, who will be sadly missed by us all.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

Those of us who attended the Annual Reunion at Blandford could not fail to appreciate the impeccable Princess Royal Day parade by the Regiment. They are to be congratulated. Although the weather was not entirely kind to us most of the programme went ahead and we enjoyed the customary hospitality offered by our hosts.

In September our annual parade at the Royal Hospital Chelsea was attended by the Sheffield Branch and members from the Reading Branch and 31 Signal Regiment. After the parade we adjourned to the In Pensioners Club and enjoyed a very good curry tiffin.

Ray Wyatt arranged a visit to the Operations Room at RAF Uxbridge. This is one of many such visits Ray has organised in the past and one which always arouses interest.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs J Barratt**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

It is with great sadness that we report that **Mrs Pat Harlow**, daughter of the late **Maj (Retd)** and **Mrs Tommy Thomas**, died quite suddenly after a relatively brief illness. The funeral was a sad occasion for those of us who attended.

The Dinner Dance planned for September fell foul to a sudden lack of interest, which led to a cancellation the first time in thirteen years that this has happened.

However, we now look forward to a trip to 'The Cloth of Gold' Ceremony at Guines near to Calais on 17 October. We are led to believe the proceedings entail all guests/participants donning a medieval overall, sitting at long tables, being served quantities of medieval food in wooden dishes to be eaten with wooden implements, quaffing quantities of wine and generally having a good time, with much singing accompanied by merry quips and jolly laughter. All of which sounds very much like a good dummy run for the forthcoming Christmas Lunch without the Medieval overall.

Bon Appetit !

Ted Drake, our Treasurer and his wife **Mary**, escaped the fiscal puzzles of the Branch by going on a family holiday to USA via Virgin Airways, but they were delayed by 14 hrs, and their luggage went astray when they finally arrived in the States.

Donald Crisp went as a guest of the Market Garden Association to Arnhem for six days to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the battle there. There is no space here to describe the generosity, the welcome, the emotion shown by the Dutch people towards us. Whether or not we had taken part in the battle all those years ago or not, we were British and that was all that mattered. **Donald** was approached by a **Maj Steve Wood**, who introduced himself saying that he recognised the Corps tie and that he himself had enlisted into the Corps via the Apprentice College in 1972, spent twenty years, becoming a WO1 YofS, and then transferred to the AAC. It transpired that **Maj Wood** and **Donald's** son, **Steve** were Telegraphist Classmates at Harrogate. A small world.

Peter Foakes, who has been ill for some time is now very much better, so well that he and **Peggy** are planning to attend this year's Christmas Lunch, his first outing with the Branch for well over a year. Despite aches and pains of varying severity, the Branch remains fit and requires very little assistance from the Welfare Member – for this month at least

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) P Burton**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) JB Greenwood**

In September some of our Members attended the Essex Regiment Old Comrades Association Dinner. We have had a lot of contact with this Association recently, and as their numbers decline, and we have organised a number of joint events over the year, and the invitation to our Members was in recognition of this.

An enjoyable evening of big band music was had for a large contingent of our Members went to see a concert with the Royal Artillery Band at The Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch on Friday, 24 September. It was organised in aid of SSAFA Forces Help.

Over 100 members, spouses and friends attended the Italian Dinner and Disco Dance held on Saturday 2 October. This is one of the two major social occasions organised over the year that everybody makes the effort to attend - and Members were certainly not disappointed. The evening ended in the traditional way, with **Barry Greenwood** parading off the Standard.

Our other major social event is our Formal Dinner Dance, which will next be held on 19 March 2005. This will be our eightieth year, so we are looking forward to this event with even more enthusiasm than normal. Details of this and other future events are on our web page at the following address http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/eastlondon/index.htm

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. We are aiming to be inclusive, and would welcome, as Associate Members, serving or ex-service men and women from other Arms, Regiments and Corps. Our meetings are held in the Sgts Mess of 36(E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, and Ilford at 8pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month except December.

GUERNSEY BRANCH

Chairman **Alec Forty**
Secretary **Eric Le Quesne**

To honour members of our Corps serving in Iraq, we decided to invite the parents of a Royal Signals soldier who lost his life while serving there to Guernsey for a short break. The name given to us by HQ was 28 year old **LCpl Shaun Brierley** and we invited his parents, **Peter** and **Christine Brierley** of Batley, West Yorkshire, to be guests of honour at the annual dinner we hold to commemorate the Liberation of Guernsey on 6 May 1945.

They flew here from Manchester on t4 May and returned on 6 May and, on learning the very special circumstances, *Les Rocquettes Hotel* kindly offered to accommodate them free of charge. The matter of meeting the cost of their airfares was unexpectedly resolved as the result of circumstances that form the following quite separate story.

Guernsey's *Red Lion Hotel* had been managed by **Bob Savage**, a member of our Branch who had served in Airborne Signals, but he died in January and, being a Northern Irishman, had expressed a wish to be buried in his home country. However, his widow **Lorraine** hadn't the financial means to have his body repatriated to Northern Ireland for burial but, following approaches made by our Secretary, **Eric Le Quesne**, the RSA, ABF and Airborne Forces met that cost.

Lorraine continues to run the *Red Lion Hotel* and, to show her gratitude for all that was done to help her, on what would have been **Bob's** birthday, she arranged a fundraising evening for Army charities. **Bob's** friends and the Red Lion's regulars raised the magnificent sum of £810.55, and an ex-Airborne friend of **Bob's**, who'd come from Jersey for the event, pushed the total above one thousand pounds by donating a £205 cheque to the ABF.

We passed the cheque to the Guernsey Chairman of the ABF and **Lorraine** wished our Branch to use its discretion as to how the cash would be used. She was delighted to be told that we decided to use part of it to meet the cost of airfares for **Peter** and **Christine Brierley** and put the balance into a fund to help local Royal Signals connected people who find themselves in such tragic circumstances as she had.

We provided a suitably inscribed Corps plaque for the bar at the *Red Lion Hotel*, and were delighted to make **Lorraine** an Associate Member of our Branch. Her meeting with **Peter** and **Christine Brierley** at our Liberation Dinner brought the two stories together.

During an interview with the **Brierley's**, a member of the local press asked about our Regimental March, and when our

Peter and Christine Brierly (seated) with Noel and Lorraine Savage, Alec and Sheila Forty, and Eric Le Quesne

Chairman and Secretary began to hum it, to their delighted surprise, **Peter Brierley** took over and sang the words, having remembered them from when he was a boy!

During their short stay, Branch members showed **Christine** and **Peter** round Guernsey, and they said that this contact with ex members of their son's Corps had been of value to them in their tragic loss. We hope we will meet them in Guernsey again before too long.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Secretary **WO2 I Wolfe**

How many of you have seen the film *Zulu*?. At our August meeting we were enthralled by a talk given by **Mr David Truesdale** on the Battle of Rourke's Drift. With the aid of excellent slides, **Mr Truesdale** took us step by step through this particular battle, even putting names to the photographs. A most interesting evening, thanks to Asst Secretary **Carol Cameron** who arranged the talk.

At one time the Branch used to close down for two months during the summer. This caused some confusion to Members and so a few years ago it was decided to open all twelve months of each year, irrespective of TA camp. Our September meeting therefore was a little bit depleted, as our Secretary, Treasurer and several Members were attending annual camp with 40(U) Sig Regt, and our Chairman was on holiday.

The Branch Welfare Member, **John McAreavey** is still recuperating after a spell in hospital. We wish him a speedy recovery and hope he will be back in harness again soon.

A welcome awaits any serving or ex-Signaller at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the 3rd Wednesday of each Month. Why not check out our web site for what's on?

NEWARK BRANCH

Chairman **Mr FC Dixon**
Secretary **Mr FC Dixon**

On Saturday the 30 October 2004 the Newark Branch held their Annual Lunch at the *Red House Hotel*, Kelham. 23 Members and wives attended the lunch; all enjoyed a good meal.

Two members of the Branch, **Dennis Hague** and **Clifford Paine** who had sadly passed away during the year were remembered by a minute's silence.

After dinner the Branch President, **Ray Vasper** proposed the Loyal Toast and gave a small speech thanking the Committee Members for their efforts during the year. He also said that it was vital that new members were recruited in order to keep the Branch going.

He then presented two awards. The first was to **Fred Dixon**, for 50yrs service to the RSA; the second was to **William (Bill) Coyne**, who received the Honour Award for services to the Newark Branch as a committed Member and Treasurer. Both replied by saying how pleased they were to get the awards.

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Pauline Tennant**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Hugh Nealon**

Branch activity continues apace. Early in August we held the annual Branch Barbecue at the home of our Secretary, and a lovely evening was enjoyed by the forty or so members who attended.

Our thanks to all involved in the organising of the event, but particularly to **Hugh** and **Lis** for inviting us all into their home and garden, and to the QM staff for their efforts in the catering department. A week later, we all trooped along to the *Bell and Bottle* in Shinfield for the quarterly Branch meeting, followed by a pub lunch. Of particular interest, amongst the reports that were presented, was one on ex-Gurkha Signalman **Mekbahadur Gurung**.

The Branch agreed to support **Mekbahadur**, via the Gurkha Welfare Trust, and this was the first report we had received from the Trust on his family's way of life. The report was received with great interest, and we were pleased to learn that our modest contribution does go some way to improving the family's condition.

A small party from the Branch attended the Royal Signals Service at the Royal Hospital Chelsea in September, and much enjoyed their visit.

On 2 October we held our 34th Annual Branch Reunion Dinner at the Sonning Golf Club. This was a new venue for us, but much enjoyed by nearly eighty branch members and guests. Our guests were led by The Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** and **Lady Cowan**, and **Lt Col Carl Conlon**, Assistant General Secretary RSA and **Mrs Conlon**.

Following his post-dinner speech, **General Cowan** presented the Association's 50 Year badge to Branch member **John Wakefield**, together with a certificate and personal letter from **Maj Gen Tony Boyle**. **John** was called up for National Service in 1950 and did his two years with the Corps.

This was followed by four years' compulsory TA service and thirteen years' voluntary TA service all with Royal Signals. It was during his TA service that **John** met and married **Thelma**, who was serving in the same Regt. **John** and **Thelma** celebrate their 40th Wedding Anniversary in April next year. Congratulations to **John** on his 40 and 50 year achievements.

By the time this report is published, the festive season will be under way, so Seasons Greetings to all our readers. If you would like to know more about Reading Branch, you can find details on the RSA Web site, or call our Membership Secretary, **Alan Foot** on 0118 926 1952 or the Branch Secretary **Hugh Nealon** on 0118 948 1136.

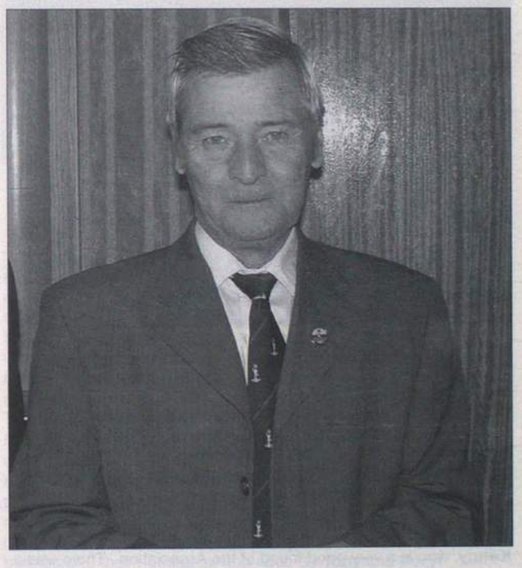
YORK BRANCH

Chairman **Tony Spray**
Secretary **Bob Cook**

A REET GOOD DO

York Branch followed in the footsteps of the Darlington and Middlesbrough Branches and organised an area Get Together on Sunday 22 August. We were blessed with a fine dry day (unusual this summer), which brought coaches and minibuses from Newcastle, Middlesbrough, Darlington, Hull, Sheffield and Rotherham Branches – carrying around 100 members and partners. A fine curry lunch quietened things down for a while, before attention was focussed on drawing the raffle. Members of the Middlesbrough Branch who proceeded to snaffle the majority of prizes greeted this with much enthusiasm. The mandatory quick game of tombola followed, called by **Fred Peebles Snr** in fluent Glasgowese. Then *tempus fugit*, and finally it was time to call it a day, with the coaches and minibuses departing to their various locations. We at York Branch enjoyed the company of all who travelled to visit us, and believe it was 'a reet good do.'

The main driver of the do was **Willy Grey**, who is always at the fore when social events need to be organised. Although unable to be present himself due to a prior commitment, he selflessly made time to ensure the success of this event. Our appreciation of his and others efforts was noted at our meeting held on 25 August.



Middlesbrough's Fred Peebles Snr

WE ENTER THE 21st CENTURY

It is clear that IT has been taken to the bosom of the Association with Branch websites proliferating on the net. This observation resulted in the Committee declaring that we needed one. Although we were lacking in expertise in this field, a website (of sorts) was eventually produced. Our thanks to Webmaster, **Andy Soward**, for publishing our site.

OUR FORTUNATE ALLIANCE

At our monthly meeting on 29 September, we had a presentation by **Capt S Richardson**, Adjt 2 Sig Regt and **SSgt M Foster**, REME on the role of female soldiers in today's Army. We were given an insight into the difficulties of breaking into a male-dominated organisation, with résumés of their respective careers to date. It was presented in a candid and forthright manner, telling of highs and lows and of their future aspirations. Listening to their stories was very interesting, and left us with no doubts about the commitment and expertise they afforded the Army

We are extremely fortunate to be associated with 2 Sig Regt, whose CO, **Lt Col Stewart MacRostie MBE**, has supported us wholeheartedly. This has resulted in a series of presentations on life in today's Army, (the above being the fourth), and involvement of the Branch in Regtl activities. The next of these will be the Freedom Parade through the City of York on 9 October, when we have kindly been invited to march with the Regt. This is an event we are eagerly looking forward to, although a surge in the sale of foot powder in York can be anticipated.

19th SIGNALS REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Lt Col (Retd) Pat Soward**
Secretary **Mr John Horne**

The twelfth reunion of 19th Signal Regiment Association was held at the Hilton Hotel, Warwick over the weekend 17-18 September. Previous reunions had taken the form of a midweek luncheon for menfolk only, but on this first occasion our ladies joined us for a Saturday evening dinner.

The advance party of 29 members arrived on Friday afternoon, enjoyed an informal dinner together and renewed old acquaintances. We were delighted to welcome **John** and **Cherry Richardson**, **George** and **Hilda Owen**, **Bernard** and **Pearl Strange** and **Denis Watson** to their first reunion. Most of them arose early on Saturday and took the coach to Stratford-on-Avon, where they took in the sights, engaged in retail therapy or took the cultural trail as the fancy took them. All too soon, the coach returned to convey us to Cadbury World, where we learned about the discovery and manufacture of chocolate, before being let loose in that Chocoholics Delight, the Factory Shop!

Weary and loaded with loot, the intrepid party returned - via the scenic route! - to the hotel to be met by the main party who by then, were gathered in clusters and engaged in deep and meaningful conversation, endeavouring to make serious inroads into the bar stock.

President, **Col Colin Gilbert** welcomed Members to dinner. Chairman, **George Brew**, read the names of those who had recently departed and, after Grace, we enjoyed a more formal meal together, rounded off with port, biscuits and cheese, coffee - and more chocolate! **Col Gilbert** ensured that the AGM was short and sharp. He presented the retiring Chairman, **George Brew**, with the RSA Honour Membership Award and for once, **George** was almost lost for words. In the 84 years since the RSA was formed, only 261 Honour Membership Awards have been made and so, as our President pointed out, **George** has joined a small and distinguished band.

Charles Little, retiring as Secretary, received a large, heavy and mysterious package. It was noted that **Charles** had undertaken the post 'temporarily' in March 1995 during the absence, on business, of **Alan Harfield** - who has not been seen since! **Lt Col Pat Soward** was elected Chairman, **John Horne** was elected Secretary and the other Committee Members were duly re-elected.

In the meantime **Charles** had fought his way into the package and discovered a large silver Beaufighter on a wooden plinth for which he expressed his great delight.

At a short meeting on Sunday morning, Committee Members agreed unanimously to return to the Warwick Hilton again next September.

254 OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

254 Old Boys Association was born out of the Boy Soldiers who were recruited in the period 1942-48. F Coy Boys ceased to recruit in 1939 when war was declared, and their final intake was almost ready to join Man's Service when recruiting started again at the end of 1941. The 254 intakes started to arrive in April 1942 and did not stop until 1948.

The seven figure number beginning 254 was allocated to Boy Soldiers in Arborfield, Chepstow and Catterick. Many of the Catterick 254 Boys served in the Corps, completing up to forty years' service and rising to all ranks up to and including Brigadier. Many were also decorated and honoured for bravery and service. Irrespective of rank or honour, the Boy Soldier spirit lives on, and at their reunions they are once more the Boy Soldiers of long ago.

Once again sixty 254 Old Boys sat down for dinner on the Thursday evening, 7 October.

Then on Friday, the remainder booked in and began catching up on where they had left off last year. Soon all were sitting down to the informal get together dinner prior to drifting to the bar area for drinks and a renewing of friendships made over the years. Saturday, as usual, meant a trip out to places of interest, and this year two coach loads left for the National Memorial Arboretum near Burton on Trent. We arrived in plenty of time for those that wanted to attend the daily service in the Chapel at 11.00hrs.

This took the form of a briefing followed by the sounding of the Last Post, two minutes' silence and the playing of Reveille. Then it was out to the memorials, a cup of coffee in the restaurant, a browse round the shop, and a few bob into the bright red collection buckets for donations. Back onto the coaches, we headed for Buxton in the Peak District.

We arrived at the Pavilion Gardens to find that the annual Great Peak District Fair was in full swing, and after a quick snack lunch, there was plenty of time to tour the halls and stalls and make a few purchases before it was time to return to base, the Mickleover Court Hotel in Derby.

Saturday night is, as usual, the highlight of the weekend, and it began at 17.30hrs with a champagne reception, courtesy of the 1944 intakes. It was very well organised by **Bob Jarratt** assisted by **Colin Day** and **Geoff Baker**. In addition to the champagne there were corsages of orchids for the ladies, and all were treated to a slice of Birthday cake. **Bob Jarratt** gave a short speech and proposed the toast to the 254 OBA. It was then into dinner and the formal part of the evening.

The meal over, our President called on **Peter McNaughton** to propose the toast to the memory of those on our Roll of Honour. This now totals 132, including the six members who passed on in 2004. We had also lost six ladies.

George then welcomed all to Derby and in particular, those from overseas, **Anna** and **John Dove** and **Ann** and **Peter Kent** from Spain; **Evi** and **Tony Taylor** from Germany; and **Gloria** and **Malcolm Peplow** from America. On behalf of all of us, **George** thanked the 1944s for their champagne reception, and he congratulated the chef and all the staff for the excellent meals and service. **George** then made a presentation of a bouquet of flowers to **Anne FoxRoberts**, who once again made an excellent job of the room and coach bookings, and organised the coach seating, thus ensuring trouble free outings.

The evening than ended with dancing to the Del Poulton Band. Eventually the Band ceased playing, the bars closed and all went to bed. Sunday arrived too soon and apart from the 40 who stayed over till Monday, the main body gradually departed, all saying see you again next year, God willing.

31 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Maj Bob Simpson**

2004 saw a busy year for the Association with apologies for our lack of *WIRE* notes. Once again May saw us off on its European trip, this time to Arras, Mons and Chievres in Belgium. The main objective was to visit Chievres and its newly created Museum, which reflected the various powers that had occupied the airbase since the early 1900's and through two World Wars, including Britain, Germany, Italy and the USA.

31 Sig Regt occupied Chievres Airbase and the surrounding bars etc in supporting SHAPE HQ with comms and comcen staff. After a recce by our historian **Maj Paul Whittle**, Chairman **Maj Bob Simpson** and trip organiser **Maj Dusty Miller**, the day arrived for our President, **Col John Eversfield** to present a Royal Signals shield and a copy of our Regtl history to the Museum Curator, **Monsieur Neve**. The CO, **Lt Col Simon Hutchinson** and eleven serving members were also at the presentation and afterwards dined with the Association at a local restaurant. If you are passing through Chievres, pop into the Museum and see the signals display.

Col John Eversfield preseting the shield to Monsieur Neve

Our Annual Dinner, organised by **Henry** and **Reggie Holman** was once again very successful. Our guests included **Maj Gen** and **Mrs Stokoe**, **Lt Col** and **Mrs Hutchinson** and the RSM, **WO1 JJ** and **Mrs Johnson**. **Pat Miller** ran the raffle. The money raised went to the RSA Benevolent Fund.

In August 40 members were guests of Yeoman Warder **John Kenny**, who is a very good friend of the Association. There was a lot of lamp swinging during the evening in wonderful surroundings. **John Kenny** ran a very successful raffle in aid of local charities organised by the Yeoman Warders Mess at the Tower.

Our next trip was to RAF Uxbridge to visit the Battle of Britain ops room and museum, deep underground. There were no Stannah stair lifts for **Sir Winston Churchill** and there was not one for us, but we all made it. You step back to 1939 with a talk and a film, which included a lot of German footage from their side of events. A great and worthwhile visit.

Our next event is our Annual Cheese and Wine Party on 20 November. We hope you make it. If not, may we take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

BEVERLEY EXBOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

The Ramada Jarvis at Willerby (Hull) was the venue for our sixth Reunion Dinner. The lads started to gather on the Friday, and **Beryl** set up the Guardroom just inside the entrance, issuing name tags, collecting subs and handing out a few stern admonishments for sloppy turn out and dirty boots. Friday evening the lads gathered in the bar and old and new friendships were cemented in the only way that squaddies know how.

Saturday dawned and many of us went to the Morrisons superstore to see the 6BTR plaque that **Tony** had worked so hard to establish. We were impressed with the whole montage. One or two local people recounted seeing the Regt on church parade in days gone by.

The top table. Marian and Tony Bermingham, Beryl and Tony Hull, Mrs Joy Jade, Councillor Duncan Jack, John Beasley

At the Dinner that evening, our Guests of Honour were the Mayor and Mayoress of Beverley, **Duncan Jack** and his wife. His speech was well received by the company and harked back to his times in his school cadet force and remembrance of Normandy Camp. The raffle was supervised by **Tony Bermingham**, and the needlework of **Katie Teague** was well received, both as prizes and a tablecloth which was auctioned. Other guests were the Town Clerk, **Helen Ball** and her husband, and the Manager of Morrisons, **Peter Wong** and his wife. After dinner with belts and corsets slackened, we descended on the bars as though we had not had a drink for years. It was good to see **Jackie Quigg**, one of our local boys, but sad that none of the other local members came in for a swift half, apart from **Bob Proud**. All good things come to an end and Sunday saw the gradual departure of the members to their homes, far and near. So **Tony** and **Beryl** another success, well done! You even got the weather right.

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

A CLEVER MOVE FOR STATE PENSIONERS

– by Maj (Retd) Cliffe Webb

Many RSA Members will not be aware that they are possibly missing out on a Govt Initiative (or should I say Secret Initiative - it must be secret, because they've told very few) that has changed the goal posts for State Pensioners. When I left the Forces in 1993, I could receive my pension in one of two ways: -

a. Payment on a weekly basis at the Post Office; or
b. Payment on a monthly basis directly into my bank account.

I found the latter more convenient, but was slow to realise that by this method, you are paid one month in arrears, whilst by the weekly method, you are paid in advance.

After a little research, I have recently discovered that you can now receive your State Pension weekly in advance through your Bank Account. The effect of this is that your pension is now in your bank a little earlier, earning you a bit more interest.

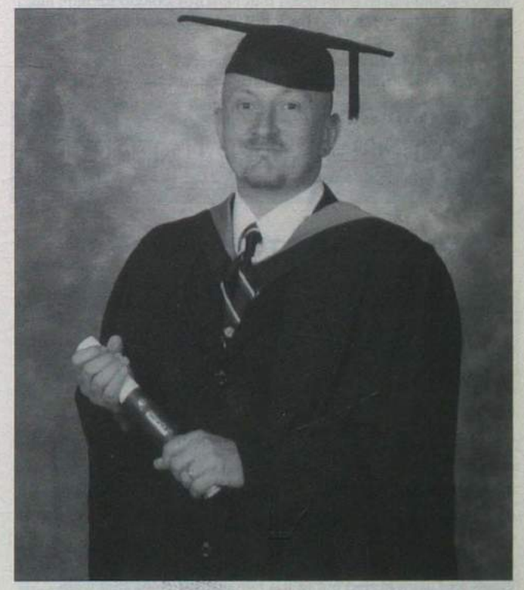
All you need to do is to have your National Insurance number to hand and phone your local Pensions Office. They will go over a few security details with you, but that's it. All you have to do is ask.

Why we haven't been informed before, I can only guess. My objective now is to make it widely known to as many people as I can!

LANCE CORPORAL DV BILCLIFFE – AN ACHIEVEMENT

- by Capt (Retd) MT Nevill

I first met **LCpl Bilcliffe** (better known to his friends as **Geordie**) in1990, when he was assigned to QM Tech Dept, 7 Sig Regt as a member of the RMT under the comd of **Sgt Bugsy Jennings**, caring for the vehs and equipt that had become redundant due to drawdown. **Geordie** was a Class 1 Lineman by trade, and a true follower of *Black Sabbath*. He had Joined the Army at Ouston in 1984 as a Boy Soldier, and after trade trg in 8 Sig Regt saw service in 4 Armd Div Sig Regt and 7 Sig Regt. He left the Army as a LCpl February 1992.



Geordie Bilcliffe BA Hons

It was not until 2003 that I met **Geordie** again when he came to Blandford with **Bugsy Jennings** for the RSA Reunion Weekend. When I asked him what he was doing, he said that he was studying at the University of Sunderland for a degree in

humanities. So on 12 July this year **Bugsy** and **Sandy Jennings** and I flew to Newcastle to witness the Investiture Ceremony in The Stadium of Light in Sunderland, where he received his Degree with Honours in Humanities, specialising in Youth and Community Studies. An excellent achievement from a past member of the Corps.

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

CPL NEIL COLLIGAN – JUST A PHOTOGRAPH

From: **Mrs Debbie JonesGreen**
Mayridge
Broadway Road
Kingsteignton
Newton Abbot
Devon
TQ12 3EH
Tel: 01626 365809

Dear Sir,

I am writing in hope that you may be able to assist me in locating a photograph of someone who used to be a penfriend of mine back in 1984/1985. His name was **Cpl Neil Colligan**, and he came from Manchester. He had a girlfriend who was also called **Debbie**, and I believe that she was in the Army too. For the whole year or so that we wrote, he was stationed in Northern Ireland (although he took part in OP BRAVE DEFENDER in Germany for 2½months somewhere in the middle of it all).

Now I would love to see a photograph of what he looked like back then. I would like to emphasise that I am not looking for him, just to see what he looked like back in 1984/85. Could any of your readers help?

Yours ...

CORRESPONDENCE

TROOP SHIPS TO NORWAY 1940

From: **Herbert W Jones**
9 Brenwood Close
Kingswinford
West Midlands
DY6 9BQ
Tel: 01384 288874

Dear Sir

I am endeavouring to obtain some Information regarding two troop ships engaged In the North Western Expeditionary Force (NEWF Norway) In 1940. They were *Ulster Queen* and *Ulster Monarch*.

In April/May 1940, the contingent of 1 Army Signals proceeded to a port of embarkation (possibly Greenock), boarded a paddle-boat, and were ferried out to the two waiting ships that were boarded via the ship's ladder.

This enquiry is being made in the hope that someone who was on board these ships may be able to shed some light on their ultimate disembarkations and ensuing events, as my personal Army file is completely blank from the entry '...proceeded to port of embarkation' of 16 April 1940 to 2 September 1940, a period of almost five months. Maybe, unknown to myself, my spirit is still waiting at Greenock for ships that according to my file, never existed.

I would be most grateful for any confirmation that these ships actually carried 1 Army Signals into active service as part of the NEWF. On a personal note, I was a despatch rider in 3 Coy, the OC of which was **Capt L Suggars**. There was talk later in that one of my DR colleagues had been awarded or recommended for the Military Medal, but I cannot vouch for this.

Yours...

OLD FRIENDSHIPS NEVER DIE

There is a group of retired officers and their wives with a standing arrangement to meet together every August to celebrate happy times together in the Sultanate of Oman as members of the Sultan's Armed Forces. It is usually a lunchtime affair, very alcoholic and tends not to finish until the next function is due that evening.

We meet at the home of one of the officers and as you can see, it is usually warm, so a BBQ is the order of the day. All five families either live or have property within 30 minutes of each other in Charente, France, so the wine and beer is cheap, thus allowing we poor (!) pensioners to spread a little cheer amongst ourselves.

The really amazing thing is that the group broke up in Oman and went their separate ways around the world 25 years ago!

Long may we continue to be able to get together to chew the fat.

Col Gordon Barnett MBE, Maj Geoffrey Maude, Capt John Larmuth OBE (RN), W Cdr Ian Macklenzie, Lt Col Ian Penny

EXCLUSIVE: ROYAL SIGNALS BAGS A LUFTWAFFE AIRCRAFT

From: **Col (Retd) Paul Randall MBE TD**
Kerilee
West Street
Corfe Castle
Dorset
BH20 5HE

Dear Sir

I found a photo the other day and thought you might like to publish the following story.

Whilst serving in the Western Desert early in 1942, I was carrying out my duties in the 8th Army Signal Office, when there was a breakdown in our line communication with GHQ Middle East in Cairo.

We sent out a line party to investigate, and found to our surprise that the main copper permanent line had been cut by an enemy plane that had been forced to land nearby.

With my CO, **Lt Col WA Peachell**, we drove to the spot and found to our surprise it was a Heinkel III that had made an emergency landing, probably as a result of a sandstorm. It was certainly unusual for a L of C Sig Regt to down a plane.

I took a photo of the plane since this must be the only time a Signal Unit had captured such a scalp.

Yours...

REUNIONS

SUEZ CANAL ZONERS REUNION 2004

From: **Reg Briggs**
157 Chaucer Road
New England
Peterborough
PE1 3LS
Email: regbriggs@cwctv.net

Friday 1 October to Sunday 3 October saw another reunion of the Suez Canal Zoners, held at the Park House Hotel, Blackpool. Friday evening was a meet and greet. Saturday evening saw a dinner and dance held in the magnificent setting of the Chatsworth Suite.

After a wonderful meal and after dinner speeches there was dancing to the music of *The Starbusters* dance band. Present were our President **Patricia Jezzard**, whose father was the founder member of the Canal Zoners. Guest of honour was Her Worship the Mayor of Blackpool, **Cllr Maxine Callow JP** and her escort **Cllr Peter Callow**.

On Sunday, an Act of Remembrance was held at the Blackpool Cenotaph, where the Suez Canal Zoners placed their wreath. There were several Royal Signals members present.

Guards and Signals on parade

It was great to see them all wearing their GSM with Suez Clasp. Remember, these men had waited over 50 years for this honour.

Anyone who served in the Canal Zone and would like to join can write to: The Canal Zoners, 172 Cromwell Road, Hounslow Middx, TW3 3QS; or email canalzoners@yahoo.com

To conclude, could someone out there please remind me of the camp name. It was on the Ismailia Road,near Lake Timsa. I believe that the Sig Tp came under 3 Inf Div Sigs.

Yours...

OPERATION BLACK SWAN 2005

OP BLACK SWAN is a reunion of Royal Australian Signals personnel, and the celebration of the 80th Anniversary of Royal Australian Signals.

The event will be held in Perth, Australia from 7-16 October 2005.

Any Royal Corps of Signals member, Serving or Retired is welcome to attend. In the words of the organisers, 'We want as many Poms as we can get to help us to celebrate this event.'

Registrations are required by 28 January 2005.

Further information is available from **Bob Shaw** at bobnlee@eftel.net.au

208 SIGNAL SQUADRON REUNION

– by Maj (Retd) Ken Mackenzie RASigs

Signallers travelled from as far away as the UK to renew friendships spanning 50 years and more, when 44 former members of the 208 (COMWEL) Sig Sqn gathered for a Reunion at the Goodna Returned Servicemen's Club west of Brisbane, Australia on 21 August 2004.

'It's fantastic to see these guys again.' said **Maj (Retd) Ken Mackenzie**, an ex Alpha Tp member, who flew up from Melbourne. 'I haven't seen some of them in over 36 years. We owe **Pam McDonald** a big thank you too. If it hadn't have been for **Pam**, none of this would have happened.'

Pam had created the 208 Sig Sqn web page over a year ago. Since it first opened, there have been 3,643 visitors, many of whom were delighted to find old mates again.

She was a little disappointed that more Brits have not surfaced, but to have held a reunion like we did on 21 August would have been impossible. There just would not be enough people around to attend and fill a room.

Pam was entertained during her stay by **John** and **Carmol Darling**, **Andy** and **Pauline Anderson** and **Richard Squire**. She thanks them all. Each of the Sqn Tps were represented: HQ, Alpha, Bravo, Juliet, MT and Q.

Queensland sized T-bone steaks and fresh sea food were all washed down with liberal quantities of *Fourex* beer. A really great day for all.

So if you were a member of 208 Sig Sqn or know someone who was, please log on to the Sqn website: www.marsden.me.uk .

LAST POST

Baldwin - Col KB Baldwin	*Served* 1934/75 *Died* ??/08/04
Chaytor - Sig G Chaytor	*Served* 1940/46 *Died* ??/08/04
Godley - Sgt D Godley	*Served* 1940/48 *Died* 16/08/04
Goodson - Sgt BM Goodson	*Served* 1949/63 *Died* 06/08/04
Hibbard - Sgt BD Hibbard	*Served* 1940/46 *Died* 29/07/04
Misslemas - Sig G Middlemas	*Served* 1962/79 *Died* ??/??/04
Skinner - Sig HA Skinner	*Served* 1940/46 *Died* 26/07/04
Warden - LCpl PE Warden	*Served* 1988/03 *Died* 17/08/04
Kay - Capt J Kay	*Served* 1969/80 *Died* 25/06/04
Harvey - Maj AE Harvey	*Served* 1939/46 *Died* 02/09/04
Rochester - L Cpl L Rochester	*Served* 1962/72 *Died* 11/09/04
Judge - WO2 AJ Judge	*Served* 1934/65 *Died* 08/09/04
Duck - WO2 JW Duck	*Served* 1937/74 *Died* 26/08/04

OBITUARIES

LIDDELL – Sig RD Liddell (Rex) died on 9 July 2004.

Rex Liddell enlisted in Royal Signals in March 1943.

He served throughout WW2 in 8 Corps Signals, including the Normandy landings in June 1944. At the end of the War, he served a short time in UK until his demob in 1947.

Rex will be greatly missed by friends and family. He leaves behind his wife, **Josephine**, and his two children. He will be remembered in their prayers.

NORTHCOTT - WO1 MCJ Northcott (Martin) died on 23 May 2004

Martin enlisted in the London Sig Regt at Atkins Road, Balham in December 1936, but left the Unit early on in WW2, ending up as RSM Palestine Command Signals.

He was a founder member of the Certa Cito Masonic Lodge in England, and a member of 56 Div Sigs OCA. Living in retirement in Queensland, Australia, he was a member of the Australian British Ex-Services Association. **Martin** used to march each year in the ANZAC Day Parade but, being unable to march this year, he was transported in a jeep as part of the parade.

His funeral took place on 27 May, and the Toowoomba Branch of the Ex-Services Association participated in the Ceremony, each member laying a poppy on the coffin. The OCA made a donation to the Stroke Association in **Martin's** memory.

Martin survived two wives and leaves a son and a daughter, six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Our deepest sympathies go to them all.

COWELL – D Cowell (David) died on 6 May 2004

David was long time member of 56 Div Sigs OCA. Our condolences go to his daughter, **Annie Brookes**, and the rest of his family.

GLENISTER – V Glenister (Vic) died on 21 November 2003.

Vic was an ex-Lineman who served with 56 Div Sigs, and was a long term supporter of the RSA. Our condolences go to his widow, **Elsie** and his family.

LEWIN - Lt Col R Lewin TD (Ralph) died on 13 September 2004.

Ralph joined 56 (London) Div Sigs in 1934, and during the war served in North Africa, and Italy. After the war he continued in the TA up to 1965, latterly commanding 56 (City of London) Sig Regt. He was one of the founding members, and a staunch supporter of, 56 Div Sigs OCA, serving as Chairman and President. Our condolences go to his widow, **Jean**, and the rest of his family.

DUCK – RQMS J Duck (Jackie) died on 28 August 2004.

Jackie joined 51 (H) Inf Div Sig Regt TA in 1937. He served with Para Sigs during WW2, then re enlisted with 51 (H) Inf Div Sig Regt in 1946, serving until retiring as RQMS in 1974. In addition, he further served the Regt in a civilian capacity as the caretaker at Fonthill Bks (latterly Prince Charles Bks) from 1952 until 1988. He will be missed by those who knew him.

NEIL - Sig JM Neil (Jim) died on 27 October 2003.

Jim was born in Wingate, Co. Durham. At school, he was an all round sportsman. After leaving school he worked for the local council and was an apprentice footballer at Hartlepool United. He joined Royal Signals in July 1963 and left in July 1972. During his time in the Army he served at home, FARELF, BAOR and Bahrain. At 21 Sig Regt. (AF), Germany, he got his Regtl Colours for football.

Some years before his death, **Jim** returned home to Peterlee, Co. Durham. There he joined the Hartlepool and District Branch of the RSA. He became Secretary of the Branch, and worked hard to recruit new members. He also set up a computer programme for the Branch. In October 2003 he helped arrange a social evening to help boost branch funds. This was a great success. Unfortunately, **Jim** died shortly after this. He will always be remembered and missed by those who knew him.

CAGE – WO1(RSM) HW Cage (Bill) died on 17 October 2004.

Bill joined Boys' Service at Harrogate Apprentice Training College. He then went on to Mans' Service in the Royal Corps of Signals, reaching the rank of RSM before retiring in 1973 after 25 years service.

He was stationed in many places, Salisbury, Catterick, Shetland Island, Edinburgh, to name a few. He talked a lot about his various postings Bahrain and Shevjoh in the Persian Gulf, where he did 2 tours with the Trucial Oman Scouts. He served in Lippstadt, Germany for 7 years, and returned to 6 Bde in Barnard Castle, Co Durham.

Bill was mentioned in a book called *Two Alpha Lima* by Peter Clayton. He often said he would write a book himself on his own experiences, but it was not to be.

He will be sadly missed by his wife, **Rena** and daughter, **Angela**, and his many friends.

MILES - Capt EW Miles (Eric) died 10 October 2004.

Eric joined the TA in 1938, and was called up into the Corps at the outbreak of WW2. In 1942 he attended OTC in Catterick and in 1943 was commissioned as a Capt. Among other postings, he served with the Kings African Rifles in India and in Burma. He was demobbed in 1946.

In 1941 he met **Vera**, and they were married in 1943, the start of 61 years of a happy and fulfilled marriage. In civilian life, **Eric** studied architecture and became RIBA qualified. As an architect, he worked in Kenya from 1950, becoming a partner with Dr May and Partners. From 1960 to 1973 he was in UK working for Kelsy Hunter as Chief Design Partner. He then returned to Kenya in 1973, working on the Kenyan Conference Centre for a year. He retired in 1979.

He was a family man with a keen sense of justice. A talented artist especially in watercolours. A photographer and a member of the Portsmouth Arts Society, he enjoyed rugby and cricket and loved good music.

Eric became ill a year ago, after sustaining a broken hip. He died in hospital at the age of 83.
The funeral was held at Portchester Crematorium on Thursday 21 October 2004. Over forty family, friends and comrades attended the simple but moving service. The Branch was represented by our Chairman, **Sidney Smith**, who carried the Branch Standard, and **Norman Davies**.
Eric leaves behind his wife **Vera**, and a large family. Sons, **Barry**, **Nick** and **Simon**; **Daughter**, **Karen**; **Grandchildren**, **Jamie**, **Abi**, **Nichola**, **Imogene**, **Helen**, **Rachel**, **William**, **James** and **Laura**.

FIRTH – WO2 GA Firth MBE (George) died on 12 July 2004

George and his wife, **Pat**, moved to Spain to live in November 1999. **George** was diagnosed with cancer in February 2002, operated on and had chemotherapy from February until July 2002. He recovered very well until March 2003, when a second tumour was found in the liver. He had chemotherapy again for 12 months until April 2004.

George never surrendered to the cancer. **Pat** and he lived their lives around his treatment, continuing with their social life and activities at a reduced level to fit in with **George's** fitness. He was active until the end, even going on a sightseeing trip to Cordoba just three weeks before he died, with 52 other people both English and Spanish from their Spanish classes.

George was born on 20 February 1942. He enlisted in the Royal Corps of Signals on 6 February 1964, and served until September 1995. After completing basic trg, Comcen and Cipher courses at Catterick, he was posted to 206 Sig Sqn, Munster, and from there went on to serve in 17 Gurkha Sig Regt at Seremban, Malaysia. In January 1969 he moved to 1 Div HQ and Sig Regt, Verden, leaving there in April 1970 to go to 30 Sig Regt at Blandford Forum May 1971 to May 1973 he served with 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in Londonderry.

Then he returned to Catterick, where he instructed Cipher Courses in 8 Sig Regt. On promotion to SSgt in 1976, he was posted as an instructor in Adventure Training and External Leadership at 8 and 11 Sig Regts until August 1978. From September 1978 until March 1980, **George** served as SSgt in QM Dept at 7 Sig Regt, Herford, and on promotion to WO2, moved down the road to 4 Div HQ and Sig Regt as RQMS Tech until May 1983.

He served from May 1983 until retirement in September 1995 at the Army Apprentice College Harrogate as RQMS Tech. During his time at the College, he was involved in the extra mural activities of the Apprentices, teaching the hobbies group military modelling, and training and assessing the mountaineering part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, by running a fell-walking group.

In the honours list of June 1996, **George** was appointed MBE for his contribution to life at the College.

Pat and his two sons, **Ian** and **Andrew** (who both served in the Corps) miss him tremendously, but mostly resent the cancer stopping him when there were so many more mountains he wanted to climb and places he wanted to see. They send their thanks to all **George's** past friends and colleagues who have contacted **Pat** to offer their condolences.

ORTON - WG Orton (Bill) died on 14 September 2004.

Bill was born in Portslade-by-Sea, but the family moved to Sevenoaks in Kent, where he won a scholarship to Sevenoaks School.

On leaving school, he joined the Post Office, then on the outbreak of the WW2, he joined Royal Signals, in 77 TeleOps Section 11 LOC. He was posted to Alexander's advanced HQ in Africa, and later saw service in Italy, where he developed a lifelong love of Italy and things Italian.

He married **Myrtle Haine** in 1940, and they had three children, **Leslie**, **Cherry**, and **Andrew**. Sadly, **Myrtle** passed away in 1989.

In his retirement, **Bill** was a member of Ightham and District Horticultural Society, the Wrotham Historical Society, and St Mary Platt Short Mat Bowling Club. He sang bass in the choir of Sevenoaks United Reformed Church, for a time served as deacon.

TOMSON - Sig TA Tomson (Tom or Alan) died on 23 June 2004.

Attached to Malaya HQ, Kuala Lumpur as a Radio Mech during the Emergency in 1953-54, **Tom** was taken on strength in the Malay Sig Regt, and then posted to Air Support Sigs.

During this time, he developed a great affection for the country and its people, and he had hoped to spend the latter part of his life living out there.

Sadly, it was not to be, for earlier this year he was diagnosed with liver cancer and was informed he only had 8 weeks to live. Even though the news was devastating to him and all who loved him, he faced the prospect with his usual brave attitude, and was determined to fight for his life.

Released to spend what time he had left at home, and with the support of medical staff, nurses and hospice home care he lived just 5 weeks and 3 days, before losing the fight on 23 June.

On numerous occasions, **Tom** said that time spent in the Malay Sig Regt were the best days of his life. Should he have been allowed to stay in Malaya, he would certainly have signed for further time in the Regt.

But over the past 5 years, he was able to make several trips to what he still called Malaya, and made friends with a family out there. They made him most welcome, and he called them his Malayan family.

Known as **Alan** by his family, he is fondly remembered by his sister, **Mrs Ivy Curtis**, who provided the details for this obituary.

AGAR – Col JS Agar (John) died on 11 July 2004.

John Agar joined the Army in 1945, having been at boarding school since the age of five. He joined at Whaddon in Buckinghamshire, with small number of people selected for the communications service of MI6. This was the beginning of a strand of his career connecting him with the world of intelligence. The second career strand was service in, and a certain affection for, the Arab world. He served four years in Aden with the Federal Regular Army, then in Libya (where he was delighted to be declared persona non grata by **Col Ghadafi**), and later as a defence attaché in Dubai.

In 1952-53 he spent two years in the Arctic with the British North Greenland Expedition, as Expedition Signal Officer, a great

responsibility for anyone. For this he was awarded the Polar Medal, of which he was quietly very proud.

John's later appointments grew less exciting as he progressed in his career. He did not much enjoy his later desk service at MOD. He left the Army in 1980 to become a school bursar in South Wales, where the stern headmaster was **Frank Edwards**, with whom he had served in Aden. **John** moved on to another bursarship in Surrey, where he also dabbled in local politics, but was glad to give it up.

From there, he retired, as he had always intended, to Bath. He referred to Bath as Saga City, but there is no doubt that he had a great affection for it, and had a wide circle of friends there. His last years were not kind to **John**. Illness restricted his mobility. He appreciated good wine, but was forced him to give it up, having to put up with the indignities of diabetes. **John** fought all this bravely and with good humour; it cannot have been easy.

It all ended unexpectedly and with tragedy. **John** was killed instantly in a road traffic accident on 11 July 04.

John will be remembered as a friend; loyal, constant, considerate, warm, thoughtful, generous, humorous, kind all that a friend could be. His style was quiet, self-deprecating and modest, though he held firm views that he maintained with vigour. He never sought confrontation. He was a devout churchman, who prized Christian values. To the end he maintained a keen interest in world affairs. As he put it, 'From my armchair, I can still run the world to my satisfaction.'

He will be sadly missed by a very wide selection of friends. His was indeed a life well lived. We will remember him.

MIDDLEMAS - Cpl George Middlemas died on 1 August 2004.

George Middlemas was born in Castletown, Sunderland on 10 October 1944. As he grew up, he was known a **Sonny**. He joined Royal Signals in 1962 at the age of 17years.

George was a person who wanted everything just right. If something was wrong, he would say so. He was a person who could talk things over with you. He had a cheerful extrovert personality, with a very bright sense of humour. He was also very conscientious in his work.

He was stationed in Malaya, 1962-64; Singapore, 1964-67; Bampton, Oxford, 1968-69; Catterick, 1969-70; Berlin, 1970-72; Blandford, 1973-74; Northern Ireland, 1973-74; and again in Berlin, 1974-76.

At the age of 23, he married **Elizabeth** on 31 January 1968, while he was stationed in Bampton, Oxford. They had two daughters, **Tracey** and **Denise**. Sadly, **Denise** died.

George had been in contact with friends with whom he had served from Australia, Canada, America and Spain. One of his friends from Singapore, **Edgar Weekley**, came to the funeral to pay his respects.

He was a life member of RSA, and a member of the ROAB, who mounted a Guard of Honour around his coffin. The funeral was held at Earlham Crematorium, Norwich on 16 August 2004. Relatives and friends from various regions came to pay their respects.

George leaves his wife, **Elizabeth**; daughter, **Tracey**; son-in-law, **Duncan**; and grandchildren, **Jordan**, **Scot** and **Chelsea Denise**. Our deepest sympathy to all the family.

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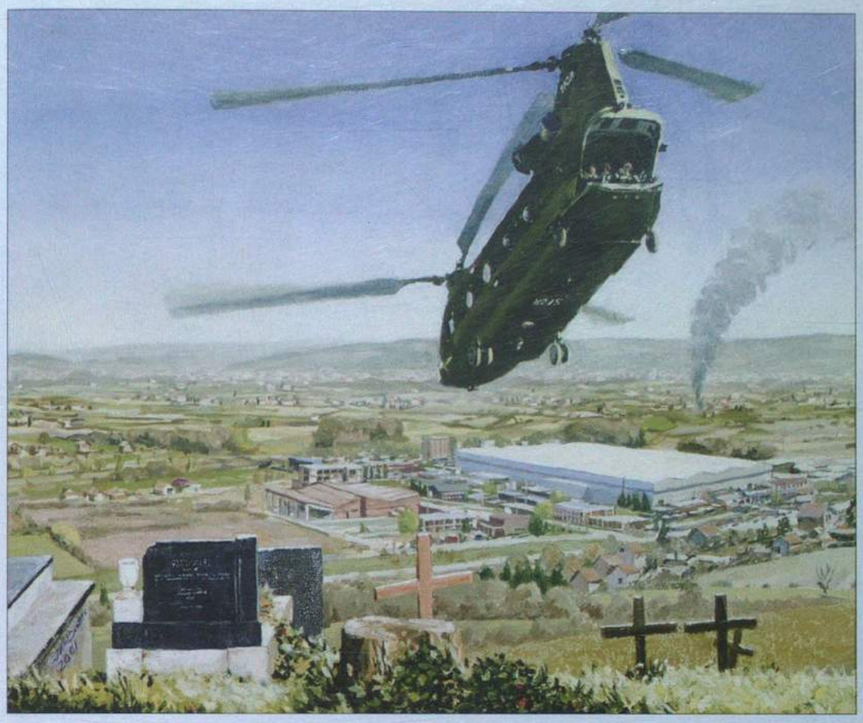

32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) has recently secured a small number of the limited edition signed print, *Return from a Surge Op* by the award winning war artist, **Hugh Beattie**. The painting depicts a Chinook helicopter coming in to land at the BLMF HLS. Only 200 of these signed prints have been produced, and it will make an ideal present for anyone who has served in Bosnia as part of IFOR or SFOR.

The approximate dimensions are 37 x 59 cm. Prints are supplied un-mounted, and the price is £23.50 + £3.95 p&p.

To order your copy, please send a cheque for £27.45 to PASO, HQ Sqn, 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V), 21 Jardine Street, Glasgow G20 6JU. Please make your cheque out to 'CBF 32 Signal Regiment,' and ensure that you include your full postal address, with BFPO number, if appropriate.

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